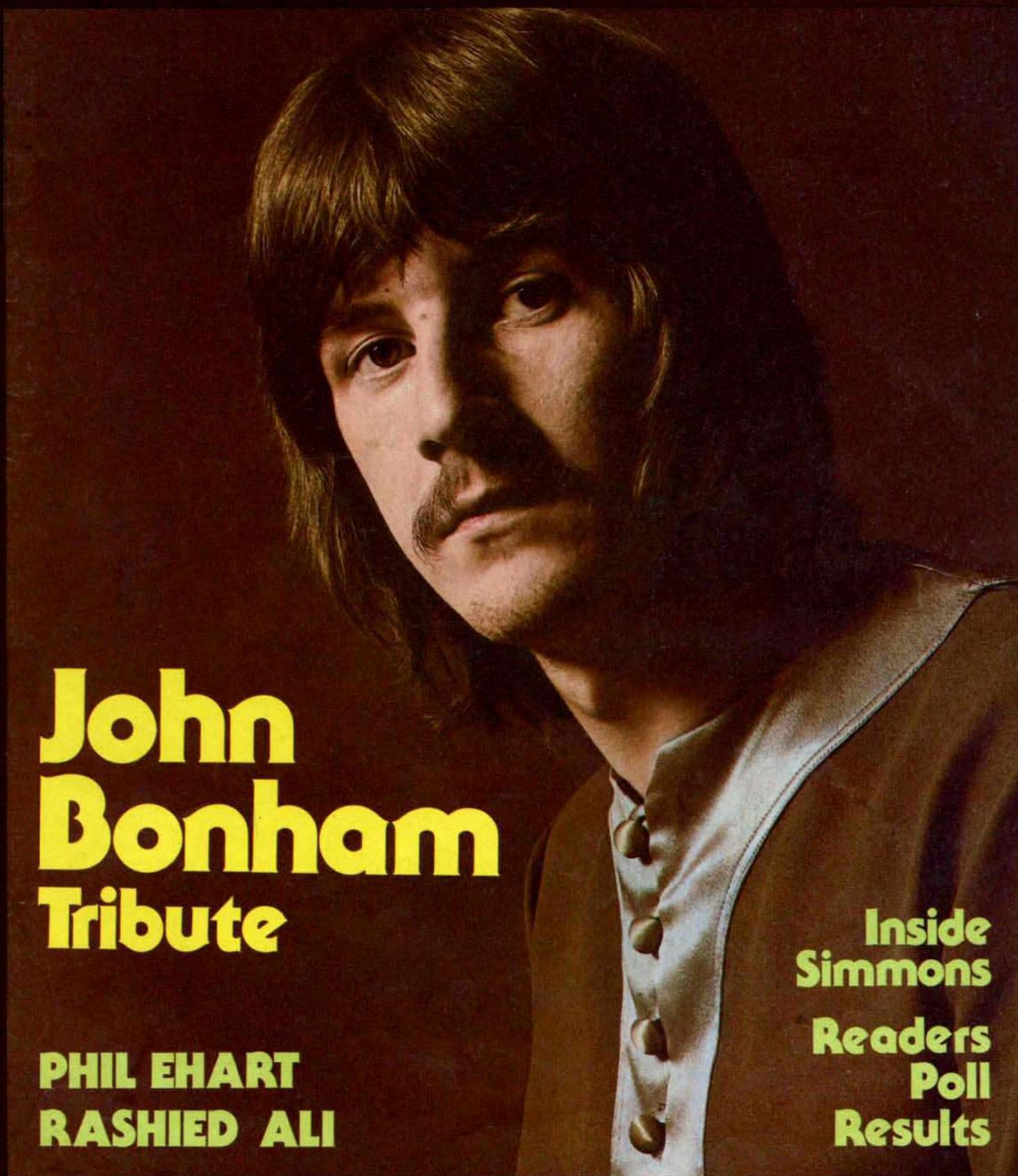


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JULY 1984



John Bonham Tribute

PHIL EHART
RASHIED ALI

Inside
Simmons
Readers
Poll
Results



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JOHN BONHAM

This tribute to Led Zeppelin's late drummer presents impressions of John Bonham by six individuals whose lives touched his in diverse ways. Bass players Dave Pegg and Phil Carson, drummers Carmine Appice and Dave Mattacks, journalist Ritchie Yorke, and studio engineer Eddie Kramer reminisce about Bonham from personal and professional viewpoints. These perspectives are interwoven with biographical information ranging from Bonham's early work to his death in 1980.

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PHIL EHART

The drummer of the rock group Kansas talks about the band's early years, his experiences with drum clinics, and how he has achieved a unique drum sound on the group's latest album. Ehart also discusses his personal methods for enhancing the prominence of a drummer within the context of a band.

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Playing drums for such jazz greats as Cannonball Adderley, Horace Silver, Oscar Peterson, John Coltrane, and Dexter Gordon certainly ranks Louis Hayes among the greats of bop drumming. Coming from Detroit's distinguished bebop school of the '50s, Hayes recounts his vast experience with these jazz legends and others, along with the steps he took to achieve such status.

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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

On Time



Industry Happenings is the department we use to inform you of recent changes in the industry, and keep you advised of upcoming percussion events like clinics, seminars, workshops and conventions. We strongly believe in the value of these types of events, and assuming we know about them in time, are more than happy to pass the information along through *Industry Happenings*.

We get our information from the manufacturer, advertising agency, public relations house, and sometimes directly from the music dealer or drum shop sponsoring the event. We count on them to supply us with the information in ample time to pass it along to you. Unfortunately, if the timing is off even by only a week, it's quite possible that the announcement will miss the issue it should be in to give you sufficient advance notice. About all we can do when that occurs is take an "after-the-fact" approach by simply reporting on the event after it has taken place.

Surprisingly, many of the people responsible for supplying us with the information have not caught on to the idea that it's essential we receive notice *well in advance*. Let's take a closer look at a typical issue for a moment.

Bear in mind that one issue of *MD* takes at least nine weeks to make its way through the entire production cycle. By that I mean, nine complete weeks from the very first editorial conference to the day the magazines are shipped from our printer in the Midwest. For example, the July *MD*, the issue you're reading now, was originally put on the drawing board during the week of April 9. The very first editorial meeting was conducted that week, and a good 90% of the content of the issue was firmly established. We still had some flexibility with the remaining 10% for the next several weeks; however, if your announcement hadn't reached us by April 27, you could pretty much count on the fact that it would have missed the July issue. In essence, if one wanted to announce an event taking place sometime this month or early next month, we should have been informed about it before April 27.

This kind of advanced planning often takes people by surprise, particularly those who have no idea that we actually work that far ahead. I sometimes think it might be nice to have a dollar for every time I've had to console disgruntled music dealers or clinic coordinators who were under the impression that they could publicize a program in the September issue by telling us about it in August. That simply does not work in a business such as ours, which tends to be highly structured and built, out of necessity, on firm schedules and deadlines.

Keeping our audience advised of upcoming percussion events is just one of the many roles *Modern Drummer* plays in the drumming community. There's certainly no reason why we can't continue to function in that capacity, provided we have the understanding and cooperation of those individuals in charge of the events which interest us all.

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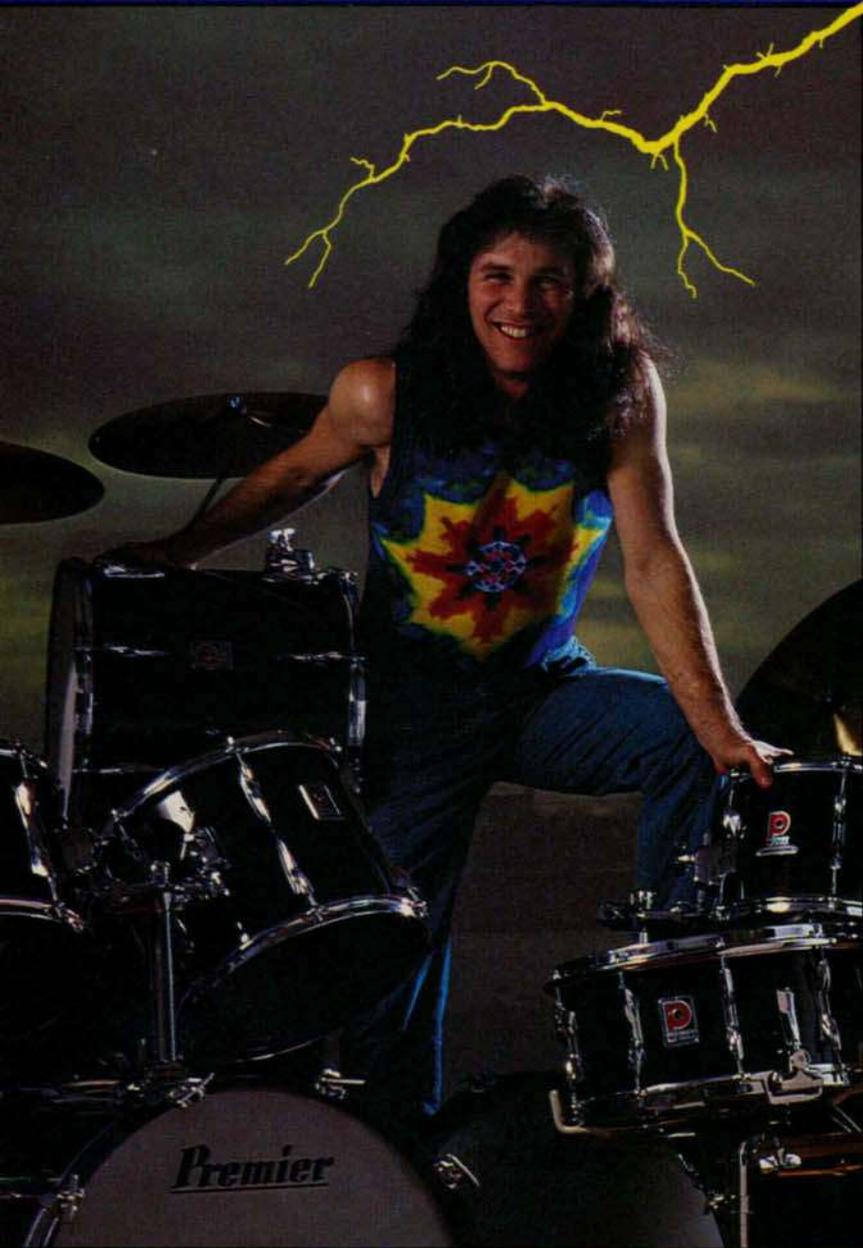
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READER'S PLATFORM

NEIL PEART

Excellent interview with Neil Peart! After reading it, I felt like playing 24 hours a day. Thanks, Scott Fish, for a superb job, and thanks, Neil, for all the great inspiration.

Todd Walker
Greenbrook, NJ

My heart bleeds for Mr. Peart. He complains about being famous. He detests it. He hates it. Poor Mr. Peart, he can't walk out of his hotel without 50 people there to greet him. He can't open his hotel room curtains. It infuriates him. Anytime Mr. Peart wants to trade places with anyone out here that is just as talented, but hasn't gotten the breaks, please let us know. Maybe Mr. Peart hasn't learned that what goes around, comes around, or to put it even more simply: Get it while you can!

I love your magazine; keep up the good work. Also, my congratulations to Robyn Flans for her great interviews.

Bob Thompson
Los Angeles, CA

I wish to salute Scott K. Fish for his fabulous article on Neil Peart. It's great to see that there are drummers who are not hung up on the image of being a rock star or famous drummer. I feel we can all learn something from Neil's way of dealing with and rejecting stardom. We must also learn to respect his feelings towards stardom. I wish to thank Neil for giving us this admirable attitude to follow, and close by saying that he definitely is, as Geddy Lee once stated, "the professor of the drumkit."

Maurice Valente
Weston, Ontario, Canada

I'm writing in response to the cover article on Neil Peart in *MD's* April '84 issue. I'm afraid I'm quite disillusioned. After reading Neil's comments on the demigod idea, I feel actually *guilty* for admiring him the way I do. He expressed an extreme dislike for people's admiration toward him. I mean extreme! So extreme that I dishearteningly formed an opinion about him. With everything that he said about privacy, alienation, etc., he seemed more arrogant than otherwise. It seemed as if he were asking everyone reading to stop liking him, and stop relating to him. He, over anyone, should realize how easy it is to lose yourself in someone else's expression (be it writing, music, acting, etc.). To admire that person is your way of thanking them. When that thanks is rejected, as I've felt he's done in his interview, it dampens spirits and weighs down the heart.

Karen Karleski
Chicago, IL

MICHAEL CARABELLO

My thanks to *Modern Drummer* and Connie Fisher for the wonderful article on Michael Carabello. All percussionists are indebted to Mike, not only for his "chops," but also for his personal part in bringing percussion into the mainstream of rock 'n' roll music. He was one of the pioneers, and I'm glad to know he's still at it.

E. Zapata
New York, NY

MATT FRENETTE

Thank you *MD* and Scott K. Fish for your outstanding article on one of today's top rock drummers, Matt Frenette. Matt has been overlooked for some time now, and I am glad to see such a class magazine as *MD* take the time to bring Matt to the public's attention.

Matt has been my favorite drummer for three years now, as well as one of my major influences. I had the opportunity to meet him briefly at one of Loverboy's shows, and he took the time to talk with me about touring, and playing around the world. Matt is a true gentleman, and has a great personality. Thank you, Matt, for your great inspiration, and "Keep It Up" in '84.

Rob Destocki
Canoga Park, CA

REGGAE DRUMMERS

Looking through my *Modern Drummer* magazines, I get very discouraged. In the last six months of *MD*, you interviewed five rock drummers for your front cover feature (Alex Van Halen, Phil Collins, Carl Palmer, Andy Newmark and Matt Frenette). There are some other types of music, you know. Take reggae for an example; there are some really great reggae drummers out there (Sly Dunbar and Sky-juice just to name two). But what did you do with them? You squeezed them all into a small article summarizing each drummer's career and life (*MD*, July '83).

Please try not to focus yourselves on just one kind of music. You have got a really good magazine here; don't lose it.

Marc Israel
Cinnaminson, NJ

CANO MODULUS DRUMS

Thank you for Bob Saydlowski's product review of the *Modulus* electronic drums in the April '84 issue. There are a few points in the article I would like to clarify.

The drumheads are replaced by removing the tension screws from the sensor pad counterhoop, just the same as on an acoustic drum. I don't see how Bob could have missed this. I believe Bob's problem with

the snare sound stemmed from lack of familiarity with the unit. His comment on the "overabundance of noise generation" makes little sense, as there is a control on the unit to vary the noise level from zero to 100%. The sensor pads, originally made of aluminum, are now stainless steel.

Belinda Crum
Director of Operations
H. W. Cano Electronics
Arvada, CO

Editor's note: Mr. Saydlowski has informed us that he was, in fact, mistaken in regard to the removability of the sensor pad heads, and also about the availability of concert-height stands for the pad units, which are in fact available from the manufacturer.

RESPONSE TO STALOWSKI

I am writing to respond to Tom Stalowski's letter, published in the April '84 issue of *MD*. I understand that people have opinions about issues and about other people, but uneducated ones disturb me. First, Slim Jim Phantom is a very fine drummer; he accomplishes the musical needs for his enormously popular trio. I am sure Mr. Stalowski has not been to a Stray Cats recording session, so how could he know how Brian, Lee and Slim Jim record their music?

And what, by the way, is wrong with Gina Schock? The Go-Go's are a good pop band, reminiscent of the girl groups of the '60s. Gina plays fine. Are people becoming worried because drummers who play simple are popular? I think it is absurd to say that *MD* "goofed up" with interviews such as these. *MD* is a professional publication with a staff educated in journalism. They would know who to write about more than Tom Stalowski.

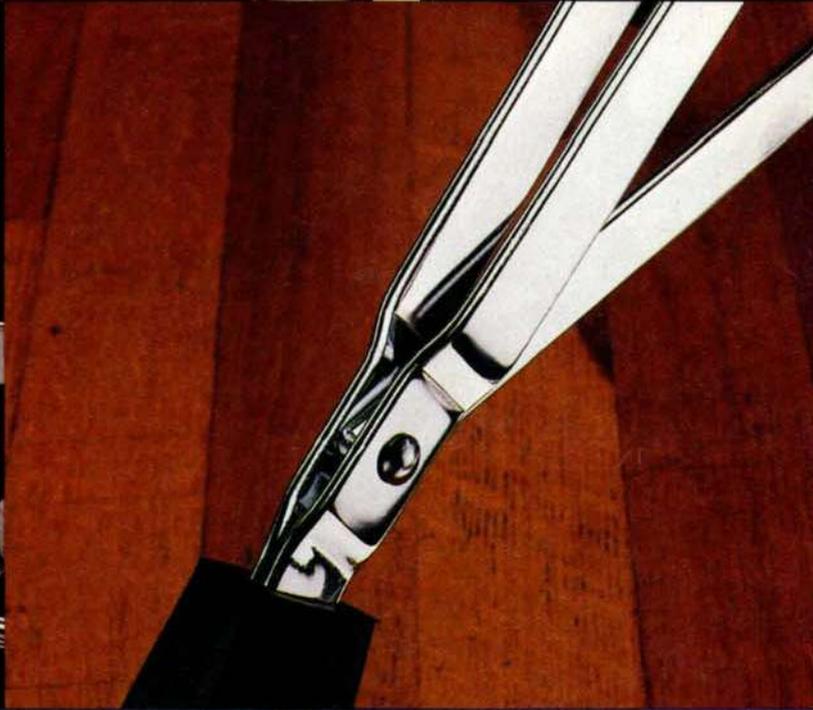
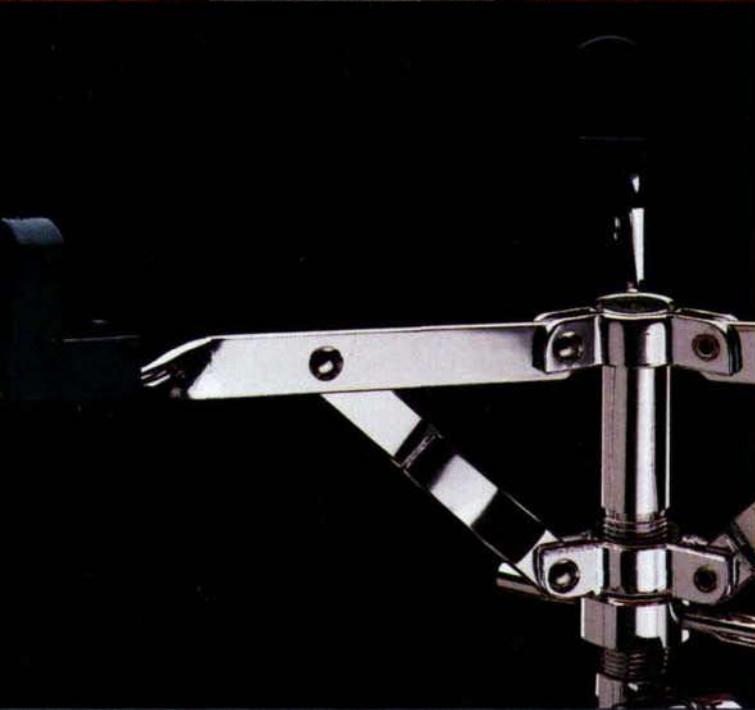
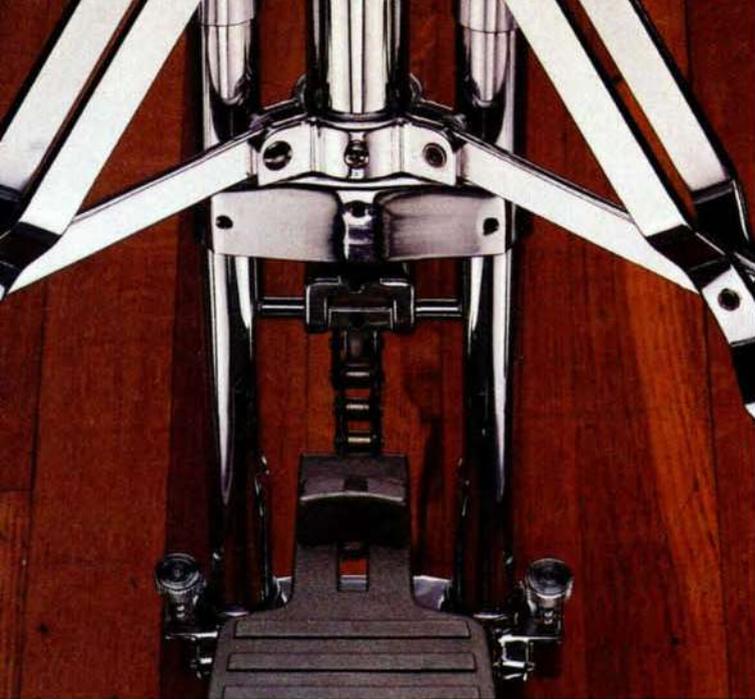
John C. Mathieson
Nashville, TN

KLEINE TROMMEL

I have just read the March '84 issue of *Modern Drummer* magazine...several times! I found the *Focus On Teachers* article especially interesting. However, in Dave Levine's piece about Murray Spivack, he states that *Kleine Trommel*, by Eckhardt Kuene, isn't available in the U.S. We stock it and sell it here at Drums Unlimited (along with all the other in-print titles mentioned in the article). Keep the fine articles coming.

Paul Winslow
Asst. Mgr./Music Buyer
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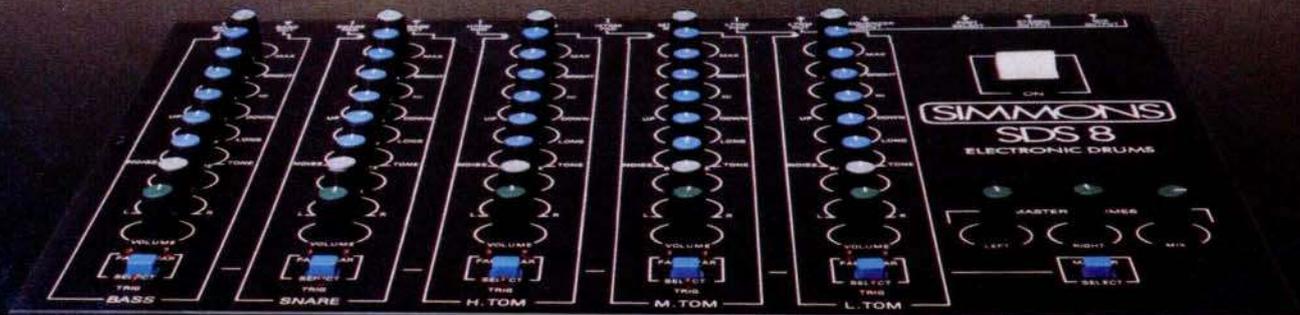
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John

PERHAPS you live in a town to which the *Led Zeppelin* movie *The Song Remains the Same* comes once every few weeks for the midnight showing. The audience at such events is a rough cross section of *Led Zeppelin* fans, ranging from students with briefcases to absolute Cro-Magnons with flasks. A very vocal group, they believe in participatory cinema and are apt to cheer their heroes on a first-name basis. Messrs. Page and Plant are obvious favorites, but it's like *Giants Stadium* when John Bonham performs on drums and racing cars.

Led Zeppelin has always held a little something for both intellectual and barbarian. You can see it in the movie, in which each member of the group, including their manager Peter Grant, stars in a personal fantasy sequence. The contrast between the soft-focused and metaphysical Jimmy Page, versus the earthy and fast-action John Bonham vignettes says it all. Unfortunately, Bonham is seldom given credit for meeting Page halfway; rather, he is portrayed like Conan, making thunder and exciting the natives. Several years after his death, articles indicate that Bonham was some kind of thumping idiot. One magazine-length tribute to *Led Zeppelin* even managed to claim that Bonham pioneered the "excess is best" style of drumming. Rarely do the accolades acknowledge the tremendous control and finesse that Bonham displayed.

And so, for the current article, it was decided that, rather than stretch the facts once more in yards of pop-journalese, credible witnesses would be approached. If it were not possible to interview Bonham, then those who knew him would be sought. And so we spoke with six people whose lives and work were touched by "Bonzo" Bonham: Dave Pegg, bass player with *Fairport Convention* and now with *Jethro Tull*, played with Bonham in the pre-Zeppelin years. Carmine Appice and John Bonham played back-to-back when *Vanilla Fudge* and *Led Zeppelin* toured on equal billing in early 1969. Phil Carson of *Atlantic Records*, now traveling with Robert Plant, was a close friend of Bonham's and frequently played encores with Zeppelin as bassist, allowing John Paul Jones the freedom to double on keyboards. Journalist Ritchie Yorke accomplished a rare feat: He became close to the group and produced a book, recently revised, which remains the definitive history of *Led Zeppelin*. Eddie Kramer engineered John Bonham on several albums. Cooperating with Jimmy Page, he created a reference standard for drum sounds, just as he did with the Beatles, Stones, and especially Jimi Hendrix. Finally, drummer Dave Mattacks' path intertwined with Bonham's over the years, mostly while Dave was with *Fairport Convention*. He admired John Bonham and, as Peter Grant told me, it was mutual. Dave worked closely with Jimmy Page on the soundtrack to the movie *Death Wish II*.

Looking back, it seems hard to believe that some of today's most ardent Zeppelin fans were not yet born when Jimmy Page first had a twinkle in his eye for a new group to replace the ailing Yardbirds. We must roll back a little.

It was July, 1968, the summer of guitarist



Bonham



by T. Bruce Wittet



Jimmy Page's discontent. He had joined the British blues-rock group the Yardbirds in its twilight years. Personality incompatibility and musical differences were rife. First, bass player Paul Samwell-Smith had left to become a successful musical producer, leaving a gaping hole in the rhythm section. Page, a guitarist by trade, seeking the comradery and meaningful work offered by a name rock group, eagerly jumped out of the relative anonymity of session work to fill the void. His bass posturing is documented on Michaelangelo Antonioni's film *Blow Up*, on which Page actually recorded guitar tracks, despite the fact that it looked as if the Yardbirds were working live in a Windsor club. Eventually, rhythm guitarist Chris Dreja got stuck with bass and Page shared the guitar chair with Jeff Beck. But the talented and erratic Beck had difficulty with the arrangement, and after a tour of the United States, he left the Yardbirds for a fruitful solo career.

Meanwhile, the Yardbirds continued, until drummer Jim McCarty and vocalist Keith Relf forsook their blues roots completely (Relf delighted in Gregorian Chants—no slight to him) in a new group, Renaissance. Bassist Chris Dreja took up photography, leaving Page and new manager Peter Grant to plot the future.

It should be remembered that Jimmy Page was something of a guitar king of the British session scene before entering the Yardbirds. His discography numbers in the hundreds and includes the Who, Joe Cocker, Them, Donovan and the Kinks. It was only natural that his next group would reflect the level of professionalism and commitment to which he was accustomed, and which failed him in the Yardbirds. Chris Dreja remembers that Page "worked very hard at fitting in and contributing to the music. Jimmy was, and still is, a very professional player. . . . Unfortunately, Jimmy came in when we needed a rest from it. Also, he was using it as a platform for himself; he was getting into bowing his guitar. . . ."

For his New Yardbirds, Page chose one John Paul Jones on bass, who had worked

with John McLaughlin in jazz groups and was well known as an arranger on the session front, achieving considerable recognition on Donovan material. Terry Reid was to be the singer for the group, but was busy and recommended Robert Plant—seconded by Tony Secunda, Procul Harum's manager. So far, they had a powerful trio consisting of three intense devotees to American blues and rock 'n' roll, and all with a striking breadth of talent. A drummer with authority was needed. Quite rightly, Procul Harum's B.J. Wilson, who had worked with Page on Joe Cocker's studio version of "With A Little Help From My Friends," was mentioned, but things didn't pan out. Robert Plant urged Page and Peter Grant to journey up to Birmingham to see a drummer whose huge local reputation was based on thunderous rock stylings and a mastery of the blues form: enter John Bonham. From this point on, things went quickly.

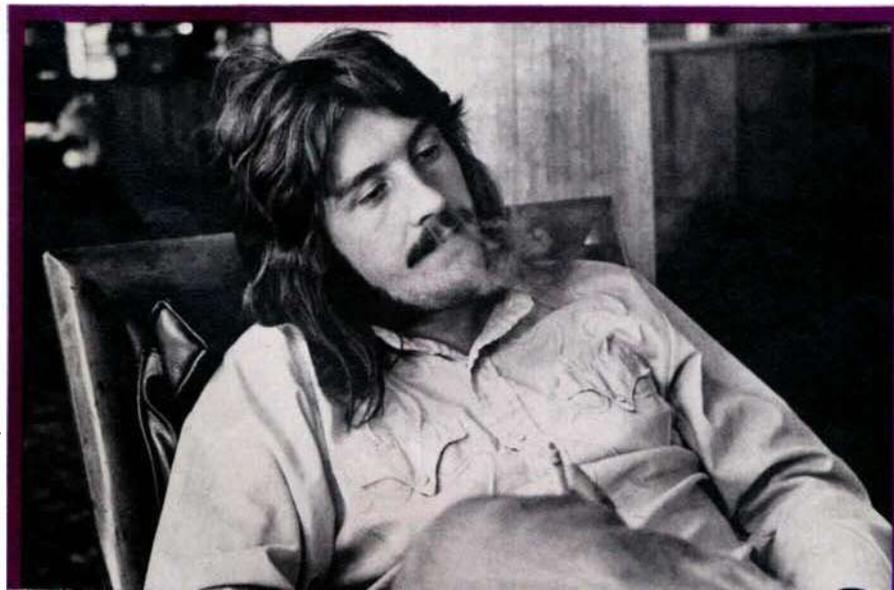
The New Yardbirds toured in Scandinavia in order to fulfill the old group's contractual commitments, and entered the studio in December, 1968, emerging with an album's worth of material, a new name (credit Keith Moon or John Entwistle with the ironic "Led Zeppelin"), and probably the most unique and powerful rhythm section in rock to date.

Many drummers can recall vividly when the first Zeppelin album was released. It sent a lot of them to their basements, some trying with two bass drums to duplicate what Bonham had accomplished with a single Ludwig on "Good Times Bad Times." Bonham was so strong and exact: Who was this guy, and why had we never heard of him? In fact, the story of John Bonham before Zeppelin is quite modest and unassuming.

Bonham was born into a working-class family on May 31, 1948, in the countryside of Worcestershire, England. His father was a building contractor in Redditch and both parents supported John's early predilection towards drumming, manifested on the usual pots and pans. They bought him his first snare drum and, in his early teens, his first drumset.

His first group was Terry Webb & The Spiders. While in his second group, A Way Of Life, circa 1966, he got married, as did the bass player Dave Pegg. Next, it was The Crawling King Snakes, with Robert Plant, which lasted a few months before Bonham went back to Pegg and A Way Of Life, due to financial considerations. Dave Pegg recalls those early years:

"We used to travel around together. John didn't drive at the time because he was suffering from a driving ban, so I used to drive him about in my old Renault Dauphine. He lived in Redditch, and I lived in Birmingham and the drive from my house to Redditch after the gig used to be known as the Redditch Bleed because it was always such a long way to go. We'd do pubs and clubs; the group only did about 40 gigs because we were so loud, and we refused to do the top-20. Very often we'd be contracted to do two one-hour spots for about 30 dollars. We'd do the first spot and it was so loud—mainly due to John, who was the loud-



est drummer I've ever worked with—that we'd have to go home. And we'd be so broke—to get to gigs we used to siphon petrol to fill the van up. If we survived the gig and got paid, then we could afford to buy petrol to get back home. But going was always a siphoner." The band performed Cream- and Hendrix-inspired material. Actually, sheer logistics and financial problems were a chief reason for Bonham leaving Plant and going back to A Way Of Life. The finances were that tight.

With the advent of stacks of Marshall or Hi Watt amplifiers, it was usually the drummer who came begging for amplification. Not so with Bonham. Pegg: "I bought a Marshall 4 x 12 cabinet and a 50-watt top, and so did the guitar player, and it still wasn't loud enough to keep up with the level that John's drums were kicking out." In those days they simply didn't have enough money to purchase PA equipment and extra Marshall cabinets, but Pegg remembers a resourceful John Bonham: "He said, 'Well, sod it. I'll make them.' His father ran a builder's business in Redditch, and we went out one day and bought all this timber on his father's account. Just using a Black & Decker, within two days John had built eight 4x12 cabinets. It was absolutely fantastic. Of course, then we needed something to cover them with. John had a mate who was a furniture upholsterer, and he covered them in orange leather—real leather with lime green speaker cloth. They looked amazing. But, of course, we only had eight 12" speakers between the guitar player and myself. John said, 'Don't worry about that. Just put one in each cabinet.' That's what we did, and all the other bands in Birmingham came and saw us, and thought it was fantastic. Of course, it only sounds so good because you've got all those cabinets. John was pretty together in that respect."

John Bonham was reunited with Robert Plant in 1968 in Band Of Joy, which opened for Tim Rose, an American singer famous for a loud, guttural version of "Hey Joe." Pegg recalls, "I backed Tim Rose with John one night before he actually joined Tim Rose. We did a one-off at a couple of American airforce bases. It was quite funny. I remember that Bonham and I drove down from Birmingham to London in a van with our group equipment that we had borrowed, including the PA, and we rehearsed with Tim Rose in some seedy little rehearsal room in London from 11:00 till 4:00. . . . We got back to Birmingham about 6:00 the next morning and got paid a tenner each!"

Notwithstanding his love for Bonzo, Dave Pegg doesn't remember Bonham being a particularly fastidious purveyor of the art of drum maintenance. "Drummers are either one way or the other.

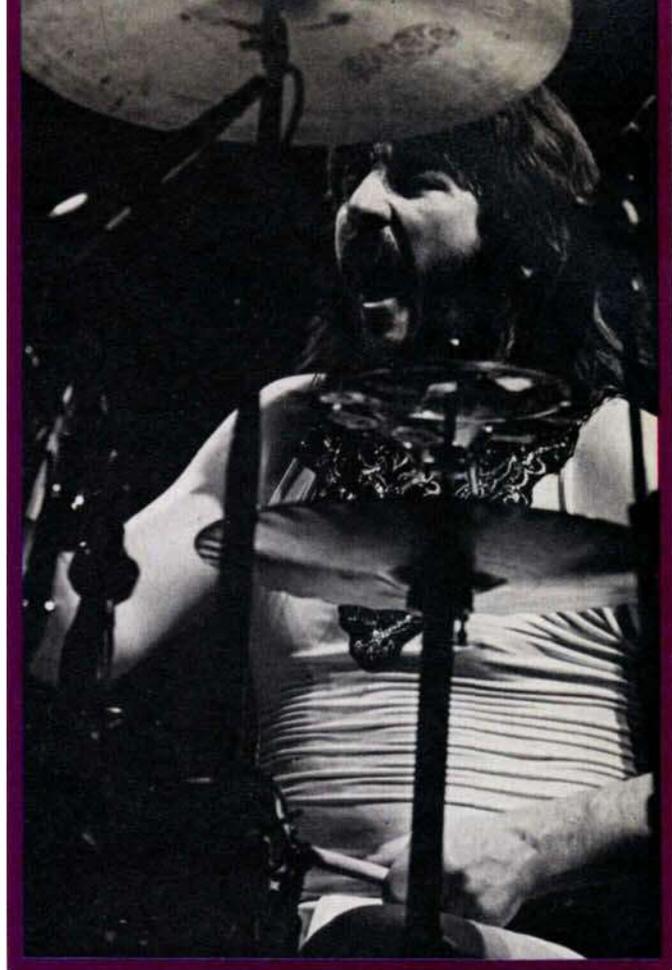


Photo by Richard E. Aaron/Starfile

They either just throw the kit in the back of the car, you know, and treat it like a lump of shit, or the kit is put in cases, padlocked, labeled and touched with a duster. Every drummer I know has been one way or the other. Once Bonham threw his drums out of the rehearsal—out of the pub first-floor window. I'm sure in later years—when he probably only touched his kit during soundchecks—that it was meticulously maintained. Certainly in his youth he wasn't that interested in it."

When John Bonham joined the New Yardbirds he completed a lineup which was really, musical similarities to the original

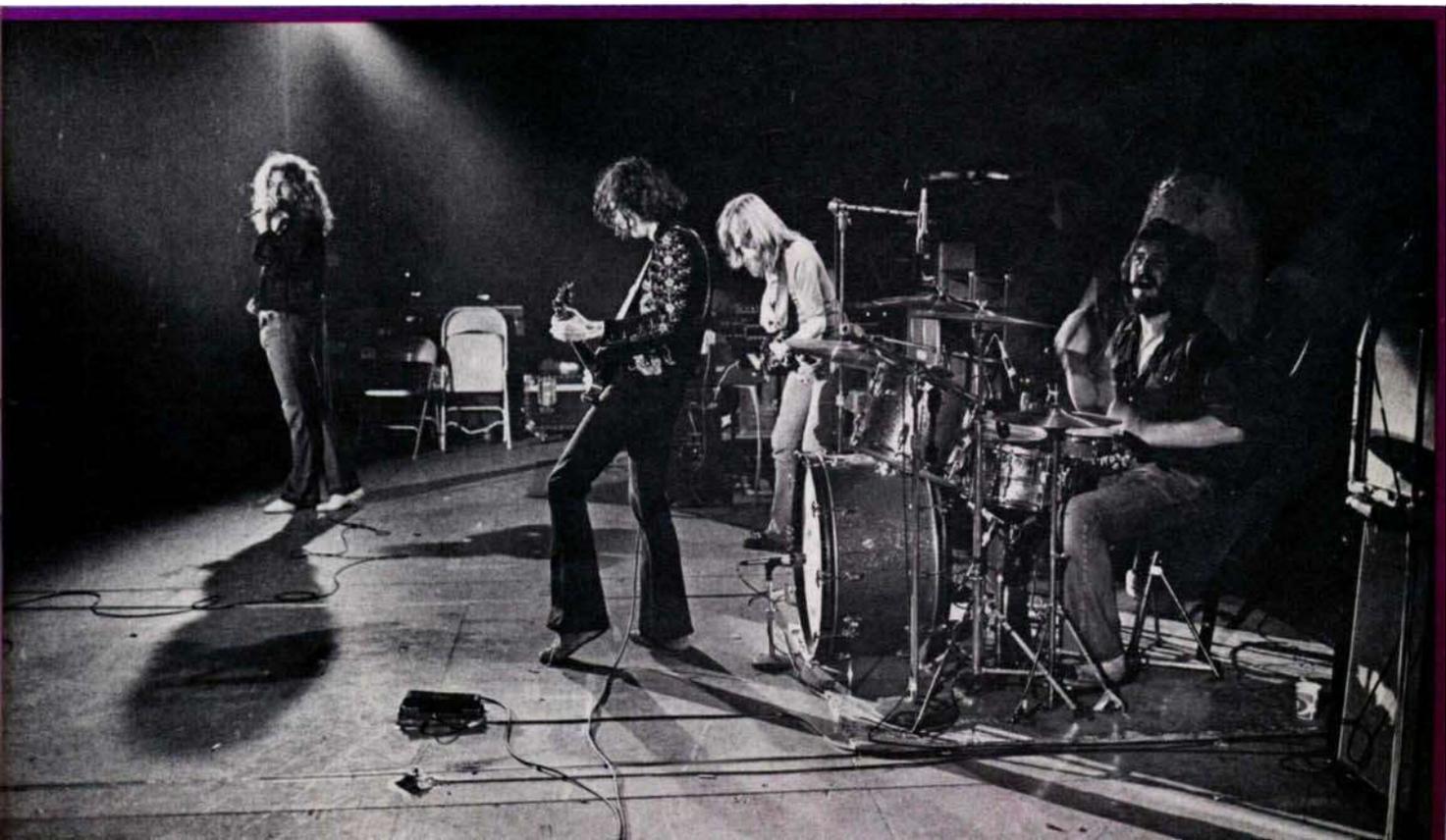


Photo by Jim Marshall



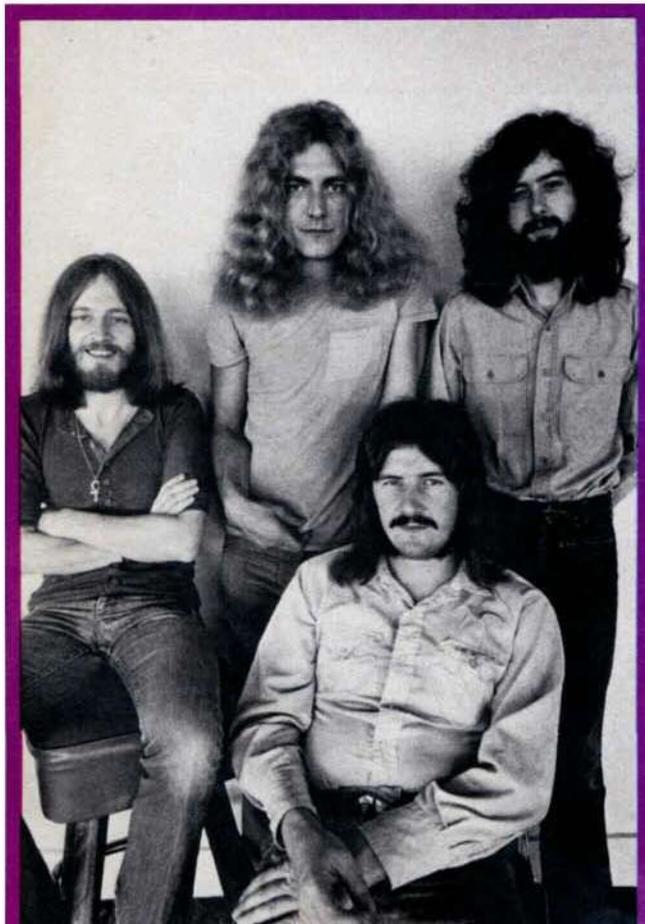
Yardbirds aside, a vastly different enterprise. The differences were three-fold: first, management. Peter Grant was not given a fighting chance when he took over the Yardbirds—a group in the throes of disintegration. His considerable skills welded Zeppelin into an organization which showed for the first time that rock musicians could be adequately reimbursed for the fruits of their labors. The record label Swan Song was a manifestation of Zeppelin's attempt at controlling its destiny. Secondly, Zeppelin displayed unerring commitment and loyalty—obvious in the fact that no New Led Zeppelin has arisen. Finally, musically, Zeppelin was stronger. Quite objectively,

Zeppelin had more appropriate vocals all of which are evident when you place the first Zeppelin album alongside any Yardbirds record.

Of course, it took the press a long while to appreciate the attributes—especially the American press, still uncomfortable with the idea that groups of Englishmen could come over and popularize indigenous American music when American blues musicians were struggling on their native soil. Hut the music of Led Zeppelin changed over the years. In spite of those who feel that Zeppelin climaxed with their first or second album, their best work was ahead. The fourth album is a marvelous achievement, providing truly universal music: It unites the most salient rock and blues elements—recorded to the hilt—with folk and Celtic strains, aided by Fairport Convention's vocalist, the late Sandy Denny, in "The Battle Of Evermore." The writing of Page and Plant increasingly began to display that, while intellectuals tapped their feet, barbarians could be engaged as well. All the while, Led Zeppelin kept to its path of healthy, loud rock 'n' roll, but the diversity was obvious.

I remember once being approached by a tourist—a lad from India, who inquired if I had heard of Jimmy Page! It turns out that he had seen Page and Plant at a Calcutta discotheque performing on primitive makeshift equipment during one of their many excursions bent on discovering worlds of music outside the four-to-the-bar. For Bonham, this encompassed a growing mastery of all percussion instruments, including the keyboards and mallets. While it is common knowledge that he performed solos with his bare hands, it has only been recently divulged that he had designs on the entire conventional percussion section. "Bonzo's Montreux," off the recent compendium album *Coda*, displays the width of Bonham's percussive imagination, coupled with Page's production skills.

But while Led Zeppelin was a superb forum for experimentation, allowing Bonham tremendous latitude on diverse noise-makers, his calling and his name were made on the traditional American device: the drumset. And John Bonham played, for the most part, a very simple drumkit, consisting of a 14x26 bass drum, a 12x15 small tom—at first mounted on a snare stand and later on the usual Ludwig bass drum rail-mount—16x16 and 16x18 floor toms, and generally a *Supra-Phonic* 6 1/2X 14 snare topped off with a *Speed King* foot pedal with a wood or hard felt beater. With today's drum world set on massive and complex hardware constructions, it is refreshing to note that Bonzo, a heavy player if there ever was one, could make do with placing his Paiste 22" or 24" medium ride on the standard Ludwig bass drum shell-mount holder, and could use the Ludwig *Atlas* line of hardware, which is quite modest compared to the amount of steel built around contemporary drumsets. Flanked by Paiste 18" (on his left) and 20" crashes, sometimes a 16" (further left), and 15" *Sound Edge* hi-hats, Bonham produced the patent sound. He augmented this arrangement with a timpani or two and a 38" gong. In the early years he used Remo *Ambassador* heads, or the Ludwig equivalent, and changed over to Ludwig *Silver Dots* or Remo black dots. Similarly, his choice of drumshells, while always Ludwig, changed from wood to *Vistalite* to stainless steel. He always got that Bonham sound, proving that it ain't the drum; it's the drummer. This is not to say that John Bonham was immune to a little drum fever. Carmine Appice tells it this way: "John was freaked out by the Vanilla Fudge albums. One of the things that really freaked Bonzo out was the drumset I had which, at the time, was two 26" bass drums, a 12 x 15 marching tom, a small tom-tom, a 16x18 tom, a 22" bass drum over on its side as the big tom, and a



6 1/2" snare. I mean, it totally freaked him out as it did a lot of the English drummers. He wanted the same drumset I had. I remember to this day calling up Ludwig and telling them about this group, Led Zeppelin, that I thought was going to be big, and that the drummer wanted a duplicate drumset. Six months later Vanilla Fudge and Led Zeppelin went out together on an equal bill, and we both had the same set of drums—the first maple wood set in rock 'n' roll." You can see pictures of this kit, minus the extra (and for Bonham superfluous) bass drum, in old editions of *The Ludwig Drummer*. This simple kit layout, in one reincarnation or another, perfectly suited Bonham's no-nonsense style.

To look at Bonham's style, we have to understand its musical environment. England by the mid-'60s was an absolute stronghold for certain forms of American music. It seemed to go two ways: First, there was mainstream pop, including all that surf music by the Beach Boys, Ventures, Jan & Dean; the English digested this and tossed it back to America in cute groups like Herman's Hermits, Gerry & the Pacemakers, and the Searchers. (For that matter, there were some who would have cleaned up the Yardbirds in such a way.) The other direction was fueled by the insatiable love for American jazz in any form—Dixie, bop, Miles, or the blues. English bands like the Graham Bond Organization incorporated elements from all of these.

John Bonham may not have owed much to the pop music of his day, but he did a careful study of the typical 12-bar blues, through close listening to original recordings and to Ginger Baker. By the time John Bonham joined his first pro group, Ginger Baker was something of a star in England. A marvelous timekeeper in the Phil Seaman matched-grip tradition, Ginger could play in any time signature and always punctuated with rude little surprises. John Bonham took to Baker's inherent straight-8th feel, to his urgent, open and ringy bass drum work, and to his flashy stage presence. Bonham recalled that "people hadn't taken much notice of drums really before Krupa. And Ginger Baker was responsible for the same thing in rock. Rock music had been around for a few years before Baker, but he was the first to come out with this 'new' attitude—that a drummer could be a forward musician in a rock band. . . . I thought [Ginger] was fantastic when he played with the Graham Bond Organization."

Ritchie Yorke talked to Bonham about his influences several times, noting that "he had an incredible respect for Ginger Baker's talents. There's no question about that. I don't think he was particularly impressed by any other

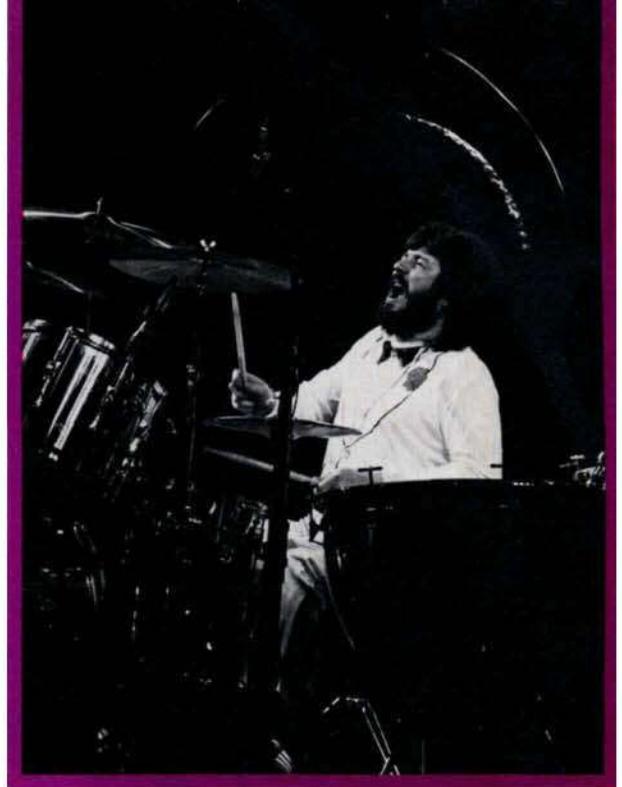


Photo by Vito Palmisano/Photo Reserve

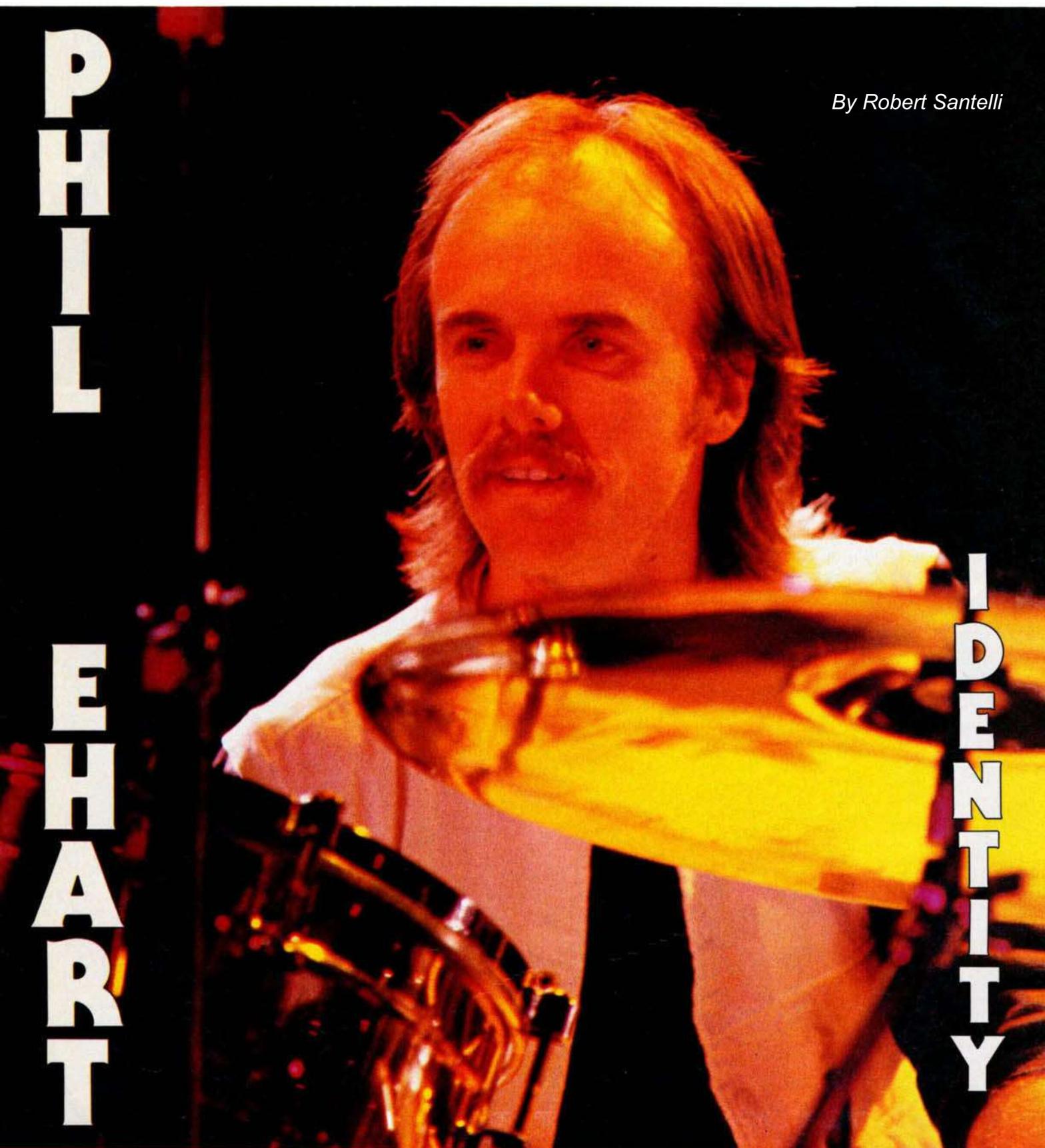
contemporary drummers who evolved in the post-Cream era."

Phil Carson spent many an evening at Bonham's house, listening to music on the family jukebox or stereo. "John had a very broad taste in music. He would listen to a lot of Motown music. Some of the '60s English groups he thought were very good. He particularly liked the Trogg's 'Wild Thing.'" Bonham reiterated his love for Motown music on many occasions and also expressed respect for the simple, fat sound of Al Jackson.

continued on page 46



Photo by Bob Gruen/Starfile



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By Robert Santelli

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Photo by Robert Santelli

THE very first thing you have to know about Phil Ehart, and perhaps the most important thing, is that he's incredibly modest—maybe a bit too modest, if that's possible. Consider the facts: Here's a guy who has been playing drums for the group Kansas for the past 12 years. Kansas, of course, is widely regarded as a somewhat progressive rock outfit, that is, one which includes classical strains to go with its rather sophisticated rock format.

When I ask Ehart about the complexities of Kansas' music in general, and his drumming in particular—especially the classical elements of it—he frowns a little, takes another bite of his sandwich backstage at the Meadowlands, and says rather plainly, "I fake a lot of the classical-sounding stuff I play." Get that right. When it comes to much of the classically slanted signatures, tempo shifts, and tight, snappy rolls heard in the music of Kansas, Phil Ehart fakes them. Well, anyway you look at it, you've got to admire a drummer who tells it like it is.

But is that really like it is? Let's put it this way: Phil Ehart is definitely not the type who needs his ego stroked every time he walks into a room, or for that matter, speaks into a tape recorder. Thus, when the opportunity arises to do just that, he pulls back—retreats. He says he fakes it. Now Ehart may be entirely self-taught with little or no knowledge of, say, reading charts. And Ehart might never have been classically influenced as a kid. But no one gets on for 12 years playing in a band that has sold millions of records, garnered eight gold and two platinum LPs and recorded such hits as "Dust In The Wind" and "Carry On Wayward Son" by faking it. What Ehart means to say, if you cut away the excessive amount of modesty, is that he plays much of the time by feel rather than with the expertise of a heavy-duty technician. Ehart might not have been the best drummer for the job on paper. But in the studio and up on the stage—where it counts—Ehart has performed his drum duties quite admirably, to say the least, regardless of his background.

There are a lot of things about Phil Ehart that seem to go against the grain. Ehart, for instance, not only resents the lack of respect too many drummers fall victim to, but he also does something about it. You know what I'm talking about: the drummer being the person in the back of the band buried behind a kit, acting merely as a timekeeper so the singer and lead guitarist can bathe in notoriety.

The way Ehart sees it, it's about time drummers step out of the shadows and take on a more direct role in the group infrastructure. According to Ehart, drummers need to be more assertive; they need to make an active effort to become more visible and more productive.

In the interview which follows, Ehart talks about how he accomplishes this within the framework of Kansas. He also recollects the early days of the group, presents his thoughts on drum solos and the importance of drum clinics, and has a bit of advice for drummers intent on strengthening their image.

RS: I recently went back and listened to all the Kansas albums in my record collection—LPs such as *Song For America*, *Leftoverture* and *Point Of No Return*. I must say I noticed that the drum sound on these records is quite different from what's heard on *Drastic Measures*, Kansas' latest record.

PE: It is a different sound. That's right. As a matter of fact, it's the most different drum sound I've ever come up with.

RS: Did you start out with that objective in mind?

PE: In a way I did, yeah. We used a large fairgrounds building in which to record; it had something like 30,000 square feet of space in it. We brought in a mobile unit and went after the big sound a place like that will give you. We even recorded some of the drums in the bathroom.

RS: Where is the building located?

PE: It's in Atlanta. It was built around 1919. We went there as a

sort of experiment; basically that's all it was. But that's not to say we were interested in breaking new frontiers in recording. [laughs]

RS: What was so intriguing about the drum sound you heard in the building?

PE: The sound you get in a room like that . . . well, it's very loud. Unbelievably loud is a better way of putting it, I think. I didn't do anything different as far as my playing went. But the approach was different and so, of course, was the sound I ultimately wound up with. It was a lot of fun and very educational.

RS: A lot of people, it seems, have somewhat of a difficult time pinpointing your drum style. There's a certain amount of eclecticism that flows through your playing. If you looked back, say, on the last ten years of your career, is there any one album that best represents your view of your drum style?

PE: I think I'd probably have to turn to *Leftoverture* or maybe even *Monolith*. See, the thing is, I'm just a rock drummer who happens to be in a band that plays in a lot of different time signatures with a lot of classical directions. That's what probably confuses people most. I don't blame them for being confused. But I never had any classical or really technical background. I'm just real good at faking it. I can make people *think* or assume that I have a lot more technical training than I actually do. I grew up and learned how to play my drums in bars and at proms and things like that. There was very little formal training in my past.

RS: Your father, I understand, made a career out of the service. You must have experienced quite a bit of picking up and moving from one base to the next. Did you find that an advantage or disadvantage in terms of learning your instrument?

PE: Basically it was a real pain. I lived in the Philippines for about two years when I was a kid. I must have been in fourth or fifth grade when I first started playing. My dad got me a snare drum from somewhere and arranged for me to take lessons from the drummer in the air force band. But as soon as we got rolling, the guy got transferred. It was that kind of thing which made having to bounce around every couple of years a frustrating thing for me. Actually, that was the last time I ever took a lesson. I guess you can say I'm totally self-taught, but definitely not out of choice. I wish I could have learned to read, but because of moving around so much, lessons would have never worked out.

RS: How old were you when you played your first professional gig?

PE: I think I was 16. I was making money; I bought my own drums and my own car. The band I played with at the time was a typical bar band from Topeka, Kansas. It was the usual bar-scene trip.

RS: How long was it from that point until you formed Kansas with Kerry Livgren and Dave Hope?

PE: Oh, about six years. I was 22 years old when Kansas came together. But even though Kansas started at that point, we still played bars for the next three years. In fact, we went to New York, recorded our first album, and the record company said, "Well, we'll release it when the time is right." So we went home and told our friends that the record would be out real soon. We must have told everyone in Topeka. Well, a year later it still hadn't come out. So we continued to play bars and clubs even though we already had a record deal and had already recorded an album. Finally, it was released.

RS: Why was it that way? Was it because Kansas was so far ahead of its time?

PE: You know what it was? It was the depression the industry felt in 1974. It was a real bad time for the record industry. The Kirshner label just couldn't afford to put the album out. I remember getting a phone call and the voice on the other end of the line telling me that 10,000 copies of the record had just been shipped. It was the best feeling in the world.

RS: How much support did you get from your family in the early days? Did your parents encourage you to play the drums?

Photo by Robert Santelli



PE: I would have to say yes. My parents were always behind me because they thought that, for a kid, playing drums was a very nice hobby. [laughs] They'd tell friends, "Phil's hobby is playing the drums. It keeps him off the streets and keeps him out of trouble. But of course when he's older, he'll get a real job."

RS: Sounds like a lot of parents of musicians.

PE: Yeah, it does. But I was down in New Orleans in 1969 playing at the New Orleans Pop Festival, which happened about two weeks after Woodstock. At the time I was in a band called White Clover. Anyway, after that gig—well, I hate to use the term "religious experience" because that connotes different things to different people—I knew that playing the drums was *exactly* what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. Sitting there in front of 30,000 people playing my drums gave me this incredible feeling. No way was drum playing a hobby for me.

RS: I remember the New Orleans Pop Festival. What was there, or what happened there, that led to this particular feeling? Was it simply the number of people listening to you play?

PE: That definitely had something to do with it. But mostly it was just playing in a band and getting tremendous satisfaction from it. And it just so happened to come to the surface for me at the festival. When I came home my parents expected me to enroll in college. Of course, I didn't do it. The reaction I got from them was something like, "What do you mean you're a professional drum-



Photo by Robert Santelli

mer?" I told them I had been playing for quite a long time at that point, and that it shouldn't have come as a major surprise to them. They just kept saying this thing about getting a "real job."

RS: What was the music scene like in Kansas when the group Kansas was playing the bar and club circuit there?

PE: You have to imagine the most unmusical environment ever. I hate to say this, because it kind of puts down the state, but it's a fact. It really is. On the whole, there's very little culture in Kansas. It's a farm state. People who live in the big city have trouble imagining that Topeka only has 100,000 people. We got all of our influences from the East Coast, the West Coast and from England. Whatever we heard on the radio is what we picked up. To form a group like Kansas in Kansas is really pretty crazy when you think about it. I mean, we were playing rodeos and biker bars. We took our music everywhere and developed a cult following of sorts. But we were pretty much alone. There were not too many other drummers around for me to hang with.

RS: What kind of bar band was Kansas?

PE: A terrible one. Kansas was a terrible club band. Kansas was the worst copy band ever. All we could play right was our own material. We finally got in the habit of announcing our songs as somebody else's. We would say, "Now we would like to do a song by Led Zeppelin" and do one of our own. It was the only way we could get away with it. People would go, "Wow! That's a great Led Zeppelin song!" It was a real battle, but a lot of fun.

RS: Let's switch gears a bit and talk about you in particular. You're very conscious of enhancing your identity as a drummer whenever you can. It seems to be a pretty big part of how you present yourself, be it on stage or off.

PE: A lot of things I talk about in my drum clinics deal with an identity as a drummer. Let's face it, the lead singer and the lead guitarist are constantly out front where everyone can see them. Most drummers, on the other hand, are buried behind large sets of drums. And no matter how good you are, you're still thought of as merely the drummer in the band. So what I've tried to do is stress that one shouldn't be content with that position. If you're in that position now and remain there, it's by your own choice. At least that's the way I see it. A lot of drummers I know in big-name groups are actually kind of the driving force behind the band in more ways than one. They may not necessarily be the brains behind it, but, for instance, a lot of the drummers who actually get involved are into the business aspect of the band.

RS: Can you give me an example of that with yourself and Kansas?

PE: I really got involved in our album covers, for one thing—album covers, artwork, titles. I'm a very image-conscious person. I'm real interested in pictures, posters, covers—the whole staging of the band. I do this, plus play drums in the band, which is demanding in itself. So I work hard to establish my own identity—my role. And then, of course, I do clinics which helps get me outside the typical role of the person behind the kit. I also do a lot of interviews. See, you can have as big an identity as you want. That's with not even being involved in songwriting. Get involved with that, learn another instrument, make yourself like Neil Peart, who writes lyrics, and there's absolutely no reason in the world why you can't establish yourself in a band, regardless of how big or small it is.

RS: What about drum solos? They also help create an identity, don't they?

PE: Drum solos definitely help. I would especially advocate solos for musicians playing in clubs and in the process of working their way up. There's no magic in a drum solo, believe me. But it's one of those things that can put pressure on you every night. If you're sitting behind your drumset, you have all your chops down and you have all the songs down, it can become boring for you and actually hold back your progress. A drum solo can be something that you look forward to every night. I'm not talking about using



gimmicks, but just playing things that challenge you as a drummer. It builds your own identity on stage. Instead of just being a musician behind a pile of drums, you get to become someone bigger than that.

RS: You consider yourself a rock drummer in the traditional sense of the term. Yet if one listens to Kansas and, more particularly, some of the things you've played over the years, it would seem to me that you've gone beyond the boundaries of standard rock drumming.

PE: Some of the more complex things I play *sound* more complex than they really are. I think, though, that some of those come across in the right way because, to be perfectly honest, I know my own limitations. I try not to waste time trying to be the drummer I'm not. I don't have a classical background. I don't even have a jazz background. I know how to play rock 'n' roll, so that's how I approach Kansas' music. Even if I *hear* something in my mind that sounds classical or jazz-oriented, I'll usually still play it in a rock framework because the contrast works out so great for the band. Sometimes, due to the material the band is recording, I'll have no choice but to play my drums with a classical feel. And I can fake it pretty well. But I think all drummers have to know their own limitations. The secret is listening to the final product and being able to say, "Well, I'm playing that beat behind the chord structure and that just doesn't work." You have to be hard on yourself and, most importantly, you have to be honest with yourself.

RS: Do the other members of Kansas express their feelings to you about the things you want to play and don't want to play?

PE: Oh yeah, sure. We have a good rapport, so we can beat up on each other pretty well and not have anyone take it the wrong way. If something doesn't work, no one in the band is afraid of saying to me, "Phew!"

RS: It seems that much of your drum style is derived from the way British rock drummers play rather than the way Americans do. Is that correct?

PE: Yeah, probably because the one drummer who has influenced me more than any other drummer is Ian Paice of Deep Purple. I ate, slept and showered Ian Paice and the way he played his drums for two or three years. This was during Deep Purple's heyday in the '70s. I just really enjoyed listening to that guy play. I think he has influenced other drummers, too.

RS: What was it about Paice's drumming that you admired?

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**"I'M NOT GOING TO
PLAY JUST
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WHAT I PLAY."**

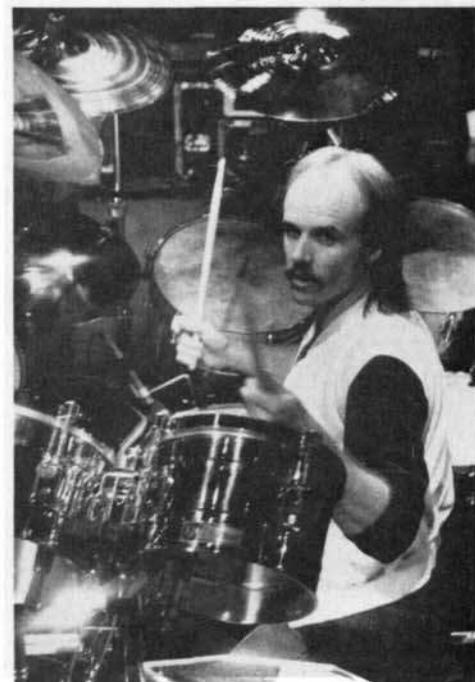


Photo by Robert Santelli

Simmons

WE passed an old picturesque cathedral with sprawling grounds as the cab took me to my destination in St. Albans, England. It seemed almost a contradiction that Abbey Mills, an impressive piece of architectural antiquity, housed the most revolutionary invention in drums ever, Simmons.

After a tour of the factory, we walked past a little brook where ducks quacked, to Ye Olde Fighting Cocks, the oldest operating pub in England, where I conducted probably the last interview about Simmons Drums that will have been held in that area. From the 8,000-square-foot rented space, they have bought their own austere, 25,000-square-foot building. It was a frightening proposition to mastermind Dave Simmons, but that's progress, and that's what Simmons Drums are all about.

This article was compiled at various times throughout the past few months. Because I met with Dave Simmons prior to the unveiling of the SDS7, we spoke of the kit most are familiar with at this point, the SDS5. Please keep that in mind as the conversation with Dave ensues. Glyn Thomas, the representative in America, helped bring us up to date with the more current products later.

Because they have infiltrated both the studio scene and the live situation, where drummers are using either a few Simmons pads as auxiliary tools to add to their already existing acoustic setup, or an entire Simmons kit in the place of their acoustic drums, most musicians are acquainted with the SDS5. The hexagonal surfaces are polycarbonate and the electronics will respond to the slightest tap. They set up conventionally on two stands which hold up to six drums, excluding the bass drum which stands independently and which is played with a conventional pedal.

The sounds one can obtain from the Simmons set seem to be endless. Imagine being able to have only one snare drum on stage and yet being able to get tight, loose, high- and low-pitched snare sounds in the course of a tune. On the toms, one can employ any combination of RotoToms, timpani or standard toms. The hi-hat, which is digital-analog, can be made more metallic or hissing, and while it looks like the other pads, it has a separate optically coupled pedal which controls the open and shut sounds. The cymbals, which are made of

the same material as the drums, are also digital-analog. The digital board is piggy-backed onto the normal Simmons board so the drummer has a choice. The bell and main portion of the cymbal are separated and mounted with small rubber shock mounts. You can get a "ding" sound by hitting the top, you can get a "shhh" sound by hitting the bottom, or you can obtain a mixture of the two.

When I first met Dave Simmons, I was surprised to see such a young man. With curly hair and wire-rim glasses, he looks a bit like an absentminded professor, but at 30 years old, he is the creator of an empire. He is a keyboard player who was always interested in music, but trained in electronics. His invention was launched at the end of September, 1982, and has boasted a no-endorsement policy. Financially, the business has boomed to selling 7 1/2-million dollars worth of drums every year in America alone.

As Sales Director Jeff Howorth said, while we were having a beer at the local pub, "Nobody has done anything for drummers in thousands and thousands of years, apart from making deep shells out of 7-ply and the next year for everybody to say they need to have thin shells. Then the following year there's the ultra-mega hardware. There's just so much you can do with a barrel and two dead animal skins strapped to either end, so when somebody actually did something for drummers, they grabbed it after the initial conservatism.

When Dave designed the SDS5, it was at a time when electronic drums had a terribly bad name. Once that time had passed, it was a quick rise to fame because there are many musicians who nobody has done anything for, while all their colleagues in bands—synthesizer and guitar players—have had technology pushed upon them for years and years."

DAVE SIMMONS

RF: Please go back to the beginning of how your brainstorm came about.

DS: Marrying music as a hobby and electronics as a career was very hard, and then making money at it was the hardest thing. We made sort of a Syndrum-version called the SDS3, which came out at the same time as the Syndrum. I had never seen a Syndrum, but it did have very similar features. When the Syndrum took off in the States, ours took off in England. At one stage, we

had 1,000 orders when our production was two a week. The SDS5 has been a natural progression from that. The hardest thing with the SDS5 is to convince drummers that it can actually do the job of an acoustic drumkit, which it can to a certain point, and for modern music it does the job.

RF: So you claim that it can actually replace acoustic drums?

DS: In many respects, yes. There are no two ways about it. Acoustic drums are a bit of a dinosaur, and eventually, they will disappear or go the same way as the acoustic piano as far as modern music and rock music are concerned. They have to. And people are replacing their acoustic drumkits with electronic drumkits, so it must be doing the job for them—or a different job. But it still produces the bass drum bottom end and keeps the band going with a snare drum, tom-toms, hi-hats and cymbals. It does the job of an acoustic drumkit. It's a matter of opinion whether it replaces one or not. But drummers can also add the Simmons to their acoustic kit if they want to. I've never been against that. You can play both and mix them up. I'm not in the business to limit people's horizons. All I can try to do is find out why people who are not using them, are not, and give them something they will use.

RF: What made you go further than the SDS3?

DS: Everybody wanted them for one sound. They're almost impossible to play as a drum. They're used as an effect because of various technical difficulties in trying to present the drummer with an acoustic head to hit, and then trying to get the electronics to read what's going on there. That was the limitation. You always had the limit of dynamic range in the sensitivity because of that. I decided to throw the acoustic head away and present the drum with a hard surface because the electronics can work with a hard surface. It gets very clean signals off it and you can get the dynamic content of the hit very easily. The electronics can therefore make up for the response that is missing from the drum. Once I made that decision, we improved the sound, but then it was a problem of convincing drummers that they didn't actually need a drumhead to hit. We still have that problem now—not so much in England, but I suspect that the States are a couple of years behind us.

Side Womans

by Robyn Flans



DAVE SIMMONS

wasn't here five years ago. It has happened very quickly. There is a great problem with digital sounds at the moment, though: They cannot respond the way a drummer wants a drum to respond. Analog sounds can still respond better. With the Simmons, when you hit the thing harder, lots of different things happen. The sounds get brighter, they get longer, there's more shift in frequency, and the pitch gets higher as well as louder. With a digital recording of a drum, you're stuck with what is there to start with. There will be a great change in digital sounds in the next year, where digital sounds will be the basis, but you'll be able to change them. You'll be able to add different harmonics; you'll be able to change the attack and decay—you name it; you'll be able to change it. I'm really not interested in producing a Steve Gadd drum sound for everybody. I want to produce something for people where if they want that sound, they can get it, but then they can change it to their own tastes. They can produce a drumkit that doesn't sound like a drumkit. Why does a drumkit have to sound like that? You tell me; I don't know. A piano sounds like a piano because of its construction—because it's made with strings, hammers and keys. You throw that away and put circuits in the place of the strings and you produce a new sound. If they're clever enough, they can also produce a piano sound, but it's the other things people want them for. Hopefully someone, one day, will go on stage with an electronic drumkit and the bass drum will be the high sound, the snare drum will be the low sound, and the tom-toms will be something completely different—six cats meowing or four dogs barking. The drummer will just click in the next song, or the next bar, or the next beat, and there will be a new sound. So the playing of the drumkit will become something completely different than keeping time or giving power. It can be that as well, but it should be something different. That's what I want to do with drums.

RF: Yet, most of your sales come from the States.

DS: Three quarters of our production is for the States now, purely because it's a bigger place.

RF: Some of the drummers say that the hard surface of the Simmons has wreaked havoc on their muscles.

DS: They're hitting too hard; they have to alter their playing. People are still using the butt end of the stick. The correct end of the stick is a lot easier. There's going to have to be some education. There are two ways of looking at it: One way is to say "It doesn't respond like my acoustic drums, but I'll carry on hitting like I always have done," or, "If I don't have to hit so hard, I can do other things with this drum that I can't do on an acoustic drum." Treat it like a different instrument, if you like, doing a similar job. Just modify the technique. You can either modify or stay the same. The choice is up to the individual.

RF: I know you had some really hard times getting the project off the ground.

DS: We had some hard times in the beginning, but never because of the product, only because of the environment of trying to produce the product. You have to convince drummers and you also have to convince financial people—people with money to back the product. They're even harder to convince than drummers. So the beginning period of trying to produce the drums for the demand was difficult. We went through a bankruptcy with the drums, but it was not the fault of the drums. The design is five years old, and it's taken until how to get them into the States.

RF: What made you see the necessity for something like this?

DS: It's a natural progression of trying to improve something until eventually, after a couple of years' work, something starts to work. It's not so much listening to drummers. If I listened in the first place, I certainly wouldn't have produced an electronic drumkit that worked because everybody I spoke to wanted something slightly different, like an acoustic drumkit that triggered something. They basically wanted an acoustic kit because of their experience, which is what they base their ideas on. I base my ideas on synthesis, which is what I've always been interested in. But to compete with keyboard synthesizers would have been difficult. I couldn't

have designed a keyboard synthesizer which would compete. I could make money with drums because it was wide open to do something—as long as it worked.

RF: Your original design was round.

DS: The *SDS3* had round, acoustic, 8" Premier drumskins. That was abandoned purely because we couldn't get sensitivity. As a nondrummer, I know what a drum should do. You tap it lightly and you get the sound. Until you get that, it's not working like a drum. Getting the sensitivity had to be the first thing. Then came curing the problems. It came down to the hard surface with a pickup mounted.

RF: Why the hexagonal shape?

DS: It's a nice shape, isn't it? It came about because we thought of how hexagonals could fit together. The original design didn't, in fact, have drum stands. That was one of my concessions to the drummer, in that I wanted it to be a very elegant type of thing—maybe mounted on one stand. In the end, we had to go to the standard drum mounting just for flexibility. Everybody wants to set them differently. So it actually ended up looking more "drummy" than we first envisaged.

I remember the first trade show we did with these drums. We had a big bass drum and these small 12" drums all the way around. Everyone who sat down was skeptical. Most people sat down, hit it and laughed out of shock and nervousness. Then the next comment would be, "Can't you make the high one smaller?" That made them feel more comfortable. I hate to think what would have happened if we had made them as small as they could be. A lot of people wanted them round and 12" deep because they felt more comfortable.

It's been a quiet revolution that I'm sure a lot of people would have liked to see go away. The easiest thing to do is try to ignore it. We've had to overcome that. But really, it's been the kids who have done it—the young musicians who are excited about all of it. They don't really want an acoustic sound out of it; they want it to be different.

RF: Why did you make the *SDS5* analog and not digital?

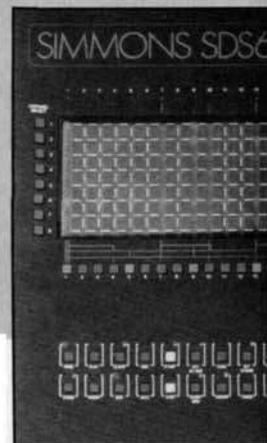
DS: You must remember that, when the drums came out, there wasn't any digital. The Linns weren't around, the *DMXs* weren't around and digital technology



SDS3



SDS5



GLYN THOMAS

Glyn Thomas was working for Pearl Drums when he met Dave Simmons, who was a tech repairing Arps. Even when Dave brought the SDS5 prototype down to Pearl headquarters, Glyn was unsure as to drummers' acceptance of this strange looking unit. But Glyn was finally convinced of the unit's viability and quit Pearl to work with Dave full time. In 1982, Glyn moved to the L.A. area to launch the drums in America and since that time he has become a valuable source of information for dealers and drummers.

RF: Glyn, please begin by detailing the SDS5, and then tell us about the most recent products and all their capabilities.

GT: The SDS5 is, of course, the kit we've been doing for the last six years. It is fully modular. It has a rack with slots for seven modules, or sound sources. The drummer can take them out, slot them in and change the format—two bass drums and five toms, no bass drums and seven toms, or whatever configuration someone wants. This model offers the bass drum, the snare drum, tom-toms, cymbal and hi-hat modules. It has four presets, three of which are

changeable and one that is the fixed factory preset. That retails for \$3,000.

RF: For those who had the SDS5 before the advent of the rubber heads, how much will it cost to upgrade their equipment with the new heads?

GT: It will cost around the same as a good drumhead. All the new kits will come standard with the rubber tops now, though.

RF: Continue on with the SDS8.

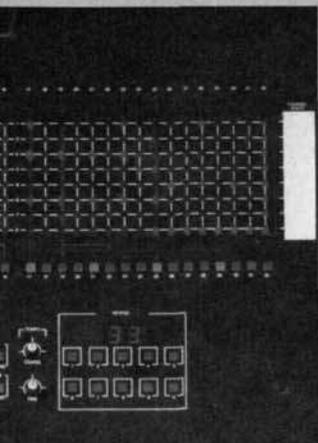
GT: The SDS8 is the budget kit, which is at a more affordable \$1,545. It has all the Simmons sounds in it, but to get that price tag, it is nonmodular. It all has to be on one board. It only comes as one configuration which is a bass drum, a snare drum and three tom-toms—a standard kit. It only has two changeable presets for sounds, but it has an added bonus: The drummer can change those presets with a little footswitch on the floor. When you're playing, you just need to kick to preset, and it changes from one to another. You can do it mid-number—halfway through a drum solo or whatever.

The SDS7 is the latest model and it retails for \$4,400. It is designed to give drummers anything and everything they could possibly want. It has a modular 12-piece rack so the drummer can have 12 drums, and the sound source is digital-analog: Each drum has a digital source and an analog source. The digital source will be set at the factory with a prerecorded digital sound that we've put in, but by the Chicago NAMM show in June we will have launched what is known in the trade as a "prom blowing kit." It is a facility for drummers to put their own sounds in the digital side. In other words, they could literally have their own drumkit at home, stick a mic' over the snare drum, hit it and send that signal into the prom of the snare drum of the SDS7. That sound becomes their own sound. The mind-blowing implications of that are that drummers can have their own acoustic drumkits at home which they love dearly, stick a mic' over all the drums individually, record them into the SDS7 digital side, and when they go out on gigs with their SDS7s, they have their acoustic kit in it as well. Along with that, they have the analog side of the Simmons,

so they can either have a pure digital sound—the drumkit as it sounded when they recorded it, which can't be changed—or they can switch over to the analog sounds which are the Simmons sounds. The beauty of this being digital-analog is that you have both separate, or a mixture of both where you can bend the digital sound and change the sounds.

We're giving the drummer 100 drumkits programmable: Each module is capable of storing 100 different sounds for every drum in the memory of the rack. A drummer can sit down with a bass drum, get a sound, and store it in the memory as sound one; another sound slightly higher in pitch and maybe longer in depth can be stored as sound two, and so on up to 100. It will be a pretty extraordinary drummer who will come up with 100 different drum sounds. It's overkill, but we know that, if we didn't have 100, there would be somebody who would come back and say, "Hey, why didn't you make it so we could get 100 sounds in there?" Those individual sounds can be paired together in the kit in combinations and stored in the memory as drumkit one, drumkit two, and so on up to 100 drumkits. We think that a usable number is about 16, so what we give the drummer along with this kit is a selector pad about the size of a briefcase. It has 16 small pressure-sensitive switches on it numbered one to 16, and you can hit them with a stick or with your hand. It will instantly recall that drumkit sound that you have programmed. You don't have to stop playing; you just tap the switch and it changes whenever you want it to.

The SDS7 has a RAM-pack memory-expansion kit built into the unit. Down the line, once you've programmed your sounds, if you want to keep them safe, you buy a RAM pack, which is a small 4x4 self-powered memory kit. You plug it into the back of the SDS7 and press a certain combination of keys specified in the manual. What you are doing is dumping the memory of all those drumkits into that little pack. It stays in the brain, but you send it out into the memory pack, which you un-



SDS6



SDS7



SDS8

plug and put away on the shelf. If ever your *SDS7* is stolen, broken, the memory breaks, or there is a failure of any kind, you won't lose your 100 sounds. As soon as the machine is mended and back in use, you can stick the pack back into the unit, press the same switches in reverse, and load the memory straight back in again. It is done in .4 of a second, so if you want to change one of the sounds, you can load it into the memory pack quickly. It also has other little things. If you're in L.A., you are called for a session in New York and the studio has an *SDS7*, you don't need to take your drumkit at all. You just take your RAM pack with you and load it into their *SDS7*.

It is also MIDI. MIDI is an organization with the objective of making all the different manufactured synthesizers be able to "shake hands" with each other. Should there be three keyboards in the band and a drummer with a Simmons, and they want to link them all together to run them on a clock, it is easy now. Two years ago, interfacing all those with one another would have involved a complicated array of things which would have cost thousands of dollars. Now there is an industry standard which involves a little bit of circuitry inside each unit and when you put five Synths together of different makes, but which are all MIDI, they can all plug into each other.

The *SDS6* is the sequencer basically designed to trigger Simmons. It's not designed to do anything else; it has no sound source. A lot of people think it's like the Linn and other drum machines, but it only consists of triggers which are hooked up to the brain of the *SDS8*, 7 or 5, and the drummer programs the drum part. We released the sequencer too early, though. It really wasn't right. The main problem with

it was that England operates on 240 volts and there is very little voltage fluctuation. Here in the States, the voltage varies: 110 can peak to 125 and drop as low as 99. What Dave put on board was a voltage spike protector which just wasn't adequate to cope with that. For example, if someone programmed all the memory into the sequencer and the supermarket next door switched on all the refrigerators, a spike would come up through a line. The poor sequencer would get such a shock through its backside that it would come up on the screen as EE, which means it lost its memory. Dave flew over, analyzed the problem, and said to recall all the sequencers. In the meanwhile, I found out about MIDI, so it worked out for the best. While Dave had all the sequencers, he updated them so they would all come back MIDI.

RF: What are the basics needed to make the Simmons work at home?

GT: Basically, at first, drummers don't really need anything. They can go home and plug the *SDS8* into their own stereo systems. They plug it into the input of the stereo and play it through the stereo speakers. The best thing for drummers to do is buy a \$25 pair of powered headphones, which will make everyone in the house happy as well. Also, a gigging drummer can practice in an apartment now without disturbing the neighbors. When drummers want to take it out in the bands they've joined, they have to have amplification. If the band is carrying its own PA, they can go directly from the drumkit into the PA with one line. If the band doesn't have a PA, we recommend that the drummer carry a good keyboard amp—not a guitar amp. At worst, carry a bass amp, which has the power at the bottom end to cope with the bass drum, but it makes the snare

drum sound a bit wooly. A keyboard amp is the best because it has the same sort of upper and lower transience that a drumkit requires.

RF: When you and I first talked, you said Simmons should be used as an auxiliary piece of equipment, not to replace acoustic drums, but when I spoke with Dave in England, he said the opposite.

GT: Dave and I have always disagreed on this. I would never go down in print as saying the *SDS5* is to replace acoustic drums. I will go down in print saying that with the *SDS7* we are aiming at the drum market, and I will say that the *SDS7* is meant to make acoustic drums obsolete. Dave is a keyboard player and I am a drummer, so in truth, I could never be quite as forceful as Dave was about the *SDS5*. Being a purely analog sound, it would be like saying a guitar player could never go on stage with an acoustic guitar. There are certain numbers that sound better with an acoustic guitar. With the *SDS7*, though, a drummer can give the audience everything. With the digital side, drummers have their pure recorded acoustic drumsets. The bonus is that even if you take the nicest acoustic drumkit in the world, when you hit the bass drum, the snares will rattle. When you hit one tom, the next one will sing a little bit in sympathy. On the digital side of the *SDS7*, you get all of the sounds of that drumkit, but you get perfect separation. There is no interaction between the drums.

RF: What about the dynamics?

GT: There are more dynamics now because of the new rubber surfaces. Obviously it's getting closer to the real feel of an acoustic drum. Drummers have got to think like keyboard players and guitarists. If that's the surface they've got to work with, then they've got to adapt to it. You don't hear keyboard players saying, "I

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Louis Hayes

by Lee Jeske

WHEN one thinks of the great jazz cities, the first names that come to mind are New Orleans, Chicago, Kansas City, and New York. The name Detroit tends to conjure up images of Cadillacs, Motown singing groups, Lions and Tigers (and Redwings, oh my), before it brings jazz to mind. Yet in the 1940s and '50s Detroit was the breeding ground for an extraordinary number of young jazz musicians. Pepper Adams, Milt Jackson, Tommy Flanagan, Hank, Elvin and Thad Jones, Betty Carter, Barry Harris, Curtis Fuller, Donald Byrd, Kenny Burrell, Lucky Thompson, Yusef Lateef, Sheila Jordan, Oliver Jackson, Roland Hanna, Ron Carter, Paul Chambers, Billy Mitchell, Julius Watkins, and Louis Hayes are just a few of the many bebop-inspired musicians who motored out of Detroit to careers of international importance.

"You know the musicians were really on a high level around Detroit at that time," says Louis Hayes with a typical understatement. "They were on such a high level that, when musicians came from New York to Detroit for gigs, after they had finished their jobs they were asked to come to this place where the local players were waiting for them. During that time it was very competitive, and cutting people and all that was really in style. I mean, your life was on the line.

"I was a little younger than most of the musicians at that time, and I was afraid to play around them—people like Paul Chambers, Yusef Lateef, and Barry Harris. I used to come and sit and listen to them, but they didn't even know I played drums. I would never even *attempt* to play drums around them. But around my comrades, I was a star."

The home in which Louis Hayes grew up had no less a heady musical atmosphere than the city itself. "My father, whose name is also Louis Hayes, played piano and drums professionally when *he* was a youngster, but he stopped when the depression set in. So the piano and drums were in the house when I was growing up. And I was listening to Duke Ellington,

Count Basie, Art Tatum and all of them when I was a little kid. I heard it whether I liked it or not; when I wanted to listen to special programs on the radio—*Inner Sanctum* and that kind of stuff—I had to cut it off because my father wanted to hear something else. So he started me out playing; I started playing piano when I was five and I started playing drums when I was ten. My father taught me as much as he could and then I started taking lessons from my cousin. His name was Clarence Stamp and he was an *excellent* drummer. I learned a lot from him. I think it's a thing where if you have it already inside of you to a point, and if you work on it—and you really have to work on it—then it comes naturally. So I really worked on it with Clarence and I learned a lot from him; I learned the basics when I was very young—how to read, brushwork, everything—so by the time I got to be 14 or 15 I could really play pretty well."

Under the guiding wing of bassist Ernie Farrow, nine years Louis' senior (Hayes was born in 1937), Louis Hayes began haunting—strictly as a listener—the jazz clubs and record stores of Detroit. "Ernie got me listening to Kenny Clarke during this time. I had a lot of respect for Ernie Farrow so I listened to Kenny Clarke really well. I mean, I listened my buns off; I was paying attention. And that's how I developed my cymbal beat, listening to Kenny Clarke so much. On my own I heard Max Roach on records and I really liked his mind. He has a very intelligent mind on the drums. I really tuned into Max for solos. Those two people were my basic influences."

Young Louis spent some time at the Wurlitzer School of Music in Detroit but, as he put it, "I started moving so fast that in 1955 I started traveling. I went to Florida with a guy named Sax Carey and I had my own groups in a couple of teenage clubs: the club Sedan and the Club Tropicano. We were playing bebop—the only thing I had ever played in my life. People started calling me up and my mother had to take me to the jobs, you know. I remem-

ber one time somebody called me up and I went to the job. These guys had a washboard, and a tub with a stick and a string for the bass. I couldn't believe it but, being about 16 or 17 years old, I dealt with it. I even ended up stranded with a group in Birmingham, Alabama. We were touring and it got messed up. I worked a lot as a youngster."

Beyond the "teenage clubs," one had to be 21 to work in Detroit nightclubs. This did not stop young Louis Hayes, who began working with an organist in a club where his age never came into question. As a matter of fact, he says, "The club owner and I had a relationship going on; he really liked me. Yusef Lateef wanted a job there. The club owner told Yusef he could have the job, but he had to take me with it. So Yusef came over to my house—he didn't know me at all, naturally, because he was much older—and he said, 'Okay, you've got the job, but you're on a six-week trial.' That was great with me. Ernie Farrow was playing bass, Curtis Fuller was playing trombone, Hugh Lawson was playing piano, I was playing drums, and Yusef was playing saxophones and other things. We had *the* group in Detroit; we had *the spot*. I stayed there for at least six months before they found out that I was a little youngster. This was at the end of 1955, when I was 18. When he found out how old I was, the club owner said he had to let me go because his stuff was in jeopardy, but I got great experience working with that group."

Louis bounced around for the next few months until a jam session in an after-hours club resulted in the phone call that would bring him east. Many of the top Detroit players had left in the middle '50s for the greener pastures of New York. Two of them, Kenny Burrell and Doug Watkins, came back to Detroit after a year and found themselves playing with Louis Hayes.

"We had so much fun playing together," recalled Louis, "that when they got back to New York they told Horace Silver, who had just left Art Blakey and was starting his first group, 'You've got to get

Putting Things Together





Photo by Alison Perry

that baby boy out of Detroit.' When Horace called, I was so surprised that I couldn't believe it was really him. He sent for me and I came here to New York in August of '56."

The Horace Silver Quintet—Silver, piano; Hank Mobley, tenor sax; and three Detroiters: Donald Byrd, trumpet; Doug Watkins, bass; and Louis Hayes—debuted on *Six Pieces Of Silver* (Blue Note 1539) and quickly established itself as one of the seminal bands of the "hard bop" movement (which later became known as "soul jazz," among other things). In the three years Louis Hayes hung in with Silver, Art Farmer, Clifford Jordan, Blue Mitchell and Junior Cook passed through the group.

The second half of the 1950s was something of a golden age in the recorded history of jazz. Labels like Blue Note, Prestige, Riverside, and Savoy were recording

records by the score: usually small bands and pickup groups that were assembled in the studio. The records were made on a shoestring budget, the rehearsal time was negligible, the entire project was wrapped up in an afternoon, and the players got paid in cash. Like the old studio system in Hollywood, the records were churned out, but frequently there were classics among the flotsam and jetsam. The Silver Quintet was hot, Louis Hayes' free-ranging, though tightly controlled, trapwork was gaining attention, and, as he put it, "During that time making records was the easiest thing you could do around New York. I made so many records with different people during that time that I can't even recall all of them."

There were sessions with John Coltrane, Cecil Taylor, Clifford Jordan, Kenny Dorham and many others during those years. Louis Hayes literally came of age in

the recording studios of New York (and Rudy Van Gelder's nearby New Jersey haven). Around this time there were a lot of comparisons made between Hayes' drumming and that of Philly Joe Jones, which is something Louis acknowledges.

"I got to know Philly Joe after I came to New York. I was young and Philly Joe liked me. We were hanging out all the time together. We were buddies, really hanging out. So I was around him all the time. And he did influence me to a point during that time. I never studied with him. I never took any drum lessons from him or anything like that, but I was around him so much that I absorbed some of Joe."

It took another jam session to get Louis Hayes to change gigs. "It was a Monday night at Birdland in 1959," he recalls. "I was working with Hank Mobley, Booker Little, Bobby Timmons and Sam Jones. We had a great time, and after the job Sam told me, 'Cannonball Adderley is starting a group. I sure would like you to come on, since we play so well together.' Now, I really liked Horace and our relationship was right in there; it was a great relationship. I loved the music and we were working enough, but I was young and I was ready to try a different thing."

Musically, the Cannonball Adderley band was far from a different thing. Adderley, having just left the classic Miles Davis Sextet, put together a unit that fell right into the Horace Silver/Art Blakey school of hard bop: Cannonball on alto, little brother Nat Adderley on cornet, Bobby Timmons on piano, Sam Jones on bass, and Louis Hayes on drums. The group debuted at the end of 1959 and was an immediate success in the days between the original rock 'n' rollers and the British Invasion. Jazz was very much in; work and media attention were plentiful; records were made by the batchful. Cannonball Adderley became something of a star.

"Cannonball was a very smart human being," recalls Hayes. "He was very relaxed, very intelligent, and he had everybody contribute to the music. He picked out his personnel, and he knew how to get people who would make his stuff work right. The band became very hot. We were working all the time all over the world. Cannonball was a hit; the band was a hit. See, Cannon could speak well, too. He liked to talk, and people liked that. Plus he got us involved in a lot of different projects—things with Wes Montgomery and Nancy Wilson. That was *the* band."

One of the advantages Louis had, in both the Silver and Adderley groups, was that he was there from the outset. He was the guy who *set* the drum sound for two of the most popular leaders of the time. "I had total freedom with those groups," he says. "During all my years with Horace and Cannon, there was never anything like reading music for me. It was, 'Louis, this is the way it goes. Now you put it together

Photo by Alison Perry

Photo by Alison Perry

because you can put it together better than I can. Play what you want to play.' They just gave me the format and I did the rest."

Louis Hayes spent six years with Cannonball Adderley. The records the band made hold up amazingly well today. The group *cooked*, pure and simple. Nat Adderley, Sam Jones and Louis were there throughout; the piano bench changed from Timmons to Barry Harris and, finally, to Joe Zawinul, who remained for nearly a decade. The band was eventually augmented by Yusef Lateef and, later, Charles Lloyd. The band was tight, but the feeling was loose and flowing.

During those years there was still time for the odd record date with Freddie Hubbard, Kenny Drew, Phineas Newborn, and others, including Louis' first date as a leader. "I was working at the Apollo with Cannonball," he says. "Sid McCoy, who was the biggest jazz disc jockey in Chicago at that time really liked me and wanted to produce a record with me as a leader. One night during this week at the Apollo, after playing from about 12:00 in the afternoon to 12:00 at night, we went into the studio for Vee Jay Records: me, Barry Harris, Nat Adderley, Sam Jones, and Yusef Lateef. That was in 1962 or '63."

Louis Hayes left Cannonball Adderley in 1965 when, he says, "The music started changing. It started getting into more of 'today's music'—sort of going with the system. I was still young and I didn't want to go along with the system to a point, you know. I wanted to make a switch."

This should be the place in the narrative where we introduce the Louis Hayes Quintet. After all, at the age of 28 with a sturdy reputation behind him, and after nine years on the hard-bop trail with two fairly steady bands, it would seem only natural that Louis Hayes would here amalgamate his experience and knowledge into a band of his own. It wasn't to be. "People were



trying to get me to get my own group after I left Cannonball," he says. "People were saying, 'Louis, get your own band. Right now, you don't need to play with nobody.' I had a reputation after doing all that stuff. But I really didn't want to have my own band during that particular time. I was ready musically, but my head just wasn't there. In a way, I wish I had started a band then, because I'd be just a little further ahead. I ended up doing it eventually anyway."

What he did do was make a right turn from the hard-nosed bop sounds which he had been playing all his life and accept an offer to replace Ed Thigpen in the Oscar Peterson Trio. Oscar Peterson? "That was a different twist altogether," says Louis

with a smile. "I fit in, but there were definitely some adjustments to make. With both of the other bands, I was the original person, so I was used to being totally free. Ed Thigpen was there for six years before I joined, so Oscar had a format. See, Oscar plays so much on the piano; he's fantastic, but he never lightens up. And we had these arrangements that were very involved. As a drummer, the adjustments I had to make weren't physical as much as using my mind, remembering arrangements and using a lot more finesse. I got a chance to use a lot of brushwork, too."

Louis worked with Oscar Peterson on and off for about five years, until, as he puts it, "It was just time to make a move. Oscar does exactly what he wants to do. With Oscar you have to accompany him and that, for a free spirit like I am, is very difficult to do. So we both got to the point where we had to make a change—a change that was for the best."

One thing that can be said about Louis Hayes' choice of jobs up to this point is that he never found time to scuffle. During the lean years of the '60s—dog days for many jazz musicians—Louis Hayes put in time with two of the steadiest ships on the jazz sea: Cannonball Adderley and Oscar Peterson. When musicians were scuffling for gigs, taking demeaning day jobs or relocating to Europe, Louis Hayes was working. It may have cost him slightly in terms of recognition as *Louis Hayes*, but it paid the bills.

Over the years, during vacations and times when Horace, Cannonball or Oscar were off the road, Hayes continued to involve himself with a steady stream of freelance record dates. He also stated that he had a regular working relationship with

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"WHEN I MAKE A RECORD, I HAVE EVERYTHING PLANNED . . . THERE ARE NO MISTAKES."

RASHIED

RASHIED Ali (Robert Patterson, Jr.) was born in Philadelphia on July 1, 1935. Well known in New York avant-garde circles by 1963, he came to international prominence as John Coltrane's last full-time drummer, from 1965 until the master's death in 1967. Following a brief stay in Europe during 1967 and 1968, Rashied resettled in New York, where he performed and recorded with Alice Coltrane, Jackie McLean, Bud Powell, Sonny Rollins, and others.

In recent years, as a leader and as a sideman, Rashied has appeared on both sides of the Atlantic in a variety of settings: the trio Afro Algonquin led by the Rozie brothers (Lee on reeds and percussion, Rick on bass), the danceable Funky-freeboppers (Zane Massey, tenor; Roy Campbell, trumpet; Sonelius Smith, electric piano; Martin Aubert, Marcus Fiorillo, or Arthur Rhames, guitar; Richard Williams, acoustic and electric basses), the duo with saxophonist-guitarist Rhames (of their performance at the 1981 Willisau Jazz Festival in Switzerland, Mark Theiler of the Luzern Tagblatt wrote, "Rashied Ali played with such fast, thick sounds that it was difficult to believe there was a duo on stage"), and groups with violinist Billy Bang, reedmen Sonny Fortune and Odeon Pope, bassist Calvin Hill, and others. In 1984 Rashied was in the studio with the Saheb Sarbib Quintet for Soul Note Records. Moonflight is Rashied's newest release on his own Survival label.

Rashied's methods of preparing and striking his instruments are somewhat unorthodox: He seems to rely little on the natural rebound of the surfaces and jabs at his cymbals with quick, delicate strokes, usually clutching the stick intently with all his fingers. His drums are muffled well beyond accepted "jazz" standards, and his cymbals are tightened to the stands at a deep slant so that they do not swing freely. (This last practice, incidentally, works in Rashied's favor because he seeks a dark, understated tone quality in his cymbals and strikes them carefully; whereas the method is generally criticized by cymbal experts because it hinders the vibration of the cymbals and increases the danger of cracking them, Ali points out that he himself has never cracked a cymbal.) Rashied's Slingerland white gloss drumset consists of a 6 1/2 x 14 metal snare drum; a

14 x 18 wood bass drum; 8 x 12, 9 x 13, 14 x 14, and 16 x 16 wood tom-toms; and assorted Avedis Zildjian cymbals, discussed below. (Recently I have seen Rashied smiling from behind a new set of Sonors.) He uses a small nylon-tipped stick such as a Regal Tip 7A.

The feel of Rashied's pulse is very much on top of the beat and highly intuitive. He will contrast turbulent bass drum figures and uproarious multi-cymbal washes with fills that consist of casual, sometimes barely audible, roll patterns, in a way that suggests the natural, rather than the regulated, passage of time—always as though the listener has just opened the door onto a concert of music already in progress. I spoke with Rashied Ali in Washington, D.C., while he was appearing with his quartet at D. C. Space.

HH: Let's begin by discussing your background and training as a drummer.

RA: Well, I was really young when I started with the drums. Let's see, I started playing congas first. I think my father got me a set of congas when I was about nine, and I played them for a while, until I was about 16. Then I went into the army. They didn't have a place for congas in the band, but I ran into a sergeant named Clarence Brown who liked me a lot, and he knew I didn't dig working in the fields, so he pulled some strings to get me into the band. He told me he would teach me how to play the bass drum so I could learn the parts for the marching band. He started turning me on to charts and reading percussion music. That's how I got into it, and I went from there into traps.

HH: Were you playing jazz before this time?

RA: Well, not before I went into the service. I was listening to it. I mean, my father is a jazz fan, and my mother is a singer, so I was exposed to jazz all my life. I'd been playing and listening through records, and while going to school I saw people like Charlie Parker. I saw all the greats playing at theaters in Philadelphia. So I had a pretty thorough background in listening to jazz and being around it. My mother used to keep me up on all the latest tunes.

HH: You didn't move to New York right after the army?

RA: No, I played in Philadelphia for years after I got out of the service. I got out in '55, and I was really anxious to play, so I

started playing with a lot of rock bands around the city, more or less learning the drumset. I played with bands like Dick Hart & the Heartaches, Big Maybelle, and Lin Holt—people like that, sort of like that rhythm & blues, rock type of thing. I played that around Philly for a few years. Then I started working with jazz musicians around there; I played with most all of the cats—the Heath brothers, McCoy Tyner, Lee Morgan, Don Patterson, Jimmy Smith. Living in Philly, so close to New York, I had been going to New York all the time anyway for a weekend, five days, a month—as long as I had enough money to keep me. I finally decided just to move there permanently. I got there and in a couple of days I was working with Don Cherry and Pharoah Sanders in a heavy group downtown. It was a place that was there about a year, on MacDougal Street right between Washington and Third, but I can't think of the name. It was a beatnik type of coffee shop—they didn't have a liquor license—where they served doughnuts and stuff like that. In fact, a lot of groups played in there; I did later with Paul Bley. We played this club for about four or five months, which really gave me a niche. After those few months I started working with different people: Paul Bley was the next gig, then Bill Dixon, Archie Shepp, and it just kept going, until I finally got a gig with 'Trane. That lasted for about two years.

HH: And you began it playing alongside Elvin Jones.

RA: Yeah, for the first six months or so we played together. Then Elvin left the band out in California, and McCoy Tyner did too. Alice Coltrane came in his place, and Killer Ray Appleton came in Elvin's place while we were in California. Then we left California and went to Chicago where we picked up a drummer named Jack DeJohnette. Then we went to Philadelphia and we got my brothers Muhammad and Omar Ali on drums and congas. They lasted in the band for about two gigs. Then we had Algie DeWitt playing bata drum. John started cutting down on the band, and finally got it down to just four people: Alice, himself, myself, and Jimmy Garrison. We did a lot of recordings like that; we didn't do much playing because he was kind of sick in those days. But it worked out okay. Musically he finally found out what he wanted to do, and he had broken it

ALI

The Will To Survive

by Harold Howland

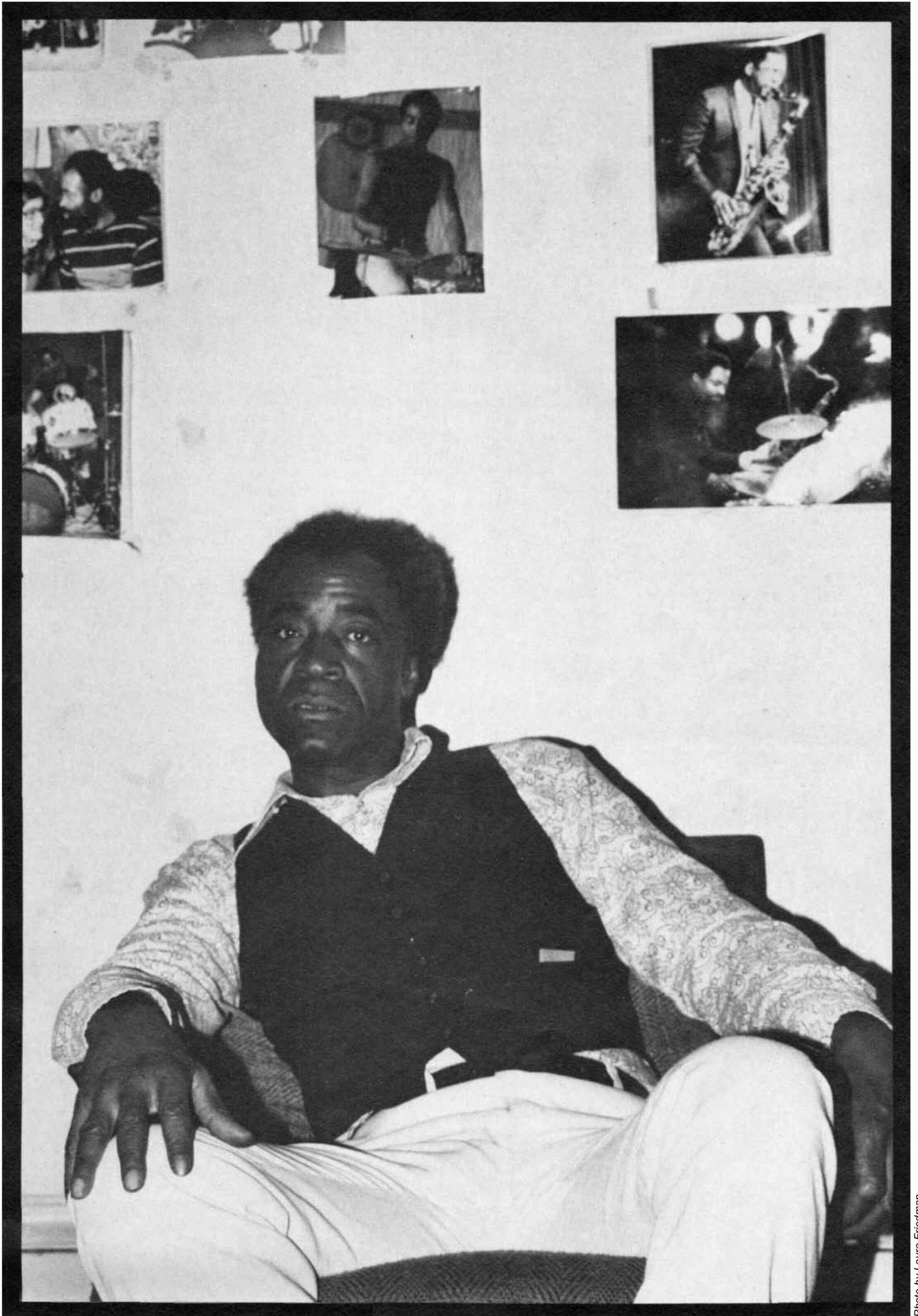


Photo by Laura Friedman



Photo by Laura Friedman

down to the kind of band that he wanted. A lot of recordings are still coming out: We did duos, trios, quartets, quintets; sometimes Pharoah would play on a couple of them. Then we did a trio with just 'Trane, McCoy and myself which is not out yet. In fact, all of his stuff that he did in those last years was recorded, so there is a lot of stuff yet to come out from that band.

HH: Did you have formal drum instruction in the early years?

RA: Well, I'm mainly self-taught, but I studied extensively with Philly Joe Jones when I first got out of the service. He was

playing with Miles Davis at the time—him and 'Trane both. I knew a friend from Philadelphia named Bubbles Ross, who was a really great drummer, I thought. He used to sort of be Philly Joe's teacher, because Bubbles is an older drummer. They were friends, and they learned from each other. Bubbles taught me a lot of things: how to hold my hands, how to get around the drums from left to right without overcrossing, how to use the left this way and the right this way . . .

HH: Yes, you play time on the cymbals with either hand.

RA: And then he turned me on to the matched grip, which I finally just got together, to be able to play both ways. I do things with both hands anyway, and he just showed me how to play with both hands. He found that I could write with my left hand and do other things the same as I could with my right. And then he told me that I should deal with Philly, so he introduced me to Philly Joe Jones. Well, it was really weird, man, because I wanted to study with him so badly that I just cut out and went to England because Philly Joe had gone to England. I stayed over there with him for about three months, and every day we would write music and band charts, and play rudiments on practice pads. Philly Joe Jones was very instrumental in things that I do now.

HH: He was the last drummer with whom you actually sat down and took instruction?

RA: To study, yeah. Papa Jo Jones, too, though—I studied with him when I came to New York because I wanted to learn how to play the sock cymbal, and he was the best sock cymbal player that I'd ever

seen in my life. So I studied with him, along with his son, Jo, Jr., for about a year. He was trying to show me a lot of things, but I was more interested in the hi-hat thing that he was doing, and that I think I copped. I split my finger up because I was doing it wrong. I got five stitches in this finger while learning, but I got it together. That's why I went to him. I was using the stick with all four fingers, and he showed me how to use just two so I didn't have so much exposed.

HH: You were learning to play the cymbals from both sides.

RA: Yeah, fanning and so forth. I was ripping up my hands because I didn't know what I was doing.

HH: When Max Roach does it, his fingers are so close to the cymbals and are moving so fast that it almost makes one nervous.

RA: Yeah, but Max got it together because Papa Jo turned him on, too. Papa Jo turned a lot of cats on to that cymbal. Of course, I played with Elvin Jones for about six or seven months and watched him play with 'Trane, so I got a lot just from watching. And Max Roach and Art Blakey—I didn't actually sit down and study with those guys. I was just listening to their records and watching them closely when I saw them play.

HH: Would you say that they're your most important influences?

RA: Those cats are definitely a main influence, but just an influence; right now I don't really play like them. I mean, you might hear a familiar lick, like a Philly Joe Jones lick, every now and then, which is deep in my system, but I try not to be repetitious. I will do anything. I don't like to sound like I'm playing the same licks all night, so I will make any sacrifice to play something different, like come off the wall or scream at the drum—anything just to get a different sound.

HH: What were your impressions of the European music scene?

RA: When I went to Europe I was really down, you know? 'Trane had just died, and I kind of felt weird because I knew it was going to be hard for me to get work; a lot of people were putting 'Trane down for hiring me in the first place. So I cut out a couple of months after he died. He died in the summer, and I split that fall or early winter. I went to Europe and stayed there for about three months; that's when I studied with Philly Joe, too. But before I hooked up with Joe in England I went all the way to Copenhagen. That was in '67, so I think it's changed a lot now, because when I got there I didn't have much trouble. Right away I got a gig in this place called the Club Montmartre; I just showed my face there, and they said, "Rashied Ali!" which was weird, because I hadn't been playing with 'Trane that long. That shows you how up on things those Europeans are; they knew me—knew all about me. So I got a gig there with John Tchicai;

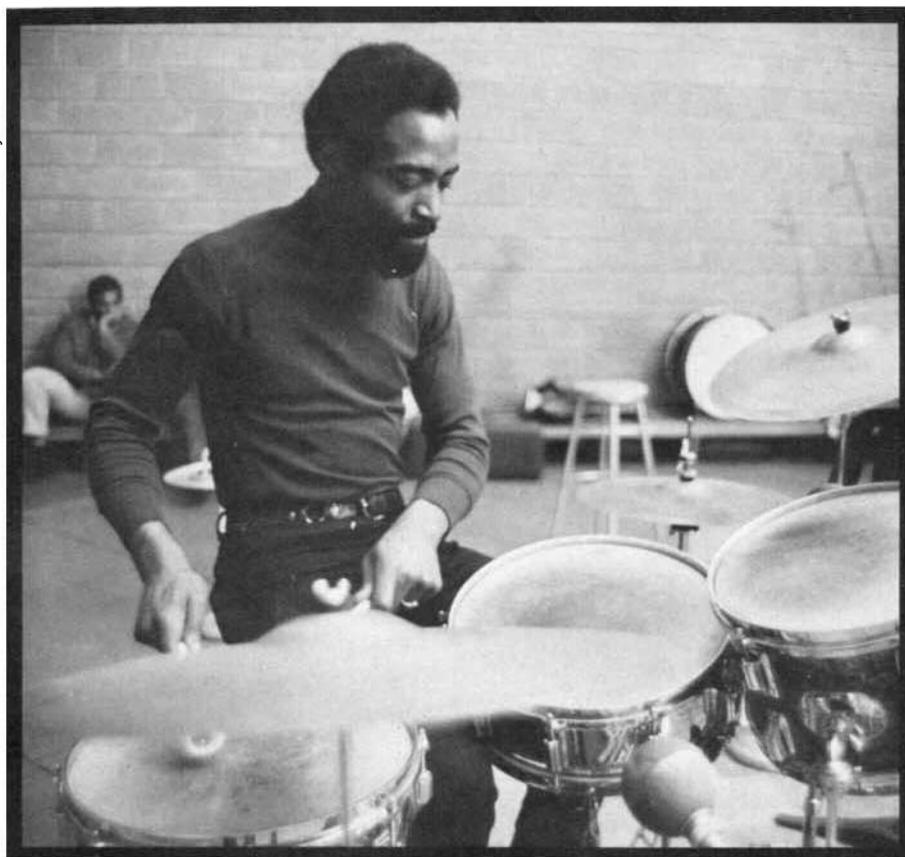


Photo by Charles Stewart

Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen, bassist; and a trumpet player—no piano. I played that club, I did a TV show, radio show, and I took that group to Germany and Sweden. After the Sweden gig, it broke up—that was after about a month—and then I went to England. I didn't go to Paris because. . . well, at that time I was getting paranoid; I wanted to get back home. First of all, I was alone, you know? I didn't feel so comfortable in Europe. It was cold, too—unbelievably cold up there in the wintertime. And so I started heading back home, because I had this concert at Carnegie Hall with Alice Coltrane that I wanted to get back to in the early spring anyway. So I went to England instead of going to Paris, and I got there with Dave Holland and John Surman—before Dave went with Miles Davis. In fact, I think that's where Dave got the gig with Miles, because Miles was in the audience when we were playing over there. What's that club there?

HH: Ronnie Scott's?

RA: Ronnie Scott's place. Well, the way I got that gig there was, Jon Hendricks was playing a single, and his drummer didn't show. He said, "Hey, man, you're Rashied, right?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "I'm uptight; I don't have a drummer. Do you play bebop? I know you're a free drummer." I said, "Yeah, man, I'll play it." So I worked there for two weeks with him. Scott dug what I was doing, and he asked me to bring a band in, but he didn't dig what I was doing with the band, because I came in playing all the other different stuff. It was a pretty weird week, although we had people there. Ronnie Scott wasn't too much for that kind of music. We were supposed to do two weeks, but we only lasted for one. That was the trio with Dave Holland and John Surman. Right after that gig I came back to New York. Since '79 I've been to Europe at least twice every year; it's happening more now.

HH: Is it more appealing to you personally now?

RA: Kind of yes and kind of no, but I feel it's going to be better very soon because I've got some good people really interested. I'm kind of lax on getting people interested in me; it seems like it's hard to talk people into that. But I've got the credentials, and now somebody is doing the dealing for me. I think it's going to work out pretty cool. It's difficult to sell yourself to people in different situations. When somebody else is saying, "Hey, this cat is dynamite; he can do this and that," it sounds a little better.

HH: Tell me about the New York Jazz Musicians' Festival that you are said to have formed.

RA: Well, I didn't really form it myself; it was a collective effort from a lot of the musicians in New York at the time. That was the first year George Wein was bringing his festival to New York [1972], and we felt intimidated that he would have the audac-

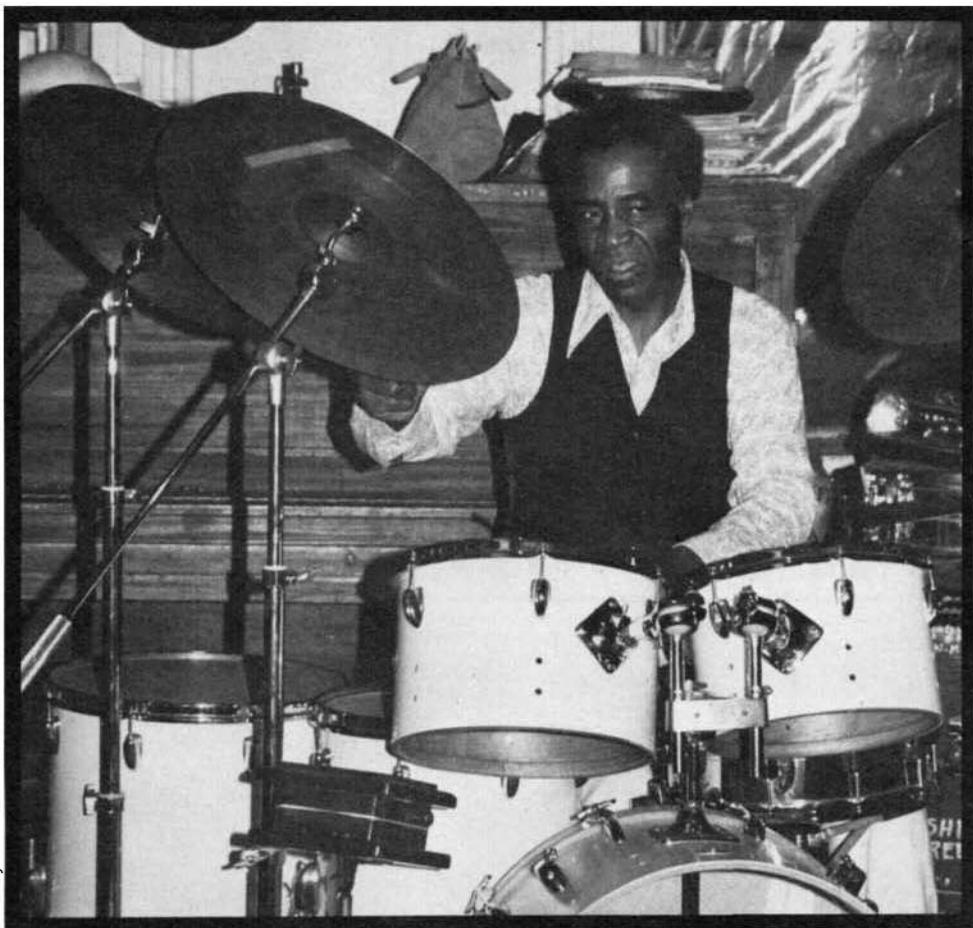


Photo by Laura Friedman

ity to bring his thing to New York City and not invite any of the local New York jazz musicians. So we all got together and used Studio We as a headquarters. We formed this concert series which would come off at the same time that Newport would be there. It was very successful. In fact, it was so successful that the next year George Wein said, "Hey, I'm going to give all you avant-garde musicians Alice Tully Hall.

I'll pay you X-amount of dollars and you can have your concerts there under the banner of Newport." So we went to this meeting, but I walked out because I didn't really dig what was happening. I wanted certain things; I just didn't want to work on a Newport concert, you know? I knew that George Wein had concerts all over the country—every six months or so he was sending somebody somewhere—and I was

continued on page 94

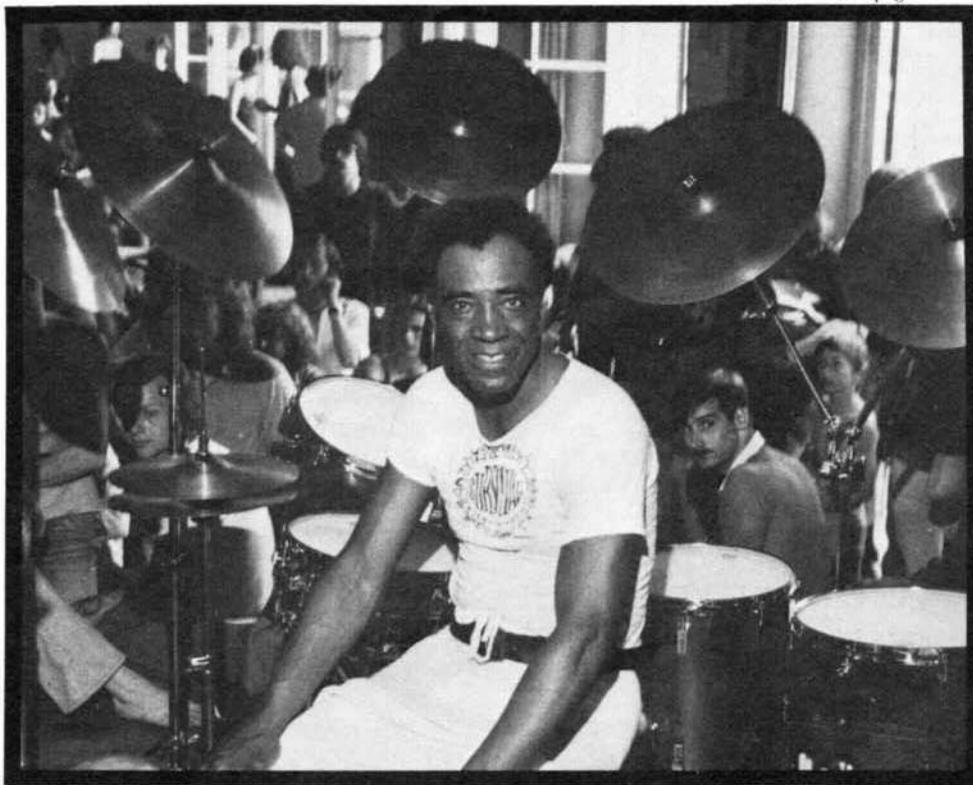


Photo by Bill Smith/Frank Driggs Collection

'84 READERS POLL



Photo by Rick Mattingly

2. Neil Peart
3. Rod Morgenstein
4. Steve Smith
5. Phil Collins

ALLAROUND 1. STEVE GADD



Photo by Rick Malkin

2. Peter Erskine
3. Billy Cobham
4. Tony Williams
5. Jack DeJohnette

JAZZ 1. BUDDY RICH



Photo by Thomas K. O'Neill

2. Louie Bellson
3. Ed Shaughnessy
4. Mel Lewis
5. Butch Miles

BIG BAND 1. BUDDY RICH



Photo by Cheech Iero

2. Carleton Barrett
3. Leroy "Horsemouth" Wallace

REGGAE 1. SLY DUNBAR

RESULTS

HALL OF FAME



Photo by Rick Mattingly

STEVE GADD

ROCK

1. NEIL PEART



Photo by Dimo Safari

2. Rod Morgenstein
3. Stewart Copeland
4. Alex Van Halen
5. Steve Smith

COUNTRY

1. MARK HERNDON



Photo by John Lee

2. Larrie Londin
3. Paul T. Riddle
4. John Stacey
5. Eddie Anderson

FUNK 1. DAVID GARIBALDI



Photo by Rick Malkin

2. Lenny White/Harvey Mason
4. Steve Gadd
5. Steve Jordan

STUDIO

1. STEVE GADD

Photo by Rick Mattingly



- 2. Jeff Porcaro
- 3. Simon Phillips
- 4. Vinnie Colaiuta
- 5. Larrie Londin

MULTI-

MALLETS

1. GARY BURTON



- 2. Lionel Hampton
- 3. David Samuels
- 4. Ed Mann
- 5. Leigh Howard Stevens

LATIN/BRAZILIAN

1. AIRTO

Photo by Tom Copi



- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

RECORDED PERFORMANCE

In order to present the results of our Readers Poll, the votes were tabulated, and the top five names in each category listed here. In the event that a tie occurred at any position other than fifth place, both names were presented and subsequent positions eliminated. When a tie occurred at fifth place, both names were presented. In the case of this year's new Reggae category, the top three names received the overwhelming majority of the votes, with the balance of votes going to a wide variety of performers, so only the top three names were presented.

Photo by Dimo Safari



- 2. Carl Palmer
- 3. Ed Mann
- 4. Stewart Copeland
- 5. Ralph MacDonald/Alex Acuna

PERCUSSION 1. NEIL PEART

Photo by Linda Mallow



- 2. Mark Brzezicki (Big Country)
- 3. Larry Mullen, Jr. (U2)
- 4. Omar Hakim (Weather Report)/
Roger Taylor (Duran Duran)

UP & COMING 1. RICK ALLEN (Def Leppard)

Alex Acuna
 Nana Vasconcelos
 Ralph MacDonald
 Sheila Escovedo/
 Sue Hadjopoulos

Photo by Rick Mattingly



- 2. Anthony J. Cirone
- 3. Fred Hinger/
Michael Bookspan/
Al Payson

CLASSICAL 1. VIC FIRTH

1. STEWART COPELAND 2. Alex Van Halen 1984



3. Alan White 90125

4. Steve Smith Vital Information

5. Steve Smith Frontiers

SYNCHRONICITY

Photo by Rick Malkin

Bill Bruford





"I'm from a good middle class background where nobody'd ever heard of a musician ... much less a drummer. After years of trying hard to deny I was a musician, around the age of 17, I realized there was no choice in the matter.

"In 1972 we were just forming King Crimson. Back then, you had two cymbals—a big one and a little one—and they both sounded the same, anyway. Then I came across Paiste, with their tremendous range of sounds, and suddenly the whole thing opened wide up. It was perfect for a band like King Crimson, that was interested in changing the way people do things with guitars, basses, and drums.

"I've been playing Paiste for 12 years now, in settings from acoustic piano/percussion duets to chamber jazz to heavy electronic rock. For me, it's been a very happy relationship.

"I think the quality and variety of sounds available from Paiste have made it possible for drummers to speak with a far more interesting voice."

While stints with innovative rock groups like Yes, Genesis, and King Crimson have made Bill Bruford famous, they have only hinted at the full range of his talents. His unique melodic style, and sensitive, thoughtful approach to material have earned him respect among fellow musicians as the consummate percussionist.

Bill Bruford truly cares about advancing the art of percussion. That's why we're especially pleased that he chooses to play Paiste cymbals exclusively.

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PAiSte

by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.

Aquarian Hi - Energy Miking System

Aquarian Accessories Corp. has stepped into another area of percussion, this time with a low-impedance miking system for drums. The *Hi-Energy Miking System* utilizes omni-directional electret condenser mic's. These mic's are very small—only three inches long—and weigh only four ounces each. Unlike dynamic mic's, the Aquarian condensers do not add sound coloration and do not need padding or limiting. They give an essentially flat frequency response, except for a bit of increase in the high end. In using the system, drum tuning is a critical factor, since the mic's give the natural drum sound. With the absence of coloration, the mic's can make a badly tuned drum sound even worse when amplified.

The key to Aquarian's system lies in

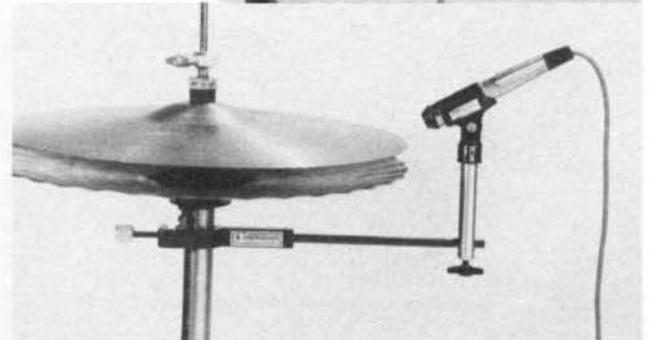
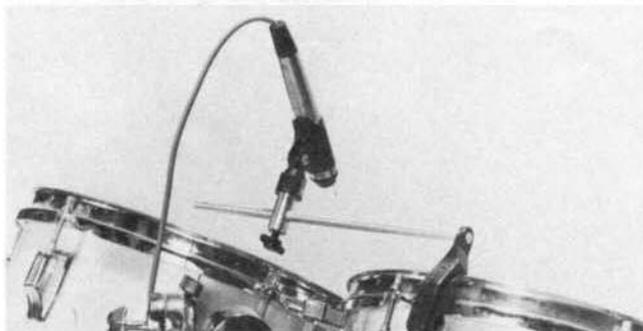
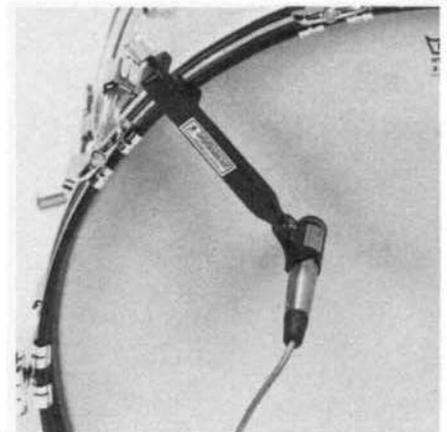
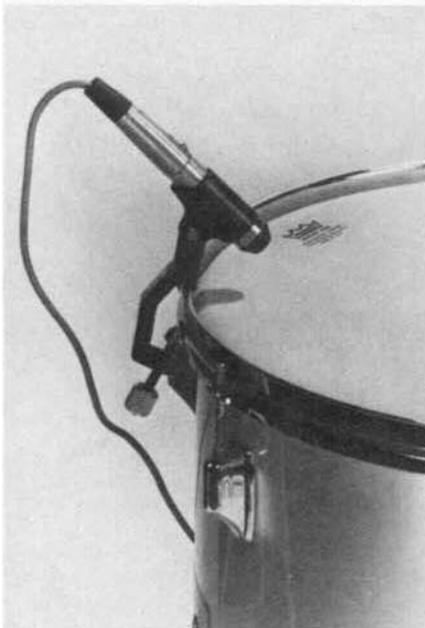
their *Dynamic Range Extender*. Available in six-, three-, or one-channel design, the *Range Extender* increases the sound pressure level for each mic' without distorting. The unit incorporates the power supply (with LED power monitors), but it has no volume or tone controls. It is merely a junction for all the microphones. Each channel has one male cannon plug and one female cannon jack. Cables are supplied to go from mic' to *Range Extender*. Separate leads are needed to go from the *Range Extender* to the P.A. board or sub-mixer. Aquarian stresses the point that the *Dynamic Range Extender* will *not* work with other microphones, and, in fact, may cause damage to mic's other than theirs.

To give a clean stage appearance, the mic's clamp very securely onto the drum hoops or cymbal stands in a C-clamp style. The mic's themselves are permanently attached to the holders (which, by the way, are shockproof). Different clamps are available for a variety of uses. Mounting can be done on a drum rim, bass drum hoop (the holder has a four-inch extension), or cymbal stand (which mikes from underneath). For hi-hats, a special bracket clamps onto the height tube and extends past the cymbals to mike from the cymbal edge. A dual miking bracket is available for miking two drums with one mic'. This holder utilizes a nine-inch thin aluminum rod attached to a clamp. The mic' is movable across the rod for positioning between the two drums. Besides mounting on a drumkit, the mic's will also work on congas, timbales, bongos, etc.

The Aquarian mic's have a better application in live sound reinforcement than in studio miking, since, of course, recording is so much more demanding. The bass drum mic' gives a minimum of "boom"

which is regularly associated with dynamic mic's, and it can be placed anywhere on either the front or batter hoop. The rest of the drumkit, when miked, sounds the same out in the audience as it does when you're behind the kit—a true, unadulterated sound. Given their omni-directional characteristic, there is leakage between mic's. I didn't even have to use cymbal mic's, because the other drum mic's picked up large portions of the cymbal sounds. (Besides, for my own reasons, I would never close mike cymbals. They need their air space.) The mic's do not get in the way of playing at all, and the entire system is very compact and easy to set up; I managed to fit the entire six-channel system, plus cables, into a fiber bongo case!

The *Hi-Energy Miking System* is available in six-channel format for \$1,200; three-channel format for \$683; and one-channel for \$210. (Separate leatherette bags are supplied with all mic's.) If you're in need of a compact miking system for clubs, concerts, etc., the Aquarian delivers true reproduction with a realistic price tag.



VINNIE COLAIUTA

A TEXTURAL APPROACH TO CYMBAL PLAYING

Vinnie Colaiuta's endlessly inventive drumming has imparted a special kinetic energy to the music of Frank Zappa, Joni Mitchell and others. The basis for Colaiuta's approach is textural; he connects to the sound sources around him by creating a shifting panorama of unexpected textures from his drums and cymbals.

"I don't think mathematically when I play anymore. You count out what you do initially but that becomes part of your vocabulary I'm not just dealing with rhythms, I'm playing *sounds*. I'm a reactive drummer. I listen to other sound sources and respond with my own textures.

"It's really a 'drum set' way of thinking, instead of just hearing rhythms. Especially those bizarre rhythms you hear in your head... I know what sound source they're gonna go to right away I'll hear different explosions on the cymbal that might fall into a place where no one expects it. I don't think about the rules, just how it's going to sound. I'll play rim shots on the tom toms; it's the way I play"

Playing the cymbals brings Colaiuta's style into even greater relief. Signature techniques like "punctuating" on the bell of the ride cymbal let him maintain the rhythmic pulse while commenting on it.

"It's a real articulate sound that doesn't seem to wash out as much for straight 8 time as playing on the body of the cymbal does. I might play full 8th notes on the body of the cymbal and in

between those notes on the bell. Not even steady ride time, just broken-up things. Sometimes I break them to make them purposely sound jagged. Other times I try to make them sound fluid."

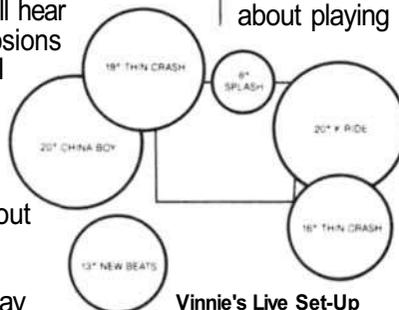
Colaiuta's definite opinions about playing cymbals that feel

exactly right are the reason why he invariably chooses Zildjian.

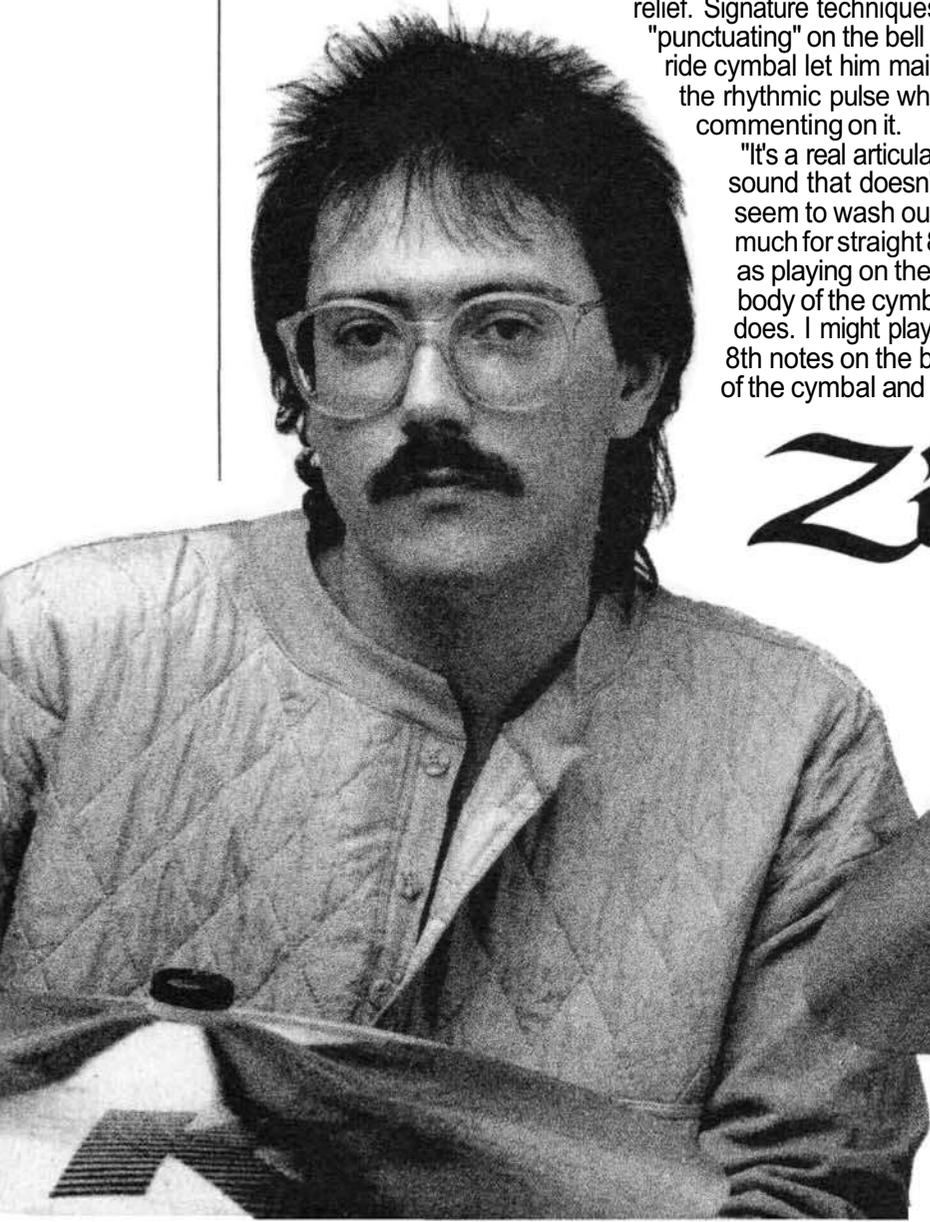
"Zildjian cymbals are real personal to me. They're all consistent to a

point—a Medium Ride is a Medium Ride—but at the same time, each one has its own individual voice. When you hit a Zildjian, the cymbal gives. It doesn't feel like you're playing sheet metal.

"They sing. Zildjians have this shimmer and a sound that's real musical to me. When you hit a Zildjian, it doesn't feel like it's resisting the stick. It's going *with* the stick. That enables me to play more musically more dimensionally" Avedis Zildjian Company, Cymbal Makers Since 1623. Longwater Drive, Norwell, Mass. 02061, USA



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Vinnie Colaiuta is currently freelancing and involved with a new band, Dog Cheese.

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natural. That's what creates the "groove" in the first place. (Hi-hat notation in parentheses indicates that the hi-hat is to be closed with the foot, not struck with a stick.)

L R R L R L R L R L R

H.H.
T.T.
S.D.
F.D.
B.D.
H.H.
w/foot

R R R L L R R R L R

R R L R R L R R 0

R L R L R L R R L L R

R R R L R R L R

R L L R L R L R R L R

R R L R R R L R R L R

R L R L R L R L R L

♩ = cym

L L R L R L L R L R L

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

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

♩ = Bell of Cym.

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

♩ = Cow Bell



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Obsolete.**

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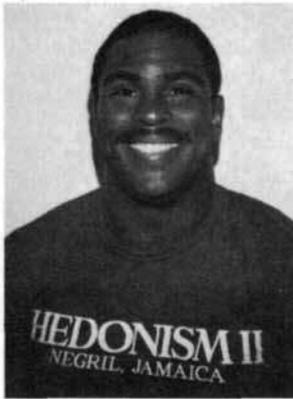
Also send me your colorful 22" x 33" poster. I am enclosing \$2.

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Yogi Horton

by Neil Kirby and John Reich

It's difficult to depict a drummer whose career started in his teens, who did a world tour in the middle of prep school, and who has played with people ranging from Diana Ross and Luther Vandross to Yoko Ono and Hazel Scott. Although his career is in the sky, his head is not.

If you have been within earshot of radio, TV, or a stereo, chances are you have already heard Yogi Horton. The jingles he has played on include State Farm Insurance, Budweiser, Michelob, Coca-Cola, Mellow Yellow, Miller Beer, Polaroid,

Ford, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Listerine, Cannon Towels, Chevy, Bubblicious, and AeroMexico. The recording artists Yogi has performed with include Diana Ross, Irene Cara, Stephanie Mills, Gladys Knight, Ashford & Simpson, Luther Vandross, Aretha Franklin, Dionne Warwick, David Byrne, Martha & the Muffins, Bob James, Yoko Ono, Hall & Oates, Michael Urbaniak, Grover Washington, Jack McDuff, Eric Gale, Leslie Gore, Melba Moore, Cheryl Lynn, and Laura Donaberte.

Although he is well respected by his peers, Yogi is one of the most modest people you will ever meet. He is quick to praise others and give credit to those who have influenced him as an artist. It is only re-

cently, however, that this talented individual has begun to gain the recognition and respect he deserves from the general public.

NK: When did you first start playing drums or show an interest in them?

YH: I used to go to the Apollo Theater in 1960 when I was seven years old. I thought the drummer had the most fun.

NK: At the time, did you express your interest to your parents? Did you bang on pots and pans at home as a substitute for playing the drums?

YH: You didn't do that at our house. My parents basically considered playing music something you did after work. My father was a career soldier. Most of the goof-off people in the service were in the band.

NK: Were you influenced by the marching band in the high school you attended?

YH: Yeah. I was also in the marching band at Alabama State.

NK: Then you have a strong rudimental background. Did that help you develop the chops you have now?

YH: Yes. Definitely.

NK: Did you study other percussion instruments?

YH: No, but I would like to go back to school to study them.

NK: Who have you taken private lessons with?

YH: I went to Charli Persip for two weeks. We rapped a lot.

NK: Then most of your musical ability is self-taught. Were you able to pick up a lot by ear?

YH: When I was in high school, I knew all the songs and beats, but I wasn't reading them. I was very good at imitating them.

NK: What was the next move in your career?

YH: When I was 14 or 15 years old, I was in a little band, and the Apollo had an amateur hour. They gave a spot on the show to the winners, and my band, called The Deltas, won. After that I was playing at the Cheetah. Those were power-playing days because they weren't miking up drums. I never played with microphones until I started doing recording sessions.

NK: When did you make the transition from semi-pro to pro?

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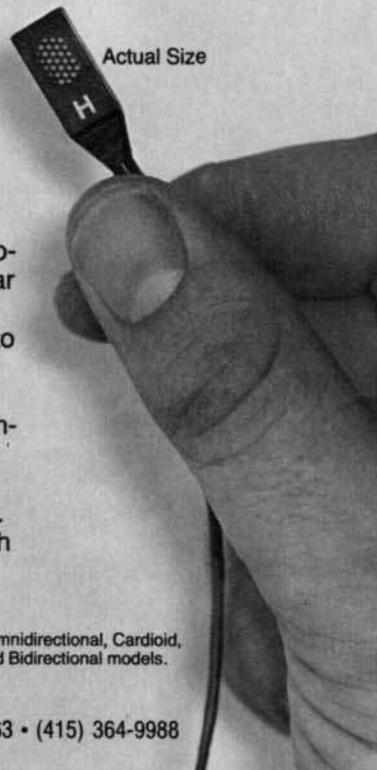
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YH: When I was in Harlem Prep School, a guy named Frank Prescott from a band called The Moments called me. The Moments had a gold record called "Love On A 2-Way Street" in 1969. Frank asked me, "How fast can you get a passport?" I asked, "Why?" And he said, "The Moments are going on a world tour tomorrow and Eddie Brown can't make the gig." So I ran down to the passport office, got my passport and split with \$2.55 in my pocket.

NK: Then that was how you got your first big break. Is that how you developed your reputation?

YH: Yes. When I got back from the world tour, I cut this record called "Pillow Talk" with Sylvia, who was doing demos for F.L. Green and Willie Mitchell. Then I did tracks while I was in Alabama State at Muscle Shoals.

NK: What was the importance of Sylvia to you? I understand she was instrumental to your career during your teenage years.

YH: Sylvia would get all the kids in the neighborhood for sessions at All Platinum cheaper than the musicians across the bridge. I wanted to be on a hit record real bad. I did "Pillow Talk" with an idea I had that was new, and I was breaking rules although I didn't know it. I got a lot of work and education I never would've gotten anywhere else. They were using eight tracks at Platinum until 1973. You had to be good and a lot of good has come out of that experience.

NK: What was the most challenging situation you were ever in?

YH: The first jingle I ever did because of the reading.

NK: When did you start to pick up reading?

YH: Sammy Lowe, a house arranger at Muscle Shoals, made it clear to me that I had to read. He gave me a mathematical approach to reading.

NK: Do you recommend reading as a must for up-and-coming drummers?

YH: It can't hurt. It is basic to intelligence in communicating music. You must learn to read and interpret charts, as well as when to read ahead.

NK: How does a drummer get into sessions?

YH: The drummer must do the calling for the gig. Usually it's an arranger who contracts the gig. Find out who the arrangers are and get to know them. You want to break into the heavy stuff doing club dates, so be trained to sub for someone who is doing sessions.

NK: Who were some of your influences?

YH: Well, at the time I was getting into it, my influences were Bernard Purdie, Ginger Baker, and Mitch Mitchell with Jimi Hendrix. I felt that Ringo Starr had great time rather than a style, *per se*. I was also influenced by James Brown's drummer, Sly's drummer, Dino Danelli, Harvey Mason, and Billy Cobham. It wasn't that it was so difficult, but rather it was difficult to

come up with new things. It was a great era between 1966 and the early to mid-'70s. You wouldn't be around for long if you didn't take from those people. A special mention before I forget would have to be Grady Tate, who showed me how to burn without banging, but be gentle and exemplify taste. He's a beautiful guy. Not enough can be said about him.

My other musical influences were Miles Davis and James Brown. I hear things on records now that people think are new, but that Brown was doing years and years ago. I dug Sly a lot and Count Basie. Sonny Payne once told me, when I was playing with Hazel Scott, to make everything I play on the drums a part of the arrangement, so that if others play it, they will have to play exactly what I play. For instance, if you try to play a gig like Steve Gadd, you'll find you have to play what he played. There is no room for personality. An example of this is the opening drum fill to "She Loves You," by The Beatles. If you change what Ringo did, the tune is lost.

NK: Who are some of your favorite drum soloists?

YH: There's a guy named D.J. who plays with a group called Mean Machine, which was behind the Commodores. Steve Gadd is also a favorite of mine.

NK: What was it like to work with Yoko Ono?

YH: She worked in the abstract. She would

start a vocal, then once I nailed the groove, she would say, "That's it." When I worked with Diana Ross, she said she wanted all the top people and I was called. That's when she was the executive producer.

NK: Are you involved with electronics in drums? Simmons, Linn, etc.?

YH: Well, if a client wants Simmons, I'll bring them. You still have to play clean and correct licks.

NK: What type of equipment are you using?

YH: I'm endorsing Yamaha. I like Yamaha because the hardware is very strong. I use the *Tour Series*. My snare is deep. My toms are 6", 8", 10", 12", 13" and 14". My floor toms are 16" and 18". I use a double or single 24" bass and 5B sticks. My cymbals are Zildjian.

NK: Do you vary drum sizes from session to session?

YH: Yes. Certain people want fills on small drums. I don't tape my drums. My roadie sets them up the way I want them. I tell my clients what I have available, and they pick and choose from that framework.

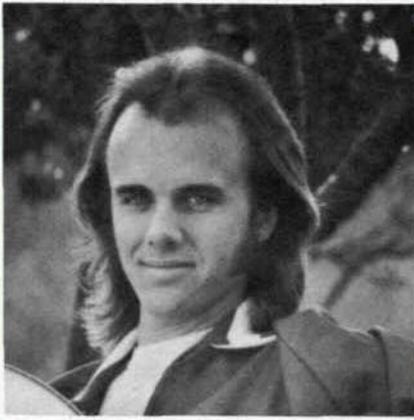
NK: I understand you play piano and do a little writing.

YH: I know basic chords, but I can't solo. I write material for Ray Chu on Capitol Records.

NK: Do you like to solo on drums?

YH: It depends on the situation. With Michael Urbaniak, I play an extended solo

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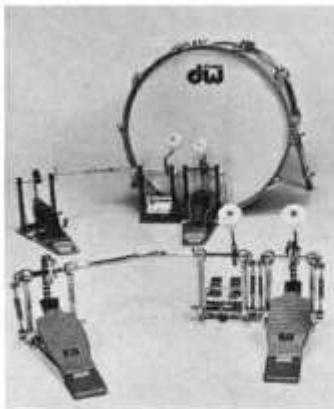


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for as long as I want. With someone like Ashford & Simpson, I might get eight or 16 bars, so I think more about phrasing and the melody.

NK: Do you play differently on a session with a group in the studio than you do live with the same group?

YH: I play a bit more live than in the studio. Recently, I've had the opportunity to record with an artist and then tour with the same artist.

NK: You look like you are in good shape. Is that from drumming?

YH: Well, I exercise a lot. I run and do push-ups. No one can accuse me of being the tired one in the group. Drumming is physically demanding and will keep you in shape to some degree.

NK: Do you find touring physically demanding?

YH: Sometimes, but if Bob Hope at his age can run around the country, then I have no excuse.

NK: Do you have any pitfalls to warn drummers about?

YH: Never overbook in New York. That can make your career really extinct. I'll tell you a funny story. One time I was booked heavily. I called the registry and told them to get someone who could read. After the sessions, I ran into this guy who said, "I'm going to wolf up all that Yogi Horton stuff and do all his gigs." He didn't know who I was, so he asked how long I had been doing sessions. I said, "Eight to ten years." He asked if I had any advice. I said, "Be careful who you talk to," and I left. When you try to get into sessions, they will want to know who you have played with, not what conservatory you went to. That's why street people are doing the gigs. Otherwise all the music school graduates would be wolfing all the gigs. However, remember Steve Gadd and Harvey Mason are well schooled.

NK: You're known for having super time. What did you do to develop that?

YH: When I was in a college marching band, we had a system called eight to five, which was eight steps for every five yards. You did 60 steps a minute. You learned about pacing. Also you had to know how long it took to hit any given drum or cymbal. Some musicians with bad time set up their instruments all over the place because it looks great to the audience, but it's hard to execute and the showmanship involved in long reaches detracts from good time-keeping. Dino Danelli was the first guy to tell me about the problems of having to reach for drums.

NK: Tell us about your video cassette.

YH: Well, it's called *A History Of R&B/Funk Drumming*, based on my personal experience. It can be helpful to a young kid who may have missed out on what was happening during the period of the mid-'60s to the '70s.

NK: Will you be doing any clinics or lectures?

YH: Yes, in the near future at Drummers Collective.

NK: If you were to teach privately, how would you go about it? What would you emphasize?

YH: I would make sure that my student didn't become a late reader like myself. It's tough when you're doing something practical, and you have to go back and learn exactly what you're doing. This allows for bad habits and errors.

NK: Do you have any thoughts about stroking?

YH: Well, if you are going to be in the studio, use a large stick, because the more surface of the stick there is on the drum, the stronger a signal you will get and the engineer won't have to EQ as much to beef up the sound. When I found that out, I started hitting the drum hard, which I had already done while working the Cheetah with no mic's. In contrast, when I played with Hazel Scott, I had to play delicately and softly *a la* Grady Tate and still make it groove with brush technique. Harvey Mason got a lot from Grady Tate. A lot more should be said about Harvey.

NK: Do you use matched or traditional grip?

YH: When I did Diana Ross' *Work That Body*, I used the parade grip on the parade stuff in the beginning. It's more accurate for that style, but mostly I used the matched grip.

NK: Do you feel that you must adapt the way you play to the way engineers do things?

YH: No, I make the engineers follow me. I don't let the engineers tell me to play this way or that way. Don't tell me to play softly because people buy your attitude. You've heard where the drummer didn't have it. I want to feel what you had for breakfast. The machines don't have that. Nothing feels better than that wood in your hand.

NK: What do you consider to be the most essential element of your professional situation?

YH: One thing I want to bring out in this interview is the importance of a good roadie. One of those people is necessary to keep you from spending more time being a drum technician than a drummer. The way things are now, they are a must. People pay a lot of money for sessions and you can't afford to have your equipment break down. My roadie, Artie Smith, is as important to me as another musician. He is as dedicated to his craft as I am to mine. I showed him my setup once and that was it. He's never let me down. This isn't a luxury when you have to be ready to play in more than one location in a day.

NK: Do you ever work with percussionists?

YH: I've played with many percussionists, like Eddie Magic and Sammy Figueroa. I get off on that.

NK: Did you ever work in a two-drummer

situation? Did it affect your style?

YH: I did that when I first worked with Eric Gale. He wanted two drummers sounding like one drummer instead of two drummers sounding like two drummers. It taught me a lot about interaction.

NK: When did you start learning when to leave things out?

YH: Well, in recording, especially at All Platinum. They would say, "Play something hip but don't get in the way. Do whatever you have to do to get to that."

NK: Were you ever told you were overplaying early on?

YH: I never overplayed because I wanted to keep the gig and I noticed that there were a lot of people who had a lot of chops but couldn't cut a record. It's nicer to play less and have someone ask you to play more than the other way around.

NK: What work are you most proud of?

YH: Well, "Why Do Fools Fall In Love" with Diana Ross, and my work with Luther Vandross and Aretha Franklin because the producer tells me to play whatever I want and trusts my judgment.

NK: What was the high point of your career?

YH: Just being able to say that I don't do anything else for a living but play drums. Another high point is having a respected magazine for drummers asking me what I think.

NK: What are some of your future plans?

YH: I want to develop a reputation for being the person who cuts your record, and if it's a hit, I'll go out with you. I'll be there if you want it to sound the same live as on the record.

NK: Who specifically will you be working with?

YH: Ashford & Simpson, Luther Vandross, and then Dionne Warwick.

NK: If you had to stop playing drums, what would you do?

YH: I would tell other people how to play them. I'll always be involved with drums.



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Bonham continued from page 15

Dave Pegg remembers John being somewhat struck with Carmine Appice. "He did listen to Beck, Bogert & Appice, and in the earlier years to Vanilla Fudge on their first American tour and he was impressed by Carmine." Pegg, however, doesn't feel that much can be gotten out of searching out particular drummers who influenced Bonham's style, an attitude shared by Phil Carson. Pegg: "I mean, he was playing the way he was when he was 16 or 17 years old. All the traits that formed his style were visible on the first Zeppelin album."

Carmine Appice feels strongly about his impact on John Bonham. "Bonzo was freaked out because I was his hero. He said, like, 'Man, I got all my licks from you,' and as the [Zeppelin/Fudge] tour progressed he saw how I did all the things I did, like the twirling, grabbing the cymbal on the left side, and just the natural attack of the drums and everything. At that time, I was basically your 'power drummer'; Moon was a good rock drummer, and so was Baker, but they weren't really power drummers." There may well be something in Carmine's assertion that some of Bonham's best-known fills were lifted from Vanilla Fudge tunes—for example, the broken bass drum triplet in "Good Times Bad Times." Carmine explains, "I'll tell you exactly where he got it. He got it off the third Vanilla Fudge album in a song called 'That's What Makes A Man.' Those triplets are all over that, and that was done and released in June '68, which was a good nine months before the Zeppelin album came out. The whole thing where Bonzo got his style is still on record, thank God." And further, "A direct cop which,

you know, I felt a little ripped off but proud about, was my thing at the end of 'Shotgun'—the little break: 'butaba butaba butaba.' If you listen to that, and listen to the end of Zeppelin's 'Rock And Roll,' you will hear an awful lot of similarity."

More interesting than who influenced whom, especially when we get to these grey areas, is trying to nail down what it was that Bonham did himself. Although putting someone's style in words is not easy, it may not be impossible. The first key word to Bonzo Bonham's way of playing drums is "simplicity." Any artist must choose, select, and discard those elements which disguise his intent: Bonham's art was the combining of execution and tuning such that one note served in place of ten. Thus, oftentimes you hear Bonham sitting on a wide quarter note on 1 and 3 of the bar, snare on 2 and 4, and letting the sheer moment of placement and power of sound carry that enormous pulse. Bonzo never gave us the hosing that some of the fusion drummers did in the mid-'70s; rarely does self-indulgent, unnecessarily busy playing wear well with time.

All this said, the man was capable of a fill or two. At first he explored the triplet: A favorite blues fill was a string of triplets—the first of each group of three on the snare, and the last two on bass drum. Bonham, to put it lightly, had a heavy right foot. One cut which particularly displays a smooth, consistent Bonham is "Poor Tom" from *Coda*, with John, both hands on snare, working a sort of straight-8th shuffle. In "D'Yer Mak'er" we have hats off to reggae with the explosive Bonham smiling at the traditionally polite and sub-

dued Jamaican timekeepers. Especially important is Bonham's contribution to "No Quarter" (especially off the soundtrack to *The Song Remains The Same*; also on *Houses Of The Holy*). Here, he is working without bass guitar. Talk about bottom end—Jones on bass pedals and Bonzo on 26" bass drum! It's nice to hear Bonham coloring a little more around the high-end here, bouncing quasi-Tower of Power hi-hat splashes off the piano figures. For a man who once said, "To me, drums sound better than cymbals," Bonham had pretty refreshing cymbal work. Actually, though, when we think about Bonham we are more likely to remember drums than cymbals. Here again we have the Ginger Baker influence. Both Baker and Bonham had the habit of playing extended solos with the snare releases in the off position, going for that African/Krupa dark sound. Bonham's twist was his ability to perform solos with his bare hands. He explained that, "It wasn't so much what you could play with your hands; you just got a lovely little tone out of the drums that you couldn't get with sticks. I thought it would be a good thing to do, so I've been doing it ever since. You really do get an absolutely true drum sound because there's no wood involved."

So much of the trademark "John Bonham Sound," the object of a lot of fuss these days, was quite simply *John Bonham*. We have all become accustomed, especially in the studio environment, to allowing all sorts of perverted acts to be done on our drums in the name of getting this or that sound. And oftentimes, as the engineers will tell you, we *have* to do a lot of these unnatural things to our drums because, maybe, we *don't* hit the snare quite consistently, thereby causing all sorts of buzzing and rattling. And maybe they're sticking all kinds of extra mic's around us because we *don't* know how to play our kits in the proper balance.

Well, the "John Bonham Sound" is the way John Bonham tuned his drums, plus the way he hit them, and finally, the way in which they were recorded. And speaking about the latter, in light of all the recent talk about distant miking and the "Sun Records sound," *you couldn't* take the average drummer and get that sound because most drummers don't have control over their drums.

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Bonham in "D'Yer Mak'er." One reason Eddie believes he is so successful is because, as he puts it, he rarely seeks to implant his will on the artist. Rather, he works around the artist, providing "the platform or the impetus with which to express a musical opinion."

I talked to Eddie about his fairly identifiable drum sound, which is marked by its openness, liveness, and spontaneous feel, all stemming from a classical background and a classical technique of miking based upon the notion that distance makes depth. "If you want to refer directly to Bonham, you could record him in one of two ways. One way was completely distant with three mic's, which I've done. 'D'Yer Mak'er' was a three-mic' job where the mic's were just in the room and specifically placed—I'm not going to say where—fairly distantly. Even though he was the loudest drummer I've ever recorded, his sound was so *complete* that it didn't need any attention to the finer, closer-miking technique in that particular song because of what he generated in the room, and he was in a room all by himself."

We are not talking about Bonham placed in a closet-sized drum booth, a point which Eddie confirmed: "No, no, I never use drum booths, or at least very rarely. I much prefer the method where the drummer is in a separate room, basically for the *acoustics*. It can be a room, a hallway, a concert hall, a stage, a back room,

an alleyway—any place where I can get a great live drum sound."

The other way of recording Bonham, more obvious on the second Zeppelin album, was close miked—not too close—with room mic's for depth and ambience. This approach was used when particular tunes warranted more discrete focus on particular kit sounds, or when ideal rooms (high ceiling, lots of wood and plaster) were not to be had.

For an engineer, surely the approach to a Zeppelin mix would be affected by Bonham's larger-than-life drum sound: "I would usually work with the foot and the snare, and the room mic's, if there are room tracks. I would get the drums as huge as I possibly could and try to fit everything around it. [laughs] One thing I remember Bonham saying to me, which I was very flattered about, was, 'Oh well, Eddie's coming; I don't have to worry about the drum sound.' And he always used to give me a big bear hug and say, 'You're going to give me a good sound today, aren't you?' in a funny, threatening voice."

The presence of a capable and sympathetic engineer was mandatory when recording Bonham: He was loud, he didn't tune his drums baggy and loose, and he wasn't accustomed to changing his approach in the studio. Eddie Kramer: "Bonham was loud, period. No, it didn't pose any difficulties in recording him; rather, it enhanced it. He tuned the kit the

way he heard it: front skin on the bass drum, tuned to the point where it sounded like a timp if you just touched it. But when you hit it with a wooden beater! He was a bricklayer, and he had a lot of weight in his legs; he hit it bloody hard, and that, to me, is the art of his drumming. He kicked the shit out of the drums. But yet, at the same time, he could be very delicate, too. His dynamic range in his solo was amazing. In the movie you can get a very good idea about what he was doing with his hands—the famous hand solo. He was not really hitting the drums very hard with his hands, you know. He was using his foot to make a lot of those big crashes. So it was an illusion that he was creating there.

"He was absolutely amazing in the studio. I know Jimmy would show him some tricky sort of timing things, where the beat would turn around, and he would get it immediately. He would just walk right into it. He'd be a little puzzled at first, but it wouldn't take him very long to lock into it."

Eddie is very careful about drums, and realized during our conversation that he may have caused some confusion with his observations on Bonham's bass drum tensioning. "When I say that he tuned it like a timpani, the tuning is 'concert' in tonality; by that, I mean if you just *touch* a concert bass drum—one of those gigantic 30" ones—it just resonates like crazy. It was the same basic thing, scaled down, with Bonham's drum. You could touch it very lightly and it would ring like crazy. Touch it gently and it would resonate and ring, but if you hit it hard with the right amount of attack and with a wooden beater, it gave you the most incredible crack, plus a tremendous low-frequency 'oomph,' which was probably the secret of his bass drum. What those various elements were, the particular head, the tuning—a lot had to do with the way he played it. The weight and attack of his foot was amazing. He had an ability to attack the drums without seeming to attack them physically, even though the sound emanating from them was huge."

I often wondered how Bonham would adjust to the studio environment where, perhaps, discipline and precision were more important than in live settings. How would a guy like Bonham react to the usual engineers' instructions? Eddie: "With Bonham there would be no necessity to give him instructions, retune his drums, or change cymbals, because he had his sound together. His drums resonated like crazy; the snare reverberated around, but I never bothered about that because, you see, I treated the drums as a whole unit, rather than as individual things. Sure, the snare has to sound good and the toms have to have a reasonable sound, but it's the overall impression that the drummer is giving you in Bonham's case. He was never a problem for me to record."

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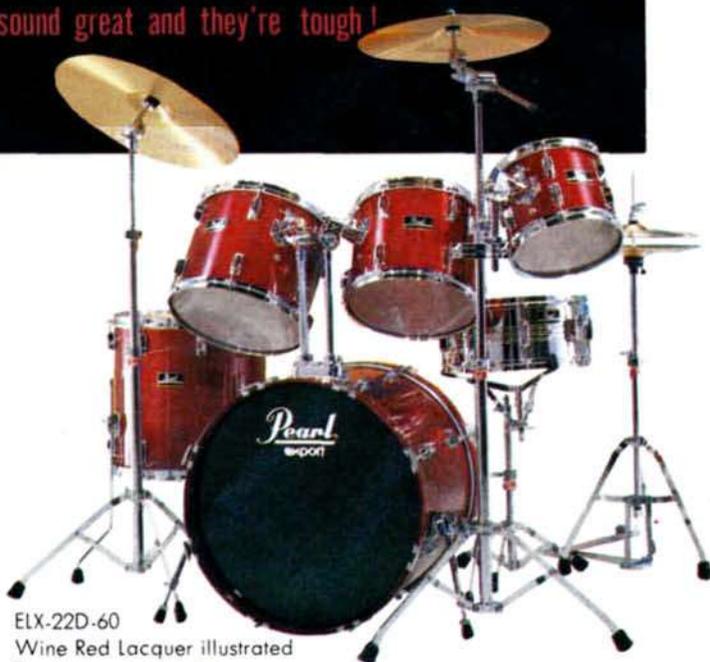
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Did you ever wonder what it would have been like to sit behind Bonzo's drums, tuned and set up to his taste, or what would have happened to your drums if he played them? Dave Mattacks had both experiences and lived to tell the tale. "I remember going to see them once in rehearsal, and John was using a stainless-steel kit. I remember going up and trying the drums. When I played them they sounded like four tin cans. He had both heads on the bass drum, fairly tight, and the snare drum was up as tight as it would go. He was using a 26" bass drum, a 12x15 tom, and an 18" and a 20" floor—or 16" and 18"—and a 61/2X 14 snare drum. I think he was using the *Silver Dot* Ludwig head. I'm pretty sure he was using 2002 Paistes because they were the only ones that didn't crack for him, and a Ludwig *Speed King* pedal. I mean, at the end of the day it's all irrelevant: It's how you tune them and how you hit them.

"A long time ago Fairport was playing the Troubadour in Los Angeles. Zeppelin had just played a big gig up in town and they came and sat in. Jimmy and Richard Thompson were on the stage together and John sat in on my drums. I remember getting off stage, hearing him play and thinking, 'Oh, they don't sound very good.' He was beating the shit out of them; he played great but the drums didn't sound too hot. I got back up and it was my lovely *Super Classics*—heads all dented!"

Carmine Appice also had a crack at the

drumset which he had obtained for Bonham in 1969. "His kit felt pretty much like my kit except he kept his toms a little tighter than mine, and he used the straight *Ambassador* head, or Ludwig equivalent. He also recorded with those. And he always recorded with the front head on; we never took the front heads off the drums in those times. In those days that's how you got the explosion."

The Bonham explosion was not so much the product of particular drums, heads, and shells, but of that particular human touch. Mattacks saw a graphic illustration of this. "I was over at Bonham's house in the early days. There was a jukebox in one corner and a little Ludwig kit with an 18" bass drum. I asked him a question about some riff or other. I understood what he was saying when he explained the riff, but that wasn't what caught my attention. Understanding the riff became totally irrelevant. I was sitting and listening to this guy play an 18" bass drum, and it was exactly the same sound as on a Led Zeppelin record! It was, like, a 4x14 snare drum, an 18" bass drum, an 8x12 and 14x14, and he said, 'Oh, you mean the thing on blah, blah,' and that sound came out. I just couldn't believe it; it was *that* drum sound from this toy drumset! The bass drum had the front head on, and the playing head and the other head up tight. I know if I tried playing a drum like that it would just go 'bing,' but when he played it, it was his sound, which proves the theory that most

good musicians carry their sound with them. Whatever you sit down and play becomes your instrument."

Indeed, how Bonham tuned his drums and hit them is what his imitators should be studying. Many people assume that loud drummers must be lifting their hands high above their cymbals, cutting each stroke with a long arc downward. Ritchie Yorke found this absent in Bonham's playing, although prevalent in the heavy metal field. "He always fired from a very low position on the snare. It always used to amaze me about John; nobody else could get such a hell of a whack. He would have the stick only six inches above the drumhead and just whack it into the snare so hard, it was just unreal."

Mattacks noticed that whereas sometimes John did "lift his hands up high, it has nothing to do with how hard you hit it; it's the *way* you hit it. There are drummers who can get bigger sounds out of drums than people who hit them harder: Let's put it that way."

Bonham had thought about all this: "You can hit a drum hard," he remarked to Ritchie Yorke, "if you take a short stab at it and the skin will break easily. But if you let the stick just come down, it looks as though you're hitting it much harder than you really are. I only let it drop with the force of my arm coming down."

A theory which many subscribe to is that people's playing reflects their personality traits. Not an earth-shaking proposition, granted, but if true we should be finding, in John Bonham, a basically simple, unambiguous and untroubled individual, sensitive and thoughtful without intellectual pretension, and with flashes of humor and hyperbole.

Ritchie Yorke is inclined to agree. "Bonham was a very uncomplicated guy. He was not into some new civilization; the mystery wasn't with Bonham. He was not an easy guy to get to know—a very violent guy in some respects. John was a country boy from the north of England; they settle things with their fists. It was always wild and John Bonham was always one of the prime movers in anything that was going on."

Phil Carson, because of his friendship with the Bonham family, made it past the facade. "John was a really nice person—very warm-hearted person, you know and a very quick wit. People don't realize he was a very funny man, in a British sense of humor. It doesn't always translate everywhere across the world, but the British do have a certain style of humor and John was right up there with the greatest in his speed of wit. It was a dry humor. He had a very fast mind, which expressed itself in his playing, too.

"At home, John was very much a family man. He invited me to his house on numerous occasions. He liked to go up to his lo-

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cal pub and just be part of the community, rather than be with people who, by good fortune, had the biggest houses and best cars. He and his wife, Pat, always had that ability; they were able to be part of the ground on which they sat. John was really fortunate; he had a really good home life and a charming family."

John's collection of cars and his passion for fast automobiles are well known. Eddie Kramer discovered another side during a conversation with Page. "Apparently Jimmy went to his house and John showed him his marvelous collection of antique miniatures of some kind—extremely delicate—the complete antithesis of what one

would expect his personality to be. You know, bricklayer turned rock 'n' roll drummer, the baddest rock 'n' roll drummer in the world, and yet, there was this other, delicate side."

But it did go the other way, a little too often, in retrospect. Pegg: "He did drink an awful lot. Lots of times when I met up with him in America we'd go out. He was very fond of his glass of ale. I don't know. I think being away from home does it to people. Some of us tend to crack more easily than others."

Carmine Appice adds that "he was basically a good guy, until he got drunk. Once Bonzo got drunk he lost control of what he

was doing. He drank all the time. English people drink all the time. That's one of their social habits."

I tossed this at Phil Carson, along with general allegations made over the last few years that Bonham was an alcoholic. "John was never an alcoholic," Phil responded. "An alcoholic is someone who can't deal with alcohol. John just enjoyed a drink. You know, people don't really understand; there are certain areas of England where the normal working-class chap will go out and consume ten pints of beer in a night, and not think anything about it. That's the way life is in the Black Country in the Midlands of England or in Newcastle. That's the entertainment. It's traditionally been that way. You tell the average person that the consumption is seven pints of beer every evening and they think, 'My God! He's an alcoholic!' It's not actually true. It's just a different dietary process. John was more of a beer drinker than anything else."

There were no drugs involved in John Bonham's death, nor was Bonham ever a habitual drug user of any sort. Carson continues, "It was just an unfortunate thing. It is terribly true to say that it can happen to anyone. You're a musician, and you probably drink a little at the gig. Have you ever awakened at night feeling ill? It's just a terrible accident, and it has nothing to do with alcoholism or anything else."

Led Zeppelin had been preparing to embark on an American tour when John's death on September 25, 1980, sent its shock waves out. He died in his sleep, poisoned by overindulgence. Perhaps Bonham was drinking a few more to rid himself of a case of nerves; after all, over the last five years Zeppelin had drastically cut the frequency of album releases and live engagements. Perhaps it was the result of a beer drinker downing too much hard liquor (alleged to be something like two bottles of vodka). What is certain is that Bonham's health was not on the decline, aside from a short-term stomach disorder medicated with a banana potion, and there were no heart attacks or major upsets. Certainly, if anything, John Bonham's playing was better than ever.

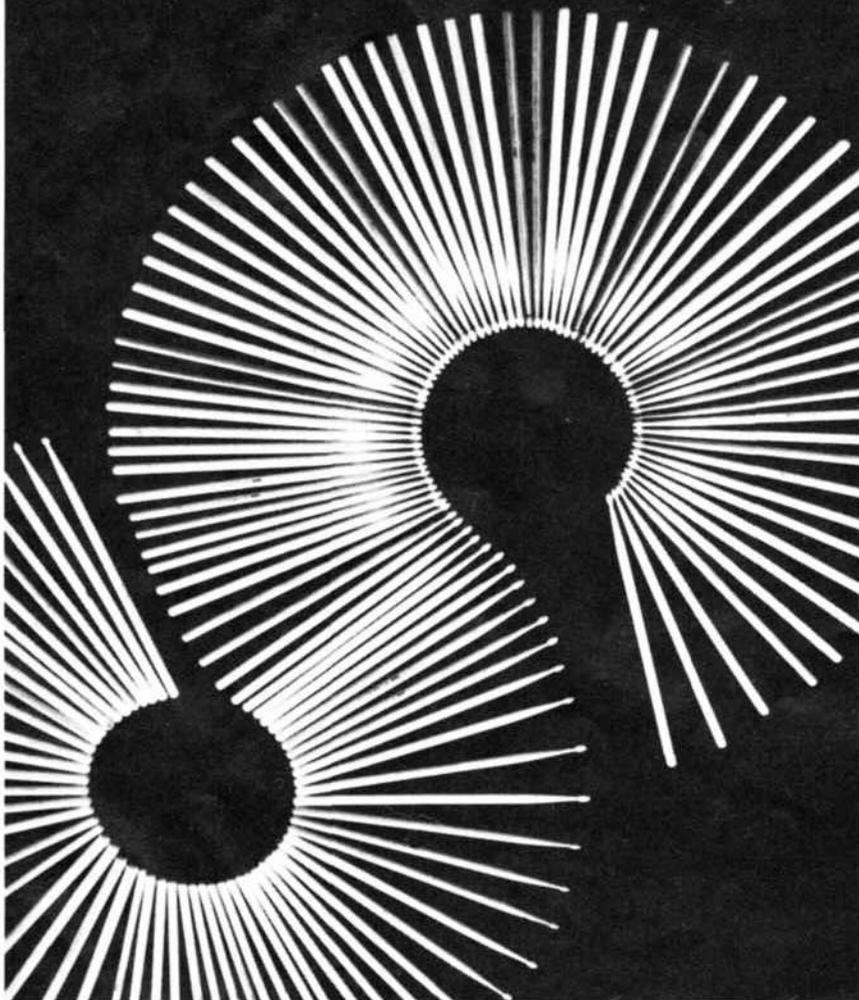
Bonzo has left a family, including one Jason Bonham, now in his late teens. Jason went into the studio with Robert Plant and guitarist Robbie Blunt to drum on some demos, and apparently the resemblance to his father is staggering. Even at an earlier age Pegg spotted it. "I'd go over with Dave Swarbrick [violinist, Fairport Convention] quite a lot, and Jason would have learned our repertoire. Jason could play all the Fairport stuff, and he looked just like his dad—the facial expression. He'd be really heavy on the big bass drum sound."

Aside from a charming family, left adequately provided for and closely watched over by Peter Grant personally, Bonham

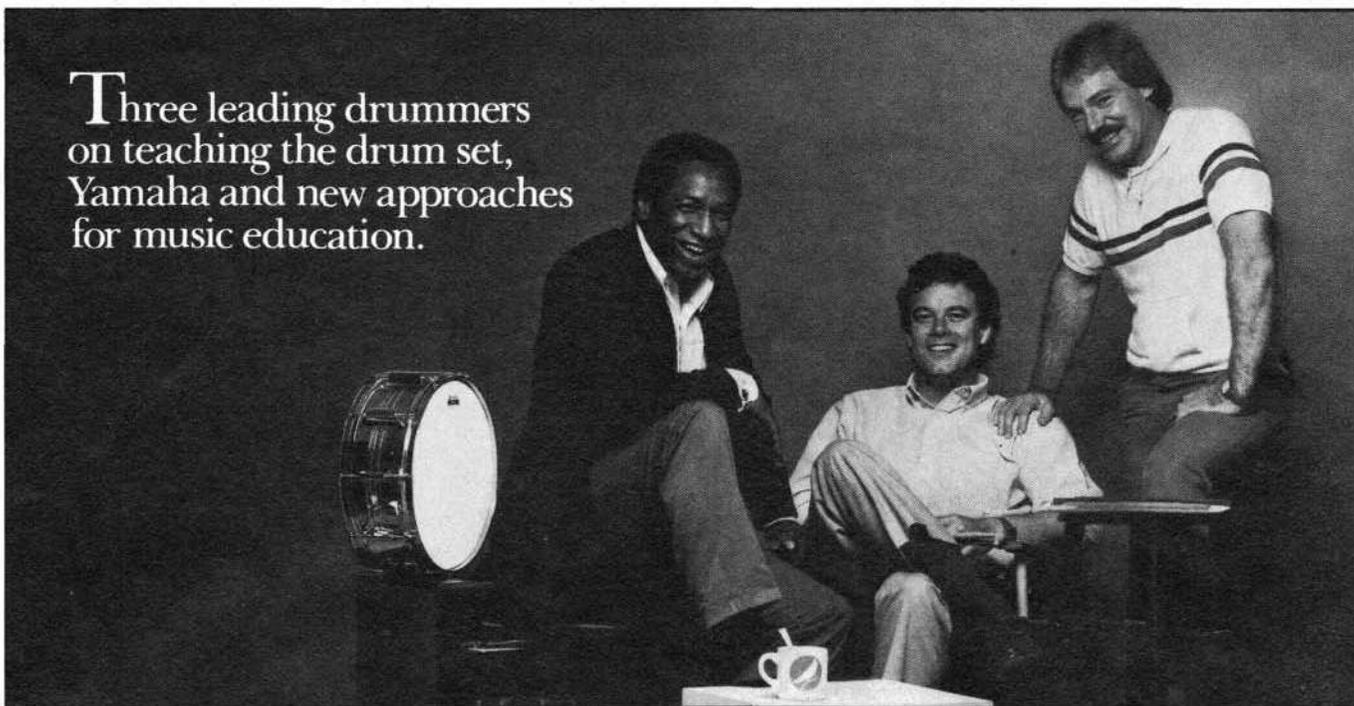
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Left to right: *Horacee Arnold* teaches and has performed with Chick Corea, Stan Getz and Kenny Burrell.
Ed Soph teaches and has performed with Clark Terry, Woody Herman and Joe Henderson.
Steve Houghton teaches and has performed with Woody Herman, Freddie Hubbard and the Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin Big Band.

Ed Soph: The drum set is an improvisational instrument. That makes it exciting to teach because there are no rules. It's a chance to establish your own identity. Just imitating others defeats the whole purpose of the instrument. Hopefully, drum set teaching will never become codified. It's constantly evolving. The repertoire is the music and it's constantly changing. It's the newest teaching field.

Steve Houghton: A teacher should be in touch with what's happening. I have a view on studio work and going out on the road and I share that with my students. I have an educational background and was fortunate enough to have a good music ed program all throughout my schooling. When we did high school clinics with Woody Herman's band, I was young enough and my college experience was real fresh so I could communicate directly with the students. There was no gap. I'll never stop playing because it reinforces the teaching. Playing keeps me fresh.

Ed Soph: A lot of the ideas I get for my teaching come from my playing.

Horacee Arnold: Basically, I want my students to understand the possibilities of the drum set and mechanically be able to deal with it and explore. What I bring to a student is my twenty years of experience playing the instrument. Every musician, particularly every jazz musician, is a composer so I see things very compositionally. Music has to do with making complete "statements."

Ed Soph: A teacher's purpose is to get the students to think for themselves. A teacher cannot *teach* a student to be creative. You can only give them the tools.

Horacee Arnold: It's also important for a student to start out with good equipment because then they can realize their full potential on the instrument. Students hear the quality of a drummer's sound and they equate that with the quality of the instrument. There's a lot of quality control built into Yamaha drums. Yamaha is really a *thinking* company because they consider design aspects you might never have thought of.

Steve Houghton: Now there's a new trend with young drummers who want to be studio players. They used to want to get into big bands. Maybe Yamaha, with its new direction, can show the kids that if you want to be a studio drummer, it's very hard work. We're all working drummers, but we're also teachers and we're aware of the problems. Also, there are a lot more clinics nowadays, it's a real trend.

Ed Soph: The thing about clinics is that students are exposed to ideas they don't get anywhere else. I'm talking about a real clinic, not some guy getting up there and playing a solo at a million miles an hour, then saying, "any questions?" New tools like educational videos give students the chance to see a wide variety of drummers play, and they can learn from that.

Steve Houghton: Yeah, the better teachers are going to take videos and run with them. Yamaha is definitely striving to break new ground in this area.

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has single-handedly fashioned a whole, heavy rock style of drumming, known for its thunderous sound, and while many struggle to keep it alive, in fact, it died on September 25, 1980. As Mattacks puts it, "There are a lot of Tarzan-like figures out there beating the shit out of large drums, but as far as I'm concerned, he's the only one who did it successfully. The sound that everyone is trying to emulate is that one-microphone sound. What everyone is doing these days is close miking and using ambient mic's—a lot of ambient mic's—to fill out the sound. But if you get the right room and, more importantly, the right player with the right tuning, you can do it

with just one or two mic's.

"What made John unique was that not only did he play properly, but he had the power. And that's what made that drum sound so huge. I mean, there's no doubt about it. He'd never get the gig with Bill Evans, but he really knew how to tune a drumkit. He had really good technique, and it was getting better and better. He's in a one-horse race and no one, but no one, gets anywhere near him; I'm including myself obviously. I don't even sniff that kind of stuff."

Eddie Kramer recorded Led Zeppelin in some of the most ideal circumstances and in some of the most adverse, from the

Stones' house, Stargroves [tracks on *Houses Of The Holy* and *Physical Graffiti*], to little eight-track, New York studios with Bonham in a drum booth, no less [second album], always managing to get a sound. "I'll tell you what comes to mind about John: determination, a tremendous amount of guts, willingness to please, great personal satisfaction in having mastered a difficult fill or passage. He'd come into the truck, or into the studio control room, or wherever it was being recorded, saying, 'Wow, that's really great,' and getting off on it. He was a man of humility, at times, even though it seems hard to see that, but he really was. And he had just a thorough enjoyment and great pleasure in what he was doing. He just enjoyed the hell out of playing the drums. From what I can surmise, he enjoyed participating in that band and giving it the kick in the ass. He enjoyed his function as a drummer, I think, and his ability to push the music along. In Stargroves I can remember watching his face during playbacks. When we'd get a great take his face would light up just like a child's face. I can remember him, Page, Plant and Jones out on the lawn listening to playbacks of 'D'Yer Mak'er'—all walking like Groucho Marx, in sync, with back steps and forward steps in time to the music, like kids. The thing I want to emphasize more than anything else is that we had so much fun making those records. We've gotten too serious in our attitude towards recording. It's become so much of a science that it's unfortunate. Something has been lost along the way and I rejoice in the memories of the days when it was more fun."

On this nice, human note we come close to the end of our tribute to John Henry Bonham, a working-class boy who rose from the ranks, seizing upon the basic democracy inherent in rock music—the folk music of our age—which combines elite technology with the basic right of expression. Like so many others, John Bonham grasped the sticks and kept to it through years of financial hardship; had he not, he would have been queuing for the train into Birmingham's factories or building houses with his father today. He didn't possess a clear artistic vision, and he did not play with an awful lot of forethought or schooling, but the things he did on his instrument have transcended the mediocrity inherent in rock music.

And so, James Patrick Page was enormously successful in creating a whole new musical form: "heavy metal"—a labeling which later work suggests he would have gladly shaken, and John Bonham was right in there on the ground floor. Would-be inheritors of his unique and powerful presence abound: The song remains the same and only the players change. But the contenders struggle in vain, for John has carried his sound and touch elsewhere. Brother John is gone.



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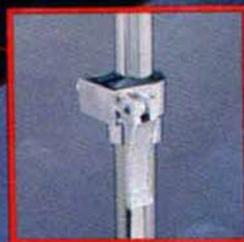
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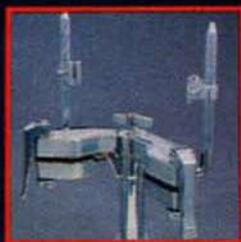
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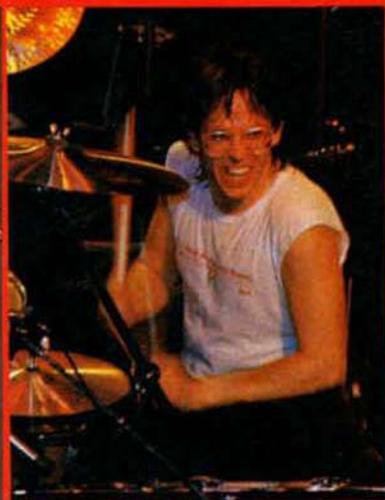
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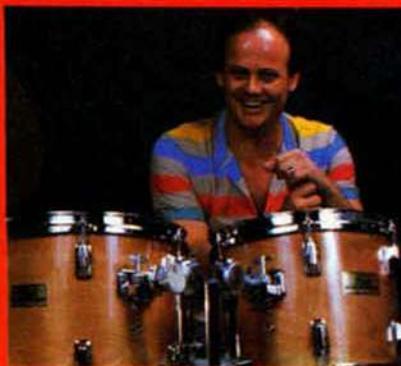
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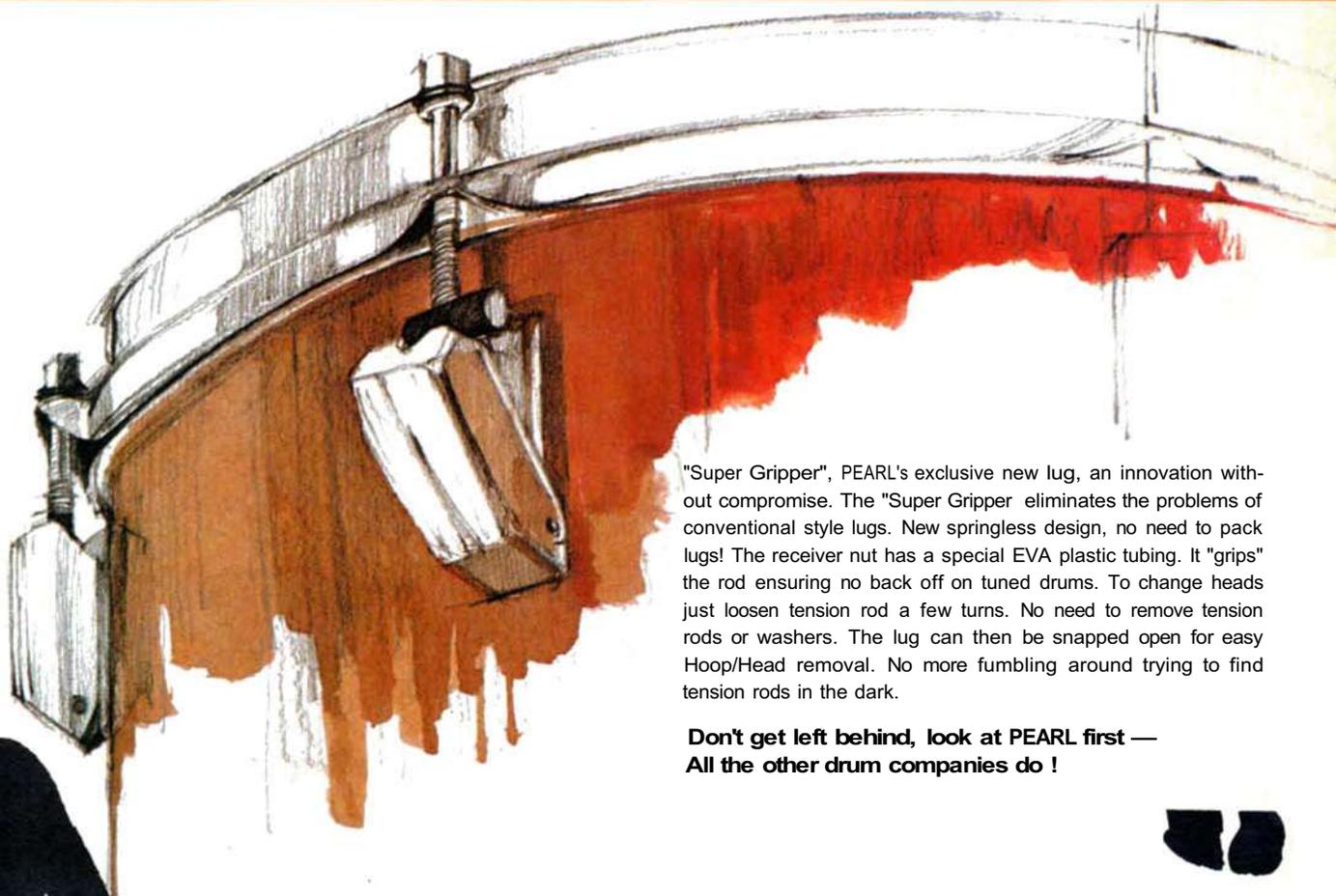
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One of my students complained to me that he had a weak foot. "I have no strength or control of my bass pedal," he said. I gave him some exercises to practice on the bass drum. At the next lesson, he was still frustrated by the lack of progress with his bass drum technique.

As luck would have it, this student happened to live near me. I suggested that I visit his house for the next lesson to check out his equipment. When he showed me his drumkit, I noticed that he was sitting quite high and very close to the bass drum. He was definitely uncomfortable with the pedal and the bass drum.

I attempted to play his set just the way he had everything arranged. The bass drum pedal was impossible. It turned out to be some unknown "bargain" that came with the drumset. Superman could not have played that pedal. It simply did not work.

I advised my student to get another foot pedal immediately. He tried several well-known pedals and selected one he liked. When he set it up for the first time, we made the following adjustments:

1. Since he was shorter than me, we lowered his drum seat.
2. We also moved the seat further back so he could get more leverage.
3. We adjusted the spring on the pedal until it was comfortable—not too tight and not too loose: medium tension, for lack of a more precise description.
4. We lengthened the beater rod slightly for more power.

My student was more comfortable with the entire set because he was now comfortable with the foot pedal. He was also seated and balanced more naturally. Needless to say, in a short time his so-called "weak foot" made a tremendous improvement. He realized that the problem had not been with his foot, but with the pedal. This understanding was a great relief to him.

Drummers are often neglectful when it comes to pedals. I have sat in on drumsets with pedals that actually squeaked from lack of lubrication. They felt really terrible and could have been fixed quickly with a little oil. Bass drum pedals need constant checking. The dirt from your shoes, the floor, and so forth sticks to the oil on the springs and moving parts of the pedal. After a while, this can really gum up the action and response. The problem is that it happens so gradually that we don't notice it until it is pretty bad.

If you are not getting the volume or punch needed from the bass drum, change

the type of beater. Many, many players use a hard beater, such as wood or *Plexiglas*. This type of beater produces a louder, more definite sound than a felt beater. You will need to place a pad on the bass drum head to protect it, such as moleskin or leather, depending on how hard you are playing.

The wrong equipment can cause other problems as well. A friend of mine recently complained to me about being tired all the time. "I am really working hard to play at the necessary volume level." I inquired as to muffling, drumheads, drum sizes and so on. He replied, "The drums are large sizes, there's not much muffling, and I use regular plastic heads—not especially thick ones."

One day I dropped by his house to check out the recording studio that he had built in his garage. He wanted to show me what the studio would do, so he began to play and record some things. As he was playing I asked, "Are those the sticks you normally use?" He said, "Yes, why?" "Because they are so small," I replied. He said, "I know they are extremely thin, but I have gotten used to them." The sticks were so small and thin that my friend was knocking himself out in order to achieve some volume. I suggested that he start practicing with larger sticks—at least a 5A size. Even a 5A was big compared to what he had been using.

He did have a little trouble adjusting to the larger size and weight. However, as he became used to the larger sticks, he was able to relax. He could now get more volume with less effort than ever before. Now he can't imagine that he was ever able to play with such small sticks.

Ed Shaughnessy makes the point very clearly in his clinics that most drummers use sticks that are too light for the style of music they play. A very light, thin stick will not produce the volume needed for most contemporary groups. It will also not produce a "full" drum sound.

How do you know if the stick you are using is too light or too thin? There are many individual preferences, and people don't always agree as to what is best. The only way I know to judge is to try the following: Play extremely loud and notice how hard you have to squeeze the stick to get volume. If you are squeezing extremely hard, you will have a tendency to "lock" the wrist. If your wrist is rigid or "locked," you will be working too hard and possibly damage the equipment. If your wrist remains reasonably relaxed

when playing loudly, you are most likely not squeezing too hard.

I've had friends and students develop some aches and pains from playing extremely hard with very light, thin sticks. Muscular strains not unlike tennis elbow can occur when you overplay very small sticks. With a slightly larger stick the muscles can relax and let the stick do more of the work.

Please do not go to the other extreme. Most of us do not need a stick larger than a 5B on the drumset. Don't practice with baseball bats or metal sticks just to work out. They won't make you faster. If you want to warm up on a pad with sticks that are heavier than you normally use, this is okay. Just avoid extremes and don't overdo it.

The moral of this article is that, when you are having difficulty playing, don't forget to consider your equipment.

1. Is your equipment *good* equipment?
2. Is your equipment in good shape?
3. Are you using the right equipment for the way you play?

Remember, adjust your equipment to suit you. Don't bend yourself out of shape to adjust to faulty or improper equipment. If something doesn't feel right, make changes. And keep making them until you are comfortable.



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The Student/Teacher Relationship

From an educational standpoint, the study of music is unique in that it is one of the few situations where the teacher and student have a one-to-one relationship. In other fields of education, a particular student/teacher relationship is usually sustained for a semester or, at most, a school year. In music, however, this relationship can be sustained from grade school through the college level. It can be argued that a career in music justifies this type of personal relationship, as musicians do not have "average" life-styles. The problems a student in that field will have to face can be best understood by a teacher who, in all probability, has had to deal with very similar problems in the past.

This particular type of relationship has numerous positive aspects. According to Charlie Perry, who has been teaching both privately and in the classroom for 38 years and who is currently a faculty member at Five Towns College in Long Island, the one-to-one situation "allows the teacher to zero in on the strengths and weaknesses of the individual. Teachers, therefore, can focus their skills and energy where they are most needed. Moreover, teachers can handle the immediate problems and needs of the individual students. Such flexibility is a must if teachers are to succeed in reaching students and serving their interests best."

In addition to flexibility, Perry delineates confidentiality as another benefit of this student/teacher relationship that allows the instructor to serve the pupil's needs in a more efficient and effective manner than would be possible in a classroom situation. "The student can confide in the teacher without being overheard by another student. This is most important. And, of course, the teacher can speak frankly without embarrassing someone in the presence of other students."

Anthony J. Cirone, teacher at San Jose State, also favors the one-to-one approach, due to the unique qualities of each individual student. "It's impossible to train a person on the level that we train them without having them in a one-to-one situation, because everyone is so different," Cirone explains. "No one is at the same level as anyone else. People do not improve at the same level. This is particularly true in percussion, where you're dealing with so many different areas of technique. You may have a great timpani player, for example, who cannot play drumset. You just can't put these people

together. So education has come up with this situation of one-on-one. The benefit is that every student can grow and progress at his or her own speed, since they all mature at different times."

Similarly, according to Vic Firth, teacher at the New England Conservatory, "All students have special problems with their instruments, and these problems are best served and solved on a one-to-one basis." Firth has tried other approaches to teaching. One attempt was to teach his students in groups of four. He found this approach to be inferior to the one-to-one situation because "each student, in effect, only played 15 minutes in the hour. There are no two faces that look alike and no two hands that are designed alike. Consequently, nothing works identically with everybody. The whole concept of classroom instruction, to me, is a double zero." He also experimented with a situation whereby he taught one student while other students audited the lesson. However, Firth found that scheduling conflicts frequently prevented interested students from sitting in while he gave lessons. Therefore, Firth found the one-to-one situation to be the most effective teaching method for his purposes.

Another unique element of music education is that the student is learning physical technique. Theoretical knowledge and some concepts can be taught in a classroom. However, it is difficult to explain sounds in terms of words. The teacher must listen to students individually performing on their instruments to determine what they are doing wrong. Furthermore, often the teacher must demonstrate the correct techniques to the students in order for them to know what they should be striving for.

However, despite all the advantages of a close teacher/student relationship, problems could potentially result. One pitfall inherent in the one-to-one situation is that a student could begin to emulate the teacher to the point where the pupil will become virtually a clone of the instructor. Joe Morello experienced this problem with a student who imitated him excessively. "The kid developed a tremendous technique and it got so that he could play all my licks. I finally said, 'Look, sonny, you've got to move out.' The student has developed his own style now. You have to emulate someone at first, but you reach a certain point where you have to put it together

your own way. My whole idea in teaching is to bring out the best in the student. If there's any talent there, it's going to come out."

Charlie Perry states that his students use him as a role model, but they do not imitate him. According to Perry, "I emphasize self-development from the very first lesson. That has a bearing on whether the student does or doesn't attempt to imitate my drumming. Students assimilate what they see and hear—records, live performances, etc.—and internalize it. Eventually, it will reappear in the shape given to it by their own creativity."

Vic Firth, on the other hand, does not believe that it is a problem if his students imitate him. "Musically, I encourage students to do exactly as I tell them. In other words, my approach is that they must do exactly what I ask of them. I want them to stick to that as the letter of the law. Then when they've perfected what I've taught them, I would prefer that they break away and inject their own ideas and personalities into their playing. That's what makes the sum total of the better player. I took lessons from one or two fine teachers, from whom I absorbed a lot. Then I injected my own personality and style into my playing. I very much encourage my students to do that when they reach a certain technical proficiency."

Likewise, Anthony Cirone states, "I think it's natural for students to imitate. After all, we work with these people for a long time, and we teach them methods that we believe in. They, of course, try to imitate that. However, I tell my students that they have to become better than I am. They can't just be as good as me. They have to always try to go beyond what I can teach them. When students leave me, I tell them, 'Get everything you can from each teacher. At the end, when you're finished studying, you begin to put all this together and you form your own ideas of teaching and music. It's not that you're to become like anyone.' Also, I think the thing that helps students develop their own creativity is the competitive atmosphere in the school. They're always around their peers. The younger students watch the older students play. They go to their recitals. They learn what's expected of them, and this, in a sense, helps their image more than the half hour a week they're with me, because they're around these other students all the time. So it's not just my influence. It's the

influence of all the students together."

One way to avoid excessive imitation of the teacher by a pupil is to advise the student to study with other instructors. The music teachers questioned were divided on this issue. Vic Firth "wholeheartedly" approves of this approach. Firth tells his students, "The more ideas and opinions you can get, the more wide and diversified your musical personality will be." Firth explains, "We have a four-year course at the Conservatory, but if somebody's really talented, that person doesn't need four years with me. People who can already play when they come in will accomplish all the basic literature and the music they should know by the middle of the third year."

Charlie Perry works in conjunction with several other drum teachers while instructing a student. "I direct the collective effort and pull everything together into a cohesive whole. I've found that collective instruction, when conducted properly, offers the student the best thinking of two or more teachers. This is particularly effective when the instruction involves one or more master teachers."

Conversely, Morello asserts, "I've never had to do that. Basically what I teach is technique, and then my students can do what they want with it. My whole purpose is to give them coordination and development, and nurture any talent that I might see. I never impose my style of playing on anybody. My idea is that I teach them how to play drums. Logically, the idea of teaching is to bring out the good in the individual. I give them a general idea of what is going on and let them develop. First of all, they must learn how to play. Then they can utilize that knowledge any way they want. The main thing a teacher should teach students is how to think creatively. I keep telling them to use their imaginations. That's the important thing."

Anthony Cirone takes a position similar to that of Joe Morello. He believes that "it's very important that the student works with one teacher for the four-year period or a large period of time. I don't think it's wise for a student to switch schools every year and go to a new teacher. I think a lot is lost in the development of the student, because every teacher handles problems differently, especially technique. If every teacher is going to start the student over with new ideas, it's going to prevent the student's progress. There's no one way of playing. There are many ways, and it's not a matter of the student doing it any particular teacher's way. It's a matter of the student mastering one way. So the student has to stay with one teacher for a number of years to get this good, solid training. Afterward, the student can add to the technique. In the early years, I think it's a mistake for a student to switch teachers very often."

There is still another aspect of maintain-

ing a one-to-one student/teacher relationship over a lengthy period of time that can be viewed as both a benefit and a disadvantage. This aspect is the personal involvement with their students that teachers often experience in this type of situation. In other fields of education, the student/teacher relationship usually remains entirely on a professional level. A student studying music can therefore be viewed as privileged in that he or she has a teacher figure who is also a friend and counselor. The music teacher can become someone, other than a parent or a peer, who the student can turn to for advice on personal matters. The teacher has the benefit of experience that the student's peers lack, and can often provide the objectivity that a parent lacks. In this manner, a personal relationship between music teacher and pupil can be beneficial to the student.

Many educators in the field of music believe that this special relationship requires them to advise their students on matters other than instrumental performance. This philosophy has been voiced by various music educators in interviews previously published in *Modern Drummer*. Charles Braugham stated that teachers should teach their students about life. Mel Lewis commented that he maintains personal relationships with his students, and occasionally departs from the subject of music in order to discuss aspects of life that can interfere with the learning process.

Charlie Perry essentially agrees with these teaching philosophies. Charlie states that he does depart from the musical aspects of a lesson when necessary. "This is part and parcel of teaching," Perry explains. "The teacher, therefore, wears more than one hat. In a sense, the teacher may be called upon to play the role of a confessor, guru, or mediator, as well as an instructor. There are times, however, when a student's problem requires medical attention, such as a heavy emotional problem, drug addiction, a severe learning disability, etc. There have been situations where I've worked in conjunction with a doctor in helping a student get his or her life together in order to make the most of that pupil's natural abilities."

According to Perry, most of "the problems that get in the way of learning can be handled by a competent, experienced teacher who has the intuitive ability to 'read' people and, therefore, probe effectively beneath the student's facade. I'm speaking of a teacher who, in addition to his or her inherent capacities and abilities, has made it a point to develop such qualities through study, and who lives in an environment where the emphasis is on learning, self-improvement, and ultimately, the raising of one's level of consciousness. This kind of environment, in fact, should be the natural habitat of the teacher."

Perry believes that "it is advisable for the teacher to encourage the student to see

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a psychologist or psychiatrist if the student's problem is beyond the scope of the teacher. And it is an equally good idea for the teacher to consult master teachers in an attempt to understand or handle a student's problems." Charlie Perry also believes that a teacher must occasionally ask himself or herself such questions as: "Am I becoming too emotionally involved with the student? Are the student's personal problems proving too great a burden for me to bear? Are my critical faculties being affected adversely and thrown off balance?"

According to Anthony Cirone, a certain degree of personal involvement with one's students is "inevitable" in a one-to-one teaching situation. "People are going to come in with questions and problems they have, and it's going to relate to your teach-



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ing. Their personal lives are going to interfere with their lessons or their progress, and a lot of times you have to deal with that. We have to discuss this part of their lives when it interferes with the progress of our teaching."

Joe Morello believes that it is his responsibility as a teacher to be a "father/confessor" to his students. "You hear all their stories and try to steer them on the right path." Morello agrees with Mel Lewis in that he believes a personal relationship should exist between a music teacher and a student. "You have to deal with each student individually and work with what you have. You must try to keep the student's morale up and keep him or her working at it, because it's not easy, especially today when music is so diversified.

"All you can do is pass on your experiences. These kids who are coming to you are just getting their big toes wet, more or less, and are starting out in the business. You can pass on some information to them and give them an idea of what it is all about." The nonmusical advice Morello generally gives his students is to "stay healthy, keep away from the drug scene, keep away from alcohol and try to lead a straight-ahead life." Morello asserts, "You have to listen to the students' problems and deal with them. You do get personally involved. You start thinking about them and worrying about their little problems. You build up a very close relationship with your students."

Although these music instructors agree that some degree of personal involvement with their students is a necessary part of the learning process, they follow different guidelines in determining what the extent of this involvement should be. In order to avoid any pitfalls that might be inherent in the one-to-one teaching relationship, Charlie Perry offers the following advice: "The teacher should not be sucked into the student's personal problems, especially if those problems are of a neurotic nature. Some students are into games, and might, in fact, feel that it is more important to 'win' the game than it is to learn. A student can drain the teacher of vital energy. The rules of conduct of the teaching and learning environment must be established by the teacher. The teacher must be in charge of the learning situation. The teacher's only involvement with the students should have to do with their development as musicians. Even then one must be cautious. The teacher's main function is to teach the student how to play an instrument. It is *not* the teacher's job to psychoanalyze the student. Students must never get the idea that they are going to control the teachers. There must be some separation between personal friendship and professionalism in the student/teacher relationship. Students must never be allowed to take advantage of teachers, just as teachers must never use their position to take advantage of the stu-

dents. To remain objective, teachers *must* stay out of the inner emotional circle of the students and their families and peers."

Vic Firth states that he tries to keep his relationships with all his students "as fair, equal, and impersonal as possible." He tries to be "totally objective" and he attempts to "stick strictly to the music." However, Firth states, "The thing is, I don't encourage it, but I certainly don't discourage it. There's no question that in the course of a lesson one gets involved with their personal problems. They'll come to you and ask your advice. So you do get involved in that respect."

In advising his students, Cirone draws upon his own experiences. "The things you've gone through in life kind of give you a pattern of thinking and a way of handling things which you're going to share with other people if they have similar problems. What I do is basically share the principles of what I've learned. A lot of times I talk to my students as a group and share these principles. Many times an individual will come to me during my office hour or something, and talk privately about a problem. Then I can get a little more specific in dealing with that. Really what I do is just share principles that have worked in my life, and explain to them the things that they may be doing wrong."

On the other hand, a teacher with strong personal or philosophical beliefs may be tempted to instill those beliefs in the student. Cirone believes that any problems or conflicts inherent in this situation can be avoided if the teacher maintains the proper attitude. "If the instructor's motives are right, this personal relationship is not going to be a problem. If the teacher's motives are not right, it can cause personal problems between the teacher and the student."

Although the potential for problems exists, Charlie Perry, Vic Firth, Joe Morello, and Anthony Cirone agree that the one-to-one student/teacher relationship is superior to any other method of music education, since the benefits far outweigh the disadvantages. The one-to-one teaching method allows the instructor to concentrate on the unique problem areas of each individual student. It also permits the teacher, in some instances, to help resolve the students' personal problems which can interfere with the learning process. These educators agree that imitation is part of the learning process, and that students naturally progress beyond the point of emulation as they develop their own creativity as musicians. Furthermore, they concur in their belief that, as long as teachers exercise care in following certain guidelines, their involvement in the personal side of students' lives will be a benefit, rather than a detriment, in this type of relationship. Vic Firth summed up the general opinion when he stated that he has "found no substitute that equals the one-to-one." 

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Photo by Denise Marie Luko

Ehart continued from page 19

PE: I like a drummer who kicks, who really plays hard and really works out. Paice used to do that in Deep Purple's heyday. I'm not going to say I've achieved the licks or the chops that he had, and I'm not going to say that I blindly copied my drum style after his. But Paice has meant quite a bit to me. Listening to a drummer who could play the way he did back then was a real treat.

RS: Are there any other English drummers who might have influenced you in some way?

PE: Well, more recently, Phil Collins would be another. I've always enjoyed listening to him, but he didn't influence me as much as Ian Paice did. Living in Kansas, like I mentioned before, I was really influenced by everyone, when you really get down to it. And it wasn't that I wanted to play like a British drummer. I mean, I could never play like Bill Bruford, even if I wanted to. But what I heard on the radio I listened to quite seriously. There isn't a musician alive who is totally original. Musicians who claim to be totally original and to have developed a style all their own without any outside input are, to put it bluntly, full of it. A lot of musicians don't like to admit who influenced them. I have to say that I listened to Ringo and I thought Ringo was the best drummer I had ever heard in my life. The same thing went for Charlie Watts. I would listen to "Satisfaction" as a kid and say to myself, "God! What a beat!" It's a shame about Charlie Watts. He always seems to be putting himself down and underrating his playing. He still excites me as much today as he did back in the '60s. The same holds true for Ringo, although we don't hear from him all that much anymore.

RS: What about the new generation of hot drummers—drummers who have come on the scene, say, in the last five years or so. Anyone in particular who you enjoy listening to?

PE: Simon Phillips. I recently saw Simon Phillips play and he damn near blew me out of my chair. He smokes. He played a drum clinic in Dallas last year, and I was in the audience. I'd already done my thing so I stuck around. Well, Simon Phillips did his thing, and when he was done, man, I couldn't do anything but get up out of my seat and give him a standing ovation. He's simply terrific.

RS: You do a lot of drum clinics. Do you do them for the exposure they give you, or is there something else that you personally get out of them?

PE: I've been doing drum clinics now for about six years. It was real flattering that someone asked me to do my first drum clinic. I thought, "Well, yeah, I'll do it. That was really nice of that person to ask me." I learned the hard way what a job that is. Drum clinics mean a fat responsibility on your part. There are 250 kids out there in the audience and probably 220 of them are drummers. And they're watching every move you make. They're just focused in on everything that's happening in front of them. If you have your act



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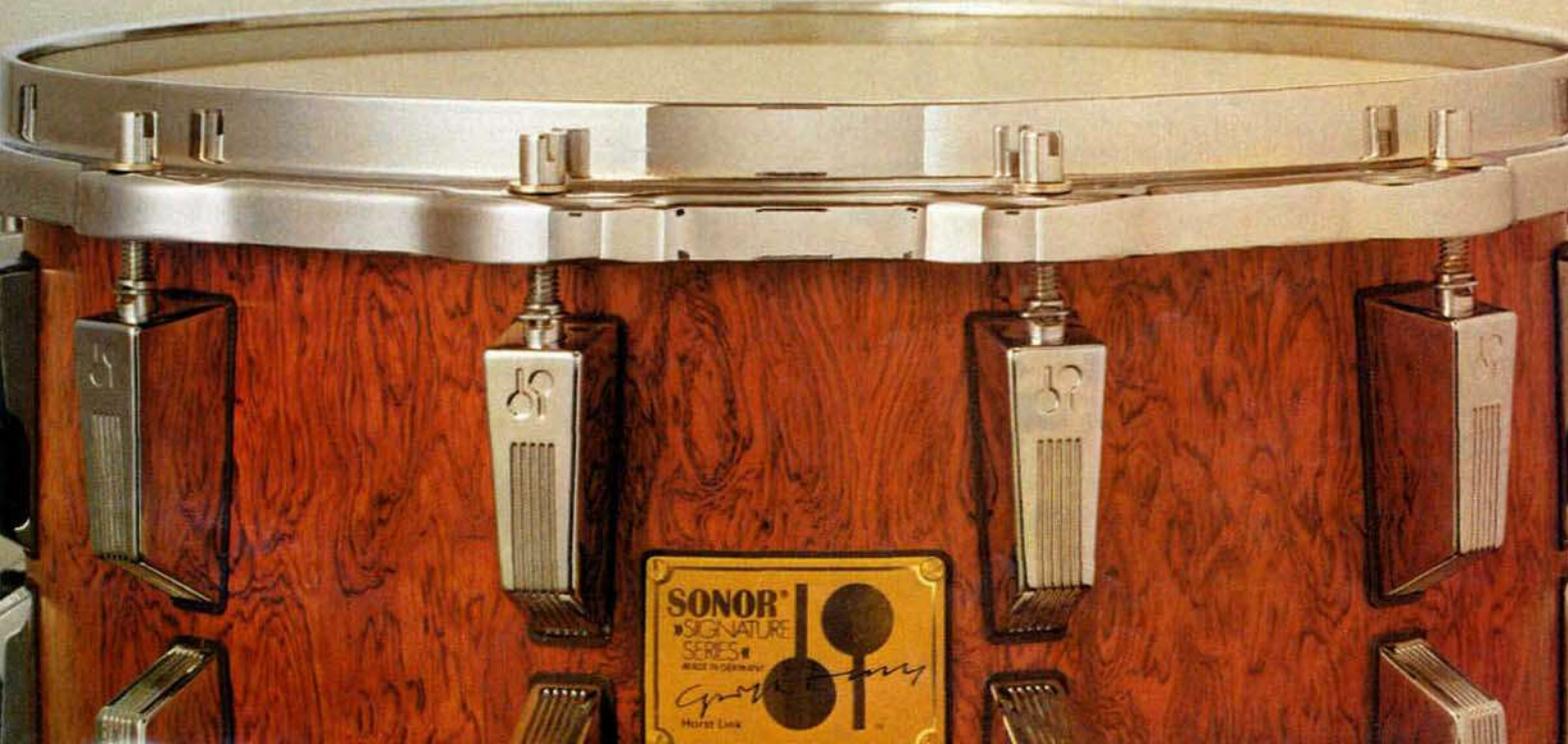
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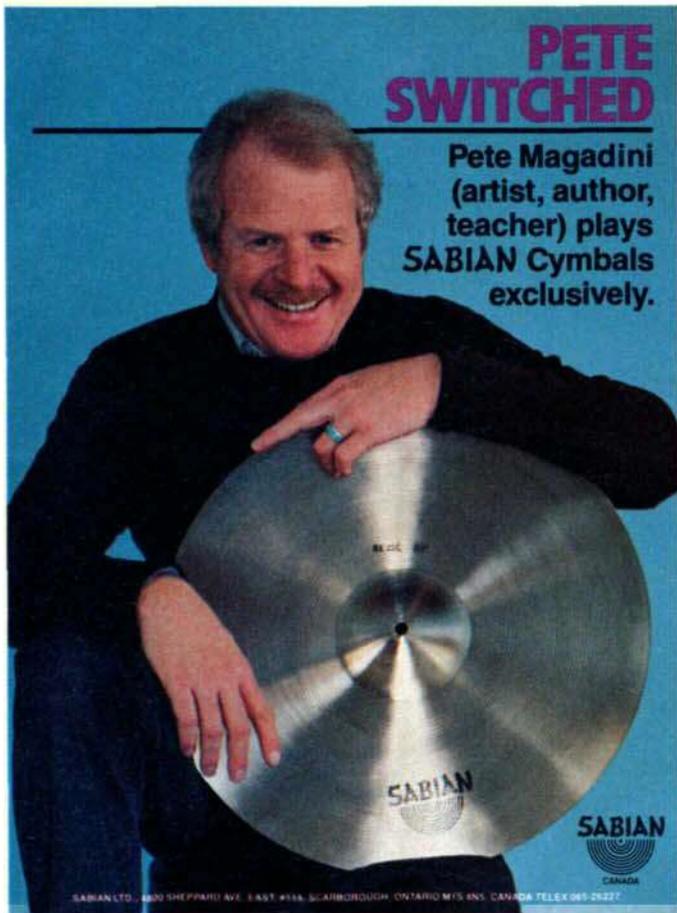
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together, you'll do alright. If you don't, you're pretty much guaranteed of making a big fool out of yourself. So I learned real quick why they asked me: Nobody else would do it! [laughs] But seriously, I really do enjoy drum clinics. I like to talk with kids. Not that I have any great secrets to give them. It's just that I know that when I was young, if I'd had the opportunity to talk with a drummer who had "made it," I would have been truly thrilled. So I try to make myself available for clinics whenever possible.

RS: How do you usually conduct your clinic?

PE: I'll go out and play a short solo. Then we'll talk a little bit about bands. Maybe I'll answer a few questions about other things the kids have on their minds. Then I'll play some more and talk some more. When I did the first Zildjian Day out in Los Angeles, I was the only drummer they had there who was in a band. Carmine Appice, Larrie Londin, Tony Williams, Steve Gadd—none of these guys are what you would call full-time band drummers. So I was able to approach that particular clinic from a totally different viewpoint than anyone else: playing drums in a band, forming a band, being in a band. Things like these really went over well.

RS: In a clinic, how do you normally explain the advantages and disadvantages of being a band drummer as compared to a studio drummer?

PE: I tell the kids how it really is. I've become real good friends with Larrie Londin, who has probably played on more albums than most, and I'll tell you, the grass is always greener on the other side. I'll sit sometimes and think to myself, "God, Larrie and Steve Gadd have played with everybody under the sun." I keep saying to myself, "Wouldn't it be nice to look at your album collection and know you've played on, I don't know, 200 records? What an accomplishment that must be!" But if you talk to studio drummers, they say, "I'll tell you what, man, I'd give anything to be in a solid band with some security and knowledge of what I was going to be doing in the future and knowing that I'd be playing x-amount of dates. It must be great to have some sort of control all your life, play with the same musicians all the time and really get to know them, instead of seeing different faces every week." Not all studio drummers feel that way, but from my experience with a lot of them, those that I know well usually feel that way.

But to get back to your question, I'll try to explain this to the kids the best I can. The strange thing, however, is that underneath all that, studio drummers and band drummers are all drummers. That's the common bond. It's a challenge to play with different people all the time, and it's a challenge to stay with the same band, the same group of musicians and continually progress as a drummer. It's very easy for a band drummer to become stagnant. It's up to me to keep pushing myself to make sure I don't get stagnant.

RS: Do you approach playing live differently than when you play in the studio?

PE: Playing in the studio is a very controlled thing. If you don't get it right, you can go back and do it again and again. If you only get part of it right, you can splice things together. You can doctor things up so that you sound like you're the greatest drummer in the world. But live you better be able to pull it off. Out on the stage you can't fool anybody.

RS: Do you prefer playing live more than studio work?

PE: Yeah, because playing live is simply more fun. I enjoy playing in front of an audience. But that's not to say I don't like playing in the studio. I like the fact that I can be inventive in there when I want to.

RS: Do you consider yourself a perfectionist when it comes to getting the right sound out of your drums?

PE: I try to be somewhat of a perfectionist, but not to the point where it just overwhelms me and I become obsessed with it. The feel of my drum sound is as important as technical perfection. I'll work real hard to get the proper drum sound, but even if the tempo is off because I've sped up or slowed down, if everyone in the band feels real good about the take, I'll keep my drums just the way they are. Going for the nth degree isn't always smart, especially if you're going to sacrifice things in the process. I try for balance. Some drummers go for that metronome perfection. I don't. I have

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to go after the performance and the feel of that performance. For me, that's what really counts.

RS: When a new song is presented to you, what's your technique in determining the drum part?

PE: Well, first of all, I stay in real heavy communication with the songwriter from the beginning to the very end. I'm always asking what feeling the songwriter is after, and even more important than that, what the dynamics of the song should be. Does the writer want a loud beat, a soft beat, more cymbal, or more hi-hat? I try to work as close as possible with whoever wrote the song.

RS: It sounds like you're more interested in completing the writer's thoughts about the song than adding your own.

PE: Yeah. And why not? I didn't write the song. I know songwriters hear something in their heads. They'll say something like, "Yeah Phil, just a nice, slashing hi-hat with a big, open beat would be great." Or else they'll say, "Keep it tight with a quick bass drum." That kind of communication gives me a pretty good feeling of what they want. Then I'll try to interpret that the best I can. If there's something that I put in and they don't like it, I'll change it. I try as hard as I can to make the writers happy, and at the same time, make myself happy. On the other hand, I've had situations where the songwriter would tell me to play a certain beat, and I'd say, "Hey, I'm sorry, but I'm not going to do it. The beat you want is wrong. It stinks." Then we talk about the song and work things out. I mean, I'm not going to play just anything. I have to believe in what I play. Fortunately, most of the time I do.

RS: Do you do anything in particular between tours to keep yourself in shape?

PE: I play a lot of tennis. I'm lucky because I've never had a weight problem or anything like that. I'm not the type to lift weights. I believe the best way to stay in shape for my drum playing is to play my drums. When I want to get those muscles I use in shape, I go down to my basement and hit the drums for a couple hours every day.

RS: Let's talk for a moment about endorsements. You've endorsed Yamaha for a while now. Some musicians feel that an endorsement relationship is an exploitation of your name and your talents to sell drums and drum equipment without being justly compensated. I know one prominent drummer who likens instrument endorsements to what athletes do with footwear and clothing. He feels musicians should be paid the same way athletes are when it comes to standing up for a particular product.

PE: That would be nice, but I doubt if it'll ever happen. The money simply isn't there—the big money. I think people have to realize that, when I go out and do a six-month tour, I need a drum company behind me. I have to have a drum company behind me, because when things break down on the road, somebody has to be there to back me up. Fortunately, I've had great success with Yamaha drums; they've given me very little problems in terms of breakdowns. But if something happened, they're going to be right there with whatever it is that I need. In addition to Yamaha, I also endorse Zildjian cymbals. If I break a cymbal on the road, what am I going to do? Am I supposed to walk down to the local music store and hope that they have the size I want? I can get anything I need from Yamaha and Zildjian. I get whatever I need within 24 hours. I would have to walk out in front of 20,000 people and say to myself, "Gosh, I sure wish I made it to that music store before it closed." That is the most important thing I see in endorsements. Big money from it would be great, too. I have to back Bill Bruford when he says, "A drum is a drum is a drum." It's real hard to refute. If you can listen to a record and say, "I know what kind of drums the drummer is playing. The set is a Slingerland or a Gretsch." No way. Nobody has that good an ear that they can tell without guessing. I like Yamaha drums; they make a great kit. But just as important as the quality of drums, is the service that goes with it. Yamaha doesn't pay me to use their drums. I use them and I endorse them because they provide me with whatever equipment I need when I'm on the road. That means a lot to me.

RS: Have you always used the same drum setup as you use now?

PE: These days I'm using some Latin percussion for effect, which

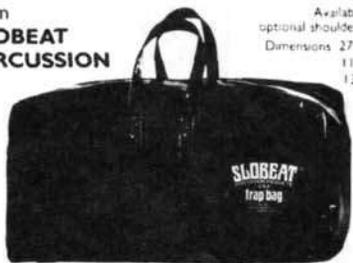


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is something I didn't use in the past. But basically I've always been into conventional drum equipment.

RS: Is there anything that you would like to have in your drumming repertoire that you don't have now, or perhaps would like to improve on?

PE: Yes. I wish I had better hi-hat work. I see a lot of drummers playing double hi-hat—real cool stuff. That was something I kind of missed out on. Somehow it just went right by me. I see drummers doing it and it frustrates me.

RS: During soundcheck you were working on something interesting. What was it you were doing?

PE: Oh, just trying to figure out a few things, but it really wasn't anything important. I'd love to have someone sit down and show me, I don't know, a "Smoke On The Water" "tssh tssh tssh" thing. That's something my drumming could use. Another thing I've been working on is a better hand-foot relationship. But what drummer doesn't want that?

RS: Has there ever been a point since you've been with Kansas where you've taken your accomplishments for granted? In other words, do you do anything to remind yourself to play your very best night after night?

PE: Our band has sold more than 12 million records, and if you think about it enough, you can get caught up in it. You can have so many people telling you how good you are and what a big star you are that you start to believe them. One day though, you say to yourself, "Wait a minute. I'm the same guy I was when I came into this. I want to be the same guy when I go out." The key to success is keeping a balanced perspective on things and keeping your head clear. Don't be so conscious of making it, because what "making it" means is different for every drummer. There are a lot of club drummers who are smokin' players and who are content to play club gigs. As far as they're concerned, they've made it. They know they can play the hell out of their drums and that makes them feel good. You've got to respect that in a musician.

For me, it just so happens that I was, and still am, in a band that got to be quite successful. In a lot of other drummers' eyes, I've "made it." But that doesn't make me any better a drummer. And that's what I constantly try to realize. I see drummers in clubs and bars all the time who can cut up my chops—no problem. When I see that I come to terms with the fact that, just because I'm playing in front of 10,000 people or whatever, and that these drummers play for maybe 200, it doesn't mean a thing.

If you get caught up in becoming obsessed with making it, then what happens if you don't? A lot of drummers simply can't find a place in rock 'n' roll and consider themselves failures. That's a shame. Now I'm not going to tell you that making it isn't any big deal because success is real nice. I've certainly enjoyed it. But I've worked my tail off to get where I am today. The success that I have is important to me. It's not everything, but it's important to me. I'd be lying if I told it any differently.

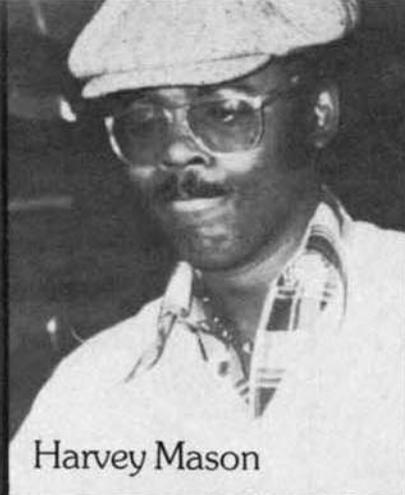
RS: I have a hypothetical question for you: If the roles were somehow reversed and it was *you* who was interviewing Phil Ehart, what one thing would you especially want to know about him?

PE: Wow, that's a hard one. Let me see. I think I would have to ask myself why I was so intense. I think I'm overly intense. My intensity in what I do, especially in my playing, is probably a bit too much. I think that has turned some people off. I know there are times when people will approach me and ask me something, and I'll turn around and give them this real intense glare that definitely turns them off. Or I'll get so intense with my playing that I can't step back and view what I have to do in a focused way. I'm a very serious person and I'm a very serious drummer. To be honest, and I hope this doesn't come out the wrong way, I feel God has given me this talent to play the drums and I don't think it's something I should mess around with or take too lightly. So when I sit down to play, I mean business. And it all comes from within. Sometimes it really puzzles me. I really think about it and say to myself, "Hey Phil, ease up. Why do you have to put so much intensity into it?" I don't usually get an answer. But I'll tell you what, if I ever do, I'll let you know.





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The Blues

The presence and influence of the American song form known as "blues" is so pervasive that I consider it an essential topic for our series. The origin of this style is from African tribal music, particularly the call-and-response and rhythmic aspects. This tradition was brought to America by African slaves, and developed, through their field chants and songs, into the basic three-chord function, 12-bar form we now call blues.

To begin with, let's learn a coordination drill you will need to play a basic blues riff.

The triplet is the primary subdivision of the quarter-note pulse in blues and jazz, so to make things less complicated we assume the following on a blues chart:

Thus, the rhythm expressed in example #1 above would be *written*:

This is much easier to read, but is still *played* as in example #1, not the straight 8th notes the notation would indicate. The key comes in knowing beforehand that the piece is a blues chart, subject to the triplet interpretation. Of course, years later, after rhythm & blues and rock 'n' roll came along, straight 8th-note blues were created. But the original form was the triplet subdivision, and you need to master it in order to have a real handle on the authentic blues feel.

After you can play the above example in a comfortable triplet groove, go to your keyboard and study this chart, which I hope is starting to look familiar.

Now try your hand at example #3 below:

From this riff we learn some very important characteristics of the blues. The first is the 12-bar form; the second is the three-chord structure of the blues, illustrating three chords that are the three primary harmonic functions in music: I = One, or Tonic, or Tonal Center; IV = Four, or Sub-dominant; V = Five, or Dominant. You may have heard other musicians refer to a chord progression as a "one-four-five," and this is what they were referring to.

An important difference between American blues and European classical music is that, while each share these same chord *functions*, two of the chord *types*—the I and the IV—differ. The blues uses all dominant 7th chords: I, IV, V. In classical music the I and IV functions usually take major 7ths, *not* dominant 7ths. If you need to, review the previous articles for more information on 7ths. So the chord tones for example #3 are: C7 (C, E, G, B), F7 (F, A, C, E) and G7 (G, B, D, F). This would be a good time to practice your C, F, and G major scales, and compare their sound to these chord tones.

This difference in chord types is what gives the blues its characteristic sound, and hearing that sound is essential for your ear-training practice. The major 7th is brighter, softer, and prettier. The dominant 7th is darker, stronger and more appropriate for the environment which dominated the lives of the people who

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developed this music.

For an experiment, play example #3 as written, then replace the B in the C7 chord with a B natural, replace the E in the F7 chord with an E natural, and replace the F in the G7 chord with an F#. You'll instantly see what I mean about the difference in character between the chords.

Rhythmically speaking, example #3 also shows us that the stronger part of the bar is on 2 and 4.

$\text{♩} = 72 \text{ m.m.}$ (♩ = ♩₃)
 $\frac{4}{4}$ | ♩ . | ♩ . | ♩ . | ♩ . |
 dot do dot
 as opposed to
 $\frac{4}{4}$ | ♩ . | ♩ . | ♩ . | ♩ . |

This creates the backbeat (2 and 4 accent) which is essential to blues, jazz, and later rock, funk, R&B, etc. A variation on the blues riff of example #3 would be to have the left hand outline the riff and the right hand play a backbeat with the *guide tones*: the 3rd and 7th of the chords. (See my article, entitled "Chord Changes" in last month's issue of *MD* for a review of guide tones.) First, learn this rhythm:

$\text{♩} = 72 \text{ mm}$
 $\left(\text{♩} = \text{♩}_{3} \right)$

Next, work with the right-hand guide tones. Remember, the guide tones for C7 are E & B, for F7 they're A & E, and for G7 they're B & F.

$\text{♩} = 72$ (♩ = ♩₃)

Notice that you only need to move down one half-step to change the guide tones from C7 to F7, and you only need to move up one half-step to move from C7 to G7. Easy! Now the next step is to work on the left-hand riff (note that it's written in bass clef, since this is the bass line for the chords):

Bass or F Clef $\text{♩} = 72$ C7

Work on this slowly at first, learning the *sound* of the riff. You will hear bass players use this riff frequently.

Finally, we put both hands together, and complete the blues riff. Note: Example #4 is in the key of C, which has no sharps or flats indicated by a key signature at the beginning of the first bar. That means that each note written in the piece is assumed to be a natural, unless modified by an "accidental" (a flat symbol = or a sharp symbol =#). Once modified, each note in the same bar remains so modified. But once a new bar is entered, the notes are once again assumed natural unless modified again. For example, the B note is flatted in every bar where it appears, except the ninth bar, where it remains natural as part of the G7 chord.

Blues Riff

Ex.4 $\text{♩} = 72 \text{ mm}$ C7

It may take several practice sessions to learn this one, but the best method of understanding a song form is to play it yourself! See if you can create your own blues figures. Once you do come up with something, your reward as a musician and drummer will be well worth the effort.

Assertions And Evaluations

Time passes, and I become convinced more than ever that the diverse elements comprising the art of drumming all work together to give us drum fanatics as good a shot at happiness and fulfillment as anyone on the planet Earth. It is more rewarding, of course, if you are an adventurous type who welcomes a challenge, for every year there are so many more skills to be mastered that those who look for the drums to be an easy ride are living in the wrong half-century.

Some of the advances I refer to are dictated in part by the changes taking place in equipment today. Try picturing an average drumset from the '60s. Picture Ringo at Shea Stadium or Dino Danelli with the Rascals. They used simple, old-style kits. Since then, the set has been in a state of flux—a continuous phase of expansion: more toms, more cymbals, and even more bass drums.

One of the few historical figures who played as extensive a set as the average rock star in concert today was the late, legendary Sonny Greer, who was Duke Ellington's drummer for more than a quarter of a century. His set, of course, was quite different from the modern spreads, yet very competitive size-wise, employing gongs, temple blocks, bells, chimes, timpani, etc. On the other hand, I recall seeing drummers in the '30s with *really* minimal equipment: bass drum, snare drum, woodblock, cowbell, one 14" or smaller cymbal, and no hi-hat. And they managed very nicely, thank you.

If the present tom-tom and cymbal population explosion continues, the drummer will soon be walled in behind the kit and all but invisible to the audience—a hermit who should be "heard but not seen." In future years, perhaps, a TV camera tucked under a cymbal, and connected via closed circuit to a large screen, may be a regular part of the concertizing drummer's equipment—the only possible hedge against being a visual "unknown."

With a setup as extensive as this, all kinds of new, or heretofore rarely used, technical ideas become more attractive. For example, patterns on one or more drums, cymbals, rims, etc., may be played with one-handed single strokes, by holding the stick in the middle. A high cymbal, or even a high suspended drum, may be played on the backswing, with the forward motion of the arm combined with the downswing to strike some other part of the

set. Then there's the four-mallet keyboard technique adapted to the drums and called *Quadrigrup* by the innovator, Michael Welch. (Think of a roll as performed on a triangle, in a corner between two sides, or around all three sides in a circular motion. Then try to picture the possibilities as applied to drum or percussion instrument design.)

There is a trend in rhythm drumming towards the use of either hand to lead. This ambidexterity makes sense in any case, and even more if you consider the distance involved on the expanded set. One thinks of it primarily as it is practiced by Billy Cobham, Lenny White, and others in rock and fusion, but it can also be an eye-opener in latter-day bebop. A scant few years back, Phil Wood's *European Rhythm Machine* was sparked by French drummer Daniel Humair, who plays ride cymbal and all the attendant independence equally well with either hand.

Reaching to cover greater distances between drums may pose physical problems to someone not in the best of condition. A vast difference exists between the motor skills involved in a bravura performance on one of these modern drumsets and the considerably less violent techniques of any other instrument, including the rest of the percussion family. In fact, one might legitimately think of it as a distinctively different, more athletic, discipline, perhaps closer to gymnastics. How far should one go as a strength and health devotee? The "sacred brotherhood of musicians" is not especially celebrated for the monastic life. As already noted, it may be that string, keyboard or horn players can get away with having their strength somewhat impaired. Being a powerhouse percussionist has proved, over the last few years, to be a real tester. There is a Japanese troupe, *On-deko Za*, that does occasional concert tours in this country. They are drummers who play many styles of tom-tom-like drums—from modest size to really huge—in the most physical manner imaginable. They have very tight discipline, are heavily involved in running, and practice a Spartan life of general fitness.

Generations of drummers have developed somewhat rigid laws on the manner in which each of the four limbs is supposed to be used. Now, a new era is dawning. All manner of innovators are busily breaking the bonds of the old jazz and rock traditions that dictated what, and on what, to

play. The larger and more modern sets contribute to the changing techniques. As we assimilate a whole new arsenal of skills (matched grip, rock or jazz ride with either hand, "full set" rhythm patterns, etc.), the really ambitious and future oriented among us should anticipate and prepare for the next stages. We should be building facility and firm control interchangeably between the hands and feet, with as many of the myriad combinations as may be practical. With all the four-way goodies that are there, like ripe cherries ready for the plucking, one can't help feeling like a spoilsport in pointing out that even the most avid lifetime student can't achieve more than a handful of these in a career. Too many absorbing, unexplored areas exist; it's hard to know where to start.

I have been very ambitious myself in some directions; in others I missed the boat. I have always recognized that the drummers with a background of tap dancing had, on the average, far better feet than we earthbound creatures. Until recently, I thought that all there was to it was just better pedal control. I now believe that the correlation between dance and drumming is far deeper than that. It has to do with balance on the seat, weight distribution, and the use of gestures similar to the dance, to smoothly achieve the shift of position necessary for power and control at various angles. To improve all these, a broad program of dance movement could not help but be useful to the drummer. What *is* most dance? It's moving to music. What is most drumming? It's moving and hitting to *make* music. Dance, or other physical development techniques, can all be beneficial. For example, you might choose to try tap dancing (for the ankles), ballet or modern dance (for balance), weight lifting (for strength), running (for endurance), or karate or other martial arts (for quickness and intensity). You would not be alone; quite a few top players practice one or more of these disciplines.

It would be wise to remember, as you are fabricating your gigantic technique, not to go completely overboard. There are many less dramatic aspects to drumming, and most of these are more demanding of taste and musicianship than of swiftness and power. I've known quite a few really heavy-chops players, who could turn anyone green with envy with their solos, but who never quite made it in ensembles. Their problem, or at least part of it, was

by Jim Chapin



that they had practiced too much by themselves. They had not been sufficiently involved in the fascinating give-and-take between the percussion and other instruments that makes the performing of music on the drums such an ongoing thrill.

Some of the most revered players in history were very ordinary technicians, and some could hardly execute at all, in the scholastic, rudimental sense. What they really could do, sometimes to a magical degree, was to relate to the musical situation at hand, and not only support and nurture the rhythm structure, but comment with their instrument in a unique and individually identifiable manner. They had found a far more effective means of making themselves indispensable than merely becoming Olympic drum athletes.



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Whenever anyone asks me what I consider to be a drummer's most important aspect, I reply, "Personality," because that's what is expressed through technique and equipment. It would seem that Max Weinberg is concerned about the same thing, because when he sat down with 14 prominent drummers—Johnny Bee, Hal Blaine, Earl Palmer, Dino Danelli, Dave Clark, Ringo Starr, Charlie Watts, Kenney Jones, Russ Kunkel, D.J. Fontana, Bernard Purdie, Jim Keltner, Roger Hawkins and Levon Helm—he wasn't so much concerned with how something was done technically. He wanted to get to know them as people—find out how they became drummers, what their lives were like, and most importantly, how they felt about what they did and the people they played with. There are some interesting contrasts here: Bernard Purdie's extreme self-confidence and Charlie Watts' equally extreme self-effacement; Dave Clark the businessman and Levon Helm the simple country boy; laid-back Russ Kunkel and aggressive Dino Danelli. As you become aware of these drummers' personalities, you realize that what they play is directly related to what they are. Purdie, for example, plays with conviction because, as a person, he believes in struttin' his stuff—which he certainly does in this book. Likewise, the other drummers provide us with a look at how they approach their music. You won't find much in this book about paradiddles and hardware, but you may learn more about drumming than you realize.

Rick Mattingly

LATIN AMERICAN PERCUSSION

by Birger Sulsbruck

Available through: Jamey Aebersold

1211 Aebersold Drive

New Albany, IN 47150

Price: \$35.00 (book and three cassettes)

Interestingly, the biggest obstacle this very fine book faces is getting the reader to take it seriously. The question one tends to ask is, what could a Danish percussionist named Birger Sulsbruck possibly offer us on the subject of Latin American instruments and the rhythms of Cuba and Brazil? Well, the answer is: plenty! Sulsbruck's *Latin American Percussion* is an exhaustive study of the subject presented in a 183-page text and accompanied by three, double-sided cassettes.

The author has attempted to answer some very basic questions in this book. Where do the instruments and rhythms come from? How do you use the instruments? What rhythms are the various instruments used for? How do you distinguish one from another? The beauty of this book lies in the answers.

Part One deals with the instruments themselves. Everything from cowbell, bongos, congas, and timbales, to pandiero, cuica, Cabasa and agogo bells are on display. There are tons of basic rhythms at various tempos, alternative patterns and a wealth of descriptive photographs while the cassette supplies the sound of the instrument and the correct rhythmic pattern.

Part Two presents examples of the rhythms of Cuba and Brazil. This is where the cassette concept really works nicely, as each Latin American instrument is heard in rhythm-section fashion, and presented in a vertical, rhythmic score format in the book. Here again, it's a most ambitious and thorough undertaking, as everything from the more common Cuban cha-cha, mambo, rumba and montuno, to the Brazilian samba, baion, maracatu and batucada are demonstrated.

If there is any fault to be found at all in this wonderful book it's that most of the recorded examples are entirely too long (upwards of 32 bars in some cases). Had the demos been cut down to eight or even sixteen bars, it's likely that the entire project would have fit on one or two cassettes, which in turn might have reduced the rather hefty price tag. However, this is not enough to overshadow the sincerity of the work that has been done here. This package is worth every cent. From Denmark to Latin America, Birger Sulsbruck has truly bridged the ocean wide with this one.

Mark Hurley

DOUBLE BASS DRUMMING

by Joe Franco

Publ: D.C. Publications

2204 Jerusalem Avenue

N. Merrick, NY 11566

Price: \$7.00

Although the concept of using two bass drums has been around for some time, there have not been many published works that clearly cover the subject; here is an exception. Mr. Franco's book explores three main ideas: the use of two bass drums in playing time in 8th-note triplet and 16th note patterns; playing fills between hands and feet by breaking up either continuous 8th-note triplet or 16th-note combinations; and soloing over the double bass roll, using accented patterns, rolls, and alternate Stickings. The musical notation in this book is in 4/4 time, the author stating that the concepts can be applied to other time signatures as well. Each section can be studied independently or in tandem with the others.

Something rare found in this book is the ability of each exercise to be practically applied, as opposed to exercises for the sake of technique alone. The book does require at least a minimal amount of technique with the left foot before attempting the exercises. All of these exercises are clearly thought out and printed very legibly.

Within the 76 pages of *Double Bass Drumming*, Mr. Franco successfully relates much of the information necessary for the competent use of two bass drums.

William F. Miller

INTERNATIONAL ROCK AND ROLL FOR THE DRUMMER

by Ralph C. Pace

Publ: Drum Book Music

975 N. Broadway

White Plains, N.Y. 10603

Price: \$4.00

This book is one of a series dealing with rock 'n' roll coordination. In this volume, the major portion of musical text presents "two fixed non-changing rhythms" (the ride cymbal and hi-hat) played against a changing snare and bass drum. The rhythms begin in a very basic form, which allows the student time to develop both the physical and mental control from this type of coordination. The book progresses through a multitude of rhythmic variations with the author reversing snare and bass patterns, thereby ensuring an all-inclusive approach to the rhythmic possibilities. By setting up groups of two, three and four notes, very interesting phrasings are achieved. While the majority of rhythms use an 8th-note ride-cymbal pattern, the author also suggests using a 16th-note ride cymbal rhythm. There are a few pages of rhythms using quarter notes on the ride cymbal, and the last section of the book deals with accent and sticking control and their application to drumset for use in fill-ins.

This 84-page book addresses the problem of rock coordination in a thorough and interesting way. It also challenges the student to develop his or her own ideas. *International Rock And Roll* can be used by beginning to advanced students who are interested in improving their rock coordination.

Glenn Weber

THE VIRTUOSO DRUMMER

by James Morton

Publ: Mel Bay Publications
Pacific, MO 63069

Price: \$4.95

Mr. Morton's 52-page work consists of a multitude of exercises for hand development. The book is in three sections: Fundamental Technique, Hand To Hand Coordination, and Ambidexterity. Within the first section, proper grip, position, and stroke action are discussed. Also development of the single-stroke, double-stroke, and multiple-bounce roll is demonstrated. In the Hand To Hand Coordination section, the author uses both 8th notes in 6/8 meter and 16th notes in 2/4 meter with different hand combinations. There are over 350 exercises in this section alone, which makes this a good book for the individual who benefits from extensive repetition. The third section deals with ambidexterity, incorporating different roll combinations in a format similar to the second section.

In regard to the skill level of this book, the author states, "This text is not a snare primer, and an assumption is made that the reader is experienced and progressed to the point of possessing an accurate and developed grip." The notation is clear and the instruction is easily understood, making this book good for individual use as well as with an instructor.

The Virtuoso Drummer can be successfully used to improve hand technique. The book ends with a recommended daily workout which lasts about 25 minutes and would be good for any drummer to incorporate into a routine.

William F. Miller

INNER DRUMMING

by George Marsh

Publ: George Marsh
256 Mullen
San Francisco, CA 94110

Price: \$15.00

I didn't know what to make of this book when I first saw it. There are no standard-notation exercises, but pages of diagrams representing "Inner Drumming Rudiments and Pendulums." Perhaps Chapin's *Advanced Techniques* was met with the same sort of skepticism when it first came out in the late '40s. At that time, who had ever heard of a drum book that was not based on the 13 standard rudiments? And now—a drumset book without standard notation? Without transcriptions? A drumset book which transcends styles? Which *makes us think*? George Marsh's book contains studies dealing with the paths of motion between the four limbs. The exercises are beautifully represented by diagrams symbolizing the flow of energy—of motion—between the four limbs.

The approach is logical, progressing from single-limb, to two-, three-, and four-limb studies (making it important that you start at the beginning of the book—not the middle or end). The simplicity is overwhelming. Marsh provides basic rhythmic progressions that apply to the diagrams, but the student can also apply rhythms of his or her own creation, giving added value to the book. After all, playing drumset is about improvisation, not transcribed mimicry.

What is Mr. Marsh's premise? Most of us need not think about the movement of our legs when we walk or run. Similarly, we don't have to concentrate on the motion and coordination required to brush our teeth or open doors. The coordination required for such everyday tasks has become internalized—become part of our psycho-physical memory. It should be the same way with drumming. Through simplicity and repetition, we can train our brains so that the path of motion required for a particular rhythm, pattern, or technique is no longer objective (outside of us), but subjective

(subconsciously part of us) providing a foundation on which to build our own musical vocabularies. The visualization of Marsh's diagrams facilitates the internalization of patterns of movement—of coordination.

The book constantly stresses virtues which are necessary for playing the drumset musically in *any* style: listening/concentration, a sense of form and structure, melodic development, physical and mental relaxation, and freedom with benign discipline. Don't make the mistake I *almost* did. Get this book and live with it for a while. The only limitations of Mr. Marsh's book are the imagination and patience of the person studying it.

Ed Soph

GETTING YOUR MUSIC TOGETHER FOR DRUMS

by Bill Molenhof

Publ: Bil-Mol Music
57 Beach Street
New York, NY 10013

Price: \$6.50 (includes book and tape)

A lot of people contend that drummers spend too much time practicing technique, and not enough time practicing music. Molenhof attempts to remedy that situation by presenting a cassette tape with six tunes which a drummer can play along with. A booklet is included which contains charts for the tunes, making them easier to follow the first few times through, and also giving the drummer a realistic look at how drum charts are actually written. (Frankly, these charts are better than the ones you usually see; Molenhof knows more about writing a good drum chart than the average composer or arranger.) The tape was recorded with marimba, bass, and an occasional synthesizer. The marimba playing is so rhythmic on this tape that playing drums along with it becomes easy; the drummer can concentrate on creativity and taste without having to worry about staying with the other instruments. As for the tunes themselves, they range from fairly straight ahead to somewhat challenging. Styles include rock, jazz, country and ragtime, and the arrangements are open enough to allow the drummer a variety of ways to play each tune. Playing along with this tape will certainly do more for a drummer's musicianship than practicing endless "chops" exercises, and it's more fun too.

Rick Mattingly

THE BEST DRUM RHYTHMS EVER WRITTEN

by Sam Vider

Publ: Lewis Music Publishing Co.
263 Veterans Boulevard
Carlstadt, NJ 07072

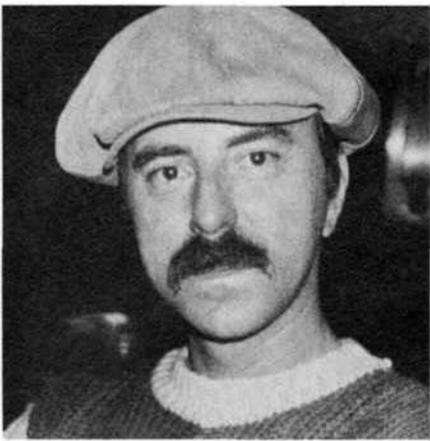
Price: \$7.95

This book contains 177 pages of drumset rhythms and is divided into three sections: Rock, Latin, and Miscellaneous Rhythms. The Rock section is very comprehensive, and includes reggae, 5/8 and 7/8 progressive rock and funk rhythms. The author presents a page of basic rhythms, followed by a page containing a variation (usually the hi-hat), then a page with the addition of short fills, and finally a Rock Solo page. While the manuscript is readable, the layout of the solo pages is confusing due to the overlapping of measures from one line to another. The Latin section covers many of the commonly used rhythms as well as very specific regional rhythms, such as "Punto-Guanacasteco," a 5/8 rhythm from Costa Rica, and "Zamba," a 6/8 Argentine rhythm. The Miscellaneous section contains odd-time rhythms, 2/4 and 6/8 marches, two-beat, and jazz waltz pages. The section also presents Italian, Jewish, Bulgarian, Rumanian and Moroccan rhythms.

This is a good book for the drummer involved in the club-date field or the drummer who would like to expand his or her repertoire of rhythms.

Glenn Weber





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Inside Simmons continued from page 23
can't play this touch-sensitive keyboard on the Prophet because it doesn't feel like my acoustic piano." They just say, "Well, here's my new instrument. This is what it feels like. I've got to practice on it to make myself adept on it." Drummers say, "I can't play on this; it's like a bloody tabletop." So what? Play on the bloody thing, practice on it, and suddenly it isn't like playing on a tabletop. Don't try to hit it like a real drum. Adapt to what it is.

JOHN GILSTON

On April 23, at the unveiling of the SDS7 at the Guitar Center in Los Angeles, Glyn Thomas was forced to announce the shocking news that drummer John Gilston had been killed in a wind-surfing accident. Just a few days before, John had been so looking forward to being part of the event, and infusing the crowd with his enthusiasm. It seemed impossible that the evening ended up being dedicated to his memory.

Although John Gilston was not officially affiliated with Simmons drums, he was their chief studio programmer. He had programmed the Simmons for such people as Michael Sembello, Donna Summer, Olivia Newton-John, Earth, Wind & Fire, Herb Alpert, The Commodores, Irene Cara, Sheena Easton, Musical Youth, Chicago, Stanley Clarke & George Duke, Jeffrey Osborne, Oingo Boingo, Jim Messina, Juice Newton, and an endless list of others.

As a drummer, his background included such bands as Fat Grapple, The Incredible String Band, Heron—a String Band offshoot—and Visitor, which later became Daniel Webster. He moved to the United States about six years ago, but became interested in electronic drums in their embryonic stages in 1976, even before he left England. He bought one of the first electronic drums, called Impact, and became a forerunner in the use of new sounds and percussive ideas. For John, it became a viable profession, and his services became invaluable to the industry at large.

Not only were his services invaluable, but John was invaluable as a person. It seems incredible to me that I am now writing a memorial of someone who was so alive and vital such a short time ago. Death is always sad and painful for friends and loved ones, but it seems even more tragic when it strikes a young person who had everything at his fingertips.

I met John while he was lending his expertise to a Kenny Loggins session. As at any session, there was spare time during quiet, nonproductive intervals. John and I spent that time talking, and we became friends. Anyone whose life he touched, in business or in friendship, knows what a pleasure it was to be around this lovely man, whose intelligence, wit, energy, vibrancy, and never-ending hint of laughter in his green eyes brightened many a day.

When I began the article on Simmons

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drums, I knew that John would be an indispensable source of information. Despite his recent tragic death, MD has chosen to run this interview as a tribute to John's valuable contribution to the popularity of the Simmons sound.

JG: The *Impact* had very few controls. In order to make it usable, interesting and different, I had to learn about synthesizers and guitar effects. I bought a whole slew of those and put the drums through them just to make some different sounds. Not a lot of it was very usable commercially in mainstream music, but the sounds were great for sound effects. A lot of it was noises you might hear in horror movies.

After the *Impact*, I graduated to *Syndrums*. *Synare* was basically just like the *Impact*, but they had a bend control. The *Syndrum* thing died because everybody used the same sound, but it did have some very good noises. Probably the feeling was that you really should keep drummers playing 2 and 4, and let synthesizer players do the other stuff because they would have a little more savvy on how to use them and the right applications. Then it became very unhip to use them.

RF: When did you first come in contact with the Simmons Drums and how did your programming career begin?

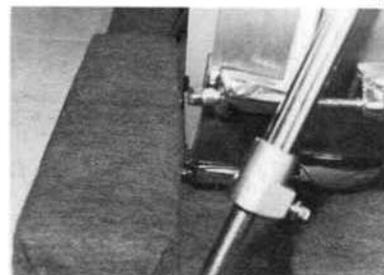
JG: I first saw the Simmons three years ago. I thought the sounds were very good, but I was very prone to dismiss them because I sort of felt that electronic drums hadn't really happened yet. I was very skeptical of any new thing coming down the pike. In '81, the hi-hat sound was very cheesy—like the Roland 808 hi-hat sound. And I didn't like the feel of the pads. The sound of the drums was good, but I kind of backed off. People were starting to use them in England, while only a couple of people had them in the States. Then I heard a King Crimson album. I went up to the house of my friend, Glyn Thomas, and I heard the drums. They had done a lot of improvements and they sounded amazing. This was the end of '82. So I decided to get a set. To defray the expense, I thought I would advertise them as being for rent. Dribs and drabs came through and a couple of interesting calls. Two of the first serious dates were Donna Summer's "She Works Hard For The Money," and Michael Sembello. "Maniac" had already been cut for the movie *Flashdance*, but they wanted to remix it as the next single. The main change I'm aware of is the Simmons.

Nobody on the sessions wanted to figure out how to run the things, so I was getting calls to come along and get the sounds for people. I simply developed a reputation quickly for doing that, and for knowing how to translate their grunts and requests. I seemed to know where they were coming from. Then I started my old tricks of putting them through all sorts of things like I had done with the *Impact* drums. Al-

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though I wasn't playing on most of these dates, it was still a wonderful experience to see artists of this caliber at work and watch their studio techniques. Now I'm getting more calls to actually play them, and while it's not on the same level as the stuff I program, I am very keen to do it because I am a player. I really don't mind not playing, though. I've had the opportunity to watch some great drummers.

RF: Can you be specific as to what you do with them?

JG: It's actually quite simple. Obviously I familiarized myself with what a bend control, a pitch control and a noise control do. Anybody who sits down with the set and listens to each control and what happens relationship-wise between each control,

can figure it out. Like Dave Simmons says in the manual, it's really a very simple set to operate. Then it's down to your ears. You really don't have to know a lot about what happens on the circuit board. That is the electronics and it's not important to understand that in order to have a fluency with the instrument. You just have to sit down and play with the control knobs. I hate to sound vague or elusive, but they really are simple. Tuning the drums—you really can't say programming the drums because you're not programming it in the sense of sequencing it like a Linn—is more twiddling the knobs than anything else. I'm called a Simmons programmer on the credits, which is very flattering, but it's just twiddling knobs and having the ears to

know what a drum should sound like.

RF: What do you see as the benefit of using the Simmons?

JG: A lot of people are using the Simmons because it's a very economical way to get monster drum sounds with no hassle. To get a good drum sound in the studio, it can take hours and hours of fooling with mic' positioning and different heads. Very often the drummer is all played out by the time it's time to do the track, and sometimes it's quite hard to get the energy going again. People often spend the first day just getting the drum sounds when dealing with a band situation. But if you're dealing with a record date for a solo artist where you call in session players who are there for three hours, you've got to nail the track. You can't afford to be spending that amount of time on the drum sound. Simmons represents a way for people to get very predictably good musical sounds in five or ten minutes. You're looking at a considerable savings in studio time and musicians hanging about. Plus, you know it's going to happen.

RF: You've taken the Simmons a step further and have invented a trigger for the unit.

JG: A way I like to use them is to trigger the Simmons from a real drumset, so you have a blend of real drums and the Simmons. You stick these little contact mic's on the drums and you can get a killer sound. If there's anything that the Sim-

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mons is deficient in, it's that with a real drum you get a certain slap—a certain percussive impact. To overcome that particular aspect, I like to use a real drum for the slap of the head, and fill it out with the Simmons tone.

RF: What have been some of the more interesting or enjoyable programming dates you've done?

JG: One of the first dates I did was for Kris Kristofferson. They called because the drummer couldn't get his toms sounding right. When I got the call I thought, "This is a little outside," but that was the challenge. Since it was one of the first dates, I wasn't convinced that the Simmons would do what he needed, but with the help of the producer, it worked, which helped on sessions after that. I had never thought of them as real drums before.

Working with Michael Sembello was probably the most enjoyable of all the sessions. He's a great guy and he was really willing to get outside, take some chances and do some different things. He's a real pro, and because I did a lot of sessions with him, we built up a relationship and it was really fun.

One of the funniest sessions I did was with Giorgio Moroder for Irene Cara's new album. They called me to program their Simmons because they had bought a set, but couldn't seem to get the right sounds out of it. After everything was set up, Giorgio finally came in and said, "I need a sound." He made noises and said, "You have two minutes to get it. Otherwise we'll pass." I thought that was an interesting challenge to meet. Most sessions are really sort of laid back, and it's expected that you will take a while to get sounds. Sometimes it's very easy to fall asleep in the studio because of the pace, or lack of it. So this particular session was fun.

RF: Did you get the sound?

JG: Do you think I would be telling the story if I hadn't?



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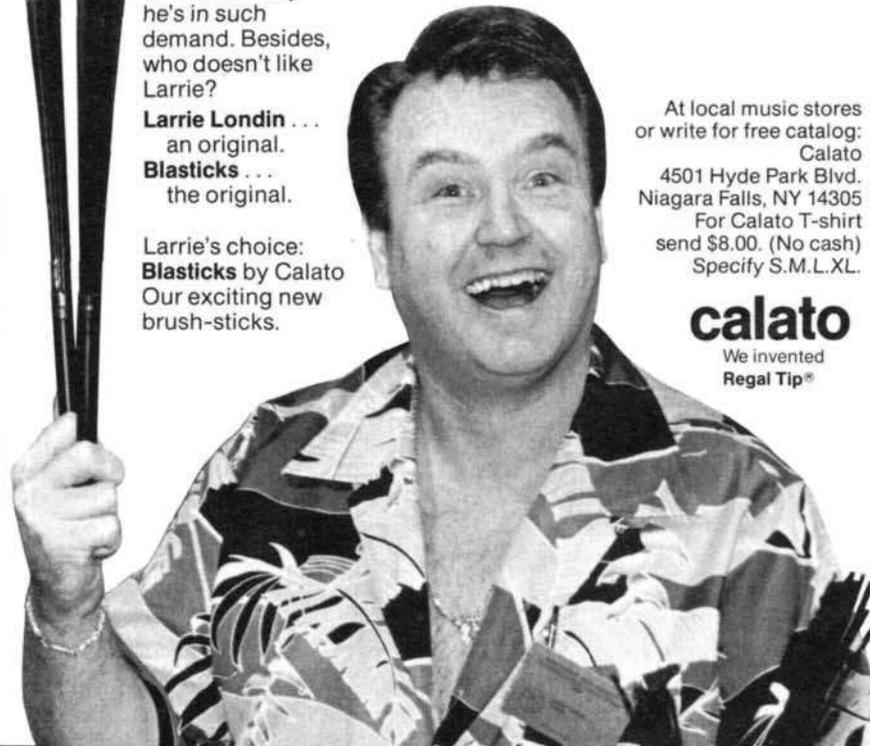
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The person on the other end of the phone may be a bandleader, a booker, or another drummer who needs a sub, in which case that individual will probably give you all the details without your asking for them. However, a friend or spouse of the person booking you may contact you to check on your availability. In this case, you may be given insufficient details, so *ask questions*. If the other person is unable to supply all the information you want, make sure that you will be filled in on the missing details before the gig. Don't leave things to chance. Make a note of the phone number of the person who is calling you, so that, if there is anything you want to know or if you have any problems, you will have someone to contact.

You can save yourself a lot of hassles and the risk of unpleasant surprises by asking the right questions, and being properly prepared and organized. Let's look at these aspects of preparation in more detail.

Money

Don't be embarrassed to ask how much a job pays. It's a reasonable question, unless the money really doesn't matter to you. It isn't a good idea to assume you will be paid the rate for the job. You might find out after it's over that you've done it for free! The value you put on yourself will probably be influenced by Musician's Union rates. These are normally set at a minimum. You *can* go above the rates if you can get it, but be wary of going below them. You don't want to get a reputation as someone who is cheap and who undercuts other musicians. If the attitude of whoever holds the purse strings seems to be that you are being given a great opportunity regardless of the money involved, be wary of this too. There is a good chance that somebody is exploiting somebody.

Your Equipment

If you are a free-lance drummer, you're probably prepared to adapt your drumset according to the sort of job you're doing. Make quite sure that you understand exactly what is required of you. You can save

yourself time by making sure you have all the right heads, cymbals, sticks, etc. Some people arrive with a trunkload of spares and start making alterations while they are setting up. If you're in any doubt about the musical requirements, *this is the only safe way*, but if you can have everything you need without having to carry superfluous equipment as well, life becomes much easier.

On the other hand, you mustn't allow yourself to arrive at the gig with less than you need. A good way of ensuring against this possibility is to check that all your cases contain what you think they contain before they go into the car. How many people can put their hands on their hearts and say that they have never gotten a couple of miles up the road and asked themselves, "Did I pack my hi-hat stand?"

If you are told, "Don't bother to bring your drums; there are some there that you can use," my advice would be to put your own in the car anyway, just in case. Your informant could be mistaken, or the owner of the other set might decide to remove it for the first time in five years on the very night you arrive to play them. If there are drums there, you might prefer to use your own, or you might want to substitute bits of the other set with bits of your own.

Transportation

Make sure that your car is in good running order. Don't depend on an unreliable vehicle to get you to the gig. If you don't make it you're not only letting yourself down, but everybody else involved as well: musicians, agent, management and audience.

Breaking down on the way to or from a gig carries the additional problem of abandoning a car by the roadside. When the car has a drumset in the back, the risk is doubled. It is well worth becoming a member of a motoring organization that operates a free recovery service.

Sometimes transportation is organized by the band. If you're traveling in a band bus or van, it's safe to assume that the costs of running that vehicle will have been deducted from the gross earnings before the individual musicians are paid. If one of the other band members is giving you a lift, remember to offer that person a contribution towards gas expenses. The bandleader might be paying this musician extra to cover the expense, but if not, it's only fair that you share the burden. Also, make sure

that you have sufficient cash or credit cards to meet any incidental expense such as gas, food or phone calls.

Finding The Club

When you are given the name and address of the club, repeat it to make sure you've got it down correctly. Something like a wrong letter in the street name could mean that you'll go to the wrong place and never find the right one. If the person booking you knows the club, ask for directions. People are usually expected to have street maps of towns within a reasonable gigging distance of where they live. But even if you can find the street without difficulty, finding the club can still cause problems. One-way traffic systems, traffic lights, etc., means that you can drive past the club many times without noticing it. Sometimes the appearance of the place isn't what you expect. There can be a single door leading to a cellar, when you're looking for a full front. If you know which side of the road it's on, how far down it is, what it looks like, *plus* any hints about the traffic system, finding the club can be a lot easier.

Timing Your Arrival

It usually happens that the people who have the longest distance to travel arrive first. This is because it's harder to accurately estimate the time for a longer journey, so a wider margin of error is needed. The important thing is, *give yourself plenty of time*. It's much better to be early than late.

You should be given full details of the time of the gig. This doesn't only mean playing times. It might be necessary for you to be set up well in advance of starting time. The management of the club may not want you setting up while the audience is in there, so you may have to arrive before it opens. If you're playing for a company or lodge function, they're likely to be having a sit-down dinner with speeches. Setting up with this going on is both embarrassing and impractical.

You'll need to know whether there is to be a rehearsal with the band, or a band call for a show act before the gig. It's also useful to know if you're free to leave when the gig is finished. Sometimes, the management doesn't want a band packing their equipment while another band is still working, or the only way out is across a crowded dance floor. In these instances, it's often necessary to wait until everything is finished before you leave.

Your Arrival

It's not a good idea to park your car in front of the main doors of the club and march in laden with drum cases. This can create a bad impression and there might well be an easier way in. Leave your car where it will not be an obstruction and go in to check out the place. Tell the manager or a waiter that you are with the band and you have equipment to bring in. Find out where you are playing and the best way to bring in your gear.

Always be polite and diplomatic. You might find that *nobody* seems to know what's going on. These things happen, but be patient. Clubs and hotels usually have at least one person on staff who is sympathetic to the problems of musicians. If everyone else seems to be floundering around being unhelpful, this person will appear eventually.

After The Gig

Make sure you've got everything before you leave. It's very inconvenient to go back to collect something that you left behind. It's even *worse* to find out that something is missing when you're setting up for the next gig.

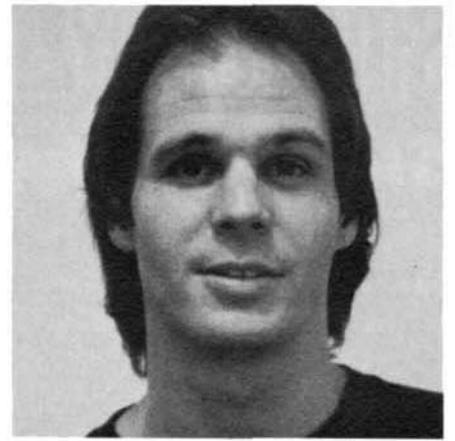
One of the best ways to ensure that you've got everything is to have a system for collapsing and packing your equipment that you can go through with your eyes shut. Packing items as they are col-

lapsed is preferable to spreading them all over the stage and then finding cases for them. I start at the top and work down. I take cymbals off the stands and put them straight into the case. I put the tom-toms away next. Then I put the hardware and snare drum into a trap case, and finally the bass drum disappears. A similar sort of method should be used when loading a car. Make sure that *all* your cases go in. If you have a regular system and you know where everything goes, it's easy to determine when something is missing.

After you collect your cash, and give back any borrowed items, you will be ready to leave. *Or are you?* It is the early hours of the morning when your metabolism is usually at a fairly low ebb. You might be either extremely tired, or in a temporary state of euphoria. In either case, you are in a vulnerable state and should think twice before driving straight home. Spend half an hour unwinding before driving home.

To Sum Up

Know what you are doing at all times and maintain a professional attitude. You might be the best drummer in the world, but you won't work much if people can't rely on you to be in the right place at the right time. Even when problems occur through no fault of your own, you *might not* get another chance.



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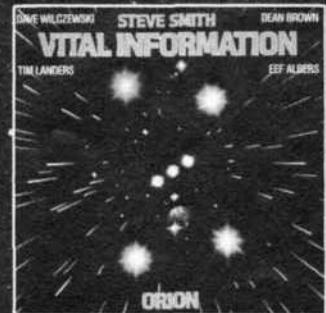
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STRICTLY TECHNIQUE

by Maurice Cheetham

Stretching Your Single Bass Drum Technique -Part 2

The "art" involved in playing the bass drum comes not just from playing it quickly or frequently, but also from the ability to use it sparingly and with taste. The ability to "drop in" bass drum notes in unusual—but effective—places is a useful facility. Even in very modern musical styles bass drum work can become very clichéd, and this useful technique might just open up some more creative ideas for you, as well as suggesting ideas to others, such as bass players with whom you work. In order for this to happen, you need to develop the ability to place the bass drum in any part of the bar or phrase. For instance, try the simple exercises below, all of which have "misplaced" bass drum beats.

♩ = 100

H.H.
S.D.
B.D.

To develop this technique further, I suggest setting up a number of cymbal or hi-hat patterns, such as shown below.

Now write out a page of 8th- and 16th-note snare/bass drum patterns. Play those patterns against the cymbal/hi-hat patterns above. Try to include as many variations as possible. Here's an example:

After mastering this example, go on to improvise "misplaced" patterns over the regular hand patterns.

Here's another interesting example of the same concept, used by Jeff Porcaro on the song "Ruby," from Donald Fagen's *Nightly* album.

♩ = 120

Earlier this century, Kenny Clarke started something known as "dropping bombs" in his bebop style of playing. This meant that he dropped in bass drum and cymbal accents over the basic ride rhythm. To further develop my concept, I omit the cymbal accents, and insert some interesting bass drum beats to create syncopations.

♩ = 152



The main idea is to break away from drilled patterns and start creating total freedom and choice in your playing. Try the rhythms below, and then use them as a basis for ideas of your own. Invent, create, and experiment!

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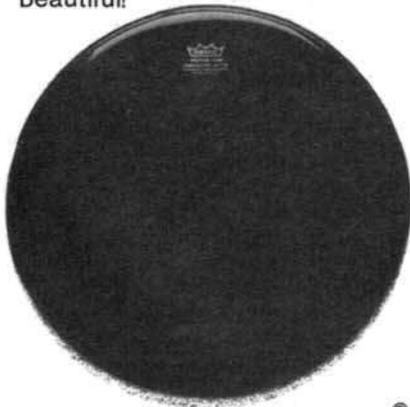
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Freddie Hubbard, at one time a neighbor of his in Brooklyn. "Freddie and I have been close since '58," he says, "very, very close. So we were playing together on and off the whole time. When I left Oscar, Freddie and I got together, because that was just a natural thing to do. See, I was with Oscar off and on. I would leave and Bobby Durham would come in, and then he would leave and I would come back. During one of those breaks in the '60s, Freddie and I started a group called The Communicators, which consisted of Joe Henderson, Kenny Barron, Herbie Lewis, Freddie and myself. Now I'm talking about a very *hot* band. We never recorded, but we were *hot*."

"Eventually things changed. Jimmy Spaulding was in the group. Albert Dailey and later Cedar Walton were also in the group. We worked around New York and California. Things weren't great, but we always managed to survive. Cedar Walton, Sam Jones and I used to do trio things. That was when I started becoming aware of the New York local scene: clubs like Boomer's and Slugg's. We all had fun—going to Europe a lot, things like that. One time I even got stranded in L.A. with Freddie. I actually had to call up my mother's house and say, 'Mom, would you send me money to get out of L.A.?' Sometime in there, around 1971, I went back with Oscar for a year. Then, when it was over with Oscar for the last time, I decided it was time to start having my own band."

Finally, in 1972, at the age of 35 and already a 17-year veteran of the jazz business, Louis Hayes decided it was time to put his name front and center. The first Louis Hayes band featured Gerald Hayes (Louis' younger brother by about four years) and Charles Davis on reeds, David Williams on bass, and Ronnie Matthews on piano. "We did that for a time," says Louis "but it wasn't moving fast enough for me."

After a couple of years of kicking around, Wim Wigt, the Dutch jazz impresario and record producer, called Hayes and asked him to form a group for a European tour. "It was sort of a little limbo period of time when I was trying to figure out what my next move was going to be. I didn't have a band, but when Wim asked me to come over I said okay. I got Junior Cook, Ronnie Matthews, Stafford James and, a little later, Woody Shaw."

That band, the Louis Hayes-Junior Cook Quintet, was the unit that finally began to establish Hayes as a leader, or should I say co-leader. Firmly grounded in the Horace Silver mode (Cook was also an ex-Silver alum), the band gained a little bit of attention at the time when acoustic jazz was at the beginning of its upswing. Attention was also being paid to trumpeter Woody Shaw. There were a number of tours of America and Europe, and a couple of recordings (notably *Ichi-Ban* for

Wim Wigt's Timeless label). In 1976, things began to get all shook up.

"I got Maxine Gregg to be our manager," says Hayes, "and she ended up being with Woody" (they later married). "Pretty soon it was pushed up from being the Louis Hayes-Junior Cook Quintet to being the Louis Hayes-Woody Shaw Quintet. See, Junior left then because his personality and our personalities started having a little problem. Junior felt that he was uncomfortable and wanted to do something else, so we changed it up."

"We got Rene McLean on saxophone and had that group together for a while, with Maxine handling it. One time when we were over in Europe, Dexter Gordon ended up playing with us in several places. We were telling Dexter and Slide Hampton to come back to America. Maxine got involved with Dexter through us. Dexter and Slide Hampton came back and were guests with our group at Storytowne. Dexter didn't have a band. Bruce Lundvall, from CBS, made an appearance at Storytowne and said he wanted to sign Dex over there at CBS. So that's how Dex got shot out there with Maxine handling him. That put Maxine in a situation where she could be on the inside to really do big things, because Dex was the big thing."

Dexter Gordon, with the Louis Hayes-Woody Shaw Quartet (Rene McLean was left out), went into the Village Vanguard in New York and things really started to happen. Dexter Gordon had been living in Europe for a number of years, and although he had been back to the States once or twice in the '70s without too much hoopla, his appearance at the Vanguard caused pandemonium in a jazz sense (much different, mind you, from pandemonium in a rock 'n' roll sense). The media lined up for interviews, the fans lined up for a glimpse of the returning bebop saxophone master, and CBS deposited a recording truck outside the door of Max Gordon's little basement. Maxine Gregg and her Ms. Management Company were responsible for much of the fanfare accompanying the saxophonist's return. Dexter fit like a glove into an already together, smoking unit that didn't have the loose edges of a typical pickup band. Everything clicked.

"Exactly, exactly," says Louis. "We had an organized situation. We *knew* what we were doing. Whatever Dexter wanted to do just fit in. It was still my group and Woody's group at the Vanguard, but it was Dexter's stuff because he was the one recording. You know what I mean: He was the one with CBS."

Dexter's first CBS release, *Homecoming*, was recorded at the Vanguard during that engagement. It was a double album with ample solo space for everybody in the group. "Since Dexter was already in with CBS," continued Louis, "Maxine could get Woody in over there eventually. See, at first it was like: Dexter's going to have his

band, Woody's going to have his band, Slide Hampton's going to have his band, and Louis Hayes is going to have his band. That was the original setup. And Maxine was going to handle all of this. Do you know what I mean? But actually, Woody and Dexter were out there and me and Slide didn't do anything with Maxine. We didn't fall out as far as having any bad feelings. She just wanted to handle Dexter and Woody, and then they talked Johnny Griffin into coming back over from Europe."

Dexter Gordon and Woody Shaw signed with CBS. Slide Hampton went his separate way. Louis Hayes called up Frank Strozier, Harold Mabern, and Stafford James, and formed a new band. Johnny Griffin bought a plane ticket. "Then Maxine wanted me to leave my group and go with Johnny Griffin, saying it was the Johnny Griffin group 'featuring Louis Hayes.' I didn't feel like joining Johnny Griffin's group at the time, even 'featuring Louis Hayes.' And I had already made a commitment to Frank Strozier, Harold Mabern and Stafford James. I kept my group and, since it didn't work out with Maxine, I started doing other things. I was going back and forth to Europe, and I made a very great record, *Variety Is The Spice* (Gryphon G-787). That went on for a little while, but it didn't take off to the highest level. Now I've got a group with Bobby Watson, Clint Houston, and James Williams. We went to Europe together and had a great time, but we haven't recorded yet."

One thing that comes across loud and clear is Louis Hayes' good humor and incredible optimism. He has a "go-with-the-flow" quality about him that is infectious, yet perhaps that is why he still isn't firmly recognized as a leader. On the afternoon we spoke, he was just back from a tour of Europe backing the three-tenor team of Joe Henderson, Joe Farrell and Bob Berg. Before that, he had been in Europe subbing for Philly Joe Jones with the Timeless All-Stars. He had recently finished a gig, and live recording, with Pepper Adams and Kenny Wheeler at Fat Tuesday's. In short, he is a drummer for hire. He would clearly like to work more as a leader, but he does make himself available to whatever gigs are in the wind. He spends a lot of time in Europe and is forming a group for a European tour that will feature Jimmy Owens, Kloss and Frank Strozier in the front line, with James Williams and Clint Houston joining him in the rhythm section. I asked him what his ideal playing situation would be—what his career would be like if he could draw up the lines.

"My ultimate situation is to have my group of people travel around the world the way I want to do it. See, when I make a record, for instance, I don't like to just get some musicians together and say, 'Hey, let's make a record.' I don't *do* that. When I make a record, I have everything

planned, I know exactly what I'm going to do, and there are no mistakes. I came up with groups like Cannonball, Oscar Peterson, and Horace Silver, I learned well, and I know how to put things together. Somebody like Bobby Watson writes his buns off. Before we went to Europe, we rehearsed and put some 20 tunes together, all arranged. We rehearsed a-plenty; we weren't just playing around. We sat down, put it together and rehearsed. That's what I like. I'd like a real long-term situation now. I don't want 'today it's this, tomorrow it's something else,' and all that stuff.

"These people today like Bobby Watson and James Williams are writing some slick music. I came up in the '50s and all that, and I love things like playing with Pepper Adams, that's for sure, but I don't really want to play like that all the time. I love it. I came up playing like that, but I already did that. So I'm interested in some different kinds of sounds and a different approach to the whole situation. You know that steel drum player, Othello, who used to play with Monty Alexander? I'd love to do something with him, too."

I asked Louis about other drummers and about his drums in particular. About his own equipment he said, "I have a couple of sets now of Premier drums, and I enjoy playing them. They're good drums. The heads are Remos. I take a new set of drums, I take the front head off and put a Remo head on the front, because that's important to me. I don't use anything to dampen the drums at all. The drums are wide open. I just control the sound myself. So the snare drum and bass drum are the two most important drums for me. I leave the regular heads on the tom-toms, but I can tune them the way I want to."

"As for the cymbals—and I'm known for a certain sound with the cymbals—I've always dealt with Zildjian cymbals. I just look at the cymbals. I can tell from the grain what I *think* they are going to sound like. Then I take them to a job, and decide whether I like them or not."

As for his fellow drummers, he cites Kenny Clarke, Max Roach, and Philly Joe Jones, and then surprisingly, he talks about a couple of big band drummers. "Buddy Rich is, to me, a gem," he says. "A gem! And Louie Bellson is a gem. He even gave me a drum seat when I was a little kid. And Gene Krupa once gave me a little splash cymbal. I really admire those people. And Jo Jones is my mentor. Over the years, his door has always been open. When I have problems, I say, 'What about

this Jo?' And he don't mind telling you.

"Of course, Elvin I've known since Detroit. When I was a little kid Elvin was playing the same way he's playing now. He looked the same and played the same. People weren't aware of it until he got with 'Trane, but Elvin was always one of the masters. I have to mention Tony Williams, too. He's really very, very important.

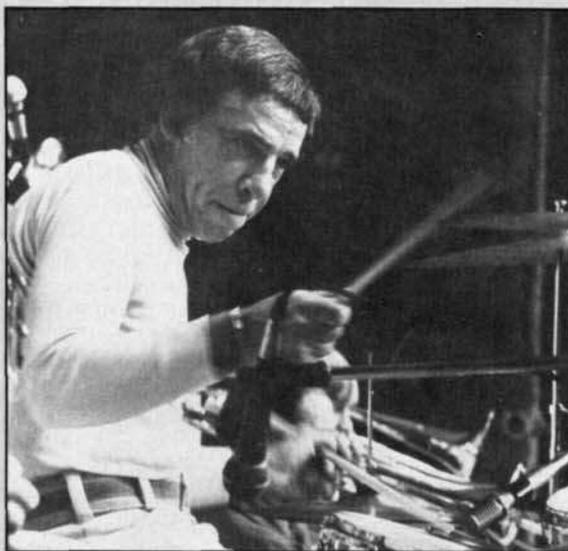
"You know, it takes a lot of time to be a drummer. You've got to practice five to seven hours a day. I love all these drummers. The drums are very hard to play. Without the drums and without the drummer you don't have a band. If you don't have a drummer, forget it! I love all those people who can actually spend so much

time creating and who can play this instrument so well.

"As for me, I'm just happy to be healthy, living, strong and still together, so that I can keep on creating and be able to make an impression on this whole world scene, because I'm going to keep doing it."

I'm sure of it. Louis Hayes will be there, rolling with the punches, making his living—the only way he has ever made his living—playing his buns off (as he would put it) every step of the way. To some, the Detroit sound may refer to Martha Reeves and Diana Ross, or the sound of a purring engine from a Cadillac. But to jazz fans it means swinging acoustic sounds of the type purveyed by Louis Hayes and company. 

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Greener Pastures

I think that most people in the music business have found themselves wondering, at one time or another, whether they were working in the right place—the city or town that offered them the best opportunity to succeed in their ambitions. In fact, MD has received several letters asking what cities offer the greatest potential for club work. "Should I go to New York?" or "Should I try to break into L.A.?" are common questions. While large cities do have certain unique aspects to offer, they also have certain limitations. Smaller cities and towns have pros and cons worthy of consideration as well. It's important to examine the potential of every type of employment location, so as to make an intelligent career decision. And since the most important part of making any decision is to understand the choices thoroughly, let's look at some of the things you should consider when looking for "greener pastures."

The first consideration is you—particularly your talents and the musical styles you prefer to perform. Although you can find musical work of some kind almost anywhere in the country, certain types and styles of music tend to be regional in nature; that is, more work can be found for those styles in certain areas than in others. For example, the recording business is based in L.A., New York, Nashville, and a few other "hub" areas. If you hope to get studio work in addition to your club gig, or if your band is hoping to get into full-time recording and concert performing, you will need to go to those cities. But remember that the competition there is tough. Bands trying to get signed with record labels often crowd the club scenes in those towns, since many of the major labels are based there, and the bands are hoping that the A&R people might come and see them at work.

Certain cities are noted for jazz clubs: New York, Chicago, New Orleans, San Francisco and Boston, among others. There is still a supper club/nightclub scene in San Francisco and Chicago, and of course Vegas and Atlantic City. Blues bands do well in New Orleans, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City and occasionally in L.A. Country music has expanded, and can be found in clubs in almost every major city. It is the dominant form of music in the more rural areas of the country, and especially in the Southwest and Deep South. Top-40 music is everywhere, and probably represents the bulk of the music being played in local lounges and clubs. If

you are a versatile musician who can—and is willing to—play in any style, then you can base your choice of location on other considerations. But if you prefer to work in one particular style, it behooves you to be aware of cities or regions that feature your style. Contact some agents or management companies in an area you'd like to check out. See what type of music they are "selling" in their area—what kind of groups they are booking. Making sure, ahead of time, that you can be musically satisfied working in any given location is a major part of coming to an informed and intelligent decision about that location.

Once you're sure you can find the type of musical work that you desire in a given region, it's time to look at the pros and cons of small towns, medium-size cities, and major cities. Each has certain advantages and disadvantages, and you may find that what seemed, at first, to be an unlikely choice for you has the most to offer.

1. *Rural Areas & Small Towns.* If you are currently living in a very small town or a rural area, the likelihood is that you are going to have to move out of it in order to support yourself via a career of full-time club performing. This is simply because a rural community or small town offers few clubs in which to work, and a very small musical community from which to draw in creating a band. As I've said before, one of the crosses we drummers have to bear is that we *must* have other musicians with whom to work; we can't do a single at the local piano bar. Even in what I call "crossroads towns"—towns located at the intersection of major highways and containing large chain-type hotels that use club bands—the tendency of those hotel clubs is to use traveling groups, since the local town cannot be counted on to provide enough bands. The few local clubs that may exist in such small towns are likely to be quite low-budget, and either hire very small groups for very little money or use recorded music instead of live bands.

The other side of this coin is the long-term potential of working in a small-town club. In towns that do feature a live music club—such as a country club or weekend dance club—it's not unusual for the same group to be employed for several years! This occurs because there simply aren't that many musicians in town, and because the ones who are there tend to generate a following through the intimacy they achieve with their patrons. Thus, it's sometimes possible for a club player to earn a comfortable living, based simply on

the regularity of the paychecks coming in. Those checks may not be large, but they're constant, and that can sometimes be a better situation, financially.

2. *The Medium-size City.* This is the bread-and-butter level of the club business. Medium-size cities are large enough to contain a fairly sizeable population seeking entertainment (and thus a decent club market), yet not quite large enough to support large-scale entertainment attractions (concert halls, showrooms, theaters, etc.) that would bleed off some of the potential club clientele. The cities I'm referring to would be the size of San Diego, California, where I spent much of my career. The number of clubs was sufficient to offer employment to dozens of club bands, and the musical community was large enough to provide the bands to fill those clubs—and then some. Yet the city was small enough that any given band had the opportunity to work regularly and develop a following. This, in turn, could allow the band to command a reasonable salary. Cities of this nature tend to have nightclub "circuits," so that you see several of the same bands working a particular club or clubs on a repeat basis. I worked for four-and-a-half years with a group called "Summer Wine," and for that entire time we only played in three rooms! We worked on an eight-week rotation schedule, and never had to leave town. It was a situation of working steadily, at a reasonable wage, and knowing where the next paycheck would be coming from, week after week, for the entire four-and-a-half years.

I stress the financial stability potential of this level, because the potential for career advancement is extremely limited. If you wish to make your living in a club, settle in one location and raise a family, I think a medium-size city is the place to do it. But if you have greater personal ambition and hope to advance your status in the entertainment business, you're likely to find club work in such a city to be a dead end. Very few industry-related people travel far to see new acts, so the likelihood of your being "discovered" in a medium-city club is minimal at best. I could cite several entertainers from the San Diego area who established lofty—and well-deserved—reputations in town, and who commanded the highest local salaries and enjoyed the greatest popularity. But when they tried to follow their ambitions and advance their careers, they found that their San Diego reputation did little to help them, and they were faced with the frustrating necessity to

"prove themselves" all over again in the much larger marketplace of L.A. or Vegas. There is definitely something to be said for being a "big fish in a little pond." A person who can be a legitimate star on a local level is often just another competitor in the major market.

3. *Major Cities.* The major metropolises, like L.A., New York, Chicago, etc., all offer a number of things, based purely on size: There are more clubs, more private parties, more weddings, and more of everything as far as employment potential goes. And in the recording-related cities, there are more studios, more record companies, more showcases, agents, promoters, etc. Unfortunately, there are also more competing musicians. Although it is a fact that there are *always* more bands and musicians than there are club gigs, no matter what the size of the city, that fact is doubled in the major cities. In addition to the locally based players, there are traveling musicians working the lounges, and bands that have "immigrated" to the area hoping to break into the "big time." Thus, it's a buyers' market. If you are a local resident, desiring to make your steady living working in a local club circuit, you are faced with competition from groups that want work desperately, just for the exposure, and who will often play for much less than a career club player. This situation may not pertain to some of the major hotel/lounge circuits that hire the top-40 acts (they often hire traveling acts anyway, even within the large cities), but it certainly does apply to the single, independently owned clubs. The young players, bent on stardom and willing—and able—to starve a little along the way, make it tough for the career club player trying to support a family on his or her nightclub income. If you are that career player, the major city might not be the place for you.

On the other hand, if you are using your club playing as a stepping-stone to something larger, then you *must* work the larger cities, and particularly the recording industry "hubs" that I mentioned earlier. You *have* to come and perform where the industry people can come to see you. But let me offer a word of caution: Don't plan to make a successful career, financially speaking, by playing in the "exposure" clubs. If you don't get your break within a reasonable amount of time, or if you don't at least make some promising contacts that encourage you to keep at it, you will very rapidly starve to death in a major city. The cost of living in New York and L.A. is extremely high, and the competition for every gig, no matter how little it pays, is unbelievably keen. It's a trying situation, and you must be sure that the goal you are seeking is worth the period of trial.

4. *Traveling.* If you plan to be a traveling player, then you can actually "live" almost anywhere; you won't be there very often anyway. But you should decide on

the working locations that will prove most lucrative for you. For example, since cities do have their own large musical communities, it's often more profitable to concentrate on rural or small-town areas, where the musical population is smaller and the clubs have to book outside groups in order to provide variety. These clubs tend to be few and far between in some areas of the country, such as the Midwest, and thus they draw a sizeable clientele from a large surrounding area. I've seen rock clubs in Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle that could accommodate over 3,000 customers; they were practically concert halls. These clubs tend to pay well, since they *need* traveling groups. Additionally, there are the "crossroads towns" that I mentioned earlier. I've played in the lounges of Ramada Inns, Rodeway Inns, Holiday Inns, and all the other major motor hotel chains, at locations that would be difficult to find on many maps. Yet the clientele was steady (a combination of local patrons and highway travelers), the pay was good, and rooms (and sometimes meals) were included in the contract. My profit margin was quite high in these situations, and yet my band was often playing towns with populations of less than 2,500.

The key to deciding where to work is knowing what you wish to gain from the employment you're seeking. Do you want to make a comfortable, steady living, and stay close to home? Do you want the novelty and excitement of cross-country travel? Do you want the challenge of attempting to break into the higher levels of the business? Make that decision first, and then decide what area of the country, and what size and type of city or town, offers you the most opportunities. 



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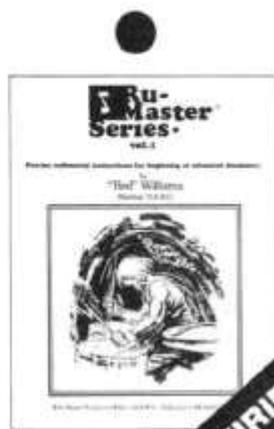
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All continued from page 31

more interested in putting the New York jazz musicians on all of those programs—at least one or two groups. He didn't want to hear it; to me it felt like he wanted to make us look bad. He gave us this hall and a little money, and he wanted us to play, so I split out. I broke up with the New York Jazz Musicians then, and I wrote a big, 30- or 40-page story on the whole situation. I told on everybody, and one of these days I'm going to publish that. George Wein proved himself to be exactly what I thought he was. The Alice Tully Hall part of the festival was the most poorly advertised part, the money he was paying them was an insult, and many people didn't come to Alice Tully Hall because no emphasis was put on it. And so he got in the paper after the festival and said "Oh, well, you know, I tried to give these people a break, but they're not playing anything, nobody wanted to hear them, people didn't dig it, and we lost a lot of money." That broke the whole thing off; that just really messed it up. So the next year they did it without him; they totally ignored him. They tried some feeble thing, but it didn't work out too well, because a lot of the good groups had pulled out. So that was like the beginning and the end of that New York Jazz Musicians' Festival.

HH: Is there a recording of your New Directions In Jazz suite?

RA: Just parts of it are recorded. I've finished writing the music; I wrote the music with the help of an Endowment grant, and I finally finished the whole suite, but I've just recorded two selections from it on the *New Directions* album [Survival]. I really want to record that with a big band—brass, strings and voices—and I'm going to try to do that. Right now I have my own record company, but I don't have a big enough budget to do it, so what's coming out now is some stuff I recorded just with a quintet and voices.

HH: Writing a large-scale composition can seem very impractical in today's economic situation.

RA: Well, it's not hard to write it, but to play it is the thing—to get a big enough budget to take it into a studio. And I don't have a big enough studio to do that thing; I've only got a four-track studio. I need something like a 24-track or at least a 16-track to do that. I did do parts of it with the three singers, but I want to elaborate on that more.

HH: Survival Records as a whole isn't just four-track, is it?

RA: Survival is a company, and whoever puts out a record on the company can get any kind of recording. It's just that the material that I did on Survival was just about all four-track. The company is still happening, and producers can use any kind of

track they want to get the baddest sound.

Survival recording and Survival Records are two different things. When I first opened up the club, I had a little recording studio there that was called Survival. I'm not into the recording part of it anymore. I have seven records with the company, and if I produce some stuff, I'll just go to a regular 24-track studio and get the kind of engineer I want.

HH: What is the background of Ali's Alley?

RA: I opened the club in '74. It wasn't a club then; it was sort of a loft. It was the same type of situation that was happening around New York at the time—these loft situations. We got this place, and Benny Wilson and I fixed it up and opened it. I had just been thinking about a place for me to play on weekends, because I hadn't been playing in clubs at all. In the early '70s I was just put in a corner; I couldn't get a gig anywhere in New York—outside of New York, maybe, colleges and stuff like that. So we got this place and started playing on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. I worked that gig for a year straight just with my group. We didn't have a cabaret license or liquor license in those days, but we started getting some attention from playing every week. We started getting little write-ups and people started coming down. We thought it could turn into some-

thing really good if we could get enough money to get a license and make the place legal. We closed it for a year and started getting it ready to pass inspection. We got that together and we got our license. It got better; the longer it lasted, the better it got. People were coming out, we were getting more write-ups, and some really good musicians wanted to play there. I couldn't really afford to hire anybody before, but now, just because the club was getting a reputation, musicians didn't mind coming there, because it drew a lot of people. It was a chance to make money and a chance for exposure. And I only dealt with groups that, like myself, couldn't play in a lot of clubs in New York. But bigger names like Jaki Byard, Clifford Jordan, Ornette Coleman, and Cecil Taylor were showing some interest. So I was hoping that in the '80s the Alley would be one of the major clubs around the city.

HH: Being a musician helped you to know that business from both sides.

RA: Being the musician that I am, I know a lot of people; in fact, everybody I know is a musician, and they would work in Ali's Alley. For instance, Eddie Jefferson would work in Ali's Alley. He could work in any club he wanted, but he would work in Ali's Alley because ... of me, you know? And a lot of cats did that, just because of me, Rashied Ali! They said, "Yeah, man, I'll play in your club before I'll play in this club or that club," because they knew I

was very sensitive to their music and I would try to do everything I could to make it right, like tune the piano twice a day and pay for it. I mean, that's just a simple thing, but most club owners don't give a damn about it. But I'm sentimental; if it don't sound good, I don't really want to be a part of it because the music is my whole thing. If it's sounding good, that's like 50% of it. We were trying to get a new piano so we wouldn't have to go through this shit, because it was costing me like 50, 60, and 70 dollars a week just to keep it tuned.

The Alley's not there anymore, but there's a spot downstairs called Dr. B's. I still own it, but I don't run it anymore. I just sold the business, leased the space, and they do a lot of different kinds of music now.

HH: Did it eventually conflict with your performing schedule?

RA: Yeah, right, man, because I'm playing more now, and traveling. I got to the point where the business was really taking me on a trip, and I wasn't really getting enough time to play. I decided that I'd rather play; that's what it was all about anyway, you know? I secured a lot of stuff, I made money, and I did some nice things with it, so I could afford to let somebody else take over the business. It still works for me, but I'm not into it anymore, and I'm not there every night trying to see what's happening with the bartenders and who's doing what. I'm able to concentrate

on playing. Starting this year, I've already been in the studio three times with three different projects, and I'm getting a group together to go to Canada for a little bit.

HH: Your drum sound is delicate and quite muffled. Do you follow planned tuning procedures?

RA: Well, I tune my drums in fourths. I used to tune them in thirds, but I didn't like that sound. I can play little melodies and stuff in tune. I just tune to my ears, man, the way I hear it. I used to go to the piano and try it, but now I just more or less tune it to my ear.

HH: What is the function of the burlap that covers the front of your bass drum?

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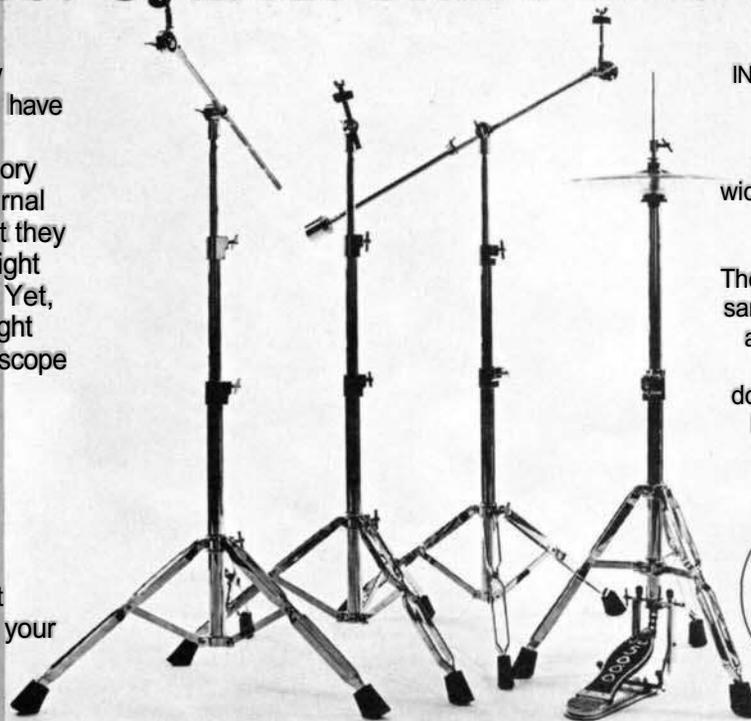
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RA: I've been doing that for close to 15 years. A lot of cats were opening their drums up. I first had my drum open in the front because I wanted a louder but more subtle sound, and I used to put blankets inside my drum to take the ring out of it. Then I got the idea to cut a hole in my skin one time, because I didn't like my drum open like that; it didn't look so hip, you dig? So I just cut a hole in the skin the first time and I worked with that for a while, but I didn't feel it. Then I was sitting in the house listening to records and tapes, and I noticed that my speaker had burlap on the front of it. I took the burlap off, and I noticed that it was a lot sharper—a lot more open without it. Burlap toned it down when I put it back on. So I tried that on my bass drum, and I got hooked. I left it there, and I think it'll always be there, because the sound I get from that bass drum is exactly the sound that I was trying to get. And it works even with a big band. It's not just designed to play with a small group; I could play it with anybody, because I like the sound it gives me.

HH: It has power and softness at once.

RA: Yeah, it carries, but it's not so brash and ringy. I hate them bass drums that go BONG! BOYOING!

HH: Your cymbals also have a dark and distant quality. Are they all A. Zildjians?

RA: Yeah, they're all A. Zildjians, and they're old, too, man; I've had them for years. I've had one cymbal ever since I

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started playing. The one that I use on my left side is the first cymbal I ever bought.

HH: The 16"?

RA: Yeah, that little 16". I've had that cymbal for 27 years. I've had the rest of them at least 17 years. And what can I say about those cymbals? I love those cymbals. And they're A.'s, too. I never had a K. in my life. I always wanted one, but I never got one. I'm not really interested now anyway, because I like these cymbals I have now. They're old, see. And I take really good care of my stuff. They don't have runs in them, because I always made sure that I had those things on there to protect my cymbals, and I keep them down real tight. I don't let my cymbals swing around. You know how cats hit their cymbals and they go "wowowowo." My cymbals are tight, like pop! They resist the shake; they just vibrate. And they're in really good shape, all right; they're good cymbals.

HH: What are their dimensions?

RA: Well, the cymbals are 14" over here, and I've got a 16", a 20", and an 18". [Recently I have seen Rashied perform with a much larger array of cymbals.] And I've got those new socks from Zildjian . . .

HH: Heavier?

RA: Well, one is heavy and one is light, but they've got a new flange sock now that I use, and, hey, man, I love it. I've also got a pair of 13" socks that I use, because I've got a smaller drumset that I use sometimes. But I'm getting ready to sell that set. I don't care how I tune it, or what I do. It don't sound like me, you know? So I'm going to trade the whole set for a conga drum. Some woman has a bad conga that I want, so I told her I'd give her four drums for it. I hope she takes it; she's been thinking about it heavy, so I think she's going to do it.

I just love to play. I set my drums up and play whenever I can. When I have them set up at home I can't walk past them without sitting down and playing. And I practice all the time, but I don't call it practicing—just me, alone; I don't need an audience. Even if I don't perform in public for a couple months, I'm ready to play with somebody on a moment's notice because I'm always at it.

HH: How is the record business?

RA: I've got seven records out on Survival Records, and I'm recording other artists, like Leroy Jenkins and Joe Lee Wilson, who are the first two, outside of myself, that I started recording with the company, and we're coming out with some more records. In fact, Philly Joe Jones is out with

one that he recorded live. Most of this stuff is recorded live, too, at the Alley. Eddie Jefferson is out with one playing with my band. The first two times Eddie Jefferson played in the club—this was in '76—we recorded the second date. Then I have a date out with voices, and then I have another straight-ahead date; Byard Lancaster's playing alto and tenor, and the rest of the cats are Lee Rozie, Oscar Brown and Nick DiGeronimo. I've been using the trumpet, too—Ahmed Abdullah; he's been playing with Sun Ra's band mostly, and he plays with me whenever he has some time off.

HH: Tell me about the Funkyfreeboppers.

RA: That's the group I'm going to get back

together real soon. I recorded with that group a few years ago. I thought the album would be out and I would be able to get more work with it, but as it happens I did enough stuff for two records. I really worked hard, wrote all that music and got it all together, and the people went out of business. I don't know if they went out of business for real or on paper, but they never did put the record out, and I haven't heard from them since then. So I finally just had to disband, because it's kind of hard to get a band working if you don't have any records out.

HH: Would the personnel be the same now?

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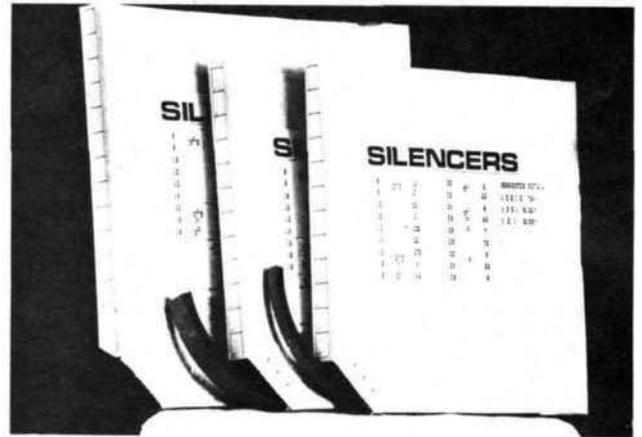
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RA: No, I doubt it; a lot of the personnel are now working with other people.

HH: What is the forecast for you as a player?

RA: A few years ago I was just starting to get myself together even to work again, you know? I was really out of it. I was concentrating on trying to get this club together, so I wasn't really concentrating on a band until a few years ago. Right now it's not steady enough. I'm trying to put a lot of emphasis on getting more gigs, so you can write there that I'm open: OPEN FOR GIGS! And if they want records, I can sell the records. It's pretty hard to get my records since I have an independent company. I've got a couple of distributors, like Record People—they get the records all around, even to Europe and places—and

JCOA [Jazz Composers Orchestra Association, which provides the New Music Distribution Service], a nonprofit organization that takes care of a lot of the New York area and south down as far as maybe Richmond. And that's about it as far as distributing goes; I'm not really on a big-time distributing list yet. But Record People does a really good job, and gets rid of a lot of records for me. I can't press that many records anyway, but the ones that I press, I sell. You know, I can say that I sell my records, and they sell pretty much.

HH: Is there anything about the future that particularly worries or excites you?

RA: It don't worry me, man; the future just really looks good. I notice that, when I play for people, I don't care how large or small an audience they are, they listen to

every note; so that means they want to listen. They want to hear something different.

HH: People everywhere seem more and more open to new art.

RA: Yeah. And I think the '80s are going to be really good for the music. The '70s weren't all that great, but I think the '70s sort of set it up, and it's going to start happening now. That's one reason I'm feeling so good about working now, I think. I feel like now I should be playing. Now is the time for me to be moving around, playing in different places and traveling. I hate to travel, but I'll do it if it's worth my while. I wouldn't want to get on a plane for nothing. I'm going to start doing things this year. Hopefully you'll be hearing from me, man.

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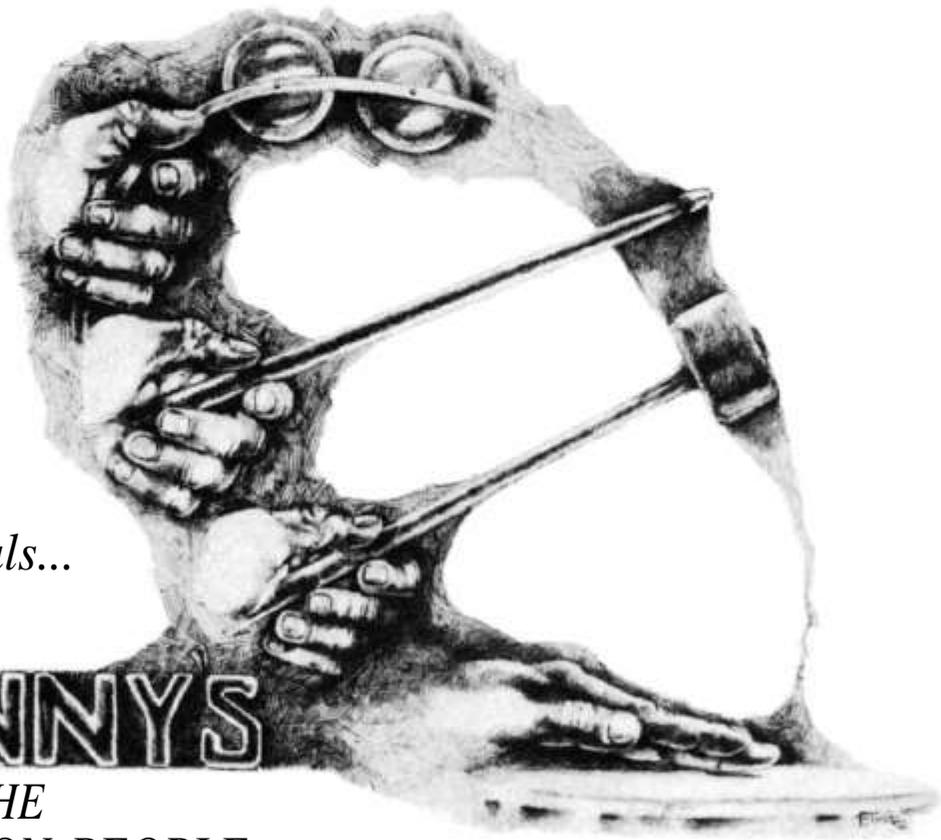


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Q. I have a 13-piece CB-700 set. It's red, and includes a double bass setup. However, one of the bass drums is not red. In a CB-700 catalog I saw re-covering material. I've been to all of the local music stores in an endless search for this material, and so far I've come up blank. How can I obtain this material?

C.M.
Central Valley, CA

A. Recovering material is not usually an item stocked by retail music stores, since there are so many different companies using so many different styles and colors of material. However, your retailer can generally order such material for you along with a regular shipment from that company, thus saving you the extra money it would cost you in shipping charges if you were to order it directly from the manufacturer. CB-700 drums are distributed in the western U.S. by Coast Wholesale Music, in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Ask your local dealer to order the material for you, and be sure to check the exact color, as CB markets two different shades of red covering material.

Q. I have an Evans Black Gold head on the front of my bass drum that I want to cut a hole in. Supposedly, the black Evans heads aren't hydraulic. However, there is some sort of liquid visible between the layers that you can see from the back. It looks exactly like the oil in a Remo Pinstripe. I also noticed this with Evans Looking Glass heads, which aren't supposed to be hydraulic either. Can you tell me what this liquid is, and whether or not cutting into the head would create a mess?

M.S.
Harrisburg, PA

A. We spoke with Bob Beals, president of Evans Products, Inc., who told us that, unless the head includes the word "hydraulic" on the logo, it is not an oil-filled head. What appears to be a liquid between the plies of the head is an optical phenomenon called "Newton's Rings." This is a prismatic effect (resembling oil on water) that occurs when the light is refracted by the twin layers of plastic film. You see it only from the rear on Evans Black Gold or Looking Glass heads, because on those heads only the rear ply is clear. On the Remo Pinstripe, you will see the phenomenon from either side. There is no liquid in a Pinstripe head either.

Q. One night while I was playing a gig at a local bar, a patron who was "feeling pretty good" picked up a spare drumstick of mine and started pounding on one of my crash cymbals. Needless to say, I was not only annoyed, but also very helpless. Fortunately, the bandleader told him to back off, otherwise the incident could have turned into utter chaos. I have been playing drums professionally for years, and this is the first time this has happened to me. Can you tell me what course of action I could have taken in this very touchy situation?

J.G.
Towson, MD

A. Situations like the one you describe are touchy, and unfortunately, they are common in club environments where bands and patrons are in close proximity. Hindsight is always 20-20, and suggesting what you might have done at the time is touchy in itself. Obtaining the assistance of another band member, the leader, or even a club bouncer or manager is generally the best solution, since you don't want to disrupt the song by stopping your own playing. That will only bring attention to the situation, which is never desirable. Generally, prevention is the best method to avoid these unpleasant episodes. For example, perhaps you could have had your spare drumstick somewhere where the customer could not have reached it. If you play in the same club often, perhaps you can arrange with the management to provide some sort of barrier between you and the audience. Prevention is especially important

since episodes such as yours present band members with a delicate legal problem. You are entitled to protect yourself and your equipment from molestation by a rowdy customer, yet you face legal repercussions should your own actions lead to any injury on that customer's part. A similar situation, and its legal ramifications, was discussed at length by attorney Stuart Eisenberg, in the It's Questionable department of the March '84 MD.

Q. I am very concerned with my timing. When I'm playing, should I keep time with my right (my ride) hand, or the bass drum, or with my left foot on the hi-hat? Should I keep the hi-hat going when I do fills, to make sure I keep it steady? I've seen drummers pat their left heel on the back of the hi-hat stand when it's closed. Is that for keeping time?

H.H.
Columbia, SC

A. The best way to keep time depends greatly on the style of music you are playing, and how developed your sense of independence is. If you are playing jazz, the tendency is to keep time with the ride, either on a ride cymbal or hi-hat, and keep the bass drum free for accents. In pop music, especially dance music, hard rock and new wave, the bass drum is used primarily to keep the time, with a very solid, straight-ahead pattern generally favored. When performing funk or fusion, the time is not as clearly assigned to one element of your playing, but is created by the syncopation, and the interplay of bass drum, snare and ride patterns. Some types of "freeform" jazz also tend to avoid a single timekeeping element.

In order to keep your own time steady, you have the choice to keep the bass drum or the hi-hat going through fills, or to tap your left heel, if that works for you. There is no right or wrong, only what works within a musical context. It is generally considered an asset if you can develop a good sense of time without having to depend on some element of your playing to substitute for a metronome. If both hands and both feet are free to play anything, you maximize your potential for musical creativity; if one hand or one foot must be locked into the timekeeping role, you drastically limit that creative potential.

Q. I have a mid-'60s Ludwig 20" bass drum with the original plastic covering. I bought it used, with the intention of refinishing it with new plastic. I have experience in refinishing drums, but this drum presents a problem. The original plastic covering is sealed at the start within the ply of the drum. Do I proceed with the normal heat treatment and try pulling the plastic from the shell, or is that likely to cause permanent damage? Do I unwrap the old finish as near to the starting point as possible, cutting it away and leaving the remainder right in the shell? Please help me. I ordered the new covering material before realizing the problem I had.

S.H.
Orono, ME

A. We referred your question to our drum customizing advisor, Pat Foley, who replied: "You're exactly right about the plastic being set between the plies. In those days, the drums were made by a process where they actually started with the plastic on a flat piece of wood, and then they bent the whole thing around at one time to form the shell. You should definitely not try to remove the plastic from between the plies. Take a straightedge, and, using a carpet knife or other very sharp blade, score a line just as close to that seam as you can get. Simply bend the plastic back and it will break off. Then butt the new plastic right up against that remaining edge, and use that as your starting point. As you wrap the plastic around, it will overlap, covering that older seam so you'll never know it's there."





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Max Weinberg is currently on the road with Bruce Springsteen. Hopefully you'll be able to catch their energetic four-hour show, as they'll be touring for a year and a half.

Their current LP took two years, on and off, to make. "We'd go in for three weeks and record 25 songs. We did that three times," Max recalls. "We did about 60 or 70 songs for this record. I prefer to work all the time, though. I'd rather stay at it. When we did *The River*, we were in the studio for 15 months, five days a week, every week. That was a lot of playing. It's real easy to play with Bruce. You can't burn out with him. He just keeps it alive. I always read what I say in print about Bruce and it sounds very idealistic, but it's true.

"I'm very excited about this record. It's really good. I love the songs, I think it's the most exciting we've ever sounded and it's the best we've ever been recorded. It was mixed by Bob Clearmountain and he's just fantastic. Personally, it's the best playing I've ever done and it's the most satisfied I've been with my own performance. It's definitely from the development over the last two years. I did a lot of woodshedding with Sonny Igoe and Gary Chester, and they were very helpful. The record really runs the gamut for me. When we started this record, the Linn machine wasn't invented and I was really playing wild. Then the Linn came about and I love it. There are a couple of things where I'm playing very wildly, and there are a couple of things where I'm so contained and it's right for the song. There are a couple of things where, forget fills, I play the whole song on the hi-hat, so it goes from a real expressionistic kind of drumming to very minimal."

But Max wasn't about to sit still during the time off. Aside from doing a few tracks for others (including Air Supply's "Making Love Out Of Nothing At All" and Bonnie Tyler's "Total Eclipse Of The Heart"), he wrote a book which came out in May called *The Big Beat*, in which Max interviews 14 great rock drummers.

"It was a tremendous amount of work and I have an incredible amount of respect for writers. It's so time-consuming, but it was a great experience. Talking to these guys, I learned more about concepts of drumming in these two years than in the last ten, and it really helped my drumming tremendously. For me, it was more than just doing a book on drummers, though. People in groups become so parochial within that group that the logical reaction to that is for each member to do a solo project. I really didn't have an album in me, so this book is my solo project."

For **Carlos Vega**, variety is the spice of life. He manages a fine balance between studio work, road trips and fun with the group of which he is a member, Karisma. The past year and a half has been extremely busy for him, beginning with the Australia and New Zealand portion of Simon and Garfunkel's tour in early '83. The year continued with work on albums for such artists as Michael Sembello, Herb Alpert, Melissa Manchester, Sheena Easton, Peabo Bryson & Roberta Flack ("Tonight I Celebrate My Love"), Dionne Warwick, Sergio Mendez, Robbie Patten, Laura Branigan, and some work on Barbra Streisand's *Yentl*. Last summer, Carlos did a short tour with Larry Carlton, and Karisma recorded a Japanese release, after which he went to Japan with Boz Scaggs. Thus far, 1984 has included work on albums for Lee Ritenour, Teddy Pendergrass, Julio Iglesias, Laura Branigan and Sheena Easton.

Karisma is the artistic part of Carlos' life since it's no secret that much of the studio work entails craft as opposed to creativity. "When you go into a date and you cut a click because you know they're going to trigger the bass synthesizer off the click, you automatically know that you're not going to have too much freedom on top of that," Carlos explains. "They're going to be clocking stuff off the internal clock of the drum machine that you're playing to, so you have to play real tight with the click and the patterns are very, very simple. You have to make sure that the snare and the kick are on the money on every bar. So for that type of thing, it's obvious what it's going to be and there really isn't any mystery about finding a groove or anything. It isn't sitting there tripping out and trying to play some hip stuff on top of a dumb tune. When you're playing a dumb tune like that, you have to do your job, which is to lock in with those machines. Sometimes they'll just bring me in with Synths, like that 'Twist Of Fate' record by Olivia New-

ton-John. I just overdubbed backbeat on top of the drum machine. That's craft. You know what you have to do and you have to make it feel right. You can't let it feel like you're trying to play with these machines. I just get into the groove on top of it, move my body and just wail it without even thinking about it. I just pretend I'm playing along with some musicians when it's really a machine. You never know when you're going to walk into a real musical situation or if you're going to be overdubbing backbeat on top of a drum machine, so you have to be prepared for all of it. With Barbra Streisand, she sang with us and it was incredibly magical. There was no click track. We had one going and she said, 'Wait a minute now. I'm supposed to follow that thing? Can't we just go where we want it to go?'

"But machines can be helpful too. Going back to the dumb tunes, when you're doing a real silly thing, it's difficult to lock into that. Barbra singing a ballad in the 'phones is a different story. You hear her voice—this incredible instrument—and that's different. But sometimes you almost need the machines to make it sound like that one record they heard. They heard something with real perfect metronomic time and if you get a rhythm section with no click, no matter how good they are, it's going to move around a little bit. So to make it sound like that record they had in mind, I will go ahead and say, 'Hey, let's put the click on, find the tempo and do it.' I don't want them telling me it's too fast or too slow."

Can the session work make him lazy? "It's very easy to walk into the club on Tuesday night, pick up my sticks and say, 'Huh?' That's where practicing comes in. In front of my TV there's a coffee table with a practice pad and sticks, and I keep those sticks in my hands at all times. Or I go into a room and practice with the drumset. If you love something enough, you'll want to keep growing with it."

Mike Baird on several recent releases including Jermaine Jackson's second single, Kidd Glove, Donna Summer, Kenny Rogers and Juice Newton. It was erroneously reported that Baird would be on Rod Stewart's newest LP when, in fact, it is **Tony Brock**. **Craig Krampf** on upcoming Santana release. **Mark Craney** on drums, **Lynn Coulter** on percussion on Dana Howard's new album. Y&T's album released last month with band's drummer **Leonard Haze**. **Jonathan Moffett** on Level 42's album. **Ed Mann** has joined Shadowfax, which has been on the road and in the studio recently. **Butch Miles** in Nice,

France, at the Grande Parade du Jazz with the World's Greatest Jazz Band. **Gina Schock** on tour with the Go-Go's through the fall. **George Perilli** on Frank Stallone's recent album. **Barry Keane** recently in the studio with Gordon Lightfoot, Anne Murray and The Nylons, as well as working with Emmylou Harris, Rodney Crowell, Roseanne Cash and Albert Lee for TV series *In Session*. Congratulations to Anne and **Mark Sanders**, who were married in May. We regret to report that **Richard Hughes**, former drummer with Johnny Winter, died recently.



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INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

MANAGEMENT BUY-OUT AT PREMIER

In a deal finalized last April, ten management executives of the Premier Drum Company of England raised £ 675,000, part of which came from their own pockets, to take over the assets of the company which founded in October last year.

The Premier Drum Company was started in 1922 by Albert Delia Porta, and established itself as one of the world's leading manufacturers of percussion instruments, including drums of all types, orchestral mallet instruments such as xylophones, and tubular bells and cymbals. Following Albert Delia Porta's death in 1965, the company remained in the family's control until the appointment of the receiver in October of '83.

Midland Bank Industrial Finance and Scottish Allied Investors are supporting the buy-out with £70,000 each of share capital plus a further £180,000 each of loan capital. The Royal Bank of Scotland has come in as the company's bankers. Three of the buy-out

team are on the new board—Mick McLoughlin as managing director, Ray Brown as financial director and Ian Hearn as sales director—along with Jim Drennan of Midland Bank Industrial Finance and Richard Capper of Scottish Allied Investors.

"We expect to achieve a turnover of about £4 million in our first year," says Mick McLoughlin, "and the company is already trading profitably with a healthy order book built up by the team while working for the receiver."

The new company is to be called Premier Percussion Ltd. so as to reflect properly the full range of its products. "We have new products in the pipeline," says McLoughlin, "and we are actively tackling new markets. We have made a breakthrough in the American market where the nationwide drum corps movement offers great opportunities and there is also real potential for our educational and concert percussion ranges."

CALATO AND JOHN BECK AWARDED "MEET THE COMPOSER" GRANT

Calato Manufacturing, in conjunction with the Niagara Council of the Arts, has received a grant from Meet the Composer, Inc., to sponsor a lecture and workshop featuring John Beck of Eastman School of Music. Mr. Beck, who is also the principal timpanist with the Rochester Philharmonic, will speak to music students from the Niagara Falls area about his work as a composer.

John Beck recently joined the new Calato endorsement program which features a talented group of artists, specializing in various fields of percussion, who will act as an

advisory group to Calato's Education, and Research and Development Departments. Like Mr. Beck, many of the artists will represent Calato in educational clinics such as the "Meet the Composer" workshop. This particular program was made possible in part through a grant from Meet the Composer with support from the New York State Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, ASCAP, BMI, Bristol-Meyers Company, Exxon, Grace Foundation, New York Telephone, the Edward J. Noble Foundation and Warner Communications.

GOLDMINE FOR RECORD COLLECTORS

Goldmine, the world's largest record collector's publication, recently expanded its music and record-collecting coverage by adding jazz to its other categories, notably classic rock and blues.

The magazine is sold nation-

wide at used record stores. Stephen Stroff of Cincinnati, OH, has been named the new jazz editor. He will work with free-lance writers to obtain interviews and record-collecting articles pertaining to jazz as well as classical music.

MODERN DRUMMER BEGINS CONSTRUCTION ON NEW OFFICES

Modern Drummer Publications is proud to announce that construction of the new Modern Drummer office complex is now in progress. The new 6,000-square-foot facility is located in the Canfield Office Park at Cedar Grove, New Jersey, and will house the entire Modern Drummer Publications operation under one roof.

"Along with being spacious and modern, our new facility will contain the latest in edito-

rial-department automation, and sophisticated computer equipment to handle our continued growth in circulation and advertising," said President/Publisher Ron Spagnardi. "The new building will also allow for projected growth as Modern Drummer continues to strengthen its position in the field of percussion education."

Construction of the new facility is scheduled for completion in the late summer of 1984.



MD President Ron Spagnardi and Associate Publisher Isabel Spagnardi breaking ground for the new Modern Drummer Publications offices.

JOE HUNT TO REPRESENT U.S. AT INTERNATIONAL JAZZ EVENT

Noted percussionist and Berklee College of Music faculty member Joe Hunt has been invited to represent the United States at the Fourth International Seminar of Jazz to be held throughout Spain May 1 through June 6. The highly prestigious event will include concerts and seminars in Madrid, Barcelona and Seville.

Hunt has performed and recorded with top jazz artists around the world including Stan Getz, Bill Evans, and Gary Burton. He has also composed and recorded the scores for nu-

merous television and radio commercials and has performed as a percussionist on Broadway in the hit musical *Promises, Promises* and *The Me Nobody Knows*. He has recently been appearing at popular musical showcases throughout the Northeast with such musicians as Pepper Adams and trombonist Phil Wilson.

An alumnus of Indiana University and Mannes College in New York City, Hunt is in his 14th year as instructor of Percussion and Ensemble Performance at Berklee.

Goldmine has also changed its publishing frequency from monthly to every two weeks. The magazine runs between 80 to 100 pages each issue, and is well-known among record collectors as "the" source for old records of all types and eras. Thousands of 45s, 78s, LPs and EPs are for sale or auctioned

off in each issue, in addition to other music-related items for sale or wanted (such as jukeboxes, books, posters and record sleeves).

Anyone interested in seeing a sample copy of *Goldmine* may write directly to Krause Publications, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990.

A must for drummers

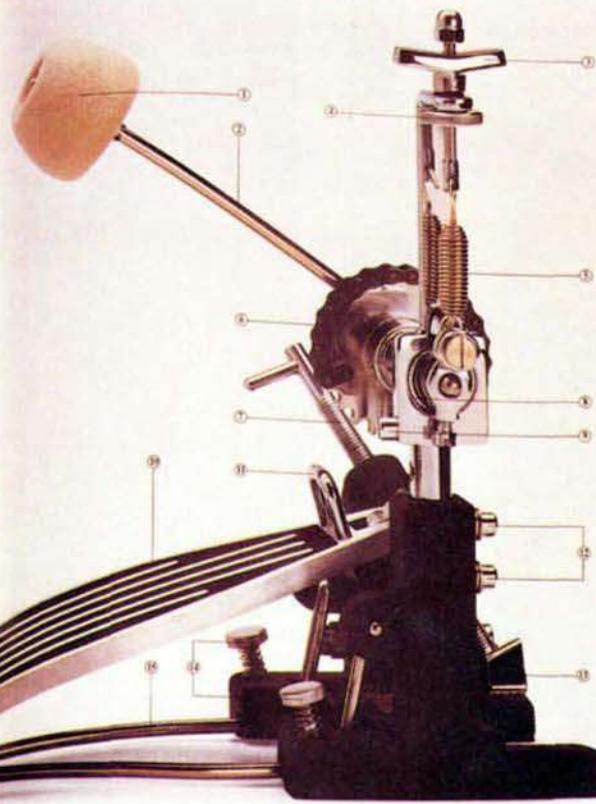
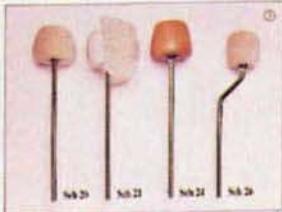
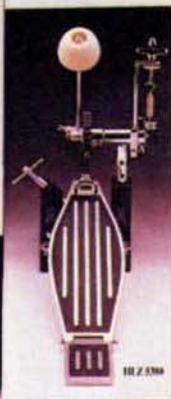
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- 10) clamp screw for quick attachment to the bass drum rim
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- 12) locking screw for adjustment of spring beater position
- 13) foot board with metal and vulcanized rubber inserts prevents slipping the foot, allows flexibility of movement
- 14) one size
- 15) knurled screws for height adjustment of base and foot board
- 16) clamp levers for quick attachment to the bass drum rim
- 17) spring loaded spring to allow a quick lock to the floor
- 18) fixed sturdy pressure spring holding of the base plate during play



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JUST DRUMS

PEARL CX CYMBALS



Pearl International has recently introduced their new line of cymbals, which they have designated the *CX-Series*. The *CX-300 Series* is designed for beginning players, and priced accordingly. The *CX-500 Series* is for the intermediate player, and includes a complete selection, from 5" cup chimes to 22" ride cymbals. The *CX-600 Series* offers a complete line of high-quality cymbals for professional players, and an additional line of *CX-600 Wild* cymbals is available for heavy playing applications. For more information on the complete line of Pearl's *CX Series* cymbals, contact Pearl International, Inc., P.O. Box 111240, Nashville, TN 37222-1240, or call (615) 833-4477.

LIBRA STICKS

CM Percussion Service Enterprise has recently made a new stick line available. The *Libra* line was developed for use in all fields of percussion. The sticks are made from solid hickory and manufactured in the United States. Hickory helps achieve a natural sound by offering a long-grained fiber which is extremely resilient and withstands impact better. Each pair is matched for perfect balance and excellent harmony.

The 22 different models in weight, taper, bead shape and length make the *Libra* line compatible with the different needs of today's player. They range from a *CM-80 7A* to a *CM-500* corps model, available in nylon or wood tip. For more information write: CM Percussion Service Enterprise, Weinberg Arcade, Suite 17, East Simmons Street, Galesburg, IL 61401, or call (309) 342-9233.

PRO CADDY RAX IMPROVES



The *Pro Caddy Rax* musicians' accessory has been substan-

dally upgraded and redesigned for 1984. The *Pro Caddy Rax* is a beverage caddy/towel rack that securely holds any size bottle, cup or glass, and which attaches to all types of musical stands. Now incorporating heavier-gauge steel alloys in its construction—to sustain even longer wear and tear—the *Pro Caddy Rax's* bottle guide has also been redesigned for a more attractive appearance.

As an additional promotion, the manufacturers are now offering a red *Fingertip* towel, featuring the company's new logo, and sized to fit the product's towel rack. Contact Mechanical Music Corp., 622 Hickory Drive, Buffalo Grove, IL 60090.

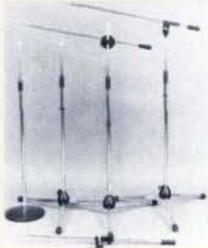
JAN-AL CASES



Jan-Al Innerprizes is a custom design firm, specializing in ATA and fiber cases for delicate equipment. The company provides a full line of ATA *Ultralite*, vulcanized fiber and regular fiber cases, custom designed with the usual options.

Founded in 1982 by Jan Alejandro, the company philosophy is that a quality case is designed for use, handling, and equipment protection. Many designs are on file through Jan-Al's relationship with major manufacturers of sound equipment, from Kawai Pianos to Simmons Drums and Soundcraft Mixing Boards. The cases have been on tour with David Bowie, Rick Springfield and Donna Summer, among others. Conscious of the limited resources of bands, Jan-Al provides repair services and case refurbishment when needed, and parts are available. Contact Jan-Al Innerprizes at 4452 E. Washington Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90023, or call (213) 260-7212.

NEW SAMSON MIC' STANDS



Samson Music Products has just released a new line of all metal tripod microphone stands at affordable prices. No plastic parts are used in either the boom arm tilting clutches or

the height adjustment clutch. The stands are triple chrome plated, and have both U.S. and metric threads permanently attached. Cable retainers are also included for a neat and organized appearance on stage.

If you already own a mic' stand and wish to convert it to a boom type, the Samson *MBA-1* boom attachment fits all U.S.-made stands. The *DM-1* double mic' stand will hold both a mini-monitor and a mic'.

For further information, contact Samson Music Products, 124 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead, New York 11550.

MARC MX1 INTERFACE TRIGGER UNIT

Marc Electronics has introduced the *MX1* trigger unit to effectively interface acoustic drums to trigger Simmons, *LinnDrum* or *Drumulator* units without crosstalk or false triggers. The *MX1* can also be used to interface drum machines directly to prerecorded drum tracks on multi-track tape for sweetening purposes, or to trigger keyboard synthesizers directly from individual audio outputs of drum machines.

The *MX1* mounts in a standard 19" rack format and is only 1 3/4" high. Both two-channel and six-channel models are available. Accessories include *Detonators*, which are units that attach to acoustic drums when using the drums as input sources to the *MX1*. The *Detonators* are sold separately at additional cost. For specifications on performance and electronics, as well as price, contact Marc Electronics, 130 N. Second St., Villa Park, IL 60181.

SLOBEAT CYMBAL BAG

Slobeat Percussion Products of Evergreen Colorado has introduced a new professional-quality cymbal bag to the drum market. The bag is constructed of *Tolex 11*, a rip-proof, puncture-resistant, space-age material. It is the most durable material used in cymbal bags available in this price range. The bag is heavily padded, with strong nylon strap handles.

An exclusive feature of the Slobeat Cymbal Bag is the crescent-shaped reinforcement panel that runs along the inside bottom of the bag where the cymbals rest. This panel greatly adds to the life of the bag by protecting the inside walls from the sharp edges of the cymbals. The Slobeat Cymbal Bag is available in three sizes: 20", 22" and 24". Other sizes are available by special order. For more information, contact Slobeat Percussion, P.O. Box 175, Evergreen, CO 80439, or call (303) 674-4043.

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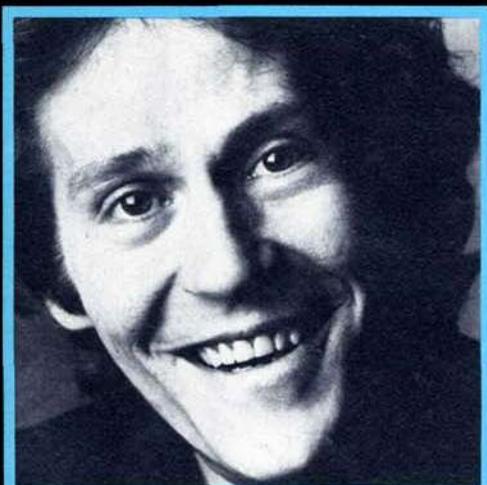
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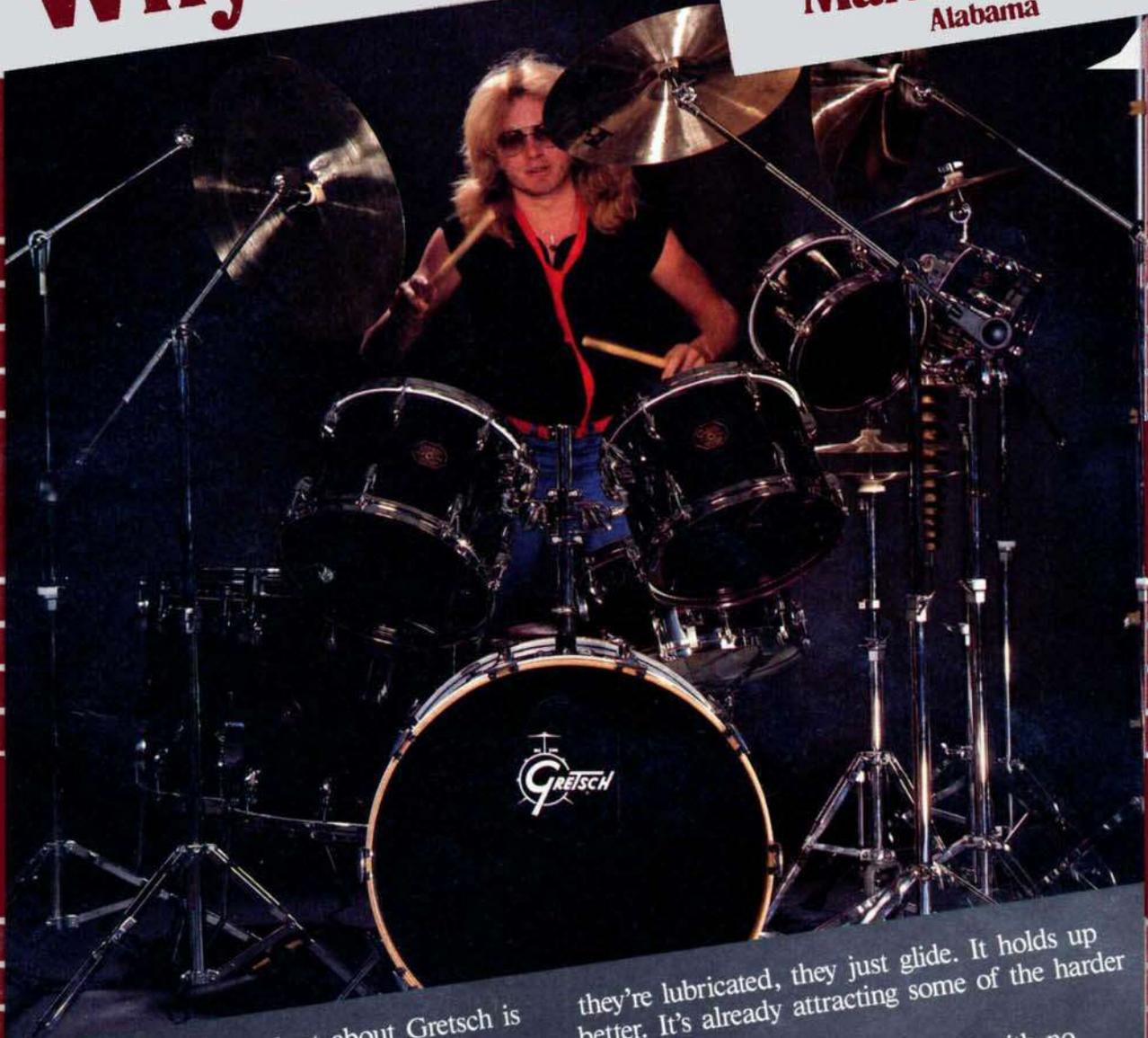
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You can choose from six different types of Avedis Zildjian crash cymbals for an unparalleled variety of tonal ranges and attack/decay characteristics. Each Zildjian crash is painstakingly crafted to the world's most exacting standards — our own.

Ranging from the super-fast, sensitive response of the Paper Thin Crash to the powerful and cutting projection of the Rock Crash, every A. Zildjian cymbal produces a rich "musical" sound with shimmering overtones.

Depending on the particular blend you're looking for, take the time to *listen* to a variety of cymbals. Like Zildjian's Medium Thin Crash, the world's most popular crash cymbal, which provides exceptional pitch flexibility, high end response and sustain. Our popular Medium Crash produces a robust, full-bodied sound with a higher pitch.

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The new Zildjian Impulse line's raw explosive attack and long range projection of the rhythmic pulse is embodied in the Impulse crash. Its focused overtone threshold allows repeated crashes without overtone build-up.

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