

MODERN DRUMMER™

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SEPTEMBER 1986



**Tommy
Lee**

**CHEAP TRICK'S
BUN E.
CARLOS**

**JERRY
CARRIGAN**

BEN RILEY

**Plus: A Guide To Full-Time Employment
Electronic Percussion Hits Broadway
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Features

Cover Photo by Glen LaFerman



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TOMMY LEE

The members of Motley Crue are perhaps more infamous than famous, preventing Tommy Lee from being taken seriously as a drummer. But behind the image is a man who is very dedicated to his instrument and musicianship.

by Simon Goodwin 16

JERRY CARRIGAN

Back in the early days of Muscle Shoals and Nashville—when a studio was judged by the skill of the musicians who worked there, rather than by the size of the board—Jerry Carrigan was providing the beat for some of the biggest hits to come out of those influential Southern towns.

by Robyn Flans 22

BEN RILEY

While playing with such artists as Thelonious Monk, Sonny Rollins, and Sphere might not make one famous, it will certainly earn you the respect of your peers and a place in history, as it has for Ben Riley.

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BUN E. CARLOS

It wasn't just his fondness for vintage drums that led Cheap Trick's Bun E. Carlos to put "Acoustic Drums and Cymbals" next to his name on the group's recent album. And he's not anti-electronic drums either. But he does have strong opinions about the use and misuse of electronics in the studio.

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SHOP HOPPIN': THE LONG ISLAND DRUM CENTER

They've grown from one store to five in nine years, so they must be doing something right. Perhaps it's the equal emphasis on education and equipment that has led to the remarkable success of the Long Island Drum Center.

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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



Above And Beyond The Call

Have you ever thought about what's involved in being a staff editor for *Modern Drummer*? Actually, MD's editors do a great deal more than one might imagine. Just keeping up with the activities in the drum world can often extend an editor's day well beyond the average, and on into evenings and weekends. Along with 12 *Modern Drummer* issues a year, the editorial team also handles four *Modern Percussionists*, a growing Book Division, related publications like *MD's First* and *Second Year* reprints, the *Treasury*, and the new *Equipment Annual*. Believe me, there's no way all that can be done in 40 hours a week.

There are also numerous tasks the staff is almost compelled to deal with, simply to keep abreast of the whirlwind of activity that surrounds the music business. For example, nearly a dozen magazines covering rock, jazz, music education, and drum corps, plus three or four trade publications dealing with the overall music industry, reach the home office every month. Each and every one is read and passed from one editor to the next. This is one way we keep up on the latest bands that may contain the hottest new drummers, plus what's new on the charts, and who's playing where or doing what in all the areas of drumming we deal with.

Of course, other publications are not our only source of information. Much of it also comes from attending rock concerts in the evening or on weekends, hitting jazz clubs or drum corps competitions to survey the activity, continually monitoring the top radio stations, and viewing a considerable amount of MTV. There are also network music programs and a host of music award shows to deal with each year. On top of this, there are the staggering amount of new album releases, the latest

drum books, and an increasing amount of drum videos that find their way to our office each month. And though much of this is channeled directly to the individual editor responsible for the material, a significant percentage is circulated to all the editors for future reference.

What about other outside office activities? Well, first comes attendance at major trade shows, clinics, Percussive Arts Society percussion days, and anything else remotely connected with drumming. If that isn't enough to keep one busy, we can include an occasional emceeing of a drum clinic or being present at workshops presented by *MD's* Book Division authors. Some of our editors have even been called upon to judge drum contests, myself included. And others on our staff remain active as part-time professional players, keeping involved in the music scene on a personal level. Along with the drum-related activities, there are the general magazine business publications that are scanned, the seminars to attend, and the business shows to visit. To say that *MD* editors must be dedicated to this business is a gross understatement. In actuality, they really must love the work, as they literally eat, sleep, and breathe it.

I can recall once having an editor on staff who phoned my home at 1:00 A.M. one weeknight. He was in a state of panic over a fast-approaching deadline on a story he was working on at that very moment. The project had been giving him some difficulty, and he needed my thoughts. Talk about *above* and *beyond* the call of duty! My sleepy suggestion? "How 'bout you put it to bed for tonight, and let's deal with it in the morning." He agreed. Sometimes, enough is enough!

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MODERN DRUMMER Magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published monthly by *MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.*, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Second-Class Postage paid at Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 1986 by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$22.95 per year; \$41.95, two years. Single copies \$2.75.

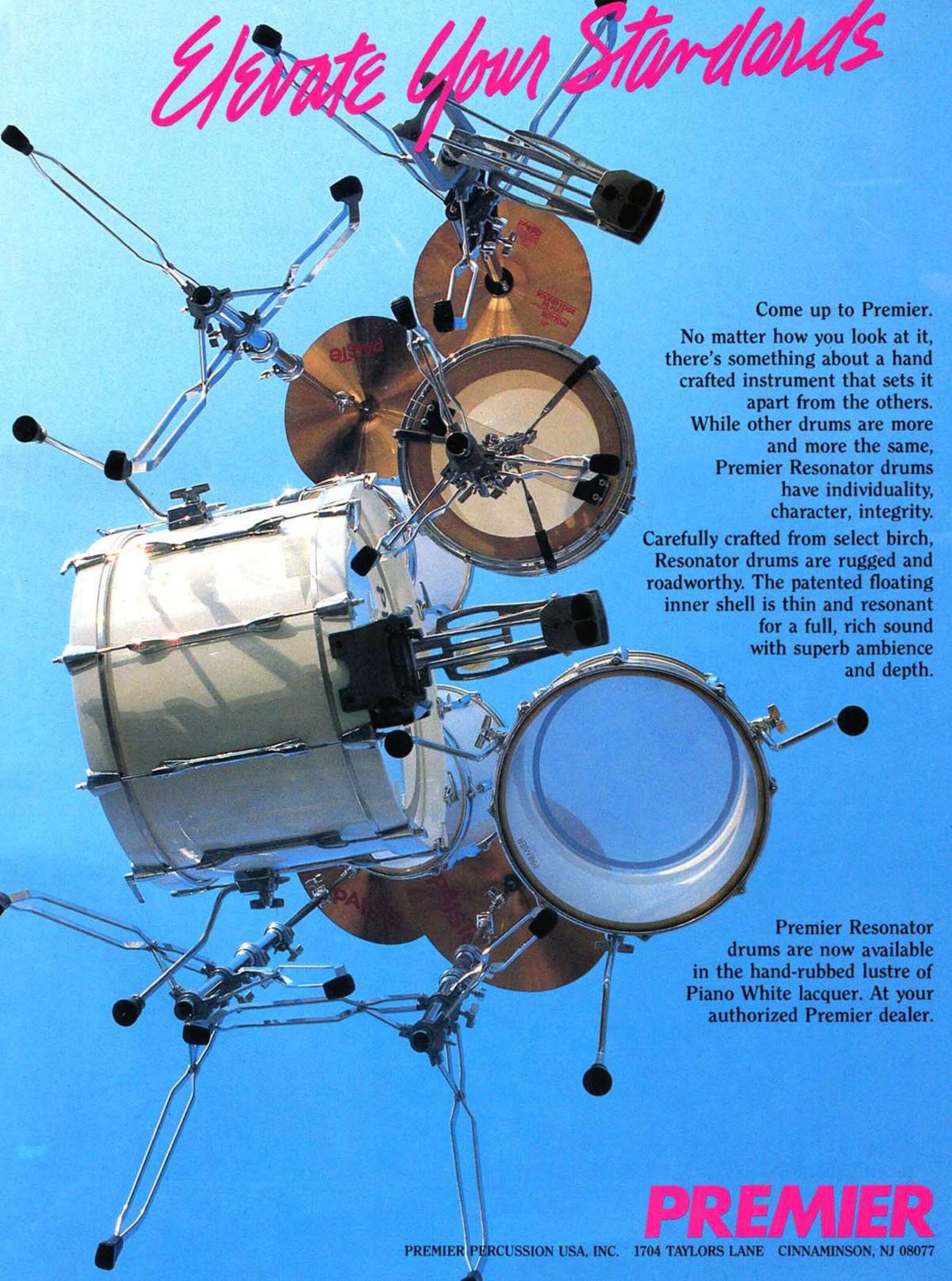
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MUSIC DEALERS: Modern Drummer is available for resale at bulk rates. Direct correspondence to Modern Drummer, Dealer Service, 870 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Tel: 800-221-1988 or 201-239-4140.

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READERS' PLATFORM

KENNY ARONOFF

I'd like to thank Rick Mattingly and *MD* for the illuminating interview with Kenny Aronoff in the June '86 issue. Although I had enjoyed Kenny's playing with John Cougar Mellencamp, I had no idea that he was as diverse and experienced a player as the article proved him to be. I also appreciated his "workingman's ethic" approach to doing his job for his band. And I'd like to especially thank Kenny for outlining his use of acoustically triggered electronic sounds so clearly. Many artists seem to want to keep their systems secret, and it was good of Kenny to share this information with those of us out here in the trenches starving for information on combining our acoustic drums with today's technology. Thanks again for a fine piece of work!

R. Donald
San Diego, CA

SOUND PHILOSOPHY

I'm concerned about the narrow-mindedness of those drummers out there who continue the debate on the topic of electronic versus acoustic drums. In my opinion, percussive tonality should not have barriers or limitations of any kind. Sound is sound, no matter what entity or object is being struck!

For example: I took an old Sears pie-plate cymbal and battered it with a ballpeen hammer until it looked like the surface of the moon. The effect it creates is similar to distant thunder! I know someone who used various sizes of stainless-steel pot lids to create an effect similar to scaled-down cathedral bells—very pleasing to the ear. Even various sizes of coffee cans can be used to make an interesting concert-tom sound. Just cut out both ends,

place the rubber lid on one end, and you've got a whole new sound. Of course, I wouldn't expect anyone to set up a "Hills Brothers drumset" with pot lids and battered cymbals to accompany it. But that's a small example of tone for the sake of tone—whether it comes from a sophisticated electronic chip, a standard-sized jazz acoustic setup, or even from so-called "junk."

Dan VandeWiele
Bark River, MI

ERSKINE SOUND SUPPLEMENT

What a source of educational material your June '86 *Sound Supplement* is! Peter Erskine's technique on the hi-hat is astounding, and the clear way in which he demonstrates the hi-hat's effectiveness in changing the feel of a tune is a revelation. I've played for years, but have only now begun to appreciate the hi-hat as an *instrument* rather than a substitute for a metronome. This new piece of information will contribute a great deal to my own development of hi-hat technique. Many thanks!

Wilson Plaudder
Seattle, WA

TODAY'S BIG BAND DRUMMERS

MD keeps getting better and better, but that's not why I'm writing. I saw the Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lou Tabackin and Woody Herman big bands recently. Both organizations had young drummers who really drove their bands. These guys were enjoyable to hear. How about interviews with them, or an article on the big band drummers of today? Drummers of road bands are a special breed, because they don't have the advantage of being in one place for a long period of time. These

drummers face acoustical problems night after night. (By the way, I was surprised to learn that the drums and cymbals that sounded awful when the drummer warmed up alone sounded great with the band!)

Alan Gill
Philadelphia, PA

Editor's note: Watch for an article on the drummers—past and present—of the Woody Herman band, which will appear later this year in MD.

SNARE TIP

After reading your magazine for the past few years, I've seen letters from readers asking advice concerning materials used as straps for snare strainers. I've been playing a 20-year-old set of Rogers drums for 13 years, and I think I've found the ultimate snare strainer strap for my wood snare drum.

I've replaced the nylon cords used as the snare's original strainer straps with 1/16" steel cable. This cable can be purchased in any hardware store, is relatively cheap, and is virtually unbreakable. Since the nylon cord used previously was the same size as the steel cable, adaptation to my snare drum was easy. I believe that, with a little ingenuity, the cable could be used on any snare drum. However, care should be taken not to apply too much tension to the snare strainer when using the steel cable, in order to avoid damage to the strainer or the drum. The advantage of the cable is its *durability*, not the amount of tension that can be applied. Good snare tuning is not achieved by over-tightening the snare strainer.

Scott Jansen
Mitchell, SD

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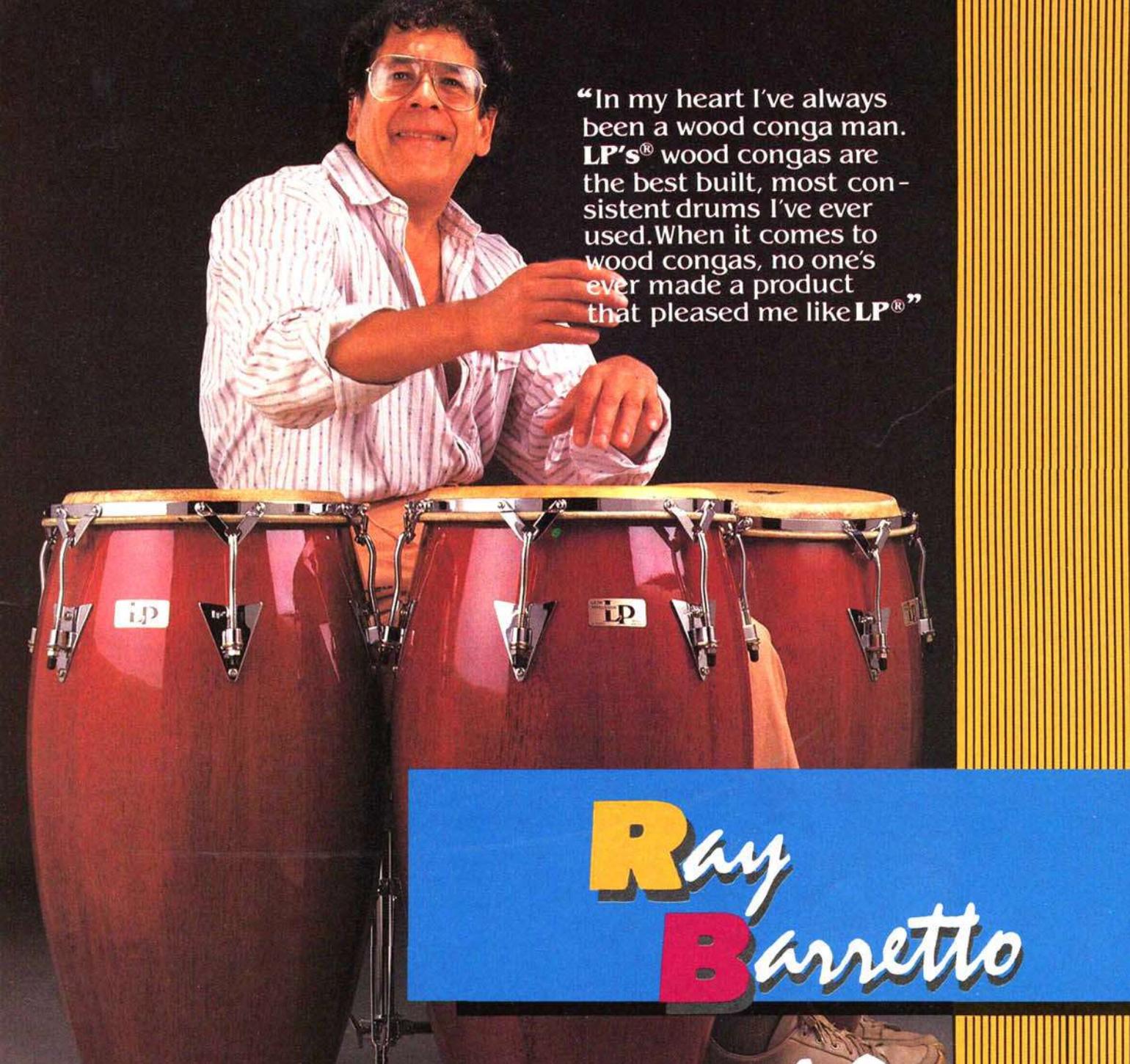
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A photograph of Ray Barretto, a man with glasses and a striped shirt, smiling and playing two large wooden congas. The congas have 'LP' logos on them. The background is dark with a vertical yellow and black striped pattern on the right side.

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Ray
Barretto

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Those are the words of Ray Barretto who is the most prominent Latin band leader. He's worked with Charlie Parker when BeBop was being invented, pioneered Latin-jazz, and maintains a much sought after dance band that also performs comfortably for the jazz festivals, the world over. As conga drummer/bandleader, his drums must be the least of his

problems. **LP® Wood Congas**, he has found are consistent in sound, with a volume that is needed to project over the full sound Ray's band is known for. Ray admits his attachment to wood is somewhat sentimental and acknowledges the importance of fiberglass when travel demands become too stressful for wood. The **LP® fiberglass conga**, with its selective rein-

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Black 'N Blue's new album, *Nasty, Nasty*, produced by Gene Simmons of Kiss, should be released shortly, after which the band, with drummer **Pete Holmes**, will be on the road. While the music the band plays is heavy rock, Pete says his varied background is of the utmost importance. "It used to be that I would swear by the more progressive stuff," says Pete, who writes jazz fusion music. "But now I really love both of them just as much. I think one complements the other. I don't think, personally, that I can play one without the knowledge of the other. I look at it now and think, 'Gosh, if I had only played the jazz stuff, I wouldn't have known the real feeling of just being in a real groove.' Then I look at it the other way: If rock would have been all I knew, I wouldn't know the high of doing free-style music and ad-libbing. Both work for me.

"I can watch drummers, and even if they're playing basic 4/4 time in a rock band, I can tell if they have a background in jazz or if they read music. Drummers like Steve Smith, Neil Peart, and Tommy Aldridge project an image to kids. You can watch them play and ask them about certain things. They know everything about the drums—the way they're built and the best way to get a sound out of them. I think kids can tell if you are really involved with your instrument, just by the way you play. When a kid compliments me on my playing, that's the best, because he noticed me. I want to hold the bottom down, but I do want to be noticed, too."

So how does the musician at the back of the stage get noticed? "It all goes back to your playing," Pete answers. "The band and I have always put music and our instruments before any type of image. I

play a rather large kit, although I don't overplay it, and I do use everything. It's just a matter of how you approach your instrument. As for flashiness—twirling sticks and such, which I do—that does get you noticed, but the reason I do it is not, 'Look at me. I can do this.' It's a challenge for me. I can lose that stick at any given time, but in rehearsal I work that in so it becomes routine. I don't want to be noticed for anything but my playing."

Double bass drums definitely enter into this power rocker's playing. "As for double bass, I think of my feet as I would my hands. Any kind of rudiments that you can play with your hands, you can play with your feet. You can reverse those, and go from left to right or right to left. Once you can do that, exercise your legs, and you'll be able to incorporate different patterns into songs. You can play louder on either

bass drum, or you can play a pattern dominating on your left or on the right. That's how I approach the double bass, as opposed to just using it for fast single strokes. There are songs that call for that, but I try to go beyond that."

Because of the power required to play the set, Pete takes good care of himself. "When you're touring, everybody thinks that's a time to go out and party. That's the time you really have to be in shape the most. I don't drink or do drugs. I may have a few beers after I play, but I'll never go on stage with anything in my system. The show takes a lot of mental strength, too. On days that we have a show, I'm always thinking about the show and gearing up for it. I only eat one light meal that day. By the time I go on stage, it's the highlight of the day, and I'm ready for it."

— Robyn Flans



One of the most positive features of the 1986 incarnation of Black Sabbath has been the addition of drummer **Eric Singer**. On Sabbath's 14th LP, *The Seventh Star*, and especially with the group's current tour, Singer has been identified as one of the new lineup's foremost strengths.

Raised in Cleveland, Eric got his initial break in L.A. after placing third in a Carmine Appice drum contest. The exposure led to a drumming spot in the *Playboy* video "Women In Rock," followed by a year-long membership in Lita Ford's band. That job eventually helped garner the attention of Sabbath's founding guitarist, Tony Iommi, to

Singer's aggressive, Bonhamesque style. "When Tony started the songs for the new album, the other members of the band wanted to go off and do solo projects," explains Eric. "So Tony decided he was going to do it as a solo project using different musicians. He began working on demos with keyboard player Geoff Nichols in his porta-studio at the same time that I was working with Lita Ford on her demos. Since Lita was living with Tony at the time, he heard her tapes one night. I guess he liked the way I played, because he asked me if I wanted to play on a few of his demos. When he found a vocalist to do the whole album [Glenn Hughes], instead of using a variety of guest vocalists as was originally planned, it was decided that it would be put out as a Black Sabbath album. But when I was in the studio working on *The Seventh Star*, I was under the impression that it was going to be a Tony Iommi solo album, and I was guesting on drums."

Working in the studio with producer **Jeff Glixman** proved to be a learning experience for

Singer. "When we were first laying down the tracks," says Eric, "the producer basically took us aside and said, 'Look, this is a guitar player's solo album. Get your playing in, but basically you're here to support.' His direction was very important because it taught me discipline. There were times that I might have approached things very differently than the way they ended up on the album, but it was good experience to have done things the way somebody else wanted them done, and ultimately, it satisfies me to satisfy the whole—as a team effort."

"One of the things Tony said that he liked about my playing was that live, I play off the guitar, not the bass," adds Singer. "Even in my monitor mix, there's no bass in there—only guitar. It's almost like a jazz quartet where the drummer might be backing the soloist. I kind of take a similar approach by following the guitar, because to me, the guitar controls the rhythm, the groove, and the attitude, as well as all of the melody lines of the songs. So it makes more

sense to me to follow *that* rather than a bass line, because usually, the bass player is going to follow your kick drum anyway."

And what are Eric's thoughts on joining a band whose name has been connected to such an accomplished and lengthy past as Black Sabbath's? "You definitely need a lot of luck. There are so many really good musicians in all instruments out there that they are a dime a dozen. I just think it all comes down to finding your own niche. A lot of times when you don't get a gig, it's not that you weren't qualified or you weren't good enough. It's usually a matter of there being so many qualified musicians out there vying for the same job as you."

As the revamped Black Sabbath winds up a world tour, speculation has arisen concerning the band's future. Nevertheless, one thing that does appear certain is that this is not the last we'll hear from Eric Singer.

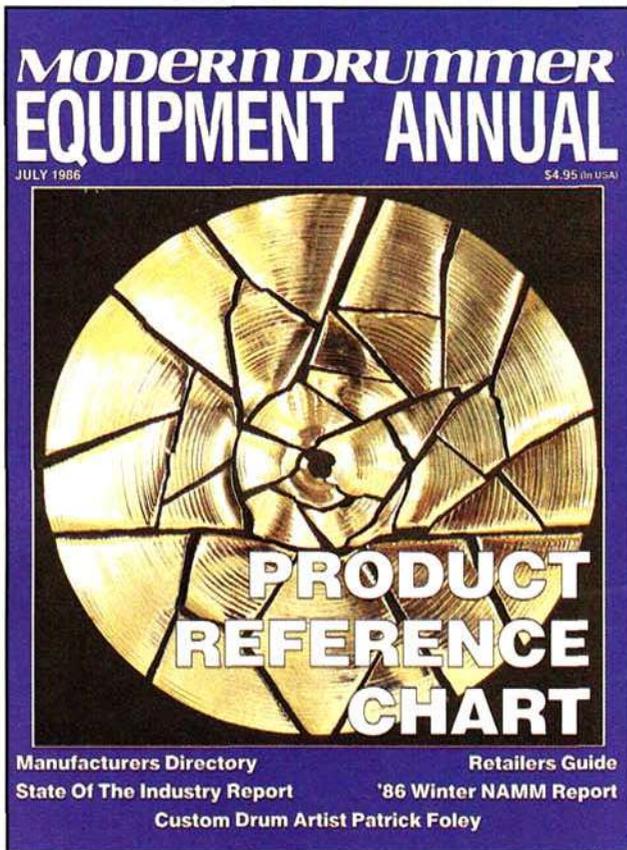
— Teri Saccone

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After eight years of being with Robert Palmer, **Dony Wynn** still enjoys relaying just how he came to join the band. "I had quit playing drums for about five years when I was 20. It was right after I played with Dr. John, which was my first professional gig. I got off the road with that, and I was living in Alexandria, Louisiana. My father owned some businesses, and I was the only son, so I was the one to take them over. I put on my suit and tie, and thought I was going to get married. Then Leo Nocentelli, the guitar player for the Meters, was in the studio in town. I knew the studio owner, so I went by. There I was in my suit and tie on my lunch hour, playing on this demo. It was a really good combination of funk and rock, like Robert is doing now. Something had happened to me, for the better, during the five years I had laid

off. Leo sat me down one day and said, 'You have a gift, and I can tell you're not happy with your work.' I had to agree with him, so one day I walked into my father's office and said, 'This may come as a shock to you, but I'm leaving for Los Angeles tomorrow.' I came out and stayed with my friend, Bobby Kimball, who was working with Toto at the time, and within an hour after being in town, I had an audition with Boz Scaggs. I failed that audition and auditioned for Rufus, but John Robinson got that job. My father gave me a year to get the music going. A friend in New Orleans bought me a ticket to visit, and it turned out that Robert was playing with the Meters in New Orleans. After the show I went with Leo and Zigaboo [Mode-liste] back to Leo's house, where he played the tracks I had played on. At the end of

one, Robert looked at Zigaboo and said, 'Good track, Zig,' and Zig said, 'It's not me.' After three or four times, Robert said, 'Who the hell is it?' Zigaboo pointed to me and Robert said, 'But you're white.' That's all he said to me. A year to the day after I moved out, my phone rang. It was Dave Harper, Robert's manager, asking if I could catch the next flight to Nassau. I was nervous as hell, because I really hadn't played with anyone in five years. All I had done was listen to Little Feat's last album with headphones on and played to it, hoping my chops would be good enough when I got my next audition. We hit it off personally as well as musically, and became great friends. Robert is a challenge. He doesn't like to be pigeon-holed and likes to discover new things all the time. It's been a real pleasure to work with

him."
Dony missed one tour, however, due to his involvement with the Romeos (now called the Meos). But he was happy to return to Palmer, even though he'd had a taste of what it was like to have his own band. "I'm not treated like a sideman with Robert, even though he is the main performer. We work equally with each other, and he takes my input as well. I enjoy working with the man so much, and I learn a lot. It's like getting a very long college education."

Recently, the Meos have been in the studio with Bernard Edwards producing, and Dony has been working (playing and writing) on that album, as well as a new Palmer LP. When he's not working in either of those situations, Dony enjoys producing some of the local L.A. acts.

— *Robyn Flans*

Even though promoting a new band is like starting over, **Keith Knudsen** says that Southern Pacific isn't very different from his previous band, the Doobie Brothers. "Aside from the personnel and the level of success the Doobie Brothers reached, it really is basically the same. We're out there traveling on the road a little less luxuriously than with the Doobies, but all the traveling and eating bad food is pretty much the same. The audiences are smaller, but they're just as good, and we're out there for that same two-and-a-half hours."

The playing is similar, Keith

says, although Southern Pacific is more in the country vein. "I'm still trying to meld rock and country/rock influences into the kind of music we're doing. But I really am playing almost exactly the same style I would have played on a Doobie Brothers album. I am a pretty sparse player without a lot of fills. Hopefully, that's one of the things that's a little bit different about us as a country band—the style of drumming I do with the music. That, plus the combination of the playing of Stu Cook, Kurt Howell, John McFee, and Timmy Goodman makes us a little bit unique."

What is different, however, is the role Keith plays in Southern Pacific, where he enjoys a great deal more input than he did with the Doobies.

"Because there were eight of us in the Doobies, plus [producer] Ted Templeman, who had a lot to say about the recording process, in Southern Pacific we all have more input than any one person in the Doobies had. Plus, our producer, Jim Ed Norman, guides us, but leaves us alone a lot of the time. We all have quite a bit of input, right from picking the material, to the arrangements, to the parts played, to

the mixing. It's really a pleasure."

Southern Pacific's recently released second album, *Killbilly Hill*, was recorded at Lizard Rock Recorders, the studio Keith owns with co-member John McFee. "I think it's a much more cohesive album than the first. Musicians always like their newest album the best, but we really have a tighter group of people, now that we've added Kurt and Stu. I think it's definitely a musically logical progression from our first album to the music on our second album."

— *Robyn Flans*

Bill Ward recently produced some tracks on a band called Smokin' Roadie; the drummer in that band is **Steve Bell**. **Terry Bozzio** and **Frankie Banali** on Andy Taylor's contributions to *the American Anthem* soundtrack. Banali is also on debut LP by Japanese heavy metal guitarist Kuni Takauchi. **Michael Mason** playing drums on E. Yazawa's upcoming release and soundtrack for *Never Too Young To Die*. **Jim Blair** recently returned from the Montreux rock festival with Animotion. They are currently on tour. **Tris Imboden** recently did some gigs with Chaka

Khan, can be heard on Jeff Berlin's recent release, and has been working with Al Jarreau. **Paul Hine** has been working with the Dazz Band and George Howard. **Michael Botts** on Air Supply tracks. **Dave Kuzma** has joined the Jesters. **Mark Presley** on tour with John Conlee. **Alan Schwartzberg** has been doing lots of jingles, work on John Taylor's solo LP, and a record by Tom Verlain. **Bill Bateman** gigging with the Blasters. **Mike Baird** has recently worked with El DeBarge, Natalie Cole, Joe Cocker, and on a film called *Ruthless People*. **Nick Menza** is in a band called Stranger,

produced by Quiet Riot's Kevin DuBrow. **Stu Nevitt** has been doing shows with Shadowfax. Percussionist **Manolo Badrena** has joined Spyro Gyra. He can be heard on their recently released album, *Breakout*, along with drummer **Richie Morales**. The group is currently on the road in the U.S. having done a European tour during the summer. **Jeff Klaven** on tour with Krokus. **Jimmie Fadden** working on new Nitty Gritty Dirt Band album. **Bill Berg** is working on another Flim & the BB's compact disc due out by early '87. In the meantime, you can hear him on the group's current

release, *Big Notes*. You can catch **Butch Miles** at the Dick Gibson Jazz Party in Denver early this month. **Alex Van Halen** still on the road with Van Halen. **Adam Nussbaum** spent much of the summer doing clinics with Jamie Aebersold, and then went to Japan with Mike Stern and Steve Slagle. **Mel Brown** led the Festival All Stars at the Mt. Hood Festival of Jazz in August. **Sandy Gennaro** touring Europe with Craaft. **Mike Porter** working with Roseanne Cash, and recently recording with John Hyatt.

— *Robyn Flans*





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MAX WEINBERG



Photo by Barry Goldberg

Q. Could you outline the drum and cymbal setup you used on the *Born In The USA* tour (including the drumheads), please? Also, I'd like to know how you got the snare sound you achieved on the album *The River*.

Kirk Marley
Indianapolis, IN

A. The drumset is a vintage, late-60s Ludwig white marine pearl kit. It consists of a 14x22 bass drum, a 9x13 rack tom, a 16x16 floor tom, and a pre-1967 Supra-Phonic 5 1/2X14 snare. I used Remo Ambassador white coated heads on the top of the snare and the bottoms of the toms; the single bass drum head and the top heads on the toms were Emperors. My drum sound on tour was a combination of my acoustic sound and my drumset triggering prerecorded drum chips made from our records. Triggering

devices installed in my drums would trigger various drum machines loaded with stock sounds and my custom sounds. You would hear a combination of acoustic drums and electronic sounds, depending on what song I was playing.

The cymbals I used included a 22" heavy ride, a 17" medium-thin crash, and an 18" medium crash—all by Zildjian—and a pair of 14" Paiste Sound Edge hi-hats. The whole kit was held together by a custom-made drum rack constructed of airplane strut material. The rack held all the wires, mic's, and cymbal stands, so that the kit looked very compact. It was the same rack as the one shown in MD's April '82 issue.

The snare on *The River* was that same pre-1967 Supra-Phonic. The way I tuned it was essentially the same as for *Born In The USA*, which involves three steps. First, I finger-tension both heads to where all the lugs are even. Then, on the snare side, I use a drumkey and turn each lug three half-turns. On the batter side, I turn the key two half-turns. So the head is actually very loose. The miking was standard top-and-bottom miking, and I think Shure 54s or 56s were used. There were also two room mic's up in the ceiling, and they helped to get the crack of the snare. I also have to give a lot of credit to Studio A at The Power Station, and to Neil Dorsman—the recording engineer—and Bob Clearmountain—who mixed the album—for my snare sound on *The River*. They can take any sound and make it great.

GARY HUSBAND

Q. Your playing on the Allan Holdsworth *I.O.U.* album is superb and truly inspirational. Is it true that it was recorded on a barge? What sort of drums, heads, and cymbals were used? Also, your cymbal work is extremely tasteful. How did you practice to develop that? Lastly, what other albums can we hear your playing on?

Peter Lydiard
Newcastle, Australia

A. Thanks for the compliments on the *I.O.U.* album. That record, recorded in 1980, captures the spirit of the first band at that time for me. It is true that the album was actually recorded on a barge that floats in Little Venice, in London. I believe that, at the time, it was owned by Virgin. The drums I used were all Gretsch; the cymbals were a mixture, which included a 20" ride, an 18" crash, and two bottom

New Beat hi-hats—all by Zildjian, along with a Paiste 2002 16" crash. Since I am left to all drum composition in the music of Allan's group, I feel particularly proud that my development has been shown through the albums *Metal Fatigue* and *Atavachron*, both on Enigma records.

I think of my cymbal approach as a reflection and development of my early love for them, and a desire to use them in a dramatic, emotional—but above all, musical—way. I try to have as much control over the way they respond as possible, so I start by choosing cymbals carefully. Then, I try to get used to them—their feeling, and the way they throw the stick back at you. From there, I start working on being able to manipulate and tease them for the kind of dynamic effects I like to use in music. By the way, the cymbals I use nowadays are all made by Zildjian.

JERRY MERCER

Q. My question concerns your approach to drum solos. I've heard many that you've done, both live and on vinyl, and would like to know how you arrive at such a blend of polished precision and raw emotion. How much work goes into planning the solo and practicing it? Is everything preplanned, improvised, or a combination of both?

Carl Simpson

St. Laurent, Quebec, Canada

A. Over the years, my approach to drum soloing has not changed drastically. I like to play within definite grooves, I like to phrase within two-, four-, eight-, or 16-bar cycles, and I like to tune my toms to definite notes, which allows me to think melodically. My solos have been more a result of evolution than of strict planning. While doing concert tours with Mash McCann and with April Wine—where I was working with both a sound engineer and a lighting technician—my solos consisted of five or six basic movements that they had to be aware of, for the sake of good presentation. Within each movement, I left myself the freedom to play whatever would come to mind on any given performance. Emotionally, I try to focus all my physical, mental, and spiritual energy into the solo, so that for a brief time nothing else exists, and I can play just as hard for five people in a small club as I do for 50,000 people in a stadium. I guess good soloing is a combination of planning, improvisation, and—above all—heart.

BUTCH MILES

Q. I have a few of your albums on Stash Records, and I really dig the cymbal sounds that you get. Could you run down your cymbal setup, including cymbal types and sizes?

Don Le Jeune
Peabody, MA

A. Thanks for the kind words. All my cymbals are Zildjians, and I use different setups for different situations. On the Stash albums, I generally used a 20" K. heavy ride, a 20" medium-thin A. swish, 13" A. New Beat hi-hats, and sometimes a 17" paper-thin A. crash. My full setup includes all of the above, plus an 18" medium A. crash (or a 16" K. Dark Crash) and a 17" K. China Boy. I have other sizes that I mix and match, but I've always been a 700% Zildjian man.

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Q. Recently, I purchased a Paiste 16" *Colorsound* crash. I've discovered a crack near the cup. Is there a warranty against breakage or cracking? Also, other than Paiste *Rudes*, what cymbals could I look into that have a loud sound and do not break easily?

S.W.

Springfield, IL

A. According to Jeff Neuhauser of Paiste America, every Paiste cymbal is warranted against manufacturing flaws for six months from the date of purchase. He stresses that it is important to save purchase receipts to verify that date. A damaged cymbal should be returned to Paiste through your dealer, since there must be a return authorization submitted along with the cymbal, and your dealer can provide that. Your dealer is also better equipped to handle the packing and shipping of the cymbal.

Paiste will request information on your playing style, the size of sticks you use, the type of stand that the cymbal was placed on, and the general playing conditions under which the cymbal was used. In this way, the company may determine whether the damage was due to a manufacturing flaw or player abuse. Conditions that will void the warranty include any alteration of the factory specifications of the cymbal (such as nicks in the edge, which can start a crack) or evidence of any contact with the metal portion of the cymbal stand (such as scarring under the bell due to contact with oversize metal cup washers). (Jeff adds that the one-piece plastic or rubber mount-and-sleeve combinations are much better for cymbals than the traditional felt-washer-over-metal-washer arrangement.) If, after a complete inspection, Paiste agrees that the crack was a result of a manufacturing flaw, the cymbal will be replaced, free of charge.

As far as other cymbal choices go, you might try the heavy-duty lines from all the companies, including Zildjian's Z Series and Amir cymbals, Sabian's Leopard series and Rocktagon crash models, and Meinl's Raker line. Additionally, all of the companies offer "heavy" or "rock" models in their traditional lines. You should also be aware that any cymbal can be broken if it's hit hard enough or hit incorrectly. Conversely, cymbals not specifically designed as heavy-duty can be very durable if struck properly. If you need to play at a louder volume level than your cymbals are capable of projecting under normal playing conditions, you should not consider other cymbals; you should consider microphones.

Q. I'm a serious teenage drummer who'd like to improve his chart reading. In recent issues, chart reading was the topic of several *Driver's Seat* columns by Gil Graham. At the end of the articles, it was mentioned that the information was taken from Gil's book, *Beginning Drum Chart Reading*. How may I obtain a copy?

A.W.

High Point, NC

A. You may obtain a copy by writing to Gil Graham Enterprises, 13 Winthrop St., Winchester, MA 01890. A review of *Beginning Drum Chart Reading* appeared in the *Printed Page* column in June of this year.

Q. In the June, 1985 issue of *Modern Drummer*, Steve Jordan talked about an Eames snare drum that Danny Gottlieb had had made for him. I'm thinking about buying a new snare, and I would like more information about Eames drums. Can you provide the address of this company?

G.O.

St. Cloud, MN

A. For information on Eames drums, contact Joe MacSweeney, Eames Drum Company, 229 Hamilton St., Saugus, MA 01906, or call (617) 233-1404.

Q. I have been playing drums for about five years. I've come across a problem I've never heard of before. Lately, when playing my drums, I start to hum, as if I were humming a bass line. This gets embarrassing when people are listening to me play. What I want to know is if you have ever heard of this, and if so, do you have a solution to this problem.

J.R.

Novato, CA

A. Several solutions come immediately to mind: (1) Wear a muffle; (2) just be sure to hum in the right key; or (3) learn the lyrics. Kidding aside, many notable artists—Louie Bellson, Art Blakey, Erroll Garner, and Oscar Peterson, to name a few—hum while playing. If they can do it, why not you? Apparently, you're just feeling the music melodically as well as rhythmically, which sounds like you're into your playing pretty intensely. That's certainly nothing to be embarrassed about.

Q. I am a 15-year-old drummer, and lately, I've been doing a drumset trio with another drumming friend and a former professional drummer. My problem is, in the course of our playing, I usually pick up a Latin/primitive type of rhythm. To accent this, I "slap" my stick on the snare in a rimshot manner, striking both the head and the rim. I seem to be going through more than my share of heads, and I think this is caused by the internal batter head muffler turning so that the metal part of it is rubbed against the head, causing a weak spot. But I'm not sure. Any suggestions?

D.D.

East Machias, ME

A. You've probably diagnosed your problem accurately. When an internal muffler is tightened up against the bottom of a batter head, the felt portion of the muffler can be literally "pounded out of position" by repeated impact. This, in turn, exposes the metal backing behind the felt, and allows it to come in contact with the head. Further impact to the head when this condition exists can definitely cause the head to break—to say nothing of the poor sound it can create. Most drummers today agree that external muffling is better than internal, since it can be more easily installed or removed, and is a more natural method of dampening a head. When you strike a head that is being muffled from above, the head moves away from the muffler momentarily—allowing the natural impact sound to occur—and then moves back up against the muffler. There are any number of clip-on type felt mufflers very similar to the internal muffler originally installed in your snare. There are also other types of head mufflers, such as Remo's Muff'ls, Zero Rings from Noble & Cooley, and Flat Rings from Groove Tubs. You can also create your own muffling, using cut-out drumheads, tape, etc. You can experiment with these to get the sound you want, secure in the knowledge that none of them is likely to present any hazard to your drumhead.

Correction: In our June '86 issue, we answered a question regarding the availability of add-on toms for a Pearl International Series kit by saying that add-on drums were not available in that series, but that such drums were available in the next series up, Pearl's Export Series. That information was correct. However, we went on to say that the two series do not offer the same finishes. This was only partially correct. Drums in the International Series are only available in black or white finishes, and those two colors are also available in the Export Series (along with several other colors). Consequently, it would be possible to add Export toms to an International Series kit and match the finish.



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by Simon Goodwin

HELLO Birmingham," Tommy Lee roars into his mic'. "Do you want that faster?" The crowd roars its assent. "I can't hear you, Birmingham," yells Tommy. "D'YA WANT IT FASTER?" This time the crowd really pulls out all the stops to let Tommy know that he should play still faster and, by implication, that his Birmingham fans are loving every moment of his solo spot. The tremendous enthusiasm of the crowd can't be put down to the mindless mass hysteria that is often found at rock concerts; there are some very good reasons for it. Tommy began his solo with more than a demonstration of technique (although it was that, too); what he played was pleasant to listen to and almost tuneful. Then he went into an audience-participation section, getting the crowd to clap along and shout responses. But now Tommy's drum riser, which had been pushed forward by unseen hands at the start of his solo, is gradually tilting forward. As he goes into the "faster" climax of his solo, the platform is nearly vertical, and the audience finds itself actually looking down on the kit. In spite of his unconventional position, Tommy Lee is playing as accurately as ever and even more energetically (if that is possible). His sticks flash across the toms, the kick drums roar like thunder, there is a flurry on the cymbals and a brief crescendo on the snare drum, and it is over. Tommy leans back to get his body into the vertical position, lifts a can of beer as a toast to the audience, and takes a swig from it before throwing it. As the riser is lowered and the other members of Motley Crue return to the stage, the beer can spirals out towards a sea of raised hands.

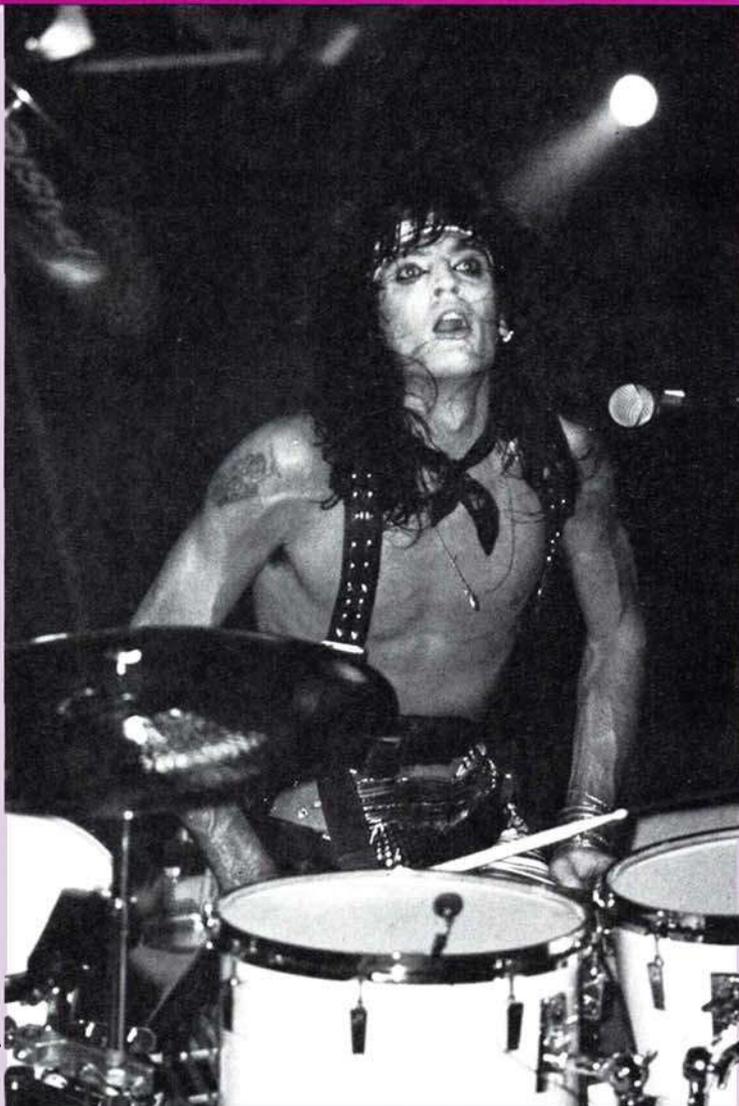
"Motley Crue?" I had said to the pianist in my jazz trio, the night before going to interview Tommy. "They are an American heavy metal band who wear makeup and are known as The Bad Boys of Rock." The pianist raised an eyebrow, Spock fashion, and with dry irony said, "You should have a lot in common, then!" I must admit that this point had been worrying me. A great deal has been written about "The Crue" during the last five years: everything from learned studies about the band as a social phenomenon, to pornographic fantasy—young girls talking about what they would be prepared to do to get close to the guys in the band—plus, of course, the usual "fanzine" stuff. They have hardly, if ever, been presented as pleasant human beings: Bassist/songwriter Nikki Sixx is quoted as saying, "I know we intimidate people—we do it on purpose—because we've mastered the art of being bastards." Motley Crue stands for rebellious youth: one of a series of bands in the history of rock that the kids love, the parents hate, and the press loves to hate. There can be no denying that this publicity is good for the band's career, but it

Photo by Mark Weiss/MWA



Y L E E





often means that the superb drumming of Tommy Lee and the tightness of the rest of the band meshed around it generally takes a backseat when the words start to flow.

Tommy is philosophical about this: "Sometimes it does bother me, because I give it everything I have, and sometimes I can barely breathe. So when people don't bother to write about the energy, I wonder why I bother. But I'll never change, because that's the way I am, that's the way I like to play, and I love doing it." Motley Crue obviously offers more than a rebellious image. Platinum and gold records, sell-out world tours—it means that there has to be substance in what they are offering as musicians and entertainers. And as far as Tommy himself is concerned, I told myself that anybody who is married to Heather Locklear can't be all bad!

Backstage at "The Crue's" gig in Birmingham, England, drum tech Clyde Duncan and tour manager Rich Fisher treat me like an honored guest, rather than just another reporter to be tolerated. Going around back after watching Tommy's solo from the auditorium, I am anxious not to get in the way, but Clyde beckons me and indicates that I can stand directly behind the riser to get the best possible view of the drummer in action. (The riser is at least five feet high, with wings on either side for the other Crue members to climb on. So with the bulk of Tommy's kit in front of us, Clyde and I are not really visible from the audience.) Tommy swivels half around to play on his floor toms, sees me standing behind him, and pulls a manic grimace before breaking into a grin. Clyde indicates that I should climb up and put my head over the

back of the riser to hear the bass drum monitors. I do, but I don't stay there very long! From my vantage point, I can tell that Tommy is really enjoying himself; it's no act. He never stops moving. If his sticks are not actually pounding on his equipment, they are spinning like propellers as he twirls them, or flying upwards (usually) to be deftly caught and brought back into play as they descend. If a stick isn't going to return to his hand, Tommy is always there with another one and never misses a beat. During the final chord of the final number, Tommy keeps a roll going on his bass drums while throwing sticks, with alternate hands, into the audience. Whichever hand isn't throwing is rolling on a cymbal, while the hand that has just thrown picks up another stick and continues the cymbal roll to free the first hand again. Tommy Lee is, quite simply, the best showman/drummer I have ever seen!

When, at the relatively tender age of 23, a person is a celebrity, a sex symbol with a macho image to maintain, and also happens to be damn good at what he does, it would be almost understandable if that person were also conceited and on a bit of a "star-trip," but you couldn't hope to meet a nicer guy than Mr. Tommy Lee. Effervescent, ebullient—these are the words that spring to mind when describing the way Tommy talks about his drums and his band. He loves the whole thing and really lives for it. I told Clyde that I wasn't going to try to hang out with Tommy for too long before the show, because I assumed he would need to get psyched up. Clyde laughed. "Don't worry about that," he said. "Tommy is always psyched up when it comes to drumming!" Tommy demonstrates sensitivity and modesty too when he says things like, "I'm really lucky to be doing what I'm doing and to have had the success that I've had. There are so many good drummers around, and they all deserve success. I've just been fortunate."

SG: Whose idea was the tilting drum riser?

TL: It came to me in a dream one day. Originally, I wanted to go upside down! But I made the mistake of asking the wrong people about it, and they all told me that it wasn't possible: too difficult, too expensive—all that kind of thing. So then I thought, "Well, how about just tilting forward? It would give the kids a chance to see what it would be like to look down on the kit while it was being played." They never get to see this, right? But this way, they see your hands and feet moving, they see each drum you play, and they see everything you do. I don't think there are many people in audiences who have ever seen all that.

SG: It's a great spectacle, too.

TL: Yeah. "He's playing like that! How does he do it? Drums weren't meant to be played in that position!" That's the sort of reaction I get, and it's great. But now that I've created this monster, I'm eventually going to want to top it. The next thing has got to be getting myself upside down. It's going to be difficult. It will involve an enormous riser and massive machinery—maybe something like a roller coaster, where you start going from side to side, then *whaaam, whaaam* and you're up. I want to do something like that so badly now that I can taste it!

My riser in the States goes all the way up to 90 degrees. This one we've got with us on the European tour doesn't quite do that; it only goes to about 75 or 80 degrees. This is because many of the places we play have lower ceilings. But my riser in the States is much bigger: The platform is eight feet high before I start, and then it goes *straight* up at 90 degrees. They said I wouldn't be able to do it. The day we got the riser built, the hydraulics working, and all the rest of the stuff sorted out, they bolted my drums down, strapped me in, sent me up, and I played. The guys who *made* the riser had said there was no

point because I wouldn't be able to play in that position, but then they stood there and said, "Wow."

SG: There must be some gravity problems though?

TL: Yes, it is much harder to play like that. Gravity is pulling your hands down, and you have got to bring them back up and play. It's strenuous; it's strange. I wish we had time to strap you onto it, so that you could go up and find out what it feels like. It's different!

SG: Next time, perhaps. One thing that surprises me is that you don't have clips, like racing cyclists use, on the pedals.

TL: I've found that I don't need anything like that. My toes just go up against the chains, and there's enough friction to make it possible to play.

SG: When I was standing behind you, I was able to hear just how powerful your stage monitors are, particularly the bass drum monitors. Why do you like to have so much volume there?

TL: It's not so much the volume, but I love to feel that low end. And I *can* feel it; my hair moves! Also, I need some reinforcement when the riser moves forward. The monitor underneath, which blows up through the grill behind my seat, comes with me, but the rest stay in the original position.

I'm sure it must seem real, real loud to you, but it feels good back there. These guys play real loud, but I haven't got that sort of electronics. I'm competing, and there's just me beating it out. I'm only human, so it helps.

SG: Another non-musical aspect of your performance that is very impressive is your stick twirling, and the way you are able to bounce your sticks way up in the air and catch them. How did you develop that?

TL: I don't throw them up in the air. A lot of drummers do that, but I bounce them off the snare drum. It happened by accident. A stick slipped out of my hand, and I saw it shoot up into the air. I thought, "Wow, that's cool!" So I tried to perfect it. I took my snare drum, my drum seat, and a bag of sticks into my parents' backyard. One would go into the neighbors' yard and another would go behind me, until eventually, I could get most of them going straight up and down. But still, I can't be sure—sometimes nine out of ten, sometimes only six out of ten. It's very hard to be accurate. It depends on how hard you hit, the angle of the stick, and the point on the drumhead you hit, whether you follow through. It's a difficult trick to make work every time. I can't say that I've perfected it, because, as you have seen, I haven't.

SG: Some of them were getting deflected off the lights above you.

TL: Well, when I can catch them, it looks great, and when I can't, I just let them go, so . . .

SG: Putting on a good show is obviously very important to you.

TL: I'm sticking up for the drummers here. I don't think that they should always just sit back and be the rhythm section. I think it's time for drummers to come out and really show their stuff. There are a lot of good drummers out there, man. I know there are. Drummers put out so much energy, and they are the ones who make the people stamp their feet and clap their hands.

My main interest is what makes people move. My motive is to get those feet moving and the heads bobbing—whatever it is. Drums are great! Rhythmically, you are in control of the audience. Whatever you play, if you can get them to do that, you are winning. I love to see people happy. That comes before a lot of things. I don't want to give the impression that I'm not a technical drummer,



Photo by Mark Weiss/MWA

because I do some technical things, but generally I bash it out pretty much straight ahead, because that's what makes everybody move. Most of the kids don't know what 7/8 is anyway; they relate to a straight four much better. I do some pretty weird stuff in my solo, but I'm into making it *look* really easy. I would like to be able to do some *really incredible* stuff, but make it look like [shrugs] no sweat.

SG: Now that we've got onto the drumming, can we go back to the beginning?

TL: Yeah. I started when I was four or five years old. From what my parents say, it was as soon as I was tall enough to reach into the silverware drawer. I would pick up things like spoons and knives, beat hell out of everything in the house, and drive them crazy. They reckoned I was going to be a drummer, so they got me my first drumkit: It was a cheap little paper-headed set for children. I used to take it out into the backyard, because I wanted everybody on the block to know that I was playing drums; I wanted everybody to hear it! This little kit had a cowbell. I'll never forget that, because I have become a cowbell freak. I love percussion



Photo by Mark Weiss/MWA

of this sort, and I use a lot of cowbell in my solo.

So then my parents started me on accordion lessons. A guy went around from house to house offering accordion lessons, and they said, "Okay." I played the accordion for six or seven years. I learned to read music, and then my parents got a piano. I started having piano lessons, but for some reason, that got really difficult for me. I guess I was 12 or 13 at the time. I was progressing, but I think I was trying to do too much too soon, and my heart was really in the drums; I didn't want to play piano. Now I kick myself in the ass for not sticking with it, because I could have learned a lot more. So anyway, I always wanted to play drums, but my mom and dad would always make me practice the piano. I just couldn't wait to get that hour over with, so I could spend the rest of the day on the drums. That's what I really wanted to do! Eventually, the accordion went into the closet, the piano lessons stopped, and I formed my first rock 'n' roll band—in my garage.

SG: Did you ever have drum lessons, or are you self-taught?

TL: I've never had a lesson. Don't ask me why, because I don't know! I played in a marching band at high school, but I never had an individual lesson. There were so many drummers, and everybody just learned together. I never had a lesson on drumset. What I learned was from playing the piano and reading drum music for the drum corps. That's where I picked up the rudiments and some of the showy stuff I do like twirling the sticks. I saw somebody do that, and I wanted to do it, too. I would sit in my room for months practicing it. I would carry a stick

around in my back pocket, so that I could take it out and twirl it whenever I had the opportunity. Eventually, I got it down. None of these tricks came overnight; you have to work hard at perfecting them. I never had a big brother or a drumming friend to show me things. I learned the stuff on my own and from watching people.

SG: Do you see this as a disadvantage, or has it helped you develop your style in your own way?

TL: I might have developed a different style if I had taken lessons. It's hard to say. You can learn anything from somebody else, but when you try to execute it, are you going to sound like that person? Somebody can *show* you how to do something, but you're going to perform it the way you're going to perform it. Everybody has a different style and a different way of doing things. Somebody might not be very good with the left hand, but that person might be better than you are with the right. Everybody has different qualities and faults.

Do you know what I'd like to do now? I'd really like to take some drum lessons—get together with somebody who is really technical. There's a lot of stuff out there that I don't know about, and that pisses me off. I just want to keep getting better. I can't get enough. I've always had a trash can philosophy; I can never learn enough. My drumming will *never* be as good as I want it to be, and I *hate* that!

SG: If your playing was as good as you want it to be, you would be complacent, and that's not a good way to be either.

TL: Right. I'm always thinking of ways to do something new and interesting.

SG: What about your musical influences?

TL: Well, John Bonham of Led Zeppelin was a very big influence. I would say that he is just about my all-time hero when it comes to groove players. He played very hard and very simple. I enjoy that more than listening to someone who is technically trained, and can do lots of weird timing and stuff like that. As I was just saying, one day I would like to learn to do some of that,

but it is completely uncalled for in the type of music I do. So the greatest influence on the way I *play* has definitely been John Bonham.

I have other idols; another guy whose style I really like is Tommy Aldridge. Then there's Simon Phillips. He's a technical player, but I like him a lot. I've never seen him play anything real simple and heavy; he's a pretty flashy, technical drummer, but I love what he does.

SG: It's interesting that, of the three drummers you have mentioned, two have been English.

TL: [laughs] Okay, to even things up, another guy is Tony Thompson. I think his style and the way he plays is great. He plays very hard, very rhythmic, and very simple—one of the greats, definitely.

But John Bonham didn't only influence me with his playing; it was the *sound* he used to get from those drums as well. Wow! I'm very sound conscious. I always used to use much heavier heads than I do now until I saw a video of John Bonham, and I said, "Hey, that's how he gets that sound!" I think he was using white coated *Ambassadors*. They ring more and give you more of an ambient sound. So that's what I shot for, and I couldn't be happier right now. Actually, I'm using *Emperor* batter heads; they are thicker than the *Ambassadors*, and therefore, they hold up a bit better under my type of playing. But with the really thin bottom heads, we manage to get the sound that I really like. The Bonham sound is a good direction for me to go in for the type of style that I play.

SG: Clyde has already given me a rundown on the stuff you use, but is there anything you'd like to say about your choice of gear?

TL: Well, those Sonor drums are just great. I've never played louder drums—and the tone! The Paiste cymbals sound just the way I like them to. They're real loud, too. They break but

SG: What? Even the 1000 marching cymbals and the *Rudes*?

TL: The marching cymbals don't go so quickly, but I do go through the *Rudes*. You know, when I first got a *Rude* cymbal, they told me that I wouldn't be able to break it, and I said, "You just watch me!" [laughs] For some reason, I break hi-hat cymbals; the top one always goes. I go through two or three a week. I guess I hit them too hard—I don't know—but one top cymbal on the hi-hat lasts me for two, maybe three shows, that's all. Once you've got a little hairline crack, you need to replace them, because as the crack gets bigger, the sound goes. Thank God that Paiste endorses me, or I'd be broke. Paiste makes good stuff. Those cymbals are much louder, and they cut through much better than any others. Live they smash right through and just kick ass. They're perfect in the studio, too.

SG: Do you use the same setup in the studio?

TL: Yes, but I don't use the Simmons pads, and I use fewer cymbals. It's mainly the stuff in front of me. The stuff on the side is really for the show, when I do that thing where I have both bass drums going and I hit and catch the cymbals on either side of me. It looks impressive—I hope.

SG: Don't worry; it does! Where do the ideas for things like that come from—from watching other drummers, or is it all you?

TL: Some of the things I do are from things I've seen other people do. It's hard to say really, because you see somebody doing something you like and you say, "That's cool, but I'd do it *Ms* way," and it comes out differently. So some of the ideas come from things that other drummers

Drum Tech Clyde Duncan On Tommy's Setup

by Simon Goodwin

CD: It's a Sonor *Phonic Plus* kit. They are the best drums and hardware made in the world. It's the only equipment that I would ever want to try tipping up vertically! This stuff has been around the world twice, and we've never had any problems with it. I can't really say enough about it.

The kick drums are 14x24. The toms are 14 x 14 and 15 x 15 mounted, and 18 x 16 and 19 x 18 floor toms. The snare drum is custom-made for us by Sonor; it is 12 x 14. Basically, it is a marching drum without the marching attachments. We've got two here, but he only uses one at a time. The other one is a spare, for obvious reasons.

The heads we use are Remo coated *Emperors*: front and batter on the kick drums and batter side on all the toms. The bottom heads on the toms are some that I got specially made by Remo. They are the same thickness as snare heads. They are really thin, which gives them that give for a real "boo-uum." [*He mimes a note bending, with his hand.*] The batter heads on the snare drums are CS. I change them after every show, because they get completely mashed. I usually have to change the tom heads after about three shows.

The bass pedals are Drum Workshop *Turbo 5000*. The rest of the hardware is Sonor *Signature*—the heavy-duty stuff.

There are three Simmons pads that we use to trigger some custom sounds, which we sampled off the album. The chips are in a Linn 9000.

SG: As we are actually looking at the kit, perhaps I could run down the cymbal setup. They are all Paiste. Going from left to right, there is a 12" 505 splash, 15" *Rude Sound Edge* hi-hats on the stand, and an 18" *Colorsound* crash. Directly in front and on either side of the rack toms there are two 20" 1000 series marching cymbals. That's unusual.

CD: Yes, he uses these up front because they're super-loud. That's the main reason. Also, they don't crack too easily.

SG: High up at about 2:00 and 10:00, there are two 20" *Colorsound* China-types. Around on the right: a 24" 602 ride, a pair of 15" *Rude* cymbals on a Tama *X-Hat*, an 18" *Rude* crash, and a 22" 2002 crash. There is also an *Ice Bell* and various cowbells.

CD: Those are all made by Latin Percussion.

SG: This one here looks like a small church bell.

CD: Yes. This one was given to Tommy about four years ago, by a girl. It's an actual old church bell. You can see here that it's been dated 1878. He's broken it in a few places, but it still has a really nice bell sound.

SG: What about the Mighty Mouse that's perched between the rack toms?

CD: Well, I think that he was a childhood hero of Tommy's. You'll notice that Tommy has a tattoo of Mighty Mouse on his left arm. This one was given to him as well, and he has become a mainstay. He's been stolen a couple of times. Girls have run up on stage and grabbed him, but we've managed to get him back.

SG: Could you tell us about the miking system you use?

CD: We use three channels for each drum. We have a *Countryman* mic' on the outside, a *MayEA* on the inside, and we're also triggering the Linn 9000. So there are three separate drum sounds from each drum, which are blended together to get the sound that is out front. We've got over 30 channels on the drums.

SG: Tommy seems to have four monitor speakers behind him at floor level facing upwards.

CD: These two cabinets each have two 18" speakers in them, which

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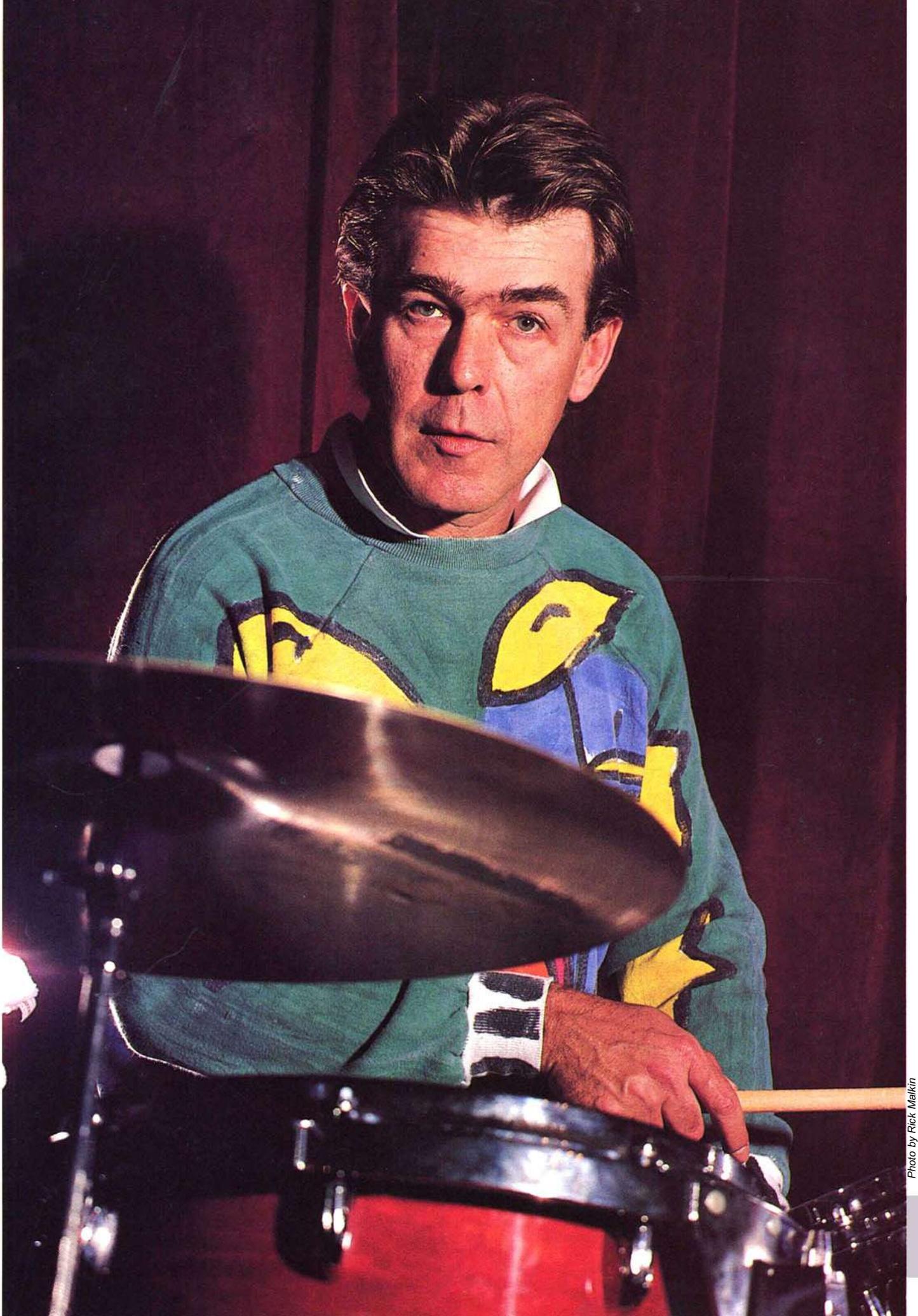


Photo by Rick Maikin

Jerry Carrigan

As a lover of music and the process by which records are made, I am always thrilled to meet someone who has played a part in creating a song that I've heard hundreds of times on the radio and sung along with as many times. It was, therefore, an obvious thrill to meet up with Jerry Carrigan during my recent visit to Nashville. His recording career is so extensive that he can't even remember a good portion of the songs on which he has played, but such classics as "Behind Closed Doors," "Please Come To Boston," and "Me And Bobby McGee" stand out, not to mention more recent hits of our time, like "Bobby Sue," "Elvira," and "Baby's Got Her Blue Jeans On." Kris Kristofferson, George Jones, the Oak Ridge Boys, Loretta Lynn, Waylon Jennings, Chet Atkins and the Boston Pops, John Denver, Merle Haggard, Earl Thomas Conley, Henry Mancini, Reba McEntire, Willie Nelson, Dolly Parton, and Elvis Presley are just random names chosen from a long list of those with whom Jerry has worked.

From his first session at age 13 in Nashville with a band called Little Joe Ellen & The Offbeats, Jerry knew the studio was where he wanted to be. As a native of Florence, Alabama, the burgeoning musical scene in Muscle Shoals afforded him just that opportunity. He and fellow musicians David Briggs and Norbert Putnam went on to lay the entire foundation for the Muscle Shoals R&B movement in the early '60s, playing on such songs as Jimmy Hughes' "Steal Away" (the first R&B hit from the area) and hits by the Tams, Tommy Roe, and Arthur Alexander.

In 1965, when he and his two colleagues moved to Nashville, Jerry was again fortunate to be part of the ground floor of Nashville's commercial success. As country music grew, so did Carrigan's list of credits, and by 1977, Jerry was playing approximately 12 three-hour sessions per week.

Admittedly, things have slowed down some for Jerry, but once again, he has seized an available opportunity by working with John Denver on the road, as well as in the studio. It's just one more phase of many this drummer has entered. And it makes me wonder what's next.

RF: How did you get into the section in Muscle Shoals?

JC: I was hanging around with Spooner Oldham and David Briggs. We started going over to Tom Stafford's up over the City Drug Store, and recording, doing demos, or whatever.

RF: What qualified you to do that? What did you know about recording at that stage? How old were you?

JC: I had done a session in Nashville with a band I was playing in when I was about 13. We were recording at Stafford's when I was 15. I remember that I used to earn my money to go down to Florida every year on vacation with a bunch of kids by doing sessions. My qualifications, I guess, came about because I was one of two drummers down there. There was just nobody else there. We started recording and experimenting with sounds, which got me off to a

great start. I've just always been in the studio and have never done anything else.

RF: You started playing at a very young age, obviously.

JC: About 12.

RF: You taught yourself?

JC: I taught myself, and then when I was in the 7th grade, I started in the junior high band playing a big ol' field drum. They let me bring that thing home and practice on it. Before that, I had my granddaddy's old banjo with a brush taped over it to make a snare sound, and I made a wooden bass drum pedal that I hooked up to a box. I used the old Edison records—those big 12" discs, which are a quarter of an inch thick—as my cymbals, and I practiced to records.

RF: What records were you into?

JC: I was into Carl Perkins, Fats Domino—the drummers on there were wonderful. Of course, it was all Earl Palmer.

RF: Muscle Shoals started to really happen.

JC: We were recording those things at Rick Hall's studio. The first hit we had out of there was "You Better Move On"—which was in 1962, I think—by Arthur Alexander. That was cut in a tobacco warehouse, which was where Rick Hall's studio was. He rented the center portion of it—kind of a triangle-shaped room, which was a little-bitty thing with egg crates on the wall and two mono machines.

RF: What else were you recording down there?

JC: Every black guy we could find who could carry a tune. That's all we wanted to do.

RF: Any anecdotes from those days?

JC: We had air conditioning in the studio, but it could only run when we weren't recording. We'd get to doing these things, and it would get so hot in there that you couldn't believe it. There were flies all over the place. We were cutting something one day, and David Briggs was sitting there. He didn't have to come in for maybe 16 bars, so he was swatting at these flies. Rick saw him, stopped everything, and said, "Y'all want to knock off for 30 minutes and kill flies, or do you want to cut records?" It was unbearable in there—like a sauna.

RF: Didn't that wreak havoc on your drumheads?

JC: Yes, because they were calfskin.

RF: How did you feel when plastic heads came in?

JC: I didn't like it at all. They felt very different, so I tried to hang on. Kenneth Buttrey and I went down to a music shop, and we bought all the rawhide heads they had. When those were gone, that was the end of it. We were very sad, because that's what we liked to use, especially on our snare drums. I had some custom heads made at one time, but it was terrible trying to deal with that again. I had to retune on every song. I wouldn't go through that again for anything. The plastic heads were a great jump into the future, even though I thought it was terrible at the time.

In On The Ground Floor



Photo by Rick Malkin

RF: So what else was happening in Muscle Shoals?

JC: We had our band going, Dan Penn & The Pallbearers. We bought a hearse and the whole works. We were going to bring Dan out in a coffin and have him jump out, but too many people thought that was morbid. We played the college circuit down South—University of Alabama, the University of Mississippi, and Mississippi State—and we played some of the air force bases. We got a lot of experience that way as a rhythm section. The guys who were doing this were the same guys who were saying, "Come on, let's get the stuff packed up. We've got to be back home for the session in the morning." It was David Briggs, Norbert Putnam, and Terry Thompson, a great guitar player who unfortunately OD'd at the ripe age of 22. It nearly killed us. Then Marlin Greene started playing guitar and singing some with us. Dan Penn would sing some of the time, and so did Jerry Sailor, who blew his brains out.

RF: So you didn't just go right into the studio and have that chemistry. You really needed to be playing live to get that together.

JC: Oh yes. It was comradery, and that formed the chemistry. We were real good friends playing together.

RF: So many young people say they want to get into recording without realizing that a lot must transpire before one waltzes into the studio.

JC: That's very true. You've got to start somewhere like that. You can't just learn to play, walk into a studio, and start recording. You wouldn't have any kind of style, would you? I think your style is developed with other musicians. We played together for a long time and actually moved up here to Nashville together—Norbert, David, me, and Herschel Wigginton, the background singer, who still does the *Hee Haw* stuff.

RF: When did you move up here?

JC: It was around Christmas of '64.

RF: Why, when things were so good in Muscle Shoals, didn't you stay there?

JC: We were already working for a lot of people who lived here. Felton Jarvis lived here, and he'd bring Tommy Roe down there. We were doing Ray Stevens stuff, and these guys were saying, "You guys ought to move to Nashville." One day we all marched into Rick Hall's office and said, "We're moving to Nashville." He said, "Well, go ahead; you won't last a month." He was wrong about that.

RF: Did he really think that?

JC: No. He was just angry. He wanted us to stay. His boys were leaving, and he had to get a new bunch. He didn't know the new bunch was waiting on the doorstep. Roger Hawkins used to call me every day, it seemed like, asking me, "How do you do this on a snare drum?" I knew he was going to be great. He was eager. He's still one of my best friends. He's a great drummer.

So I moved, and David, Norbert, Herschel, and I got us an apartment over on 17th Avenue. Sharing an apartment—mistake number one: Four guys away from home, and it just did not happen there with all of us together. We all began to get a lot of work, so I was the first one to move out and get my own place. They all followed. It was all my furniture in there, and I never did see it again. I got a furnished apartment.

RF: You just walked into Nashville, and it started happening for you?

JC: I had a lot of good people helping me. I didn't know a thing about playing country. I had my brushes taped for a black sounding shuffle, not a lazy triplet shuffle, which is what country is. I quickly learned. Mort Thomason, the engineer, grabbed the brush out of my hand, flung it open, and spread it all apart. It looked like a peacock's tail to me. He said, "Try that; it might work a little better." Okay, so *that's the way you do it*.

RF: You had to realize that, when you were coming to Nashville, it was the country capital. What were you thinking?

JC: I started digging on Buddy Harman, because I knew I was going to have to play that kind of stuff.

RF: Did you do anything else to prepare yourself while still down in Muscle Shoals?

JC: I just got in the car and left. At that age, you'll do that. At this age, I wouldn't.

RF: Aside from the brushes, what other adjustments did you have to make going from Muscle Shoals to Nashville, playing-wise?

JC: I had to learn that we couldn't take all day to do something, for one. I'm not on my time; I'm on another person's time. Someone else has bought my time. I had to learn to be fast.

RF: Down in Muscle Shoals, did you have all day? Weren't you on another person's time there?

JC: In Muscle Shoals, we didn't go by three-hour sessions. We worked until we got it. In those days, somebody would have an idea to do a song he or she really believed in, and we'd show up in the morning and work all day, or whatever it took to get the song the way the person thought it should be. Communication wasn't great between people back then. They knew how it should sound, but they couldn't tell you how they wanted you to play it. You had to experiment until they said, "That's it! That's what I wanted to



hear." Back then, we'd just get in there, and work and work. We wanted to do that, as well, and get it as good as we could get it.

RF: I would imagine the lack of technology played a part in that.

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Wendell The Drum Machine

by Robyn Flans

It's not hard to imagine that a drum machine that costs \$80,000 to build would be superior to one that costs the consumer \$2,000. If dollars and cents don't make the impact, then perhaps knowing that it was the expensive drum machine that helped create the technically acclaimed Steely Dan albums and Donald Fagen's *Nightfly* would get the point across. In 1976, Roger Nichols masterminded the state-of-the-art computer from scratch for his Steely Dan projects. Many of its components were indeed unique.

"The chips in most of the drum machines are a finite length, 32K bits, which would be 4K bytes," Nichols explains. "That's 4,000 samples of 8 bits in one of these little chips. A snare drum in one of these other machines will fit in that size of a chip. A snare drum in *Wendell* takes 64K words: 64,000 16-bit words, which is 128,000 bytes. That would be about 20 of those little chips. So it would take 20 chips for one snare drum beat.

"As far as editing, in *Wendell* you can actually move the beats around in increments as small as one sample time. That means in a pattern that is playing, you can make the snare drum a 50,000th of a second later or earlier, which is hardly measurable. It doesn't have to be all of the snare drum beats; you can move just the snare drum beat on 4 of bar 15. You can make it just a hair earlier, or any combination, so it's always in high-resolution mode. What I've used it a lot for is replacing drum sounds. Somebody would write a tune that is done with a Linn machine, *DMX*, or the Yamaha, and we'd just play

the tape."

With regard to snare drums, they are sampled in as right-hand and left-hand hits, taking into consideration that the sound would be slightly different if played by a real drummer with two sticks. Cymbals also sound terrific. "We wanted it to be exactly the way a real drummer would do it, so you wouldn't have a ride cymbal that just went 'ding' and quit," Roger says. "It would ring through the two-bar break, until the drummer started playing again. With a regular drum machine, when something is re-triggered—like a ride cymbal that is going 'ding, ding, ding, ding'—it just cuts off what's there and starts over again, so you can actually hear the little breaks. With *Wendell*, it does cross-fades. It keeps playing what the cymbal is doing, plus it starts over again, so there's no difference between the computer and a drummer." Also, *Wendell* is fast enough at triggering off of the sound that is on the tape that it can start putting out the sound in less than one 50,000th of a second, instead of having to memorize the information first.

The good news is that Nichols has finally manufactured *Wendell, Jr.*'s, and they should be available as you are reading this. Many of *Wendell, Sr.*'s good traits are preserved, but there are some differences. "*Wendell, Jr.* is a one-channel device," Nichols says. "If you need eight drums to happen at the same time, you need eight units. Each one is one rack-space high, and the drum sounds are in cartridges that are about the size of an 8-track tape that plug into the front, so you can put in a snare

drum and then trigger it off the snare drum that is on tape.

"There is an advantage to this over the big *Wendell*, because you can have more than one. Snare drums always sound bigger and meatier when you slow the tape down a little bit, and they have more crack to them when you speed the tape up. You can put two different snare drums into two different *Wendell Jr.*'s, and trigger them off the same source. You can tune one of them down a little bit to get the fullness, you can tune the other one up a little bit to get the crack, and then mix them both together."

If this is sounding cost prohibitive, do not despair. Each *Wendell, Jr.* costs \$1,000, and comes with snare and kick drum sounds that cover a wide range. "It's good sounding, and you can use it along with a live snare, a drum-machine snare drum, or in place of a drum-machine snare drum. There are a bunch of different combinations, so you don't have everybody's album sounding exactly the same. There are 25 other sounds, from the long-decaying ride cymbal, to different snare drums, to different percussion things that can be purchased. *Wendell, Jr.* is playback only, so you have to have the sounds in these little cartridges. But we do offer a service where you can supply your own sounds that we can make into cartridges.

"This took a long time to get into production because the big *Wendell* was \$80,000. The goal was having one that was \$1,000 or less. We had to wait for technology to get to where it would be feasible to do."

by Jeff Potter

BRILLIANT BEN

FAME? Ben Riley doesn't ever recall having had the feeling of being "famous." It's a word he avoids. Although he says a friend once called him "jazz's best-kept secret," the jazz drummers' community holds his authoritative playing in the highest respect. It is true, however, that Ben never received his fair share of media attention. His face wasn't often found in the music magazines, but musicians who demanded superb drumming already knew what the public was slow to discover.

In the first half of his career, from the mid-'50s through the late '60s, many of the great figures in jazz were supported by Ben's graceful talents, including Sonny Rollins, Junior Mance, Ahmad Jamal, Stan Getz, Roland Hanna, Eric Dolphy, Woody Herman, John Lewis, Kenny Burrell, Walter Bishop, Jr., Sonny Stitt, Billy Taylor, Kai Winding, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Nina Simone, and Johnny Griffin. But the crowning gig that secured him a place in jazz history was his four-year stay (1964-67) with jazz's unpredictable individualist, Thelonious Monk.

Recording with Monk during the Columbia Records years, Ben put to vinyl some astonishing classic examples of melodic drumming. Albums such as *It's Monk's Time*, *Monk*, *Underground*, and the recently issued 1964 live recordings, *Live At The It Club* and *Live At The Jazz Workshop*, demonstrate how Ben not only swings the band, but also coats Monk's music with brilliant coloration.

With credentials like these, how could Riley not realize the significance of his musical contributions? An answer occurred to me while I sat with Ben over lunch at Sweet Basil's jazz club in Greenwich Village. Several people who happened into the club came up to greet Ben heartily, and a few acquaintances waved from the street as they passed by the glass-walled cafe. Knowing that Ben has been living 50 miles away from the Village on Long Island for many years, I commented, "It seems you know just about everybody on the block!" "No, not really," laughed the sad-eyed, salt-and-pepper bearded drummer as he sipped his coffee. "It's just that I've played around here since they first put the door on this club."

There lies the key. On a worldwide scale, it is much the same. Ben never exploded on the scene with a sudden glittery media-attracting splash. He has just always been there: a deep-rooted, consistent pillar of excellent musicality in jazz drumming. Some artists—such as Monk, whose face appeared on the cover of *Time*—were lucky enough to see concrete media evidence of their renown. Ben, however, is an artist who quietly climbed to artistic heights without the media's herald trumpets, and now rightfully stands as one of the jazz drum masters. As Monk once pro-

phetically told him, "You're a part of history, and you don't even realize it."

After the Monk years, the stress, strain, and discouragements of the business side of music collapsed on Ben, and he exiled himself from music entirely. Leaving music for four years gave him a better perspective and a new strength to return. He speaks of these soul-searching years with a soft-spoken voice that reveals hints of wounds that have only now been soothed by the wisdom of maturity. The lessons he learned are food for thought for any aspiring artists.

Since returning to the scene in the early '70s for the second newborn half of his career, Ben has worked with acts such as The New York Jazz Quartet (with Ron Carter, Frank Wess, and Roland Hanna), Carmen McCrae, Alice Coltrane, the Ron Carter Quartet, and the Jim Hall Trio. He has also traveled to the Soviet Union with a group featuring Toots Thielemans, Milt Jackson, and Bob James. In 1984, Ben began playing with South African pianist/composer Abdullah Ibrahim (Dollar Brand). He continues to play dates with Ibrahim's big band and also played on their last album, *Ekaya*.

The group that is an ongoing love for Ben is *Sphere*, which he co-founded with fellow Monk alumnus and tenor saxman Charlie Rouse, pianist Kenny Barron, and bassist Buster Williams. *Sphere*—who has two domestic album releases, *Four In One* and *Flight Path*—features a healthy serving of Monk tunes in its repertoire. Rather than just rehashing Monk tunes in an overly familiar way, the group maintains the balance between preserving the authentic spirit of the music and contributing its own fresh perspective. Monk would have wanted it that way.

At Ben's last date at the Village Vanguard with *Sphere*, his playing was as sharp and alive as ever. His intuition for complementing soloists and his sensitivity to dynamics are masterful. Plans for his own recording project are now brewing in his head. Perhaps these future plans will make more history—whether he realizes it or not.

JP: *Sphere* seems to be the group best qualified to carry the torch of Monk's music.

BR: *Sphere* was formed the same year that Thelonious died. We formed the quartet just before he became ill. We were searching for a name for the band, because there was no one leader in the group. The name *Sphere* was suggested by Kenny Barron. The rest of the band said to Kenny, "Well, you know that *Sphere* is Thelonious' middle name?" And Kenny wasn't even aware of that! So, it was very strange, because of course, we were also playing some of Monk's music in our repertoire. Just before Thelonious became ill, we called his family to find out whether or not they would have any objections to us using the name, and they didn't. On our first album,

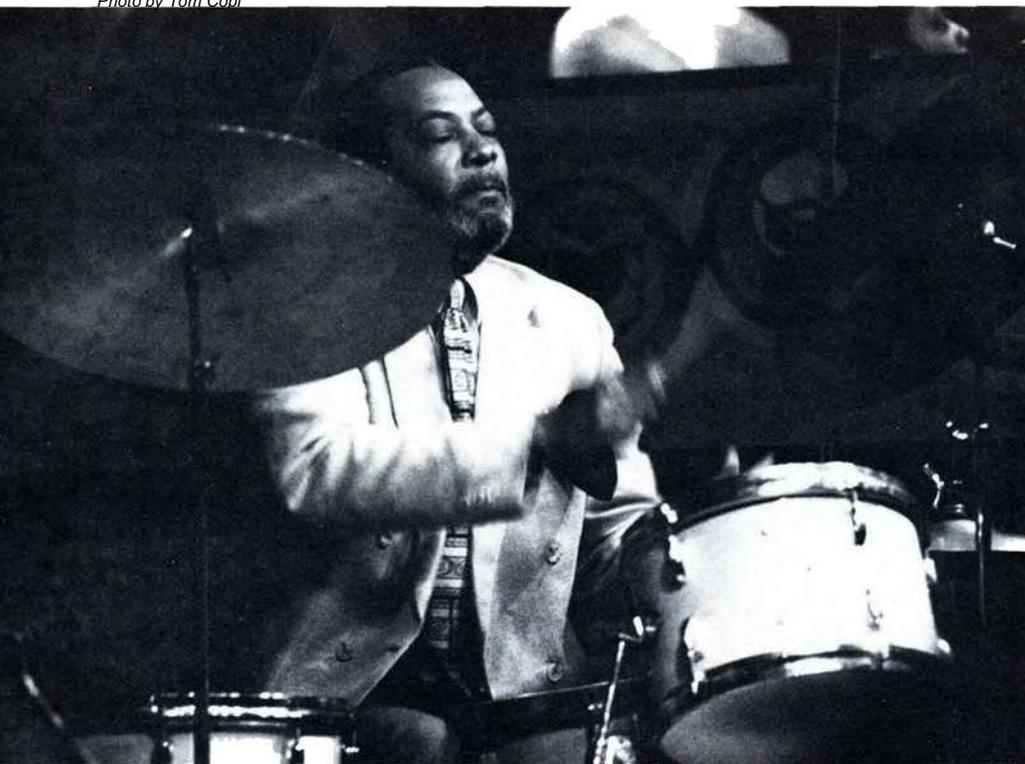


HISTORY

MAKING

Photo by Tom Copi

SEPTEMBER 1986



Four In One, we recorded all Thelonious pieces. It was strange: The morning we went in the studio was the morning he passed away. We didn't find out until after the date was over. It was eerie. The whole day had felt strange to me, and I had no idea of why that was. When I got home, I found out what had happened.

JP: It must have been tricky handling that music, especially since you and Charlie Rouse are Monk alumni. Did you find you had to be conscious of being more than just a "tribute band"? *Four In One* turned out to be much more than that. Sphere has its own personality.

BR: Yes, we did want to establish the fact that we weren't like the Mingus Dynasty band. However, we will always play and record music that belongs to Thelonious' company. There are a couple of tunes under litigation that we would love to record. But for now, why record something that we know will not go to his own company—tunes that are controlled by his family? He has so many tunes that most people are not familiar with. He has written quite a lot of songs that don't get played much because they're hard. It's not the easiest music to play, first of all, because it's such personal music. Thelonious is one of the few composers whose music has to be played almost note for note to make it sound like it is supposed to sound. Most of his music plays itself. The beauty of it is the simplicity. If you avoid overdressing it, you are warmed by what he has written. My greatest experience with that music was when we played it with a nine-piece orchestra, because I could hear *all* the colors.

JP: As a piano player, Monk not only had

his own sound, but also an unusual quirky kind of swing feel. You and Rouse complemented him so well in that kind of feel. It was almost more of a dotted-note bounce than a triplet-implied swing. When you joined Monk's group, after having played with a lot of other jazz leaders, did you feel that you had to shift gears to be compatible with the Monk swing feel?

BR: He had a great sense of time and rhythmic construction. I played two or three different ways in that band until I felt comfortable. Certain tunes dictated that I find another way to interpret the beat. I got

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more into a Shadow Wilson style of playing later on, because it left a lot of space for the other musicians to do what they wanted, and it didn't dictate what was happening. Thelonious would always drop one-liners on you. Instead of telling you what to do directly, he would give you a little hint, such as, "Because you're the drummer, it doesn't mean you have the best beat." He said, "You can't always like every song. Another player might like the song better than you; his beat might be better than your beat." What he was say-

ing was that you should listen first before you take control and find who has the swing in the beat. And whoever has the best beat—that's the one you join. After years of playing together with Sphere, we find that we listen more to each other. And that has to do with that idea of time arid feeling: The others will join whoever has the best feeling at a particular time.

JP: Monk's comping style was unusual. His left hand dropped in some surprising harmonic/rhythmic accents. Some drummers would have been startled by this.

BR: It makes you think, and it demands that you become involved in the music. Rather than just counting bars, you have to become melodically involved in it. It is almost like working with a singer.

JP: You have been called a "melodic drummer." Do you think of your playing in those terms?

BR: There are theatrical players, and there are melodic players. I think I play the melodic style, because I worked with a lot of trios and singers. Also, in the era I came from, there were more "melody" songs. In order for a drummer to be really involved, he had to learn the melodies and verses to really be in tune with what everybody else was doing.

JP: Even your soloing shows this melodic structure.

BR: I think listening to Max Roach caused me to start doing that. If you really listen to Max, you'll notice that he plays the melody all the time. Many drummers who have experience with melody play "melodic" even if the tunes are more abstract. For instance, in Elvin's playing with "Trane, there was a melodic structure set up. Even in Ornette Coleman's music—which a lot of people say is just "out"—it's all melodic if you listen to the rhythmic structure of the horns and rhythm section. I have always been conscious of playing with structure. Some people just go "out there" with no way of getting back. Sonny Rollins used to say, "When you play, it's like driving on a highway you've never been on before, but there are always landmarks. You have to make those marks."

JP: As a leader, Monk had a strong personal concept. Did he expect you just to pick up on what he was creating, or did he look for ways to coax something special from you?

BR: For the drums, he allowed me the freedom to find what I could do to enhance what was happening. Plus, he never played anything he didn't think a player could handle. He would play just enough music, and then when he thought you were comfortable with that, he would step up to other things that might be more intricate. On my first job with him, we had had no rehearsal. We went right to Europe, and he just played. Later on, he said, "If I didn't think you could handle it, I wouldn't have hired you."

JP: On some of the records you cut with Monk, proper sideman credit is not listed. It shocked me to see one liner-note article that simply referred to " . . . a bass player and drummer"

BR: I can only offer theories on that. I know what you're talking about. But I hate to think why that may be. Sometimes, when records are reissued, the record company only wants to think about the artist and doesn't want to bother repaying the sideman. I have been finding a lot of records in Europe now that Larry [Gales, bassist] and I were on, but we didn't know anything about them until we got over there.

JP: Do you believe that part of the reason why you were overlooked in the media was due to the fact that you were in Monk's shadow?

BR: Basically, I think it was because I am not a flashy person. Media people tend to write about flash; they don't listen. If they don't see anything flashy, they can't hear anything. This is a very visual age.

JP: Ironically, that may have been part of the reason why Monk hit the cover of *Time*. Although his music alone merited the honor, he may have drawn cover attention also because he was a colorful, eccentric person.

BR: It took the public a long time to realize what a genius they had on their hands with Monk. And some media people said discouraging things about Thelonious. When I first started with him, I read reviews. He said to me, "Until I tell you that you're not doing what I want you to do, don't worry about it. They don't know what I am doing, so they *can't* know what you're doing." So that kept me from being overly concerned about the media.

Everyone would love to have the media be enthusiastic, but it takes longer for some people to get the attention and some players never get it. I have heard players who I thought were some of the world's greatest, and no one has ever heard of them. So at least I am fortunate that I have had some visibility through Thelonious. Later, I gained visibility from a whole new younger audience playing with Alice Coltrane.

JP: Playing with Abdullah Ibrahim is another situation in which the leader has a very personal feel.

BR: Abdullah is from a different culture. Here's another person with a different approach to time and beat. It's very different from what we are accustomed to. It is more in the vein of a laid-back style or an early rock thing. There is an African drum influence, so you have to lay back and let that take precedence over what you do. I can't stay on top of the beat with him. In a way, that's like Thelonious: He wanted me there, but not to force it. When I first joined Abdullah's band and we did the first rehearsal, the musicians approached the music like a Western band—playing a little

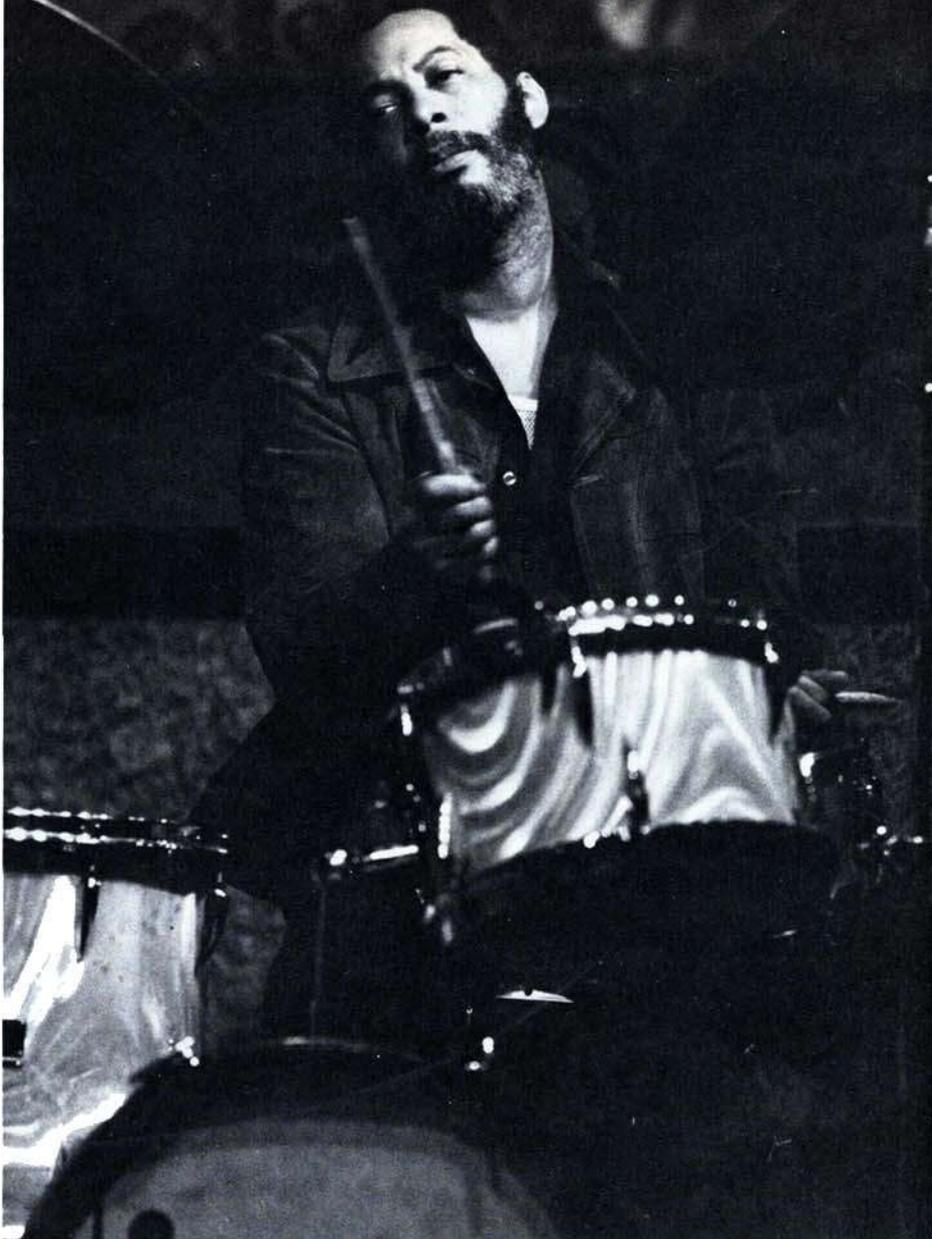


Photo by Tom Coppi

too "hip." But with him, you can't play like that. There may not be as many notes, and you have to set up each one and make it *be* something.

On the drums, I have to take the rhythm and expand it. Rather than try to do too much at one time, I have to build it—see how far it can go, and then change the accents and colors. I enjoyed it, because it demanded that I think in a different way and approach the music in a different way.

JP: I understand that you are basically self-taught?

BR: I started by myself and then studied in school. My first teacher was Cecil Scott, a sax player who had a big band in the days when Harlem was hot. The first place I ever worked was at the Sudan club with his band on Sunday afternoons.

When you first start playing, you idolize certain players. So, at one time, I tried to play like Max Roach, and then I heard Art Blakey and incorporated that into my playing. Then I heard Philly Joe Jones, and that impressed me. But the biggest

impression came the night I heard Kenny Clarke. From then on, I tried to be everywhere he was working. I loved the way that he was not over the top of anyone, no matter who he played with. He was always right underneath and would always build. He uplifted the music without overpowering anyone, and that is what impressed me about him. I decided that was the way that I wanted to play. But most important, I wanted to be a well-rounded player.

I still don't really feel that I'm a soloist. There are times that I have something to say, but I don't have to take that much time to say it. I just want to make that statement and go right on with the music.

JP: With Monk, you had plenty of extended solo space.

BR: Monk made me do that all the time.

JP: *Made you!*

BR: Well, rather, he would *inspire* me to do it, because he would leave space for me and I had to do *something*, [laughs] So, yes, I guess in a way, he made me get involved and think of structural playing. I



Photo by Lynn Goldsmith/LGI

BUN E. CARLOS

MIND OVER METAL

by Robin Tolleson

MANY drummers have a roadie on standby during concerts, in case of a head breaking, cymbal cracking, or bass pedal busting. Bun E. Carlos, the deceptively powerful drummer of Cheap Trick, has his man on alert just in case the perpetual cigarette dangling from his lips should be extinguished, or should he slap it across the stage with a stick.

But don't let Bun E.'s act (or guitarist Rick Nielsen's constant flicking of picks out into the fervid crowd) fool you. Beneath the pomp and parading is a very musical metal, and one of the hardest-working and clearest-thinking drummers in rock. "Bun E. is the best drummer I've ever worked with," says Nielsen, who attended high school with Carlos. "Besides that, he's a brilliant conversationalist, and he knows how to keep a beat once in a while.

"I could work with anybody I want to just about," the guitarist continues. "So could Bun E. So there you go. We stick together because it's a good band." Indeed, even critics had good things to say about Cheap Trick's 1985 reemergence, *Standing On The Edge*. And producer Jack Douglas's work with Bun E.'s traps make this one of the drummer's best show-cases.

Bun E. claims that his great-grandfather was a Wisconsin Brigade drummer in the Civil War. His dad plays accordion, his mom plays many instruments, and his older brother was a first-chair drummer in school for six years. But being left-handed posed problems with the L's and R's in the book at Bun E.'s first formal lesson. So discouraged was he with having to change the stickings in his book that young Carlos gave up lessons in favor of playing along with a jukebox.

Seeing Dennis Wilson play a right-handed kit left-handed with *The Beach Boys* in 1965 gave Bun E. encouragement, because that was the way he played, too. Carlos began going to more concerts to observe the drummers—Mitch Mitchell, Charlie Watts, Ringo, and any other rock acts that would come through Rockford or Chicago. In high school, Bun E. was part of a group called *The Pagans*, which released a single of "Good Day Sunshine" and Them's "I Can Only Give You Everything." The Pagans became local celebri-

ties in Rockford, Illinois. Out of high school, Carlos and Nielsen toured with some rock 'n' roll revival shows, backing up the likes of Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, and The Shirelles.

In 1973, Rick and Bun E. started *Cheap Trick*, and a year later, they added vocalist Robin Zander and bassist Tom Petersson. They played the Midwest club circuit for three years before going national in 1977, with help from a frenzied live album from *Budokan*. Ten albums, one EP, and two bass players later, they are still with CBS Records.

Bun E. is also part of a group organized by Kansas' Phil Ehart, called the First Airborne Rock 'n' Roll Division. Members of Toto, Pablo Cruise, LRB, Cheap Trick, the Doobie Brothers, and Kansas make up the unit, which flies to bases around the world to entertain U.S. armed forces. "It's a chance to serve your country and travel for free. I mean, it pays nothing," says the drummer. "You'd make more money in America, but those people are sitting over there. It does make you feel great when you get there and play, and they all love it. Everybody wins." Then there's *The Bun E. Carlos Experience*, which gets together in Rockford during Cheap Trick's off time. Featuring Jon Brant (Cheap Trick's new bassist) and several of Bun E.'s "guitar teacher buddies," the group specializes in Lou Reed, Jimi Hendrix, and Yardbirds, and hasn't risen above bar-band status at this writing.

Actually a bar-band image is sort of what Bun E. projects on stage with simple dress, a fairly normal kit, and a somewhat detached look on his face. Circus recently described him as "forever acting the two-bit nightclub drummer on a nicotine jag," a somewhat nicer job than the Rolling Stone Record Guide's "an overweight war criminal on the lam."

As he sits nervously warming up before the show, tapping the tips of his fingers, stretching his legs, and fitting a samurai headband on his forehead, there's nothing in his enthusiastic nature that suggests worry about image. The years of jet lag and high-decibel noise don't seem to have dimmed his zeal for his sport or for the tools of his trade. If someone ever wants to start a drumset museum, that individual might do well to begin at the home of Bun E. Carlos.

RT: You make it clear in the liner notes to

Standing On The Edge that you are playing acoustic drums and cymbals. Was that your doing?

BC: Ooooh, somebody noticed that. Yeah, I did that. I didn't want to be held responsible for the "booooooms" and that garbage they put in there. So I just put "Acoustic Drums and Cymbals," just to let people know that, if they didn't like the dopey effects, it wasn't my fault. I don't mind percussion effects on an album, but some of them get a little overbearing, and I thought I just better protect myself.

RT: It's kind of refreshing to hear somebody play acoustic drums and cymbals on an album. So much of pop is going in the electronic direction.

BC: I was talking to Tony Brock the other night. He "Emulates" his toms and uses a Simmons SDS7. They kind of sound like real drums, but they still sound like fake drums, which I don't like. And you don't have any control over them. You live or die by your sound man. Plus, I don't use monitors for myself. I have guitar coming into my monitor, but that's all, so I can hear what I'm playing.

RT: Is that why you hit so hard?

BC: Well, kind of. That's just the way I developed. Drumming for Chuck Berry you had to do that. But that thing on the album cover was very deliberate. When I do play electronic drums, I'll credit myself for it, but until then, I don't want to get blamed for them, because they're very easily abused. A guy tried to get me to put a Syndrum on *Dream Police* in 1978, and I said, "No way." The next week, sure enough, it was on *The Gong Show*, the house band had it. If I had put that on the record, it would have been out of date before the record even came out. I'll be a big fan of electronic drums when I buy some probably. Until then . . . like tonight the sound man is going to go "kkkkkssssshhhhhh" on a couple of spots: on "Tonight It's You," and on a roll on "Ain't That A Shame." He's going to digital delay it, or throw some plate echo on it and jag a little bit of it. Otherwise, it's going to be just drums.

RT: You said that Tony Brock sampled his own drums on an *Emulator*!

BC: Yeah, he had a snare drum and a whole set of Simmons. He just basically taped his own kit and sent it back into the Simmons, which seems kind of redundant to me. But we exchanged phone numbers,



Photo by Neil A. Calandra/LGI

and I'm going to call him up and grill him—see why he did it and what he did. We've worked with Denny Carmassi, and I've talked to him about Heart. We did some stuff with them about two and a half years ago, and I thought the Simmons sounded kind of "garbagy," but on this last tour, they sounded real good. So I'm not anti-electronic drums. I'm just anti-people-that-don't-know-how-to-use-them-right. Plus, I'm a drum collector, and until I used new Ludwigs, I was using *Radio Kings*—like pre-World War II and stuff like that.

RT: That's right, you've got some antique drums.

BC: They're not really antiques. Antiques fall apart. Sorry Bill III, but the old drums are better than the new ones—a single piece of maple with reinforced bonds. I've got about six sets of them, and I bash them all the time. You can play them with three-foot sticks, and it doesn't hurt them. You could knock them down and things, and they hold up really well. In fact, my snare drum is a redone 5x14 about 1932 Ludwig. And the thing just holds up better than any drum I've got. It plays really good, and it sounds really good.

RT: What about the rest of your kit? Is it new or old?

BC: It's a new Ludwig kit, a couple of years old—right before they moved to North Carolina. I think they're five-ply: 14x26 bass drum, a little 7x10 rack, and then 9x13, 16x16, and 16x18 floor toms. And I like the little rack tom, because I couldn't get an 8x12 to get a good clank or bonk out of it, so I just got one size smaller and skipped the 8x12. I

started out using a 9x13 and a 10x14—got in a Ringo mood, kind of. But then I went back to my Keith Moon noisier syndrome. So I switched back.

RT: Do you take care of your own drums, or do you have somebody doing that for you?

BC: I've got Kurt Wiesend, my drum roadie. We call him "Cheese Neck," because he's from Wisconsin. He sets them up and takes them down. Since he's a drummer, he's pretty good at tuning them. He's the first drum roadie I've ever had

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that's a drummer. But otherwise yeah, I sit on them every day religiously. Even if we don't do a soundcheck, 20 minutes before we go on, I sit on my drums and move this or do that. I don't like them exactly the same every night. I'm always moving something somewhere and messing around with something.

We've been on the road for seven months now, and my *Speed King* pedals—I was starting to dance on them so hard that I could hardly feel them. We dragged out a couple of DW pedals, and I've been

using them for a while. The springs or the chain-drive is a little bit stronger, and that's real nice. Next week, I'll probably go back to *Speed Kings*.

RT: Do you think you just wore your *Speed Kings* out?

BC: Well, I have four of them. We kept putting in new ones and tightening up the springs. I think my feet were getting in a little too good shape or something. I play a lot with my toes, and I got to the point where I'd hit it and I couldn't feel it too much. I wanted just a little stronger pedal. They seemed to work fine, but it's more a matter of convenience. I prefer Ludwig. I endorse Ludwig. I endorse American mainly. I'll probably endorse anything American.

We're going to switch sticks to Silver Fox, from down in Florida. We took a couple of pairs out and beat the daylight out of them, and they work. They make great laminated sticks. The ones I'm using right now are the Slingerland 5A *Peter Erskine* model. I sent them in to somebody and had my name put on them. And we put *Power Grip* on them, which is basically athletic tape, made by Bryan Holmes, the drummer from The Producers. But the Silver Fox sticks play very nicely, and since I've got the straight-up hoop and the clamp-over lugs on the snare drum, they hold up pretty good right here in the middle. They don't shatter in the middle often, and they don't break at the tip when I'm crashing my cymbals.

RT: You play wood tips?

BC: Oh yeah, I swear by them. Ever since about 1965, when I first bought my plastic-tip sticks, and they proceeded to break on

Photo by Michael S. Jachles



me in live minutes, I gave up on plastic-tip sticks and never went back to them. I did use them in the studio on a couple of ballads, like "Voices" and "Y.O.Y." On the album ballads, I usually get them out just to get a clear cymbal. I get a 20" medium Rock ride and just play with the tip. Otherwise, I use a medium-thin to get a little more mud from the cymbal—a little more wash.

RT: On "This Time Around," on your new record, the snare sound is like you're hitting every drum you've got and kicking the bass drum at the same time.

EC: That's probably a little bit of producer Jack Douglas dialing in something. But I had Charles Donnelly, from Newington, Connecticut, make a snare drum for me. It's a brass shell that weighs about 13 pounds. It's about 6x14, and it's got three holes the size of quarters in it. It's the kind of snare drum that you wouldn't need a mic' on for a hall like this if you didn't muffle it or anything. I used that one on a couple of those tunes to get a big, fat sound. Usually, I use a four- or five-inch snare drum. I get a lot of old snare drums from him. He's good at coming up with parts and stuff when I want to get something really old. I got a set of Gretsch *Gladstones* from him that are really neat. It's Cozy Cole's snare drum, and Benny Goodman's tom-toms and bass drum. They're real nice, with the wood hoops and the three-way tuning key and all that. I can't play them too much, because I don't want to wreck them, but they sure look good. I've got them sitting at my folk's house. I've gotten about eight or ten *Radio King* snare drums from him, because I'm putting together . . . someday when my endorsements run out, I've got my white-pearl double bass drum *Radio King* kit with the square-back lugs, and so I thought I'd better get as many snare drums as I can. So I've got like a 4 x 13 and everything on up to about 8 x 15 in *Radio Kings*. And then I started getting into metal tube lugs, because they've got those counterhoops on them, like the *Supra-Phonic 400* by Ludwig has a little hoop that hangs over on the inside of the shell from the bottom to the top, and that kind of hot-wires the sound back and forth. That's what I like about those old ones. Between that and the straight band of metal, it's BOINK! You don't have to put any noise machines on it to get a boink out of it. And if you hit right along the line of the snare, it's nice and fat, and if you go off an inch, boink. So you get two or three sounds on one drum. Plus, I mike underneath, so the sound man can jag with it or whatever.

RT: You mike from underneath the snare drum?

BC: From underneath and on top. And for the hi-hat, I use four sizzlers on my bottom cymbal, so I can get a little more ring without as much bottom—just to get a "sssssss."

RT: Did you put those in yourself?

BC: Yeah. We did a gig with Fleetwood Mac in '75, and Mick had them. He would open the hi-hat about a quarter of an inch, ride with the tip at 90 miles an hour real light, and it sounded like he was beating the daylights out of it. But he really wasn't, and the sound man loved it. I said, "If it's good enough for him . . ."

RT: You mentioned producer Jack Douglas. You worked with him as far back as Cheap Trick's first album.

BC: We did that, we did *Budokan*, we did *Found All The Parts* and we did the *Rock And Rule* soundtrack, which never came out. He's a good drum guy. For the first song on the first album, we worked about four hours on the rack tom for all the little kiddies, to get the perfect rack-tom sound, because he's an engineer and a tinkerer. He called Rick and I up for the Lennon sessions and stuff like that. He likes us and we like him.

RT: Which Lennon sessions were those?

BC: *Double Fantasy*. We did a couple of tunes. The story goes—if you talk to Andy Newmark, you'll probably get a different story—but they couldn't get a feel for two songs, so Rick and I came in and recut them. They came out sounding real heavy, so they played them for those guys and they recut them again. Ours sounded kind of like the Plastic Ono Band, and theirs sounded kind of like the Eagles. That was the difference. It was kind of neat. I made Bill Ludwig give me one of those prototype snare drums with the cast-iron hoops on it back in 1980. I tried to tune it down loose, and it didn't work. So I just got out an old wooden one and set it up. Whatever John wanted, John got. That was my first ses-

sion. That was an experience. It was fun. "What speed do you want it, John?" "Oh, whatever you want." "Okay."

RT: Did he know you guys before?

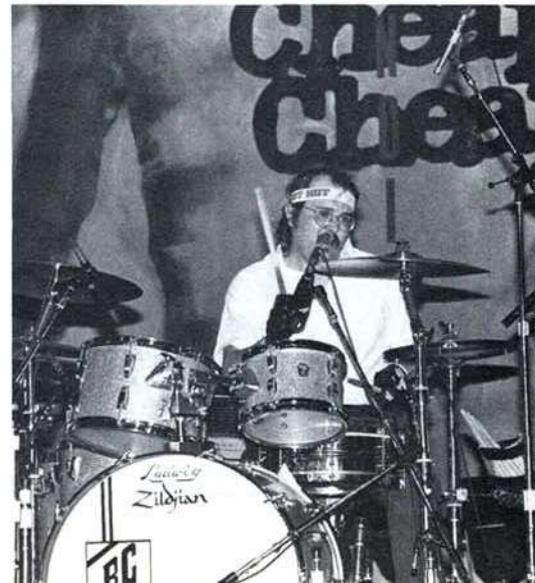
BC: When we walked in he said, "I know you guys; you're in Cheap Trick." And we said, "Yeah, sorry." Then he said, "Well, they wouldn't tell me what band you were in. They just told me your names. They were afraid I wouldn't like you or something." So that's how that was. He knew who we were, because his kid or somebody saw us on TV or something.

RT: Was John at all mad at you guys for stealing so many Beatles licks? [laughs]

BC: Naaa. In fact, he whipped out this guitar at the session—Rick was doing a guitar solo, and John was jumping up and down saying, "This is great. Where was this guy when we did 'Cold Turkey'? Clapton was a little out of it, and he froze up and only played one lick." He got his guitar out and

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Photo by Ebet Roberts



THE LONG ISLAND

THE Long Island Drum Center is one of the most successful *drum* operations in the country. In its brief nine-year history, the Drum Center has grown to become one of the largest purveyors of drumming education, information, and equipment. The Drum Center consists of five stores located throughout the Long Island, New York, area, and each of these shops contains teaching studios, as well as showroom areas, which, to say the least, are packed with equipment. Anyone with an interest in drumming would be happy at the sight.

The Long Island Drum Center is much more than an instrument sales establishment. The stores are not retail stores with drum studios in the back. They are learning centers and retail stores combined. The students who study at the Drum Center are exposed to many of the finest teaching methods available, and there are motivational activities that also take place. Activities such as LIDC-sponsored recitals, contests, and clinics are all an integral part of this organization.

Drum legend Jim Chapin is one of the regular instructors at the Drum Center. According to Chapin, "The attitudes and techniques taught at the Drum Center are absolutely professional. No other retail store that I am aware of has such a close relationship between teaching and professionalism as a player. The sharing of infor-

mation among the teachers has really kept the quality of the teaching top notch." With these types of attitudes towards drumming, this organization is an excellent one.

The Drum Center got its start through the efforts of Jerry Ricci, who began the Drum Center because of his love for drums and drumming. Ricci became involved in drumming in his youth, and by his mid-teens, he was serious about pursuing a career in drumming. According to Ricci, "When I was about 17 years old, I knew of a drum instructor who all the good players were studying with. I finally gave in and told myself I had better study with this guy." This guy was Ronnie Benedict, a successful Long Island drum instructor. "I studied with Ronnie for a few years, and I enjoyed my lessons because he was such a great motivator. He was a marvelous teacher, a straightforward disciplinarian, and he knew how to relate to me and what I was doing. Then one day, he told me he was going to retire to Florida. I was devastated. Then he said, I want you to take over for me."

Taking over meant learning to become a drum instructor. "I was playing gigs and studying at a junior college, and Ronnie asked me to take over his teaching practice. He trained me for about eight months to become a teacher. Ronnie had studied with Henry Adler, so I learned his teaching

techniques. I learned all sorts of different teaching devices. When Ronnie finally did retire, he left me with his studio, a small one-room rental, about 40 students, all sorts of teaching materials, a couple of chairs, and a desk, and he charged me hardly anything." This was a promising start for the 22-year-old Ricci.

Education has been the main thrust of the Long Island Drum Center from the start. Through Ricci's teaching, the Drum Center grew. "My students used to ask me to pick up a good cymbal or a drumhead. Little by little, they kept asking me for different items. I decided to keep a few things around my studio, so I would only have to drive to a store once a week instead of four times. I didn't really have any intentions of opening a drum store. It just happened. I was a teacher, I was playing a lot, and I was making good money doing just that. Things were going well." Then the opportunity came about. "One day, I saw a 'For Rent' sign in the window of a store right across the street from the one-room studio I was teaching in. I talked it over with my wife, and we decided to see about opening up a business in that store."

The first thing that Ricci did was contact a few drum manufacturers. "At that time, which was 1977, Ludwig was gigantic. Without Ludwig, we couldn't have started. I also contacted a few other important companies. I found out what was nec-



The sales staff from the Drum Center include (from left to right) Tony Fabiano, Jerry Ricci, Joe Licata, Mike Joos, Jim Stanton, Mike Abbate, Jim Holland, Steve Chaika, John O'Reilly, and Dennis Ricci.

Photo by Rick Mattingly

DRUM CENTER

essary financially, and we started to pool all of our money. I pooled what I had. My brother loaned me some money. My wife gave me her savings, and she sold her car. We got just enough money together to get started. I'll never forget moving into our first store. One night, I finished teaching about 7:00, and I had all of my students help me carry everything across the street, all night. The next morning, we were in business." That was the first store, which was in Merrick, Long Island.

The first few years of the Drum Center's existence were busy ones for Ricci. In addition to his teaching, Ricci had to be involved in sales as well. "I used to teach, and believe it or not, I had a mirror set up so I could see out into the store area. If somebody came in to get a pair of sticks, I would just tell the student to practice for a minute, and I would take care of the customer." After a while, more and more drummers were coming by, and even the mirror wasn't enough at that point. Jerry recruited his brother Dennis to man the store while he taught. The business was growing.

According to Jerry, the teaching end of the business kept growing as well as the sales. "After a while, I had to start training my more advanced students to become teachers, because there were too many students for me to handle. With more students, people started requesting more and more products, so I kept getting more items." As the business grew, the Drum Center started to get a reputation as *the place*. "As we were just getting started, a few name artists started showing up, which gave us some credibility. Joe Franco walked in one day back when he was with the Good Rats. The Good Rats was a big band in this area, and having Joe around really helped. Then Jim Chapin, who I had studied with after Ronnie Benedict, started coming around, and he was a big supporter."

More and more people started to hear about the Drum Center, and as the saying goes, people were "traveling from miles around" to shop there. "So many people were coming and saying that they had to travel too far," states Jerry. "Because there seemed to be so much demand, we opened up our second store." And as before, Jerry found the staff needed to help run the growing operation among his students. "Yeah, I hired a few more teachers, all from my students. I groomed some of them to do the teaching, and I groomed some of the older students to help me behind the counter."

There were other benefits to opening up another store. "Right around that time

was when Tama really started to catch on. Tama kind of took over from where Ludwig used to be. Ludwig was number one for years, so when we first started, Ludwig was the most important franchise we had. Then, all of a sudden, people started asking for Tama. Unfortunately, I couldn't get Tama equipment at our first location, because it was too close to another store. Tama wouldn't give me the

franchise. I didn't know what I was going to do, and I had to have Tama. When I opened up the second store in Commack, Long Island, I was able to get Tama drums because of the location. That was extra incentive to open up another store."

Since that time, Ricci and company has opened up a total of five stores, and each is a success. The five New York locations are in Nyack, Little Neck, Patchogue, Com-



The Long Island Drum Center teaching staff: first row from left to right—Bill Messinetti, Greg D'Angelo, and Wayne Sabosto; second row from left to right—Dom Famularo, Jim Chapin, Frank Marino, and Joe Franco; third row (stairs) from left to right—Frank Bellucci, Jim Holland, Fred Weng, Mike Ciardo, Mark Edwards, Mike Abbate, and John Favicchia.

Photo by Rick Mattingly

L.I. Electronic DRUM CENTER

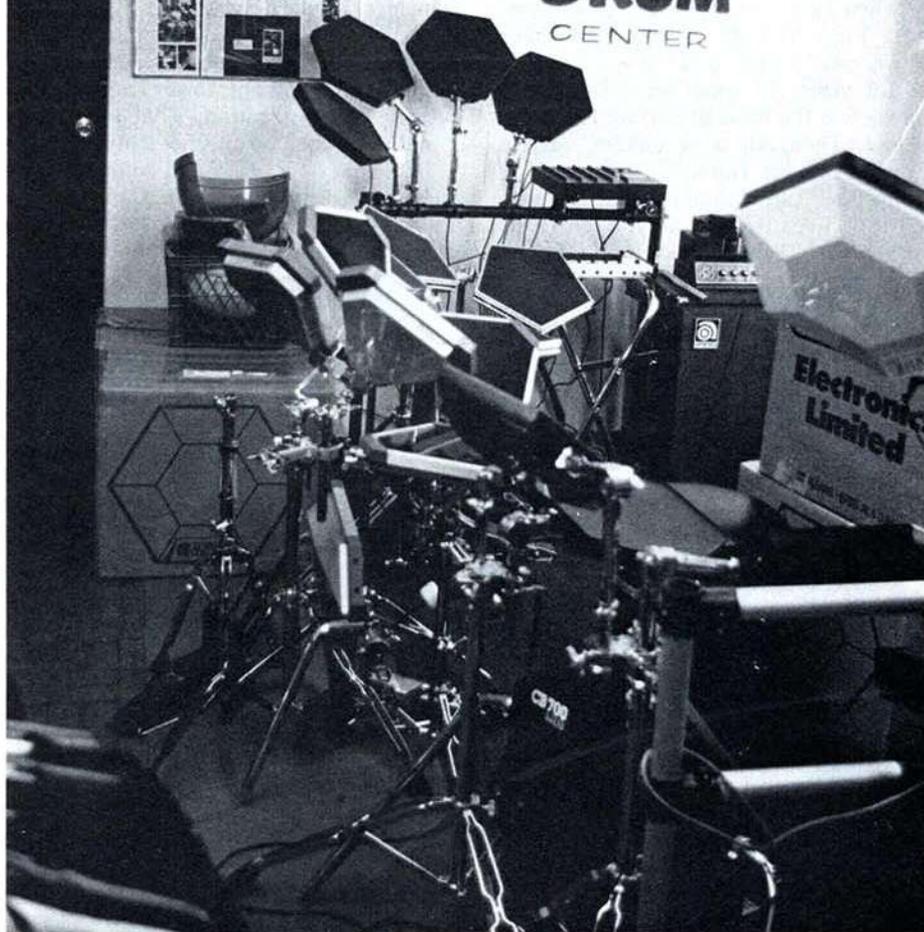


Photo by Rick Mattingly

mack, and the headquarters in Merrick. How does Jerry account for so many drum stores in such close proximity? "Well, there are a few reasons, but number one, Long Island is unbelievable. If it were a state, Long Island would be the 11th largest in regard to population. Secondly, Long Island has one of the highest per capita income levels for a county in the country. However, the biggest reason for the success is the teaching that we do, because if we had opened up all of these stores and didn't teach, we would be out of business in a minute. As a matter of fact, if I hadn't been teaching when we opened the first store up, we never would have made it. Teaching has always been, and will continue to be, our number-one priority—not the sales."

The current number of students enrolled in the five stores is over 600, and according to Ricci, these students are the strength of the store. When asked if all students study in a one-on-one setting, Ricci responds, "Most students study that way, but the master class concept is becoming very popular. A master class is a small class, anywhere from five to ten students with a

teacher, which meets for approximately two hours. The master class has become very popular with the students and with the teachers. This situation creates a way for people to share ideas and concepts, and it also creates a little competition, too.

"We have a few name players who like to teach master classes, because they don't have the time to teach in a one-on-one situation. Lately, we have been asking our different clinicians to hold master classes. A lot of them are trying it and loving it. We had Steve Smith here recently, and the day of his clinic, he did two master classes. Tommy Aldridge has done them for us in three of our stores when he was in the area, and we've had Rod Morgenstein teaching master classes. Lenny White is currently doing a continuous master class course, and Billy Cobham has also been involved with us."

Besides the master class, the Drum Center includes one-on-one lessons with many name drummers. Included among the more notable teachers are Frank Marino, Jim Chapin, and occasional teaching "visits" from Joe Franco and Dom Famularo, all noteworthy players and instructors.

Rounding out the teachers are the 15 instructors who teach at the five stores. Even more impressive than the list of teachers at the Drum Center is the unique attitude that the Drum Center has towards education. Dom Famularo, noted player and Tama clinician, explains, "Jerry Ricci, with the help of a few people, has instilled a program that benefits the students and the teachers immensely. This program is based on once-a-month meetings of all the instructors. At these meetings, we first discuss business. By business, I mean that we talk about what problems the teachers have. For example, a teacher may say, 'I have a student who's not that motivated. How can I handle that?' Well, in our meetings, we open the floor to discussion, and everyone throws in ideas to solve the problem. These problems can cover all sorts of topics, and with a group of people who are interested in what's happening, a real team attitude happens. That's what we call the business end of it."

"The next thing we discuss is actual technique and playing the drums," explains Dom. "We all give information to each other, so we can pass it along to the students." Jerry Ricci agrees, "We normally close each meeting with one of the instructors giving a presentation about one aspect of playing. He has to present it to his colleagues." Dom Famularo adds, "The closing presentation becomes a mini clinic for the teachers. Teachers communicating with teachers—this has never been done before in the history of drumming. There is so much information to cover that these meetings will be taking place probably every three weeks. The only way you can keep knowledge alive is to share it. All of the technique in the world doesn't mean a thing if you don't share it. For me, it's the greatest feeling in the world to pass on information to students, and watch them master it and develop it further. This whole attitude towards education makes the Long Island Drum Center more than just a drum shop."

Another way the Drum Center shares information and involves more people is through its extensive clinic program. When asked how many clinics the Drum Center averages in a year, Jerry Ricci responds, "We never limit ourselves to a set amount. We will put together a clinic as different artists make themselves available. Sometimes somebody is on tour and decides that he or she wants to do a clinic. Even though we haven't scheduled it, we'll grab that person. Sometimes, it is a business decision that involves drum manufacturers. They'll say, 'If you take so-and-so

for a clinic, we'll sell you x amount of drums at x price.' So a lot of times, clinics aren't planned.

"The clinic is just a natural extension of everything else we do, except that it's for more people," says Jerry. "The clinics helped us when we first started because they helped to associate us with the bigger names in the business, but now our clinics are purely educational. We don't try to go overboard with sales promotion at a clinic. We don't have to beat people over their heads to buy equipment at a clinic. Just seeing a talented drummer playing on a great sounding, great looking new set of drums is enough. When you get a Tommy Aldridge to come in and do a clinic on a brand-new Yamaha *Recording Custom* set, or Billy Cobham on a Tama *Superstar* set with a beautiful finish, the drummers at the clinic will be motivated to check out the equipment. The equipment today is fantastic. I can't say enough about the quality of drums today. You hear a lot of players saying, 'They don't make drums like they used to,' or 'Oh, the old this or that was the best.' That's great, but that piece of equipment probably can't measure up to the new equipment. At our clinics, we let the artists playing do the talking about the equipment; we don't have to. The clinics help us and help the drummers attending.

"Clinics for us are so much fun to do now, because we really have the routine down," Jerry continues. "When people come in, we have them write down the questions they want to ask. Then, they can come up and ask them. This way, we avoid questions like, 'What color pants did you wear?' So, we get great questions, and everything runs smoothly, which helps the artist feel more comfortable. Also, we normally have a good turnout at our clinics. We have a drummer/customer listing of over 11,000 names located throughout the tri-state area [Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey], and we send out mailers to announce any upcoming events, like clinics. We can bring in a lot of people."

With so many people showing up for clinics, Jerry is careful to try to cover a few different areas of percussion. "Usually, we try to have a couple of 'opening acts' for the featured clinician, just to help educate people more. We will bring in a drum corps drum line, or we will have a Latin percussion demonstration or a high school percussion ensemble perform. I think we need to have a little bit of a mix and try to educate drummers as to the other areas that they can be involved with.

"Clinics are important to us and do help the different manufacturers. As the differ-

Photo by Rick Mattingly



ent artists come through here, their endorsements do help in equipment sales." Jerry is quick to point out that artist credibility is important. "If an artist sticks with the products he endorses, he becomes a major asset for the company he represents. These artists don't have to be married to the company, but they should stay a decent amount of time. Some artists change drum company endorsements annually, it seems, and the players coming up today are aware of it. When a drummer is featured in *Modern Drummer* and says he plays a certain brand, but is pictured on another make, people notice. Credibility is very important."

The Long Island Drum Center has a few attitudes towards instrument sales that you might, at first, find shocking. It has to do with selling equipment to new or younger drummers. Jerry explains, "Our attitude about selling equipment to inexperienced drummers is something we're very careful about. For example, I heard my brother Dennis doing this recently, and it's something we all do. A father came in with his young son, and not only did the boy want a set of drums, but he wanted a large, brand-new Tama *Artstar* set in a piano-white finish. We're talking about a drumset that costs a lot of money. Dennis asked the boy how long he had been playing, and it turned out that he had never played! He wanted to start. So Dennis said to the father, 'Listen, are you planning on having your son take lessons? I don't mean here—anywhere.' The father said yes. So Dennis suggested to the father that the boy should start the lessons before buying the set to see if he liked playing. If the boy enjoyed it, Dennis told him to come back in a few months and then buy the drums. The father said, 'Great idea!' You know the story. My father bought me a piano when I was a kid. Every time I go over to my father's house, that baby grand is still sitting in the living room, [laughs] Anyway, that boy started lessons, and after a few months, his teacher talked to us and the decision was made to buy the set. Because

of doing this, we now have a customer for life. The father is happy because he didn't waste any money, and the boy is happy with drumming. What would have happened if we had sold that set to the father, and the boy didn't like playing and didn't take any lessons? The boy would have taken it home and banged on it for two weeks. Then, he never would have touched it again. The father would have been frustrated. He would have wanted to choke his son, but he would have wanted to choke us even more. So we think this is the best way to handle new players. If they get over that first hurdle with the lessons, then we will sell."

In addition to the younger players, all types of people come to the Drum Center. "Drumming today is so great, because it's so wide, meaning so many different types of people can get into it. We've got lawyers

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Photo by Rick Mattingly



by Ira I. Wong



Noel Okimoto

Whenever one thinks of Hawaii, images of sun-drenched beaches and swaying palm trees invariably come to mind. Yet, although few musicians would view Honolulu as a major music center, some very fine jazz can be heard in the Islands. Propelling much of that music is drummer Noel Okimoto.

At 28, Okimoto is a seasoned veteran of the Honolulu music scene. From 1977 to 1982, he was a member of ex-Stan Kenton band lead altoist Gabe Baltazar's quintet. During this period, he also earned a Bachelor of Music Performance degree from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. In recent years, Okimoto has accumulated an impressive list of credits including performances with Freddie Hubbard, Bobby Hutcherson, Richie Cole, Bill Watrous, Bud Shank, Lew Tabackin, and Wynton Marsalis.

In addition to being a virtuoso at the drumset, Okimoto is also an accomplished orchestral percussionist, jazz vibist, and composer. Recently, just prior to an engagement with Freddie Hubbard, MD spoke to Noel about the Hawaii jazz scene, Noel's musical influences, and his goals for the future.

IW: How did you get involved with the drums?

NO: When I was ten years old, my dad, George Okimoto, who was playing drums full-time, went into the hospital for back surgery. While he was in the hospital, there was a talent show at my elementary school and, although I don't know for what reason, I signed up. After I had signed up, I thought to myself, "Now what am I going to do?" I decided that I was going to play the drums.

My dad had his drums set up at home, and he had told us not to mess with them. But while he wasn't at home, I would sit down and play. I developed to the point where I could play enough for the show.

Then I asked my mom to ask my dad if I could use the drumset for the talent show. When she did, he nearly had a heart attack, [laughs] But he said okay.

My older brother took me and the drums to school. I didn't even know how to set the kit up; I just sort of pieced it together. I played with a Young Rascals record and with a bossa nova record that my dad had recorded with Herb Ohta, the ukulele player. And that was that; it was the start.

When my dad got out of the hospital, he asked me to play for him. I played the bossa nova, and he asked me, "How did you learn that?" I told him I learned from listening to him. I guess he saw that a kid who could learn something like that on his own might have potential. He asked me if I wanted to learn, and I said yes, not really knowing what I was getting into—especially from a parent. I mean, some parents can't even teach their kids how to drive, so learning how to play a musical instrument that way can really be treacherous. But I learned fast. I *had to*, for my life!

IW: What types of things did your dad cover with you at that early age?

NO: Functional things: How to play various different rhythms, a certain amount of technique, and musical form—like when to fill after four- or eight-bar phrases. It was really good training in the beginning. He would actually sing the melody of tunes while playing a particular beat he was showing me, and then do a drum fill. So I got into the habit of hearing musical drumming in the sense of phrases.

IW: Did drumming seem to come easy for you?

NO: I guess it did come a little easy, although I wasn't really conscious of it. What didn't come easy for me was reading. My dad tried to teach me how to read music in a systematic way by breaking it down mathematically. But I guess at that point, I was just into *playing* the drums, so

he sort of gave up on teaching me how to read.

I learned how to read out of necessity when I got into intermediate school. I had auditioned for the 7th grade band. But I guess the band director realized that I could play a little better than most of the other kids, because he put me in the 8th grade concert band. I was really happy, but when I went to class I realized, "Wow, what did I get myself into?" I didn't even read music.

However, I did meet two guys who, besides being good readers, turned out to be excellent concert percussionists. They played all the different instruments, whereas I basically just played the drumset. So they would take me to the back room and show me rudiments. It was really nice because they had a more formal background, which they offered to me. They didn't play drumset, so that's what I had to offer them.

Since I couldn't read at that point, they would teach me the songs. I would look at a piece of snare drum music while one of the guys played it, and memorize the part. I would look at a figure and visually associate that figure with what he played. After a while, I started relating how certain figures looked to how they sounded. Eventually, the two came together, and that's how I learned how to read in the beginning.

IW: How did your first gig come about?

NO: After three months of instruction from my dad, he went back to work with his casual band, and I went with him. He would even let me sit in and play a couple of tunes. Within a month after I started going to the gigs, the bandleader hired me to replace my dad, who was going to play with another band. These were musicians my dad's age, while I was only 11. I had to join the union, get a child labor permit and a liquor commission permit for each job I played. They went through a lot of hassles

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SEPTEMBER 1986

by Simon Goodwin

Andre Arpino

Photo by Simon Goodwin



The audience is ecstatic, on their feet and prepared to clap until their hands become raw. Anybody arriving on the scene at this moment would be excused for imagining that this is the end of a noisy rock concert; it is unusual for relatively quiet, intimate music to elicit such a noisy, enthusiastic response. The musicians return to the stage for their fifth bow, and the noise of the audience increases again. The three men on stage exchange glances, the leader gives an imperceptible shrug, and Vincent Charbonnier, a 24-year-old who has just proven himself to be a virtuoso, picks up his double bass and starts playing Bach's Chorale Prelude No. 1 In D. Pianist Jacques Loussier and drummer Andre Arpino exchange mischievous glances, flick a high note and a triangle, respectively, in unison in the fourth and eighth bars, and then ease into a gentle accompaniment. At the end of the passage, they break into a jazz improvisation, picking up a really fast tempo with a precision that makes it seem as if they have each been activated by the same switch—no count, just a nod, and they are in.

The happiness and enjoyment shines out from these three men. Jacques Loussier formed a new Play Bach trio in 1985 (the tercentenary of Bach's birth). They recently brought out a record, The Best Of Play Bach, which isn't reissues as the title might suggest, but new recordings featuring the new trio and representing a new phase in Loussier's creativity. This is the second concert of their British tour, after which they are going to America and Canada. As they finish the number, take more bows and leave the stage, there is no doubt in anybody's mind that the magic is still there. Other people have used Bach in a modern setting, but Loussier was the pioneer and nobody has done it better.

Attention was automatically drawn to Loussier, the legend, and Charbonnier, the brilliant new star, but I couldn't help wondering whether many other people in the audience realized that we were also in the presence of one of Europe's master

drummers, Andre Arpino. The man is phenomenal. He has been king of the Paris session scene for many years, but it was a great surprise to me to find out just how many. He is in his early 50's, but he really does look at least ten years younger. He has always made a point of immersing himself totally in the music he plays, and it is to this that he attributes his success. Over the years, this drummer has played with so many people and in so many styles that he has trouble remembering them all. Yet, his playing has always been from the heart, and his heart has always been in the right place. It would be excusable for someone in Andre's position to be complacent, having achieved so much, but he still loves music and is dedicated to developing his skills still further.

The interview that follows was conducted with Andre speaking French and me speaking English. Our interpreter was Jacques Loussier himself. Jacques was patient and helpful, content just to sit and translate. He did occasionally make comments of his own, but usually only to compliment his friend and drummer.

SG: I understand that you have known each other for 20 years, but this is the first time that you have toured together.

AA: We have known each other for a long time, and we have worked together a lot, but it has always been in the studios. I hadn't performed with Jacques in Play Bach until this year.

JL: I called Andre because he has a fantastic interest in any kind of music. He's an eclectic drummer; he's been researching and playing a lot of music so he can adapt easily. There is a similarity in our thinking that makes communication easy; I don't have to explain things to him.

SG: Andre, what are your particular influences while you are playing with the trio? How much is Bach, how much is Loussier, and how much is Arpino?

AA: I've been a musician for a long time, and I've developed the facility to adapt to playing any type of music. This isn't really

a physical thing. It comes down to *understanding the style*; that's what is really important. Now I understand the style of Play Bach, so what I play is based on that understanding. You could say that 50% of what I play is my own interpretation of the music, and 50% is already there in the music of Bach and in Jacques' arrangements and compositions.

SG: You play an extended solo in "Concerto In Dm." What goes through your mind while you are constructing a solo of this type?

AA: I want to say something with the drums; I want them to talk. I don't have a set format in my head; I improvise. This means that some concerts are better than others because I'm affected by the mood I'm in at the time. But I've got enough experience to be reasonably secure when I solo. What I don't do is use a solo as a demonstration of technique! It has got to be music, and therefore, it shouldn't sound just like any other jazz drum solo. I try to make music with my drums.

SG: As an extension of the piece you are playing?

AA: Yes, absolutely. But it isn't only an extension of the piece that the trio has been playing. It is an extension of the whole program and of the spirit of the evening.

SG: I was interested to see that, in addition to your five drums, you only use a hi-hat, one ride and one crash cymbal, and a triangle and bell cymbal. In the music you are playing, there could be the opportunity to use more. Isn't there a temptation to do so?

AA: Do you think it would be better if I did? I certainly don't reject the idea of using a lot of equipment, and I don't want to criticize people who do. What is important is the emotion that comes out of what you do; it is the emotional input that produces this, not the number of instruments you have to hit.

I am basically an accompanist. But even when I solo, I want to express the emotion we were talking about through my heart

to have me in the band.

IW: What kind of things did you practice back then?

NO: When I had just started playing, I got to see Roy Burns in a clinic. Roy is not only one of the great drummers, but also one of the great clinicians. His approach is very clear and practical, especially from a developmental standpoint. My dad had taken some lessons from Roy, so he had some of Roy's teachings in mind. I concentrated on relaxation and getting good wrist turns. When I got into intermediate school, I started working on rudiments and reading rudimental drum solos. As far as drumset goes, I just played, because it's a real jazz instrument and that's what you do. I'd listen to my favorite drummers and try to play what they played. Very early on, my dad, who liked drum solos, encouraged me to listen to them and try to work them out. Of course, the primary concern was playing with the band. But he also told me to work on soloing, because he felt that, if you become a good soloist and a good team player, then you have both going for you. Some people just don't develop solo style and technique, whereas some people develop it very naturally. It came naturally for me, but it was a conscious thing; I liked drum solos and listened to a lot of them.

IW: How did you get interested in jazz?

NO: I was always attracted to things that were different or a little more involved. So that just led me to listen to my dad's jazz

records.

IW: What jazz drummers did you listen to?

NO: Buddy Rich was the first, and to this day, he is a major influence on me. My dad also had a big Dave Brubeck collection, so I eventually got into Joe Morello. Both of these drummers are phenomenal technicians who play with a lot of clarity, and the music they were playing was accessible. Then it became a process of evolution. Music that I didn't appreciate then, I appreciate now, and that also goes for certain drummers. I remember buying my first Miles Davis album, when I was in the 7th or 8th grade, because I had read about Tony Williams. It was *E.S.P.*, which I think was the first quintet album with Wayne Shorter. I put that album on, and it was like, "Wow, what is this?"

So it was a progressive thing. As I matured, I began to appreciate drummers who had more depth. Not that other drummers didn't; it's just where you're at at the time.

IW: So you would say that Buddy Rich, Joe Morello, and Tony Williams were your primary influences?

NO: I would say primary, but there were a lot more—especially recently. I go through periods where I'll listen to one drummer a lot. After I listened to that Miles Davis album, I read that Alan Dawson had taught Tony Williams. So I went out and looked for Alan Dawson records. He was

recording with Brubeck at that time, so I bought those albums. I was very much impressed. Then I started buying other albums with Alan on them, like some Booker Ervin albums that leaned more towards Coltrane-type music. Again, it was phenomenal drumming. So for a while, I just listened to Alan. When the fusion movement hit in the '70s, I was influenced by all the fusion drummers. Billy Cobham, especially, was a major influence.

It's funny, but as you progress in your musical development, you go back to find out why drummers played a certain way at a certain time. So even though I was into fusion, I started going back. I started to listen to the things that Tony Williams did with Miles, and to Miles' group before that, with Philly Joe Jones.

I also listened to Roy Haynes and Max Roach. All of them were incredible stylists who really typified the playing of the bebop period. If you're talking about that type of drumming, you have to listen to those guys. There's no getting around it. And I went even further back than that.

Then you pick up little things from drummers that you might only hear once or twice. For the most part, if the player is good, there is something that you can use. Sometimes I'll remember just one little thing after hearing a drummer perform, and not necessarily because I focused in on it at the time.

I remember seeing Woody Shaw's band in San Francisco with Victor Lewis playing drums. I knew who Victor was through records, but when I saw him live, it was one of the most moving experiences. He's just a phenomenal jazz drummer. What I picked up from him was basically more of a conceptual thing. To see that style of playing is sometimes more revealing than listening to records.

I remember hearing Bobby Hutcherson here, with Eddie Moore on drums. There was a certain thing that he did with the bass drum and hi-hat that I picked up—just a specific thing that I use now in my playing. It's those little things that you pick up here and there that broaden your musical vocabulary.

IW: I hear a lot of Gadd in your playing.

NO: Well, you can't deny his influence. He works in basically a studio or commercial setting where you're at the service of other people and trying to please them, which he does. Yet, he is still able to do things that nobody else has done before. He's just an incredible player on the instrument.

IW: How about the jazz scene in Hawaii? Is there much happening here?

NO: The jazz scene here, like in many cities, exists around a small number of people that play the music, and an even smaller number of people that want to give the music a chance to be heard. That doesn't sound real positive, so it's really not a thriving thing.

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Back in 1977, I started playing with Gabe Baltazar, who I consider to be one of the greatest jazz musicians ever. We were playing three nights a week at Kats-O, a small club in Honolulu. I was just out of high school, and it was a thrill for me to be playing with a musician like Gabe—just an incredible learning experience. In 1978, we started at the Cavalier, playing six nights a week, and it took off. It was just about that time that jazz became really popular in Hawaii. We had three or four radio stations playing jazz and jazz concerts week after week. It was great.

But after a while, all of that died down, which sort of shows that it was a faddish kind of thing: People jumped on the bandwagon because it was hip to do it. But it was good though, because at least some people were exposed to the music.

So now it's down to the hardcore people who really love it—fans or musicians. That's the extent of it.

IW: So why do you choose to stay in Hawaii?

NO: From when I first started playing, I always knew that eventually I would have to leave, and I still hold that feeling. Initially, when I finished high school, I planned to go off to a mainland college. But when that time came around, I wasn't ready personally to leave, so I went to school here. I have no regrets, because I learned things that I didn't know. If you learn, then it's a positive thing. I was able

to go to school full-time and play full-time with one of the world's great jazz musicians.

My association with Gabe ended in 1982, and for about three years, I had to learn about the business. When I left Gabe's group, it was like being thrown out on the streets. For a moment, I was paranoid. I was living on my own, I had my degree, and I was thinking, "What am I going to do now?" Then the phone started ringing. When people find out that you're available and that you can do a good job, they will call. Of course, since then I haven't done a real full-time jazz gig. But what I did learn was how to broaden my playing and my possibilities. I've learned how to survive in this business. I've been very fortunate in that I've been able to make a living as a drummer in a place like Hawaii, which is pretty difficult.

IW: What kind of kit are you using?

NO: I have a Gretsch power-tom set, which I got basically to round out my equipment. It goes without saying that Gretsch has always been associated with jazz drumming, but it's really a great set for anything. I also have a Yamaha *Recording Custom* set, which is also a beautiful set.

IW: What about cymbals?

NO: When Zildjian came out with the new K line, I kind of fell in love with that sound, and that's what I've been playing recently.

IW: What do you consider to be some of the greatest musical moments you've ever had?

NO: I guess playing in the most challenging situations. I remember once playing in an orchestra with two other percussionists for a presentation of Abel Gance's 1927 silent film *Napoleon*. Carmine Coppola had written a score for it, which also included excerpts from Beethoven and Tchaikovsky. He was also conducting. We had one rehearsal, and Coppola, being who he is, expected only the very best from the orchestra. He's not the most patient man in the world and wanted things right. So that was a big challenge, and it turned out well.

A different kind of challenge would be playing with the jazz greats. But to me, that's easy because it's the music that I grew up listening to and always wanted to play. So playing with people like Lew Tabackin, Richie Cole, Wynton Marsalis, Freddie Hubbard, or Bobby Hutcherson were all great moments that were easy for me; it was fun.

IW: Considering your facility on all of the percussion instruments, did you ever consider orchestral percussion work as a possible career?

NO: I think I was more serious about that possibility in high school, when, due to the influence of my band director, Henry Miyamura—who is now with the Honolulu Symphony—I wanted to become a timpanist. When I got into college, I really got seriously into mallets. I studied jazz vibes and classical marimba, and actually performed on both. And though today I realize that my dreams of being a concert marimbist were delusions of grandeur, I don't think I'll ever let my mallet playing go. But as I got into the business, I realized that what I was really best at was playing the drums, so that determined my path.

IW: What are your plans for the future?

NO: Well, I'm definitely going to the mainland. Since this is such a small musical community, after a while you just sort of recycle. You end up doing the same thing with the same people—which is not bad if that's what you want; there are fine players here. It's home, and, to me, the most beautiful place in the world. But as far as my career is concerned, I have to move on. And I feel more than ready. I have enough experience, and I know a lot more about the business part—which is something you really have to be aware of. I have sort of an idea of where that's at, and I've played with enough world-class artists to know where I'm at.

What I'd like to do is try to go after those challenges that I mentioned that make me feel good as a player—whether it's the challenge of a studio situation, or just burning with jazz artists and playing very creative music. I hope to encompass all of that.

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Arpino

Arpino continued from page 39

and through my feelings. I don't need a lot of instruments to do that. A player's spirit should always be able to shine through. Too much equipment can actually get in the way of that happening; it can form an obstacle. However, I might start using a few more pieces of small percussion with the kit. I don't like to close my mind to ideas.

SG: Now that we're onto the subject of equipment, I notice that you're using a *Sonorlite* kit.

AA: Yes, I ordered this kit specially to use with the trio. I have been using Sonor for four years now. Sonor takes drum making very seriously; that company's drums sound and look good. I can go further than that, and say that Sonor's drums are aesthetically correct. The kits are convenient to set up, and they don't move until you come to collapse them.

SG: As a studio player, do you use different kits for different jobs?

AA: Oh yes, and they are all Sonor.

SG: What about your cymbals?

AA: All Sabian, apart from the 8" bell, which is Paiste.

SG: Do you tune to specific notes or intervals?

AA: No, but I'm glad you raised that point, because I think that the tuning of drums is of vital importance. The quality of the drums counts for nothing unless they are tuned properly. Did you hear three specific tones from the tom-toms?

SG: Yes, definitely.

AA: Good, that's what I want, but I don't tune to specific notes. You can get the right sound without that. Another thing is that, when you play acoustically, the acoustic properties of the hall can even out the sound of the drums so that the differences between them are lost. Not being miked up, I have to tune with this in mind, too. If you are amplified and you want to tune to particular notes, you can then, at least, be sure that the finer points of your tuning will be heard.

SG: I notice that, when you play the ride cymbal, you have a knack of pulling out accents on 2 and 4 without relying on the hi-hat for that emphasis.

AA: I don't like to use a strong hi-hat afterbeat in this style of music. When I play with a big band it is different, of course, but my conception of how I should play with this trio is that the music should flow. You don't need metronomic drumming; that detracts from the flow of the melodies.

SG: Still on the subject of your drumming technique: I found your brushwork, particularly at the faster tempos, to be absolutely phenomenal. How do you do it?

AA: [laughs] What is difficult for one drummer is easy for another one. Everybody has the facility to do certain things better than others. With me, it is brushes. I can actually play faster than that if I need to.

SG: Yes, but is it in the wrists, the fingers, the forearms . . . ?

AA: It's in *relaxation*. You have got to be completely relaxed, and that relaxation is in the hands, the wrists, the arms, the shoulders—everything. You must be very smooth with your movements—with no tension anywhere. That's the secret.

SG: You were a professional drummer at the age of 14. How did you manage to develop so early?

AA: My father was a professional musician. He played saxophone and violin, and he started to teach me to play saxophone and clarinet when I was five years old. [*He smiles as he launches into an amusing anecdote.*] But my father kept changing his ideas. After a while, he decided that the best instrument for me, if I was going to have a career in music, would be the guitar. So I stopped learning the sax and clarinet, and took up the guitar. A year after that, my father changed his mind again and decided that I ought to be learning the piano. So I stopped learning the guitar and started on piano. But all this time, I was learning musical culture and technique on all these instruments, which was very helpful for my development. By 1944, I had settled for the drums, this time from my own choice, because they interested me more than all the other things. I started gigging on drums at local dances. As a *drummer*, I am completely self-taught; I never had a lesson from anybody.

SG: Did your parents encourage you to become a professional while you were still so young?

AA: My father was a professional musician who used to travel around a lot. He agreed that I should be a musician. With my mother, it was rather different because I was still more or less a child. But I was able to make a living by myself; I didn't need anyone.

SG: What sort of work did you do?

AA: [laughs] Everything! Dance music to start with, then cabaret going on to light music and jazz. And then in 1954 at the age of 23, I settled in Paris. I started by working in the nightclubs, and after a while, I began to get offers for recording sessions. I gradually got into more and more studio work and less and less live playing.

JL: That is why he is so adaptable. He has done so many things at different times: South American music, jazz, backing singers, doing TV shows. He can read as well as any classical drummer.

SG: Did you make a conscious effort to break into the jazz scene in Paris, or did it just happen by accident?

AA: I always had jazz in mind, from a very early age.

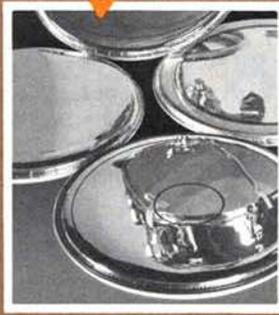
SG: And you ended up playing with a lot of the great American players?

AA: Yes, I've accompanied Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Getz, Lee Konitz, Herbie Hancock, and singers like Sammy Davis, Jr., and Tony Bennett.

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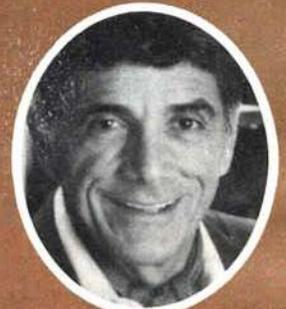
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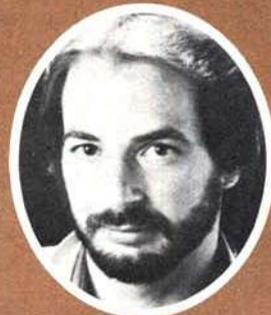
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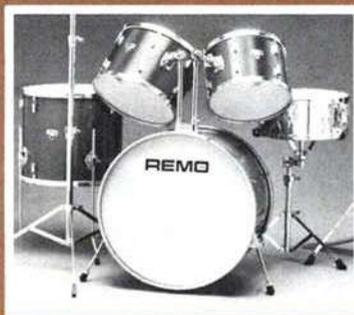
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SG: Has this mostly been in the studio for TV or records, or have you done concerts as well?

AA: I have done some concert tours. For example, I toured with Tito Puente, playing salsa. I enjoyed that very much; I love Latin music. I have also played with Sergio Mendes.

SG: For some time, you have been one of my favorite drummers because of your playing with Baden Powell, particularly on *the Samba Triste* album. On the title track, you do some lovely samba stuff using only the bass drum and the closed hi-hat.

AA: For *Samba Triste*, Baden Powell wanted me to do something fairly basic to help the music flow. There is a lot of guitar on that track, so the backing needed to be fairly simple. Another thing with Baden Powell is that there are no written arrangements; he talks to you at the beginning and then says, "Okay, let's go." If you know where you start, you don't know where you are going to finish, so for your own security, you can't go too mad with your own playing.

JL: In Paris, Andre is known as a Latin specialist. He has a really great reputation. The South American musicians who come to France know this, and they always ask for him.

SG: Andre, how did you develop your Latin playing?

AA: A lot of listening. Of course, it has

always been a pleasure for me to do so. I love all music—particularly Latin.

SG: Is all the Latin playing you do on drumkit?

AA: Professionally, I always play drumkit, but I enjoy playing Latin instruments also. I practice a lot on timbales, getting into the Cuban style.

SG: In addition to Latin and jazz, you do quite a lot of commercial work as well: Mireille Mathieu, Charles Aznavour, people like that.

AA: There are only two types of music: good and bad. If Mireille Mathieu has a good song, it is good music; if she has a bad song, it is bad music. I don't concern myself with whether or not it is commercial. Actually, I believe that it is often *more difficult* to accompany a variety singer than it is to play with a jazz or Brazilian musician. When you play for musicians, you speak the same language; there is no problem understanding what they want from you. But a lot of singers are not really musicians, and often they will react to music in a way that will surprise you. You have to be extra careful not to make any mistakes or do anything that can throw them, because this is more easily done when they are not musicians. I like to watch the artist very carefully, so that I can feel what the artist wants to get from the drums. Communication isn't the same as it is among musicians, and it often depends

on being able to gauge reactions. The way I approach it is that I never go along intending to make a show out of myself. I am an accompanist, and as such, I have to make sure that I give the best accompaniment of which I am capable.

SG: Presumably, there is less creative input from you when you do this kind of work. Isn't it more a matter of playing the written arrangements and interpreting for the artist?

AA: Yes, in a way. But I still enjoy what I do, and when the red light goes on or the curtain comes up, I am 100% with the person I am playing for, regardless of who that person is or the style of music. When people ask for me to play with them, it is because they trust me to do a good job. I must always make sure that I am worthy of that trust, so I always do the best I can.

SG: What is important to you other than music?

AA: Everything! Life is important to me—life and the people I like. People I like mean a lot to me, but people I don't like—well, I prefer not to have anything to do with them. I try to eliminate them from my own daily consciousness. I have to like people in order to work with them. If there is no positive feeling with people you are working with in music, it is hopeless.

SG: Isn't this difficult sometimes when you are doing studio work?

AA: No, not really. I don't want to give the impression that I take a dislike to people easily. It only happens very rarely, and if I have a clash of personalities with someone I am working with in the studio, it is usually only for a three-hour session, so I can concentrate on the special things that are required of me during that session. But I wouldn't get involved in anything long-term unless I got on with the people concerned. That is essential to creating good music.

SG: What about the future?

AA: What I want to do now is stay with Jacques and work to make the trio better and better, and hopefully more popular, too. All my life, I have been a session drummer doing odd days, weeks, and sometimes months with different people. Now I am really enjoying working towards a common goal with the other two. You were at the concert last night. If you come to another concert in a year's time, you will notice differences in my playing, and in the playing of the trio as a whole. We have only been together for a short time now, but we will continue to develop. We won't stand still. This is what I find so exciting!



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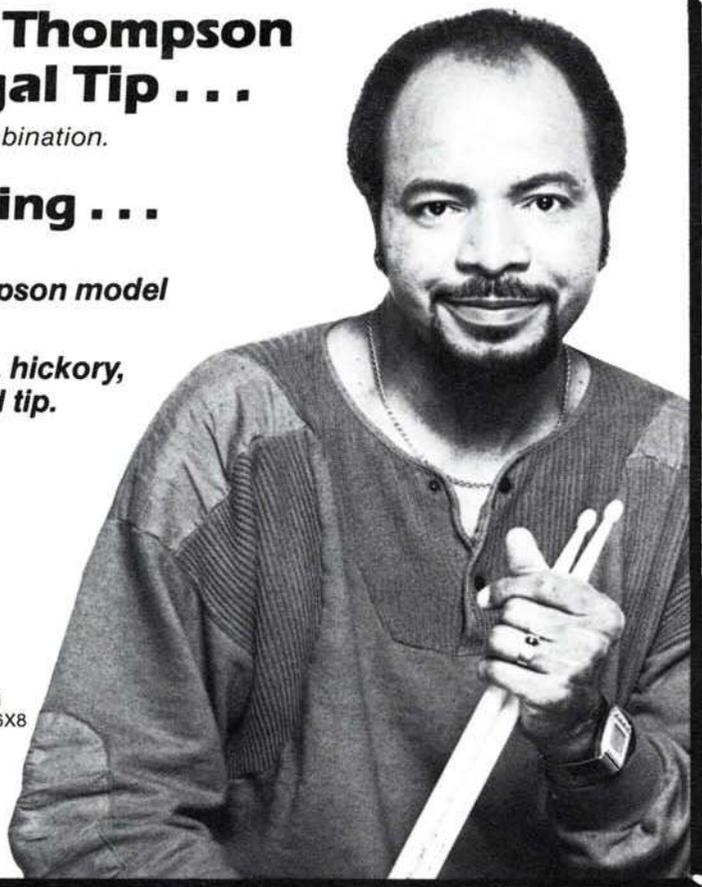
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Electronic Percussion On Broadway

by Jeff Potter



Photo by Laura Friedman

It's in the studios, it's on the stage, and now it's been used on Broadway: Electronic percussion has arrived in musical theater. Bob Fosse's musical *Big Deal* marked the first time that electronic percussion had been used extensively for Broadway theater. Other shows have included electronic drum parts in the trap drum book, but the *Big Deal* score included a full-length part written solely for electronic percussion. The show ran from April 10 through June 8 of this year.

Big Deal's score featured contemporary arrangements of popular '30s tunes. In addition to the electronics percussionist, there were three other players providing the rhythms: two percussionists and a trap drummer. With four percussionists aboard, the job demanded that the electronics player's role be far more than just an imitator of drum sounds. And Tom Oldakowski was the drummer who handled the job superbly. Because the part is unlike a traditional Broadway trap set score that can simply be placed on a music stand and read down, Tom's involvement in the show was very different than that of the standard Broadway drummer. More than just a player, Tom also acted as a consultant, kit designer, and programmer/sampler, nurturing the creation and development of the part right up until opening night.

When Tom was first asked to work on the show, the rhythmic notation and arrangement of the electronic drum score (arranged by Ralph Burns) was almost complete. As for the sounds needed to make sense of the notation, however, much was still sketchy. Tom's programming skills came into play here. When programming, Tom had to consider the sounds in musical relationship to the arrangement and changing dynamics, as well as the specific action and/or dialogue on stage.

"At first, I was working from just hearing the music," Tom explains. "That made it difficult. For instance, at one point in the score, it says, 'Simmons toms.' I thought, 'Yeah! A nice low sound would be great there.' Then, a week later, I got a chance to go out in the house to listen and watch while another drummer covered the part during the pre-New York run-throughs in Boston. Suddenly, I saw that the low tom occurred when two of the dancers were doing a high dance kick. Then I realized, 'Whoops! That's not the right sound for the action,' and I changed it accordingly."

Tom was asked to design a setup that would handle the demands of the score. The problem he faced was in creating a setup that would provide the needed sounds, stay within the show's budget, allow flexibility for changes, and at the same time, be mechanically practical for one drummer to handle. In addition to playing and

turning score pages, it was necessary for the drummer to be able to handle program switching. Obviously, a nightmare of knob twiddling and stick flipping could have resulted.

Tom's well-conceived solution was the following setup: In simple terms, Tom broke the sound sources down into two categories: All required Simmons drum and hi-hat sounds were programmed into the Simmons *SDS7*. All other "real" and synthetic sounds were sampled and stored on discs that could be loaded and unloaded into a Mirage sampling unit. It is important to note that, although Tom's setup was hi-tech, all of the parts were played with sticks; there were no drum machines or pre-taped parts. Six Simmons pads formed the bulk of the kit. On the top row were three pads used for tom settings. Below that were three more; the first pad on the left was the Simmons hi-hat, the second was snare, and the third was for bass drum settings. To the left of the Simmons kit was a Roland *Octapad Pad 8*. Tom played the eight individual pads of the Roland unit with sticks in order to trigger the Mirage.

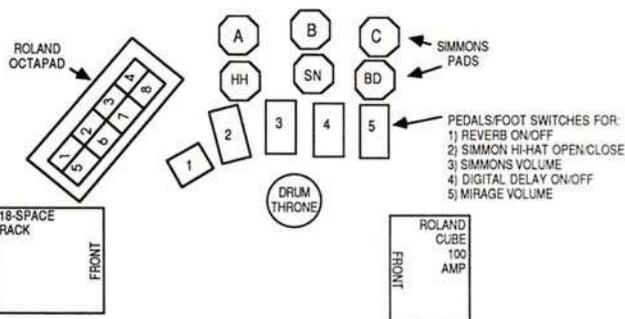
The Roland and Simmons pads kept his sticks busy, but there was also the matter of electronics control by hand. Most of this—except for preset changes on the *Pad 8*—was handled on the rack standing at Tom's left. Contained in the rack was a Furman Power Conditioner Strip, which prevented power surges in the rack and allowed for one single A.C. cord to power the whole. Below that was the Simmons *SDS7* and the Mirage Multi-Sampler, which is the rack-mountable version of the brains found in a Mirage keyboard. Controlling and/or enhancing these units were the Peavey *701 R* mixer, the *Effectron III* digital delay, and the Alesis *XT:C* digital reverb unit. A headphone amp also sat at the bottom of the rack, which Tom used for click-tracked selections of the show. The manual switching chores on the rack involved changing program, or "kits," on the *SDS7*, and loading and unloading discs into the Mirage. A Simmons selector pad was also nearby, so that Tom could call up a kit with a quick tap of the stick when a fast program switch was needed.

Fosse's sequined, high-kicking strutters weren't the only folks with fancy feet in this show. While Tom's hands stayed busy, his toes were also alive. Five foot controls were on the floor: a volume pedal for the *SDS7*, a volume pedal for the Mirage, a Simmons hi-hat pedal for open-close effect, a reverb on-off switch, and a digital delay on-off switch. "People asked me why I didn't program the sounds for the right dynamics rather than use pedals," says Tom. "That would have been fine once the show was set. But when I was developing this system, we changed sounds at an unbelievable rate. The pedals gave better flexibility for changing dynamics very quickly." (See Diagram)

Sampling was essential in order to realize certain moments of inventive percussion scoring. In the show's funniest sequence, a group of inmates in stripes glumly intoned the old ditty, "Ain't We Got Fun" as they sand-danced and shook their wrist-chains to soft-shoe rhythms. Tom had sampled a chain shake and stored it on disc for the Mirage. Matching the dancers' moves, Tom played the chain licks on the *Pad 8*. At another point in the show, two thugs flashed their switchblades in rhythmic sync with two dramatic accents in the music. "I spent Easter Sunday looking for switchblades and sampling them," Tom laughs. "It was only two days before the first public performance in New York, and Bob Fosse suddenly had an idea. He asked, 'Can't we get the sound of a switchblade opening? Can't we—uh, what do you call it—sample it?' He had discovered a new word and a new possibility to play with." The scene was dramatically stronger due to the percussive



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 BD = SIMMONS BASS DRUM
 HH = SIMMONS HI-HAT
 NUMBERS 1-8 = CORRESPONDING PAD NUMBER
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switchblade accents that slashed out as Tom hit the *Pad 8*.

For the most part, however, the electronics were used much like an acoustic percussion part: for coloration and accentuation of the arrangement in teamwork with the acoustic drums. Special care was taken to avoid electronic overkill.

"It was interesting working with people who didn't know the limitations of the equipment, because they would just hear something and they'd want it—which was great. It's your job to figure out how to get it. It taxed the limits of the equipment. When you're working with Simmons drums in the studio, you have to work to get different sounds, but basically, you're dealing with a bass, snare, and tom sound."

Before the show moved into the theater, Tom faced the problem of having to program through different amps and in different rehearsal halls, making the consistency of sound extra difficult. Once the programs were set, the novel presence of these electronics in a show pit and their direct-to-board possibilities made house mixing a special challenge. "This show was a very different show in terms of sound," says Tom. "It required 18 wireless body mic's, four synthesizer players, four percussionists, bass, guitar, saxes, trombones, and trumpets, and at certain points in the show, there was a six-piece band on stage. So the soundman had his hands full. Starting with the show's run in Boston, it took a few performances before the Simmons settled right in the mix. Theater sound tends to be on the thin side, because the soundmen are concerned with the vocals on stage and the dialogue. In New York, they spent a lot of time with the sound. Phil Ramone even came in for a few days to work on it."

Seeing the show from the house proved that Tom's part worked well musically and dramatically, and seeing the show from the pit proved that Tom played the show first and foremost as a drummer. Impressive, high-tech trinkets aside, Tom's grace and groove ultimately were what made the part work. A graduate of Hartt School of Music and presently a student of Gary Chester's, Tom has handled Broadway shows, national show tours, gigs with Mose Allison, studio work, and has been staff drummer at Radio City for

five years. Currently, he balances his show schedule with live dates as a member of the group On The Edge and playing drum tracks for the TV cartoon series *JEM*. He endorses Sabian cymbals and Vic Firth sticks.

As for the future of electronic percussion in musical theater, Tom feels, "Broadway is a scene unto itself, so I don't think it will always necessarily incorporate pop recording sounds." However, when Tom does discuss the possibilities, he becomes animated. It's clear that he would relish the challenge. "I could conceivably see a show being done in which they go into the studio and sample the sounds they need, which the drummer could trigger. For example, they might want a Phil Collins sound for one song and a Stewart Copeland sound for another. If you're interested in drums, it is valuable to know something about these new innovations in electronics. It doesn't have to be your only thing. Just check it out, and you decide how involved you want to get."

Here is a score sample from *Big Deal*. In the show's book, all notation was standard. The three Simmons tom pads are indicated as "A," "B," and "C," and the other three pads are indicated traditionally (snare = sn, bass drum = bd, hi-hat = hh). Sampled sounds are identified by name, and the pads to which these sounds are assigned are indicated by numbers one through eight. Changes in Simmons kit numbers, Mirage discs, *Pad 8* presets, and foot-pedal changes are all indicated at appropriate spots in the score.

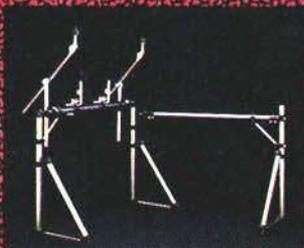
Notational examples occur in bar 86 over the fourth beat, where a letter A is written, which means to play Simmons pad A. Another example occurs in bar 88, where the handclap sound on beat three is a sampled sound assigned to the second pad ("2" is indicated) of the *Roland Octapad Pad 8*. Other examples appear throughout the page.

The excerpts from "Beat Me Daddy Dance" are reprinted by permission of the *Big Deal* Company.



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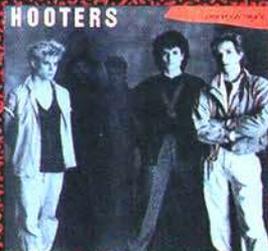
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THE PRO DRUMMERS' NEW CHOICE

Lee continued from page 21

have done, and some come from my sitting down at the kit and just seeing what happens and what I like.

SG: Could you tell us about your use of the Simmons pads?

TL: I've got three set up with the kit at the moment. One is programmed with the sound of an orchestral chord, another is a *Vibra-slap*, and the third is a combination of a gunshot and a cannon. The *Vibra-slap* effect is something from a song on the new album called "City Boy Blues." I took the sound of the real *Vibra-slap*, which I did on the album, lifted it off the master tape, and burnt a chip of it into my Linn machine so that I could trigger it with the Simmons.

SG: So what we hear live is not only the same *Vibra-slap* as was used on the record, but it's even the same hit?

TL: Exactly. I hate going to see bands and thinking, "Hell, why didn't they do that? It's on the record." But I also hate doing things half-assed live: You can't take a real *Vibra-slap*, hold it up to a mic', and expect it to sound good in a band this loud. But I can hit the pad, and it sounds brilliant; it's perfect every time. I thought, "Why not have it *exactly* like it is on the album?" So I lifted that, and I also lifted the gunshot and cannon shot, which is all on the same chip, and is on a track called "Louder Than Hell." This way, I can keep it sounding the same as it does when someone buys the album.

SG: The pad with the orchestra in it is only for your solo?

TL: Yes. I got tired of going to rock shows and hearing the same old drum solo all the time. Now that we've got electronics to play with, we can get some new and interesting sounds. And this orchestral sound is *musical*. It's not just a case of putting my head down and beating the drums up. I can play this musical sound along with everything else, and people wonder where it's coming from. They look up and say, "Whaaat?"

SG: Do you go for sounds in the studio and worry about reproducing them live later, or do you think in terms of live performances all the time you are creating new arrangements?

TL: We *definitely* think live, right off the bat, because if we go to perform and we can't reproduce it, we think of it as cheating. So we always think about the performance: how we might be able to break it down live and make it an audience-participation trip—a sing-along—a shout-along. Yeah, we're always thinking live, and we certainly don't add tons of

keyboards and harmonies that we can't reproduce. If you do that, people get depressed, because it doesn't sound like the records.

SG: Many bands use sequencers and backing tapes to get around that problem. You obviously don't.

TL: No, we just use an intro tape; that's about it. After the intro tape, it's all live.

SG: You are getting quite involved in using electronic drumpads to give you effects to back up the sounds of the acoustic kit. Would you ever be interested in going all electronic and getting your regular drum sounds from pads as well?

TL: It would never happen. I could never do that. I'd be letting a lot of people down, plus I wouldn't be happy. I like the sound of the real drums and the way you hit them. You hit an electronic drum, and it's just not real to me. There are a lot of drummers who do that, and it sounds brilliant, but I just couldn't play that way. Also, I'd probably break them. They wouldn't last that long, and they are quite expensive.

SG: You wouldn't need to play so hard, though.

TL: That's true. But I *like* to play hard. I get a little bit aggressive with my drums; they take a bit of a beating, [laughs]

SG: You play piano on "Home Sweet Home." Do you find going from the hard, physical bit on the drums, where you are using arm and leg movements, to the delicate finger action of the piano difficult?

TL: Great! That's very understanding. It takes a drummer to ask a question like that. When I come off the drums, I'm really worked up; I'm on "11," you know! When I go to the piano, I have to make a psychological adjustment: take a deep breath and tell myself to relax. There I am having to play a ballad on piano straight after doing something like "Ten Seconds To Love" on drums, and I really have to psyche myself into that in the few seconds it takes to go from the drums to the piano. And it's hard to do. I really have to tell myself to relax. I might play the thing a bit too percussively, so I have to calm myself down.

SG: You've been getting involved in the songwriting for the band recently.

TL: I didn't do any writing until the last album, *Theatre Of Pain*, but I co-wrote three of the numbers on there. Nikki and I are getting more involved in writing things together now.

SG: Do you specialize in writing melody or lyrics, for instance?

TL: My contribution is more in the arrangements: timing, stops and starts, rhythmic breakdowns, and things like that. I can write melodies, but Nikki is great doing that, so I more or less leave that to him. I'm good at working out how many verses, how many choruses, and stuff like that.

SG: What about drum machines? You said that you have a Linn.

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TL: Yes, I approve. There's a lot you can do with it, and there's a lot that I could do if I learned more about it. I'm not worried about being replaced by one though. I'm not sure that a machine could produce the same sort of energy. I saw something on a guy's T-shirt once that I think really sums it up. It said, "No machine can replace me until it learns how to drink."

SG: Speaking of energy, do you do anything to keep yourself in shape, or does it happen automatically?

TL: I do sit-ups and things like that, but we have a pretty heavy touring schedule. Tonight was the fourth show in a row. We've got another show tomorrow, then a day off, and then another four shows. So when I have a day off, I don't usually leap out of bed in the morning and say, "Right, now for some push-ups." I like to rest. Particularly, I rest my hands; they get a little bit [He holds his hands out to show the callouses.] I exercise when I'm at home and not playing, but my drums really keep me pretty fit. It's pretty good exercise. Check this out: I got hold of one of those milometers for joggers, which you can strap onto your foot and it tells you how many miles you've run. I had one of these on my right foot during a show, and it registered six miles. That was with the one foot. Imagine how much energy I was putting out with my other limbs.

SG: You do a fairly heavy touring schedule?

TL: Well, by the time this tour ends, we will have been on the road for nine months. We had Christmas and New Year's off, but apart from that, we've been touring all that time. We've got a slave driver for a manager. That's what it is. [laughs]

SG: Do you plan to spend so many months of the year touring, so many recording, and so many off?

TL: No, there's no fixed schedule for that. When we go home, we might have a couple of months off, then we'll record, and then we'll do this all over again. You see, in this band, everybody complains by saying, "I want to go home" when we're out on the road, but after we've been home for a week, we're all saying, "I want to get out there and play some more." We're a young band, and we enjoy working. When we're home we get miserable, because there's nothing to do.

SG: You all seem very happy with Motley Crue.

TL: Oh, man! When the four of us came together We have all been in other bands, but that was more or less standard rock 'n' roll. This is like New Year's Eve,

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SG: How do you see the long-term prospects for the band? Will you still be together as a rock band when you are in your 40's, like the Rolling Stones?

TL: I really, really hope that could happen, because it would make me really happy. That's one of the reasons why we change our look—our image. People ask us why we changed from the leather-and-studs thing to the more glam, show-biz look. The answer is that, if we didn't change, we wouldn't be around. Kids ask me, "Why does this new album sound different?" I tell them, "What do you want us to do—record two albums that sound the same?" We want to be around for a long time, so we'll always change. We've never been a band to look and sound like anybody else. If anybody ever said to me,

"Your new album sounds just like the last one," that would really hurt. And we've found that, when other bands seem to be coming along with an image like ours, we shrug and say to each other, "Okay, it's time to move on."

SG: Where do all the ideas come from?

TL: From the band—from us. We all get involved in the set design for the stage, the light show, the sound, what we wear, album covers, artwork—you name it. We're involved in everything. We take it all seriously. The music is definitely first, but the rest of it is almost as important. You can have a great album out, but if you go out on tour and nobody wants to come to see you play, what's the use? We always keep it very interesting, and give them tons and tons to look at as well as listen to.

SG: Would you be interested in doing solo projects?

TL: When we record an album, I get very involved. I'm the first to arrive and the last to leave. Tom Werman, our producer, Duanne, the engineer, and I are the people

who are there all the time. I take an interest in all the technical things. I don't claim to know a lot, but I've learned quite a bit by doing three albums. I know it doesn't sound like a lot, but if I knew when I started what I know now, I'd be well on the way, if you see what I mean, [laughs]

I love working with Tom; he's great. We call him "Pops." Working with a great producer has inspired me to some extent, and one day I would like to produce an album. Being a drummer, I love dance music—not disco, but good funk. I'd like to try my hand at something like that one day.

SG: Playing as well as producing?

TL: Just producing. I hope that I can develop some engineering skills. It's one thing to have a sound in your head, and it's another to get it down accurately. But I do know what I want to hear. [He pauses for comic timing and then sings a drum part "boom, tsst, boom boom, tsst."] Anyway, this is keeping me busy enough at the moment.

SG: You obviously enjoy being one of the "Bad Boys of Rock."

TL: Yeah. It keeps it interesting out here, you know. It's never boring, but if you let it get to you, you can lose your mind. It keeps everybody smiling!

SG: Doesn't it get to be a bit of a strain sometimes, keeping up that image?

TL: [laughs] Oh yeah! Sometimes I wish that I was in a band like Hall & Oates, or something like that, where I would just have to play my drums and not worry about anything else. But fortunately—I say that because I enjoy it—we've created this monster, and we've got to live with it. I'm having fun. *Somebody* has got to do this! [laughs]

Drum Tech Clyde Duncan continued from page 21

just blow low-end from the kick drums to hit you in the seat. When you hit a kick drum, it boots you right in the ass!

SG: What's in these other cabinets to either side?

CD: In each of these there are four 12" speakers in a reflex cabinet, with a horn in the top for the really high stuff, like the guitar. It's extremely loud.

SG: And all for the drummer?

CD: All for the drummer. Sometimes the guy out front gets a little mad, because these are almost as loud as his P.A.

SG: Before I ask you to talk about the riser, what sticks does Tommy use?

CD: The sticks are Vic Firth *Rock Nylon*. I carve them up to put a bit of friction on them, because he does a lot of twirling.

SG: Okay, now for the riser.

CD: As you can see, these pieces are built into the bottom of the center section on each of the stands, so that they can be bolted to the riser quite simply. The threaded rod slips into the dish built into the platform base. You tighten it by turning it counterclockwise. The rubber feet on the stands grip so that it is very secure. It's also

got to be quick to set up and dismantle; we're doing it every day. The kick drums are strapped down, and fixed in the same way. It all works very well.

SG: Securing the drummer might be harder than securing the drums.

CD: That's something that did take a bit of practice, but we had a harness made for him, similar to the ones used by people who go up on telephone poles. There were bits added to it, and we got it sorted out. I test it myself each day. It must be just right, with even tension on each leg, because when it goes up, he is literally hanging there.

SG: What about the mechanics of tipping it up?

CD: It's a hydraulic system: There are two hydraulic piston arms, which are mounted on either side about midway back. The hydraulic pump pumps fluid into the pistons, and up it goes. So far, it has worked perfectly every night.

SG: As long as it comes down again!

CD: We *had* thought that on the final night of the tour we might play a joke on him like not bolting the drums down, or leaving him up there, but I don't think it would go down too well! [laughs]

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Beat Shifting

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①

Now let us shift the starting beat, so that the original 2 is the new 1.

①a

Beat 1b uses the original 3 as the new 1.

①b

Beat 1c uses the original 4 as the new 1.

①c

Clearly, neither beat 1 nor its variations are extremely rhythmically inspiring and are merely meant to illustrate. It should be pointed out that it takes an interesting starting beat to make the "beat shifting" technique effective.

Let us now examine a good basic funk beat.

②

Beat 2a uses the original 2 as the new 1.

②a

Beat 2b uses the original 3 as the new 1.

②b

Beat 2c uses the original 4 as the new 1.

②c

Any basic Latin beat can be easily varied with interesting rhythmic effects.

③

The original 2 is used as the new 1.

③a

The original 3 is used as the new 1.

③b

The original 4 is used as the new 1.

③c

This fusion of funk and Latin borrowed from Steve Gadd offers some very tasty variations. Try using a cowbell on these.

④

The original 2 is used as the new 1.

④a

by Howard Fields

The original 3 is used as the new 1.



The original 4 is used as the new 1.



Keep in mind again that the more interesting a beat is, the more rewarding are its variations. Simple 2 and 4 backbeats do not bear much rhythmic fruit, as beat 1 and its variations show. It is the more sophisticated rock, funk, Latin, and fusion grooves that lend themselves most effectively to the "beat shifting" technique as the other beats demonstrate. You will find that, once the original beat is conquered, the hard work is over and the ensuing variations are little or no problem to master. Hence, one beat equals four beats. This is the bottom line.

Howard Fields was the drummer in the late Harry Chapin's band from 1975 to 1981.



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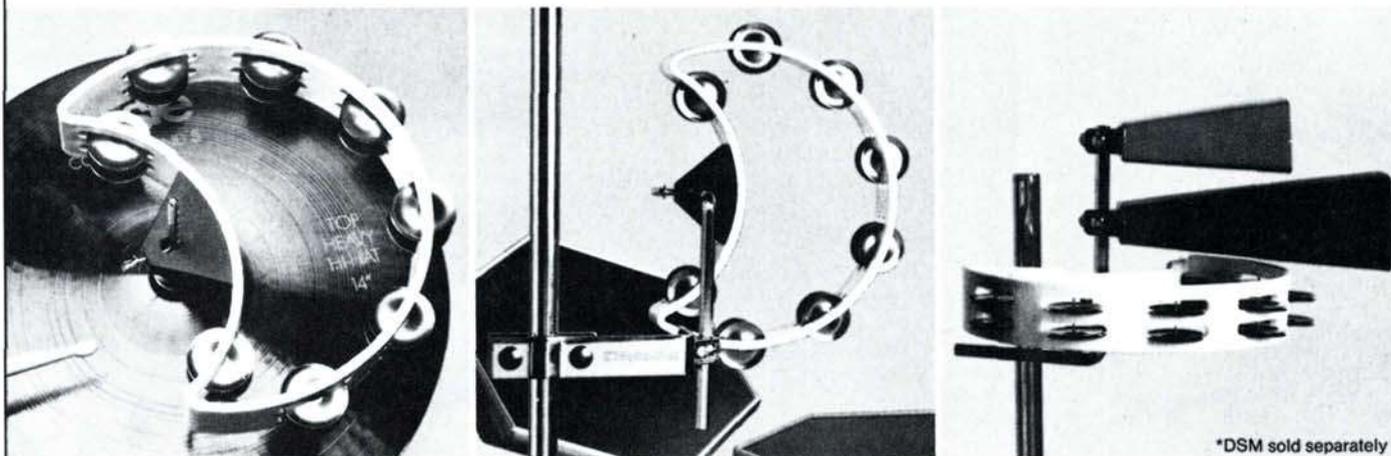
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LISTENERS' GUIDE

ED THIGPEN

Q. For readers who'd like to listen to albums that most represent your drumming, which ones would you recommend?

Album	Artist	Label	Catalog #
Out Of The Storm	Ed Thigpen	Verve	8663
Three And One	Thad Jones	Steeplechase	SCS 1197
Eclipse	Thad Jones	Metronome	Digital MLP 15-652
Very Tall	Oscar Peterson/Milt Jackson	Verve	UMV 2062
West Side Story	Oscar Peterson	Verve	UMV 2068
Night Train	Oscar Peterson	Verve	V68538
Oscar Peterson Trio & Clark Terry	Oscar Peterson	Mercury	EXPR 1028
Oliver Nelson Live From L.A.	Oliver Nelson	Impulse	9153
Ernie Wilkins Almost Big Band Live	Ernie Wilkins	Matrix	MTX 29203
Lullaby	Kenny Drew Trio	Bayside	RJL 8029
Ed Thigpen/Action-Reaction	Ed Thigpen	Sonet	SLP 2558
Moonlit Desert	Kenny Drew	Bayside	RJL 8039



Q. Which records do you listen to most for inspiration?

Album	Artist	Drummer	Label	Catalog #
Black, Brown, And Beige	Duke Ellington	Sam Woodyard	CSP	JCS8015
Concert Of Sacred Music	Duke Ellington	Louie Bellson	RCA Victor	LPM 3582
Brazil—Original	Various	Various	RCA	EJL2-7208
Jo Jones Trio	Jo Jones	Jo Jones	Musidisc	CV 1153
Basin Street	Clifford Brown/Max Roach	Max Roach	Lime.	EXPR 1031

Also, any Charlie Parker, Art Tatum, or Count Basie recordings. I have a rather extensive collection of jazz classics, and it is next to impossible for me to say that any one of them gives me more inspiration than the others. I can say in all honesty that I am inspired by all of the greats, particularly Max Roach, Philly Joe Jones, Art Blakey, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams, and Jack DeJohnette. Billy Hart, Billy Higgins, Buddy Rich, and Louie Bellson continue to amaze me. Others I listen to are Charli Persip, Roy Brooks, Louis Hayes, and, of course, Roy Haynes and Alan Dawson. Please understand that I have been influenced by all types of music and artists, as well as by the total entertainment aspect of show business in general. This naturally includes vaudeville, musicals, European classical artists, African, Indian, and Latin-American music, and all of Nature's sounds.

PHIL EHART

Q. For readers who'd like to listen to albums that most represent your drumming, which ones would you recommend?

Album	Artist	Label	Catalog #
Leftoverture	Kansas	CBS/Kirshner	JZ 34224
Song For America	Kansas	CBS/Kirshner	PZ 33385
Point Of Know Return	Kansas	CBS/Kirshner	JZ 34929
Please Don't Touch	Steve Hackett	Chrysalis	CHR1176
Drastic Measures	Kansas	CBS/Assoc.	QZ 38733
Two For The Show (Live)	Kansas	CBS/Kirshner	PZ2 35660
Masque	Kansas	CBS/Kirshner	PZ 33806
Audio Visions	Kansas	CBS/Kirshner	PZ 36588
Seeds Of Change	Kerry Livgren	CBS/Kirshner	PZ 36567
Schemer Dreamer	Steve Walsh	CBS/Kirshner	JZ 36320
Monolith	Kansas	CBS/Kirshner	PZ 36008
Vinyl Confessions	Kansas	CBS/Kirshner	PZ 38002



Q. Which records do you listen to most for inspiration?

Album	Artist	Drummer	Label	Catalog #
The Dream Of The Blue Turtles	Sting	Omar Hakim	A&M	SP-3750
Shaken 'N' Stirred	Robert Plant	Richie Hayward	ES Paranza	90265-1
Completion Backward	The Tubes	Prairie Prince	Capitol	SOO-12151
Principle	Peter Gabriel	Jerry Marotta	Geffen	GHS2011
Security	Trevor Horn	Various	Island	90179-1

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16	Latin Percussion
18	Fu Yin Gong, Opera Gong
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Now that we've gotten all these great percussion sounds into a Mirage, how do we get them out? Naturally, all the sounds can be played in real time from the keyboard. Since the Mirage can hold up to 16 samples, you can play a full drum set or complete percussion at any one time.

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You can follow the above procedure to use any of the Mirage percussion sounds with the Octapad — but why stop there. One of the strongest advantages of the Mirage/Octapad combo is the ability to play percussion using any sound in the Ensoniq Library.

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Most drummers will argue that playing percussion is no fun unless you get to hit something. We agree. MIDI features that can put you in touch with a Mirage are showing up on electronic drum kits. And our friends at Roland have come up with a MIDI percussion item that's simple and inexpensive — the Octapad*.

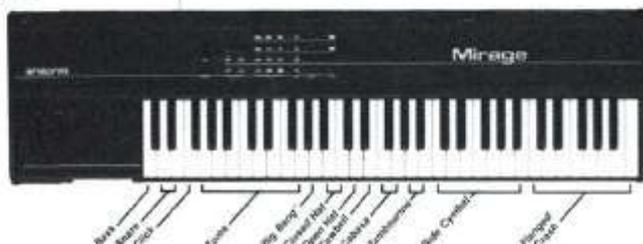
As the name implies, the Octapad gives you 8 pads to hit and each pad can be assigned a MIDI channel and MIDI note number. Add a Mirage, a MIDI cable and a pair of drum sticks and you've got a potent percussion instrument.

Let's start by creating an electronic drum kit. Connect the MIDI out of the Octapad to the MIDI in of the Mirage and load Sound 2 (Electronic Drums) from Sound Disk 4. The Mirage now

has 12 distinct electronic percussion sounds ready to go, including full octaves of toms, ride cymbals and flanged crash cymbals.

Set the Octapad and Mirage to the

same MIDI channel and choose any 8 sounds by entering the MIDI note number into the Octapad for each sound. The keyboard map shown here will give you a guide. You've now got an 8-piece electronic drum kit that's ready to record, sequence or play live.



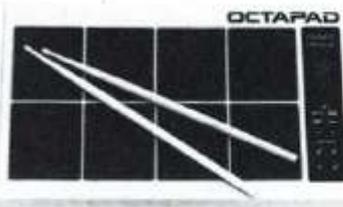
Ensoniq Library just waiting to get pounded.

All this and a keyboard, too

As you can see, the Mirage isn't just a great keyboard, but a versatile drum machine, too. With some additional MIDI gear, it can be downright amazing. Visit your authorized Ensoniq dealer for a full demonstration. There's no telling where a Mirage and your imagination can take you.

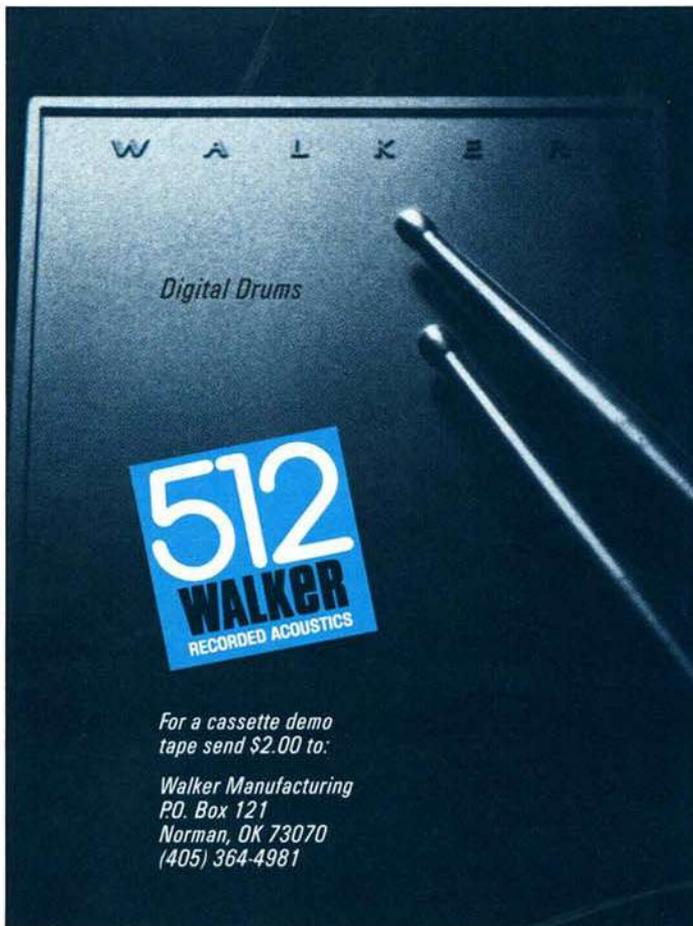
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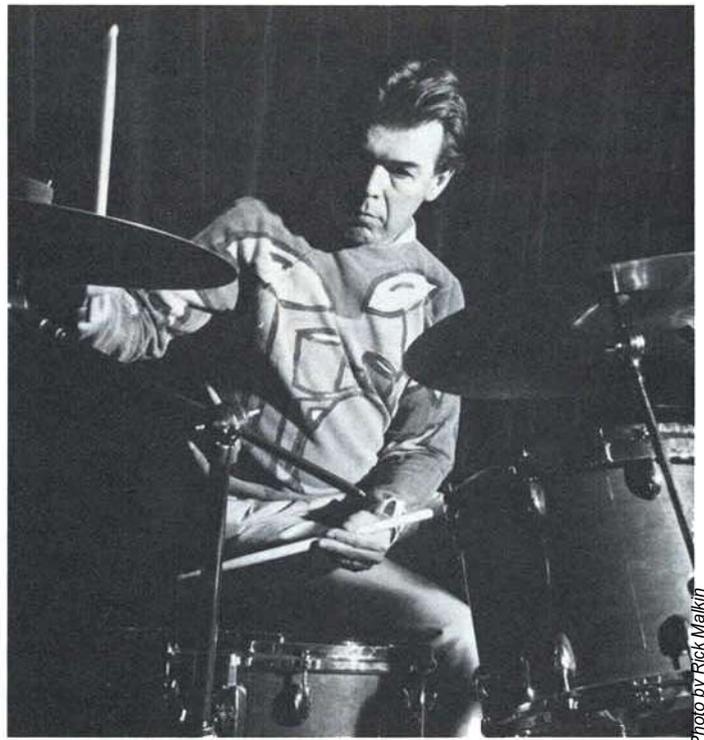


Photo by Rick Malkin

Carrigan continued from page 25

JC: A big part. We were trying to get sounds like they were getting in New York, which was where most of the big R&B things were being done, and we didn't know how they were doing it. They had EQ and stuff, but we didn't have that. You created your own dynamics, by playing louder and softer. There wasn't a mic' on the bass drum.

RF: Isn't that the opposite of everything you're told to do in the studio today? Aren't you supposed to play at an absolute even level to peg the needle at the same intensity every time?

JC: Yes. That was back when you really had to play the song, make it breathe, and do it on your own. You didn't have somebody in there mixing it to make it do that. We had to do it right then. It was cut in mono, so that's the only pass you had. You had to be sensitive to what was going on, instead of sitting there like a robot playing at the same level all the time. To this day, I don't try to do that. I still play songs the way I feel about them, punching places and getting off of it in places. I like to play that way, so I guess I work for the people who like me to play that way. I don't feel music the other way. I feel it in sections, parts, and phrases, instead of just one long, continuous thing.

RF: Back to when you first moved to Nashville.

JC: As I said, I had to learn to get my part quickly and not make mistakes. That just takes experience. And I had a lot of real frustrations that went on.

RF: Like what?

JC: These musicians up here were so seasoned. I was thrown in there at 22 years old with people who were 35 years old, and that was a big age difference. They were mature, very settled, and playing great things. I was boisterous, young, and trying to do this and that. There wasn't time for that. It frustrated me. I couldn't get my parts as quickly as they could get theirs.

RF: Yet, they kept hiring you.

JC: They liked me, because I took a different attitude to the music. I played it a different way. I played the bass drum a lot. I used to play triplets against 8th notes and 8th notes against triplets, and they would freak out. "You can't do that!" "Of course I can. The same number of beats are going to be there, and when you get back to 1, I'm going to be there—just a little different way." It took a long time for that kind of stuff to start happening.

RF: Coming into Nashville, you didn't feel you had to conform to the way they were expecting it?

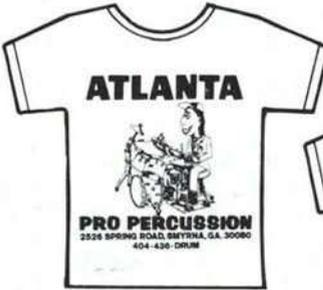
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JC: No, no, no.

RF: Most people would go out of their way to conform to the standard.

JC: I didn't do that, but after a while, I did learn how to play the real clean, clean country thing. I had to.

RF: How did that differ?

JC: In the way you play the shuffle, feeling it as a triplet instead of a dotted 8th and 16th. I learned to settle down, play that, get it real clean, get a good little rim sound, and be Mr. Simple and Mr. Clean. That was great, because a lot of clients demanded that and would not allow that boisterous stuff that I liked to do. I had to know which ones did and which ones didn't. I used to do a lot of Gospel sessions and still do. They'd say, "Get that long-haired guy. He'll do something different." My hair was down to my shoulders. They liked that stuff. I was the first person in Nashville to play the real hard snare drum stuff on country records, and I don't say that to brag. Nobody else had the *nerve* to do it. I don't know why I did, but I'll tell you, at that time—and I'm not proud of this—I was drinking a lot. I think that brought my inhibitions down. I made a lot of people mad along the way and lost some accounts, but some people didn't care, as long as I could get through it. I played so crazy at times that, if I could get through it, it didn't matter, if they could endure me that long. That had to come to a screeching halt in about '74.

RF: Were you afraid to stop drinking, thinking you wouldn't be as good sober?

JC: I sure was. I always felt I played better when I was hung over. Your emotions become very raw when you're hung over. I still think I can play more soulful hung over, but I don't want to be hung over and feel that way anymore.

RF: A lot of people get very attached to that feeling—afraid if they don't feel it, they won't have that spark.

JC: That's not so. It just takes a little while. You've really got *more* of that spark once the mask comes off. I don't advise anybody to do that. It's wild how you'll do those things drinking and you won't do them sober—the crazy bashing stuff.

RF: You're lucky you got out of it.

JC: Some people never do. I wanted to.

RF: What made you want to?

JC: I had a spiritual experience that made me want to come back. That's what brought me back. I got through it, thank God.

RF: About the technical standards of the times, how different was the actual recording?

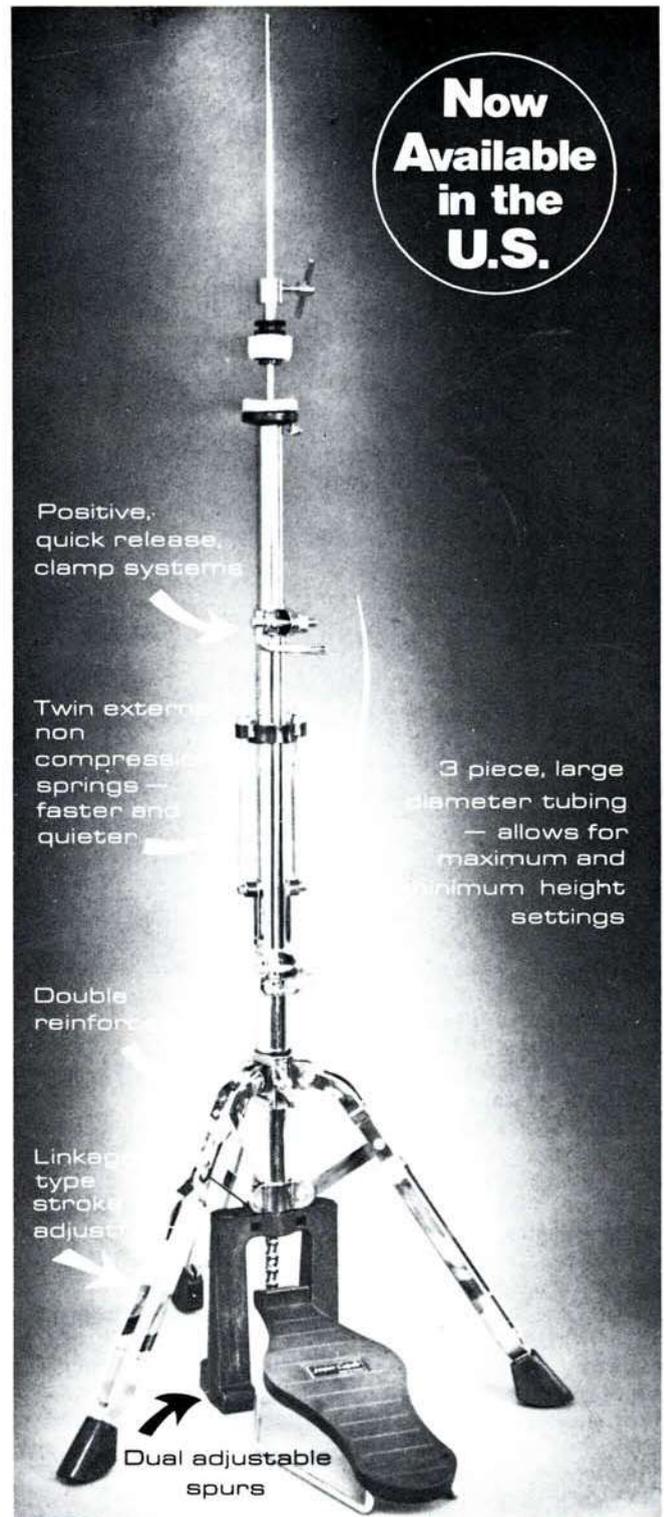
JC: We're talking daylight and dark. Back in those days, there were no headphones and no overdubbing. I mean no disrespect to anybody, but people who are coming up today, going into the studios, don't realize how they've got it made. Back then, when the red light came on, we had to do it right, because we couldn't go back and punch in. I started back in the mono days, and then went to 2-track, 3-track, 4-track, 8-track, and 16-track; I've been through it all. The technology has freed me up, of course. I can be a little adventurous now; if I mess up, it can be fixed because everybody is isolated now. Back in those days, they'd put one microphone on the drums, and if you wanted the bass drum louder, you played it harder. I'll never forget I had to do that opening bass drum part on "Be My Baby," and I said, "Rick, I can't hear the bass drum." He said, "Stomp it." I said, "I'm hitting it as hard as I can." He said, "If they can do it in New York, we can do it here." He didn't tell me that in New York they had a mic' on the bass drum. I was out there pounding that bass drum.

When we first started, there was no EQ. If I wanted the drum bright, I'd turn it upside down and play it on the bottom. I did that a lot. A Tommy Roe thing ["Everybody"] had a little sizzling snare drum, and that was played on the bottom of the drum. And the backbeat on that is a box that 45 RPM records were shipped in, played with a mallet. I play lots of boxes, still. Brushes on a box are great. Put the mic' up inside, and it sounds like a big, puffy pillow.

A lot of that has changed. The tuning was not as critical back then, because you couldn't hear all the overtones you hear today. When you put a mic' a half-inch from a drum, you're going to hear

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everything that is going on. There are some things that you *shouldn't hear*, if you want to know the truth. When you're listening to me play my drums set up over there, you don't have your ear on the tom-tom saying, "I hear a weird thing happening about 300 cycles there." Now your drums have to be tuned real well, and I always thought I was a good drum tuner.

RF: If it wasn't critical early on, how did you develop that?

JC: I had to learn as I heard the bad sounds come back from what I thought was good. I had to learn how to correct that overtone problem, or whatever it was.

RF: Can you give any tips for that?

JC: There's at least one spot on a drumhead that's going to have a definite overtone. The best way to find it is to tap the drum a half-inch off the center and run your finger around the edge. It works like a charm. When you find that spot where the tone goes up or down or deviates, you put a little one-inch square of duct tape there. You are still going to have a ringing drum, which some people like and some people don't, but from that point on, you have to figure out how much muffling you're going to need in this particular room to make it sound real good. I found a guy in L.A. who is a master: Ross Garfield, the Drum Doctor. I've rented drums from him the last two times I've been out there, and it's wonderful. You walk in, sit down, and they're tuned perfectly to the room, and you don't have to touch them. While you're listening to the playbacks, he's out fiddling around. It's wonderful. His drums sound great.

RF: As technology was progressing, were you feeling worried about it or were you into it?

JC: At first it bothered me, and to some extent it still does. I happen to like the sound of pure drums better than I like electronics. I bought Simmons drums and sold them.

RF: Working with Roger Nichols, you are working with *Wendell*.

JC: That's great. I like that. He can save your neck.

RF: Can you explain the concept of *Wendell*?

JC: It's not a rhythm machine; you've got to have a rhythm machine to run it. It's a bank of stored sounds. You could play the worst sounding drums in the world, but if you ran it through *Wendell* it would still sound great. Let's say you have a track and there are places where it doesn't sound right. What you do is go back and sample two bars, or whatever you need, in *Wendell*. Then you insert that into the tape.

RF: What is it like working with someone of the sophistication that Roger Nichols has? Roger has worked with Steely Dan, which technologically is one of the most advanced recording situations. Was it intimidating at first?

JC: No, because he's not an intimidating person. I was a little nervous at first. We were in New York, which makes me a little nervous anyway, but when I finally figured out who this guy was—I was in the studio at night and Donald Fagen had been in there all day—it made me a little uptight.

RF: Was it different working with Roger than most of your accounts in Nashville?

JC: Yes. There are some great engineers in Nashville, too, but Roger is not afraid to try something. If you've played something just right except for one 8th note, he's not afraid to try to punch that one little note in. And he'll nail it. Another thing is, rather than start to EQ everything to death, he has somebody move the mic's around before he starts moving the knobs. Let's give the old drum a chance before we destroy it with EQ. He gets a real clean sound on everything. Roger is real familiar with the digital stuff, which is what I really like. With analog machines, what we hear as we're running it down is not what we hear as a playback. It has that little veil of muddiness. The digital does not. A lot of people don't like digital, because they say it ruins the ambient room sound. I don't believe that. I feel it's cleaner.

RF: When did you come in contact with John Denver?

JC: Here in Nashville in March of 1981, when I did an album with him. I got along very well with John and his road manager at the time, Barney Wyckoff, so Wyckoff asked me if I went on the road, and I said no. The last time I had gone on the road was in 1973 with Johnny Rivers, and I didn't want to go again. Wyckoff said, "Would you even *talk* about it with us? Can I call you?" I said yes, and he called me in May. They made me an offer and I accepted.

RF: Why?

JC: I like John; he's a great man. I had made my mind up that I would never go on the road again. That thing with Johnny Rivers was too weird for me. It was unorganized and everything was wrong. We went to New Orleans to play, and they didn't even have his name on the marquee. Jack Williams, the bass player, had to get up there and put it on. It was unbelievable.

RF: I understand the Denver organization is very well run.

JC: It's wonderful. You could not ask for anything better. John is wonderful, very understanding, and gentle. He's just as he appears. We have great crowds everywhere we go.

RF: Are you enjoying playing live now?

JC: Yes, I like it. I play with a bunch of really great musicians, which helps, too.

RF: But in studio playing, you have a variety and get to do something different every day. Live playing is not like that.

JC: In the studio, I may go through ten snare drums for different

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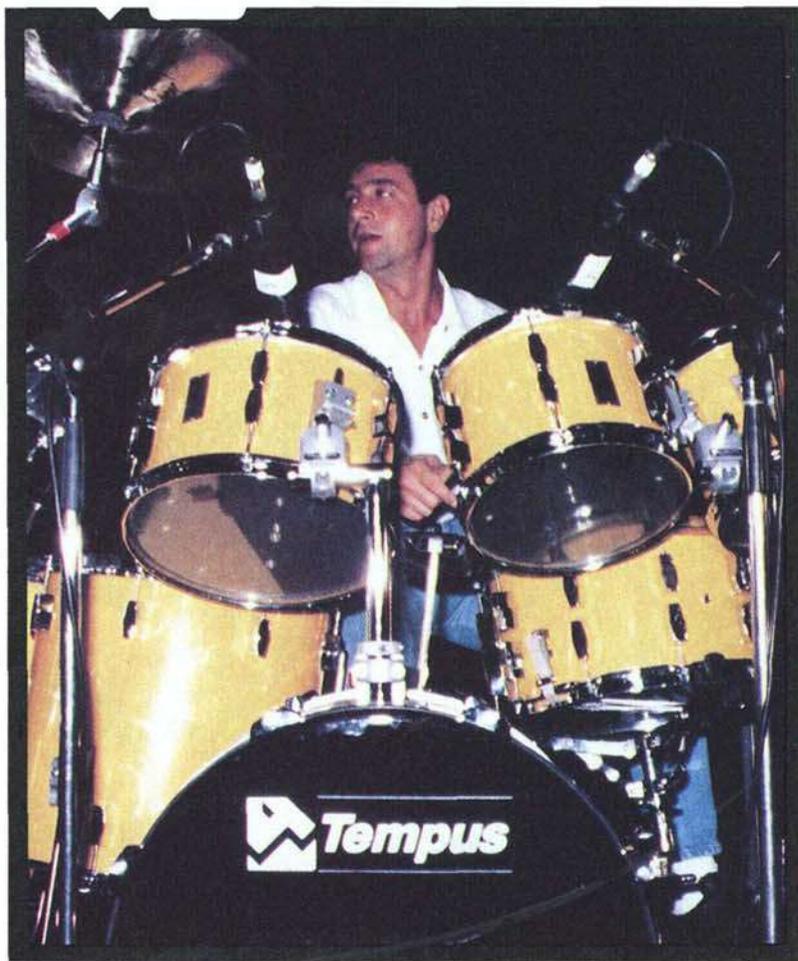
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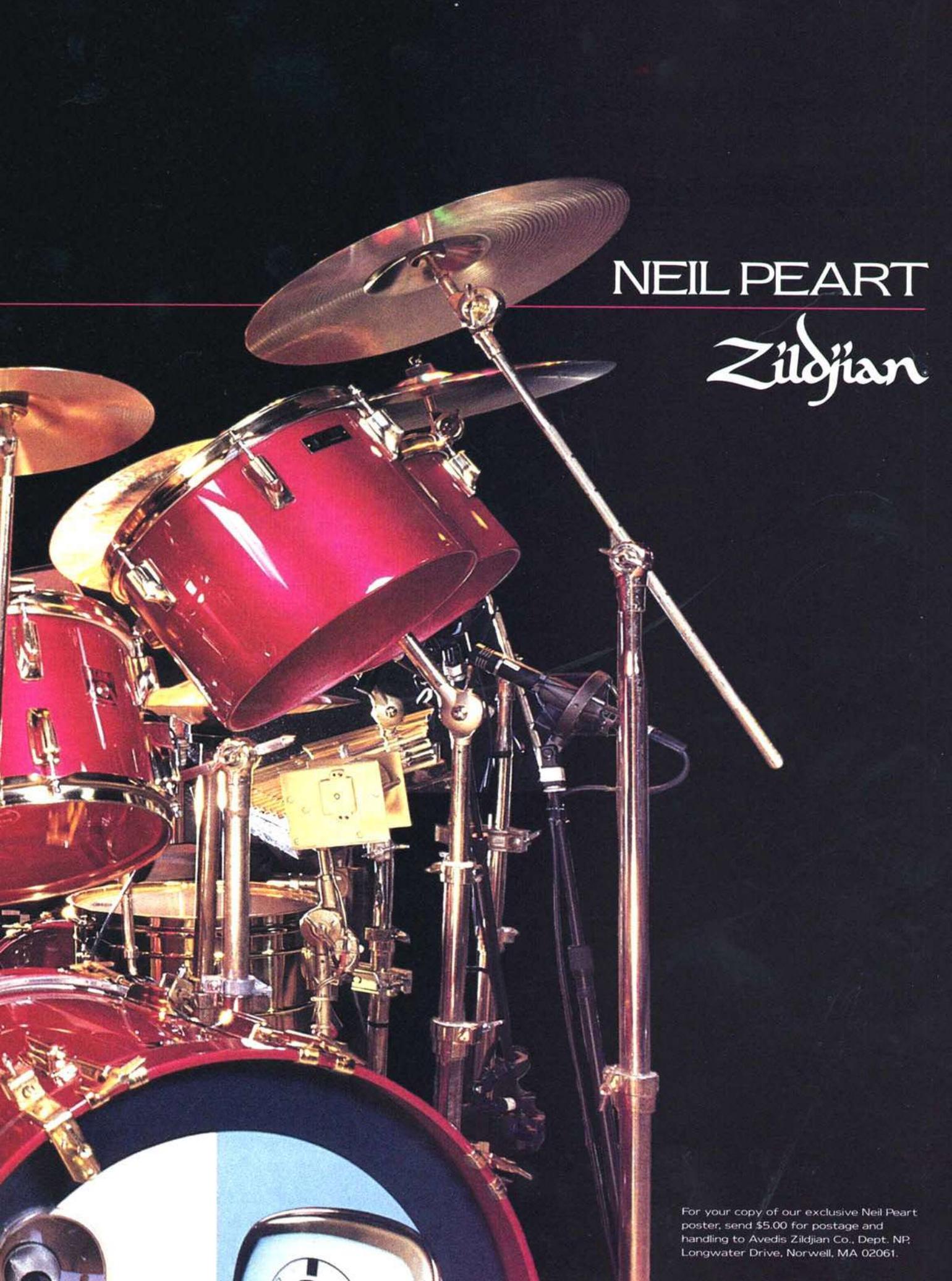
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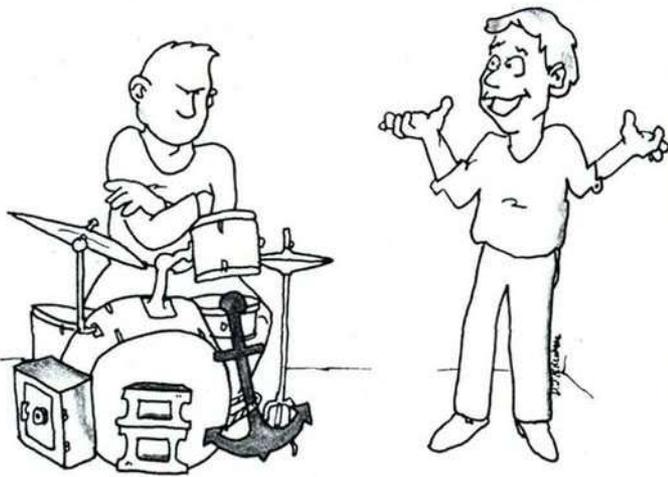




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sounds in the course of a day. Then, I go out with this artist to play live and only have one. You really can't play the little subtleties live, because they won't project, so you have to figure out, "How am I going to play this to sound *almost* like that?" That's an adjustment I had to make.

RF: What about tuning, live?

JC: Live, my drums are tuned much higher and usually wide open, with no muffling at all. They have to have more punch and projection. We have to keep "that great Gretsch sound" going. I use Gretsch drums, which are wonderful. I never dreamed I'd have a deal with them. I love the drums, except the snare drum. They're missing *oomf*—body. They've got a great snap and a great crack, but no body. The other drums, though, have the roundest, fattest, warmest sound, and when I go to L.A., I rent Gretsch from the Drum Doctor.

RF: What about your equipment, live and in the studio?

JC: In the studio, I use a 14x20 bass drum, 8x10, 10x12, 11 x 13, and 16 x 16 tom-toms, all with clear Remo *Ambassador* heads, tops and bottoms, but a *Pinstripe* bass drum head. As far as snare drums go, I use a 6 1/2X14 *Black Beauty*, 5x14 *Black Beauty*, 7x14 *Radio King*, 6 1/2X14 *Gladstone*, and 7 x 14 Yamaha. I use the DW 5000 chain-drive bass drum pedal, or Premier 252. I use a Pearl hi-hat stand. I have a large variety of cymbals, but they're all A Zildjian and K Zildjian.

Live, I use a 14 x 22 bass drum with a *Pinstripe* head, and 8 x 10, 10 x 12, 12 x 14, and 14 x 16 tom-toms. I use the RIMS mounts as well, which I highly recommend. The top heads are all *Pinstripe*, and the bottom heads are all clear *Ambassadors*. I use a 7 x 14 Yamaha snare drum. I use one K Zildjian 16" crash, an 18" A Zildjian crash, a 19" A Zildjian ride, and 14" A Zildjian hi-hats. I use Regal Tip 5A or 5B nylon-tip drumsticks.

RF: How many days a year do you generally work with John?

JC: It varies. The most I've worked was about 90 days. It'll be maybe 25 or 30 days a year. He really doesn't work all that much with the band.

RF: I would imagine that could present a problem in Nashville with most people thinking you're off with John.

JC: Yes, it does, as a matter of fact. It has cut into my studio work considerably. My leaving created an opening, which other drummers have filled.

RF: But you must have known that when you took the gig.

JC: I did, but I felt like I wanted to, and I think it helped me in a lot of ways.

RF: How so?

JC: In working with musicians who play with a little different attitude. They play much more relaxed and laid-back than the Nashville players, meaning no disrespect to any Nashville player. When I go out to work with them, I have to get my mind in that mode. To me, that's the way I think all ballads should be played, and it helped me to really feel that. Jerry Scheff, the bass player, taught me how to play what we call a "sideways feel." Every beat is very relaxed. It's not jumping on one and laying back on another. Everything is feeling good and breathing. Of course, now in Nashville, I find you can get away with playing a lot more laid-back than you used to.

RF: That rock flavor that has come into country is a little of an R&B kind of thing, and it's gone back to your roots now.

JC: A lot of the stuff they're doing now is what I grew up playing. They're just doing it with different sounds.

RF: Who have been some of the artists you've worked for in the latter years?

JC: I did a project not long ago that I really liked with J.D. Hart. He's real good. I played on most of Mel McDaniel's album that "Baby's Got Her Blue Jeans On" is on, and I was on that tune. I even played on that demo for Bob McDill.

RF: Demo work has traditionally been a lot of people's way in the door. Unfortunately, machines have taken over most of that work in L.A.

JC: Demos were one of my first things, too, and people said, "Who is that?" Most of the things I've enjoyed doing recently

have been the demos with Bob McDill and those people. It's a real chance to create, because all you have is somebody playing the guitar, instead of a tape with every instrument on there. A lot of times, they'll play the demo and want you to copy it. How are you going to copy it? It can't be done. You can't copy another person's feel. It's impossible. I can't copy my own from day to day, because my body rhythms are different from day to day.

RF: You just mentioned creativity. As a session player, you're not always allowed to be creative.

JC: No, because a lot of times, they're telling you exactly what to do.

RF: What, to you, is a very positive session, as opposed to a mediocre or lousy session?

JC: When the artist knows the material, can sing the song, and can give you a genuine feel for it, instead of just sitting there and reading the lyric off into a microphone. It's where the artist has it together and the producer tells you, "I want it to be this way or that way." I like a direction.

RF: Then where does the creativity come in?

JC: If they want it to feel southern R&B, that's a very wide place to be. I can play a lot of different things until hands are spanked. I like someone who will tell me, "I do like this," or "I don't like this." So many times, you'll go in and they might not like it. Then, they'll go out later and say, "Listen to what so-and-so played here. I don't like it." Don't tell me a month later that you don't like it. Tell me now and we'll do something about it, instead of just letting it go. A bad session to me is when you go in and nobody is prepared. The singer doesn't know the song, so you end up tracking it, a lot of times, without even a scratch vocal. What kind of emotion am I to put into something where I don't know what kind of emotion this singer is going to put into it? How can I do my job? I can play time. Is that what they want? To me, that's not making records. That's business music, not music business. That's another thing about Roger: He's prepared. Everything is prepared. All the charts are there, he knows how he wants it, and that's great.

RF: How would you say your style has developed through the years?

JC: I just play so much simpler now than I used to play. I used to play a lot more fills, with a lot more craziness. I think my playing is stricter, and I'm able *not* to do something when I want to. Now, when I start to go to a place where I want to do a fill, I'll let it get to where it's about to go and then really let it explode, rather than doing all those little nothing things and playing something just to be playing it.

RF: Then, when you make the statement, it really means something.

JC: Right, and I'm not telegraphing every little change that is about to happen in the song. I used to do that a lot.

RF: "Used to" meaning when you first came here to Nashville, or when you were first starting in Muscle Shoals?

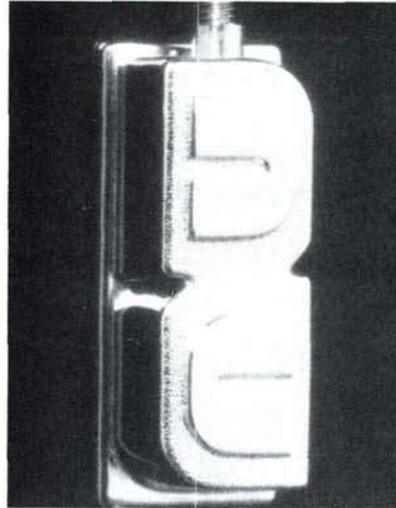
JC: When I came here. I didn't do it in Muscle Shoals. I can still listen to those records and find that they were pretty simple. I just don't play as busy now. I really try to play more for the songs and the artists, and how they feel the song. I used to play more for me. You can't play for yourself. Of course you're going to have a little satisfaction out of it, but it's satisfying to know you played the right thing. The number-one priority is to make the producer and artist happy. You've got to listen to everybody and find things that complement what everybody else is doing. You've got to keep the pulse and the beat going. That's how my style has changed.

RF: I think, when you're young, you are just naturally more self-centered, too.

JC: That's one of the things I truly try to work on: selfishness. When you're playing all that crazy stuff, that's way too much. That's selfishness: doing just what you want to do—ignoring the artist and the song.

RF: Let's talk about some specific artists. I've extracted a minute list of people you've worked with from the extensive one you sent me, and I would like any comments you have about working with each individual. Chet Atkins and the Boston Pops.

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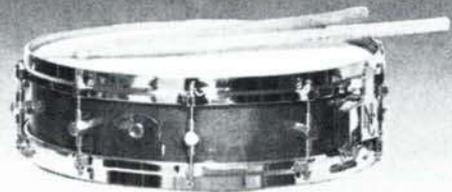
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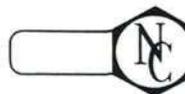


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JC: That was about 1967, and it was a wonderful experience. We did three concerts and an album. We'd do these tunes, and Arthur Fiedler would stop us and say, "You're not following me." Chet would say, "He's not used to following people. He's used to people following him." Arthur just said, "It's going to be different this time. He's going to follow me." That was a wonderful experience. I had always imagined doing something like that, and I couldn't believe it was really happening.

RF: Lee Greenwood—what did you do with him?

JC: I did his first album in about 1981, which had "Turns Me Inside Out" on it. He was great to work with. He has a really powerful voice.

RF: He's an old R&B singer, so that approach must have felt familiar to you.

JC: It had that down-home feeling to it. They called me to do the second album, but I was going out with John Denver, so James Stroud started playing his albums.

RF: What about Larry Gatlin?

JC: My experience with him goes back a long way. I worked with him the first time he was in a studio here. He was awfully big-headed at the time, and I told him, "If you ever become a star, which I know you will, you're going to be unbearable to be around." Now, he's more humble than I ever have seen him. It's funny how that worked.

RF: Kris Kristofferson.

JC: That really goes back a long way as well. Kris Kristofferson was the janitor at Columbia Studios. He used to take our orders for coffee and sandwiches. He lived in a little dump apartment off 17th Avenue. Here's a man who has not changed one bit, ever. I've worked with him since he's become a big star, and I've done some shows with him. He'd actually ask me if he could get me a cup of coffee or something. He's a wonderful man.

RF: What records did you cut with him?

JC: I cut "Me And Bobby McGee," "Sunday Morning Coming Down," and I can't remember what else.

RF: What about Henry Mancini?

JC: I did a country album with him called *Mancini Country*. He had the parts all written, and he sat down at the grand piano and played and conducted. It was another highlight. That was with a full 40-piece orchestra.

RF: Barbara Mandrell.

JC: I did all of her first things when Billy Sherrill was producing her. I can't remember any of those titles either. I always thought she was a great singer and a really nice person.

RF: The Oak Ridge Boys.

JC: I love them. I did their things back when they were a Gospel group, as well as their pop-hit things like "Elvira." I'm the one who told them what the bass singer should say: "Oom papa, oom pop, oom papa mow mow." I knew what it was because I played on Dallas Frazier's original version of it. I also did "Bobby Sue" and "Fancy Free." It was lots of fun.

RF: What about Dolly Parton?

JC: Goodness. I worked with her years and years and years ago. We did "Sixteen Candles." That had to be in 1966, because it was downtown at the old Sam Phillips Studio before they tore it down. Then, I worked with lots of her stuff when she was with Porter Wagoner. She's a great writer. I have nothing but good to say about her.

RF: Speaking of Sam Phillips, what about your work with Elvis Presley?

JC: I first worked with him in 1970. What a thrill that was! The first thing we did was "I've Lost You." I never was crazy about what I played on that stuff, but he always wanted you to have a charging feeling about everything. He wanted you to push him to the wall. I thought it sounded like I was rushing all the time, but they loved it. He would stand out in the middle of the studio, just like being on stage, and he would face you. He would wiggle and point to you when he'd want you to do a fill or something. The first week I worked with him, we did 35 tunes. One of them was "Letter To Sylvia." We blasted through that stuff. We started at 6:00 at night

and worked until 6:00 the next morning. He was definitely nocturnal. He was wonderful. I'll tell you, when he walked into that studio and I saw him for the first time, there was no doubt that a real star had just appeared. He used to change clothes three times during the evening. It was like a performance.

RF: Just to get into different moods?

JC: Yeah. One time I did a Christmas record with him in July. We walked in, and there was a Christmas tree in there with presents under it.

RF: What about Earl Thomas Conley?

JC: I like him. I think he's soulful, and I like his tunes. Unfortunately, I don't remember titles, but I do remember doing "Angel In Disguise" with him. I've done lots of things with him, and everything I've ever done with him has been a hit. I think he's a great artist.

RF: What did you do with Don McLean?

JC: Two or three albums with him after *American Pie*. Larry Butler produced them. He was good, and it was very different. He's one of these guys who wants you to play the dynamics of his songs and not just hammer it all the way through at the same level. He wanted some finesse along the way, which was wonderful.

RF: What about Waylon Jennings?

JC: I did many early things with him like "The Only Daddy That'll Walk The Line," and then he started to have monster hits when he started to use his own band. We always wanted to play his music real raunchy, but we were held back by the producers who wouldn't let us do it. It was not cool then to do that. I didn't want to take out a brush and a stick, and play country licks. I wanted to take both sticks out and play raunchy—almost rock 'n' roll—but I was never allowed to do that. It was a hit when he decided to do it with his band.

RF: What about George Jones?

JC: He was always my favorite country singer. I think he's the best pure country singer who ever lived. I did "The Door," and I did a CBS showcase with him. They had a little miniature sound-effects door by my drumset, and when the time came for the sound of the closing of the door, I reached over and closed the door. It was great. He used to miss sessions, though, back when he was drinking. We'd come to the session, there'd be no George, and we'd cut tracks all day. That was not too gratifying. But when he was there, it was truly wonderful, and I understand that he has all that straightened out now.

RF: Is there anyone we must add?

JC: Tony Joe White and "Polk Salad Annie." We must have that in there. He's a funky character, and he's good. I still see him all the time playing golf, although I haven't recorded with him for a long time. We had some great times on those sessions, and if you go back and listen to those records, you can tell that. We had a lot of freedom, and they had some feeling about them.

RF: People say that there is X amount of time that you're at your peak, and then it goes away. I think Hal Blaine was the first one to tell me that studio players have five good years, if they're lucky.

JC: You've got more than that. My work has slackened off from what it was, but that comes from a number of things: More drummers have come into town, and there are a lot of very good ones; going out with John Denver makes people think I'm unavailable, and this is a terrible thing to say, but some people would like me gone all the time. I understand what Hal said, though. You do have peak years, but I had more than five, I think. Then you kind of cool off, and someone who has come to town plays a little differently; they're going to want that. You've got to be able to understand that, accept that, and not take it as a put-down to yourself. That's hard to do. There was a time when I wouldn't have had time to do an interview.

RF: But it must be nice to have the time to breathe and spend time with your wife. The Denver situation should help that, and you're even getting the chance to travel a little.

JC: That's true. Last year, we went to Chile, and this year, we went to Australia. I've got to be doing something, though, because I'm a hyper person and I love to work.



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①

②

③

④

⑤

⑥

⑦

⑧

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4 THURSDAY SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER 1996

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12
	14	15	16	17	18	19
	21	22	23	24	25	26
	28	29	30			

8:00
8:30
9:00
9:30
10:00 *RALPH HUMPHREY - Studio Drumming Video*
10:30
11:00 *PRACTICE SESSION - LAB 13*
11:30
12:00 *Sign up for DEMO recording*
12:30 *LUNCH*
1:00
1:30
2:00 *HI TECH CLASS*
2:30 *- Play Linn Arrangement*
3:00
3:30
4:00 *SEMINAR*
4:30 *w/ROD MORGENSTEIN*
5:00
5:30
6:00
6:30
7:00
7:30
8:00
8:30

5 FRIDAY SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER 1996

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	
	5	6	7	8	9	10
	12	13	14	15	16	17
	19	20	21	22	23	24
	26	27	28	29	30	31

*Jim Seamon
The Whiskey
10pm*

10:30 *BAND REHEARSAL (work on "Tom Sawyer")*
11:00 *PLAYING TECHNIQUE VIDEO*
11:30
12:00 *PRACTICE SESSION - LAB-11*
12:30
1:00 *PRIVATE LESSON*
1:30
2:00 *LUNCH*
2:30
3:00 *JEFF PORCARO - Open Cymbalunk C-12*
3:30
4:00 *ROCK PERFORMANCE CLASS*
4:30
5:00
5:30
6:00
6:30
7:00
7:30
8:00
8:30

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A Guide To Full-Time Employment: Part 1

In the quest for full-time employment in the music business, it's very essential that you get your name out. And the best way to get your name out, in any profession, is to let people know that you're available. Again, *getting your name out* is the name of the game.

Music Stores

Actually, it's not all that difficult to get your name out locally. You can start at local music stores and read the notices on their bulletin boards. Write down the names and phone numbers of those that interest you. While you're there, be sure to post your own name, instrument, qualifications, and phone number. It's important to have a number where you can always be reached. If you have a hectic schedule, post the best time for someone to reach you. People will call only so many times. If they're unable to contact you, they'll probably call someone else, and you will have lost out on an opportunity. Using answering machines to take messages is quite acceptable, or have a friend take your messages. Either way, be *sure* you contact the person as soon as possible.

Also, date your notices. Some music stores will take down notices that are not dated, and new notices tend to get more calls than old ones. Update and reword your notices every two or three weeks. It keeps them new and fresh.

Agencies

Another way to get your name around is by contacting entertainment agencies. Local agencies are listed in the Yellow Pages, or musicians at music shops may be able to turn you on to agencies that book bands.

You'll find that most agencies are willing to take your name and number for future reference. If one of their bands needs a drummer, you may be called for an audition. Or you may pick up a fill-in gig to replace a regular drummer who can't do the job. This may not always lead to full-time work, but if you do well, they'll remember you. They will also pass your name along to others if they know you're willing to work. All you have to do is ask.

Agents often trade information with one another, and that could also help you. I was once contacted by an agent I'd never heard of to do a fill-in gig for a band that had an ailing drummer. When I asked the agent how he got my name, he told me that he had obtained it from an agency I had called two weeks earlier. As a result, I did

six weeks with that band. Of course, when the regular drummer came back, I had to leave. However, I did work for six weeks, and about a week later, other musicians were calling about full-time work when they heard I was available. It also helps to remind agencies that you're available. Just don't overdo it and become a nuisance. Remind them every two or three weeks or so.

Agents may also know about jam sessions or other local musical happenings that might enable you to meet other musicians. Why not ask them? Remember, if you're courteous to the agents you contact, they'll be polite with you. If you act like a jerk, they'll more than likely treat you like one.

Referral Services

Local and national referrals are another good way to get your name out. Referrals usually charge a fee, but they're well worth the investment in terms of helping you find work. Upon payment, you're allowed a specific amount of time as a member. That means you'll be in their files for a certain length of time—anywhere from 30 days to a year, or longer. Most referrals keep you active for one year, after which you either pay for another year or discontinue your membership. Don't restrict yourself to only one referral. If possible, sign up with at least two. That way your name will get more exposure. Again, update your listings frequently.

Finding a national referral service is quite easy. Just pick up any issue of a music magazine. Under the "Help Wanted—Musicians" listing, you'll generally find some of the better referral services available. If you *do* decide to use a referral service, call and ask for details. Request information on what that service offers. Most referrals can't guarantee employment. However, if they weren't helping musicians find work, they wouldn't be in business.

Remember, calling national referrals, and the contacts they offer, may cost you in long-distance calls. So, it's wise to call only those bands playing the kind of music you want to play, and working in the areas where you want to work. Also remember to keep records and receipts of such expenses. They're tax deductible as business expenses.

Classified Ads

Classified ads are another means of spreading your name around. Most big cit-

ies have an "Entertainer's" or "Musician's" classified section in their newspapers, and that's a good place to put your ad. If the paper in your area doesn't have a "Musician's" section, then place your ad in the "Personals" or "Miscellaneous" section, or under "Help Available/Situation Wanted." Classifieds usually cost so much per word, so keep your ad short and *to the point*. Advertising in the Saturday or Sunday paper is your best bet. Or you can run your ad daily for an entire week.

Is there a paper in your area that's geared toward musicians and the performing arts? If so, that's also a good place to run an ad. Many music shops and record stores have these kinds of papers on display, and they're usually free. Pick up two or three, and check out the classifieds. There just might be an opportunity there for you.

Local Recording Studios

If you can read music, play a variety of styles, and wish to do studio work, by all means *go for it*. Contact all the local studios, either in person or by phone. Let them know you're interested, and leave your name and phone number. Studios usually have certain musicians they use frequently, so be prepared to wait.

Studio work is usually a high-pressure situation. You must be ready for whatever an engineer or producer asks of you, and you had better be able to do it well and gracefully if you want to be called again.

The Musician's Union

Your local musician's union can also lead you to full-time employment. You'll have to pay for membership. However, the cost varies from city to city. If you do decide to join the union, I'd advise you to get the opinions of other musicians in your area, union and non-union, and assess the pros and cons. Like every other form of getting your name out, you'll need to inform the union frequently that you're looking for employment on the local music scene. The union can also keep your name on file for work with touring bands. Do a good job, and you could find yourself working for a long time.

The union also publishes a monthly journal that lists agencies and bands looking for musicians. It's a goldmine of information from all over the country. If you have an entire band that's looking for road work, referral services and union papers can put you in touch with agents who can book your band on the kind of circuit you

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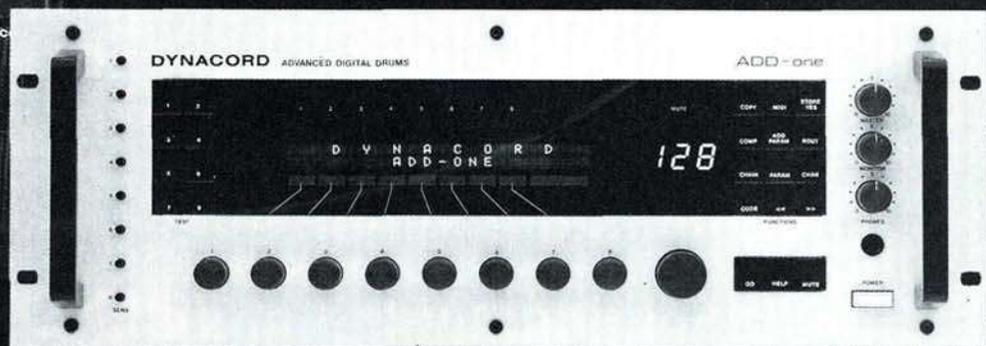
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want to work.

Word Of Mouth

Though all these forms of getting your name out are effective, nothing really works *better* than favorable word-of-mouth advertising. Get to know the people working in music stores. Get to know other musicians, and learn what the competition is like. You may have an edge over the people you're competing with. There are many drummers, but how many can sing lead or backup vocals? If you sing, or play another instrument, you should stress that point or any other point you feel is a plus for you.

When talking with other musicians, ask about the clubs and the work available. If musicians give you names of other musicians who might be able to help you, be sure to contact them. You just might find yourself gigging next week.

If you have friends who live in an area where you'd like to work, ask them to place your notices in music stores. That *could* lead to contacts in that area. Your friends may also know what the music scene is like there, and can tell you if it's worthwhile looking for work in that city.

Auditions

After you've made your contacts, you may be asked to do an audition. If you go to a live audition, take whatever equip-

ment you feel you might need for the type of band you're auditioning for.

Be prepared to play songs you may have never heard before. If this happens, let the band know that you're not familiar with the tune, but are willing to give it a shot. In a situation like this, it's best to keep your playing simple. You'll do alright if you have good ears, and they'll understand that you didn't play more elaborately since you didn't know the tune. It's much better to impress them *this way* than to solo out every other measure. If they want to hear you solo—they'll ask!

After the audition, if the musicians have any questions, answer them honestly and to the point. If you have any questions about the band, *now* is the time to ask them. Remember, it's a two-way street; they're auditioning for you, too. If you find out they're not what you're looking for in a band, don't be afraid to decline joining the group, unless of course, you're starving. In that case, *anyjob* is better than nothing!

The Demo Tape

Contrary to popular belief, you don't need a 90-minute tape crammed full of your playing. An effective demo tape should include three to five songs that you've performed with a band and a brief demonstration of your soloing technique. Don't make your solo too long either, or

the listener may get bored and come away with a negative impression. Three minutes is a good enough length for a solo. If you don't have other musicians to work with, then play along with some tunes off your records.

Remember to demo the style of music the band will be performing. It doesn't make much sense to make a demo playing hard rock, if you're sending it to a band that's looking for a drummer to play country & western. If the band plays a variety of styles, then *by all means*, give that group a variety of music you can play with some degree of skill.

You don't need to go into a studio to make your demo. You can do it in your own home, provided the acoustics and sound quality are good enough to effectively demonstrate your playing. Your demo tape should be recorded on one side only. And be sure the tape is ready to be played so the listener doesn't have to rewind it to find what you've recorded. It's also wise to write your name and instrument on the tapes, so the musicians know *who* they're listening to and *what* they're listening for.

Resumes

When sending out a demo tape, it helps to include a resume. A resume should contain the following information: name, address, phone number, age, marital status, instrument and other talents, training and experience, musical preferences, hobbies and interests, salary requirements, equipment, and references. Give the reasons why you left the bands you list and their phone numbers. Even if the band you're auditioning for doesn't contact them, it shows you have enough *confidence* in yourself to offer the information.

Be certain your resume is easy to read. A typewritten one is best. If you can't type, have someone do it for you. Make it short and to the point; a one-page resume is sufficient. There's no need to write a book on your life history. Remember, you're composing a resume for employment.

In next month's Taking Care Of Business, we'll look at what to expect on the road, how to stay healthy, and relocating to a new city.



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would think, "Okay, I don't know how long he is going to leave me out here, so rather than just do something haphazardly, let me structure it the same way as the song is structured." Each time I played the songs, I could add on because I had the melody in my mind, and I could embellish and stretch in and out of the melody. Working with Sonny Rollins got me into thinking about how horn players phrase, and I started to apply that phrasing to the drums. That's another one of the reasons why I got into melodic playing.

In the era I came up in, there was always someone around to inspire you or say something to you that would help you to think about what you were doing. They would make suggestions without making suggestions. The first time I met Kenny Clarke was at Minton's. I was playing, and I looked out in the audience and saw him. I tried to play as best as I could and as much stuff as I could think of. When I got off the bandstand, I went over to meet him and he said, "Yeah! That was wonderful. Let's go downtown and hear so-and-so." I said, "I can't. I have to stay here and work." He said, "Work? You mean to tell me you're going to play something after that?" [laughs] It made me stop and think. He was telling me that I had to take my time and use my space—put it in order. You can overplay without realizing it. You have to learn what not to play.

One of the things I enjoyed about playing with Monk as well as Sphere was that we didn't always play the same tunes in the same tempo. When this happens, you can't come in and develop "cheats." Since each tune could be in a different tempo each time you play it, the things you played before won't fit the next time, so you always have to approach it differently. That's one of the great lessons that I learned from Thelonious. He played what we used to call "in between tempos." He used to say, "Most people can only play in three tempos: slow, medium, and fast." So, he played in between all of those, and we had to learn how to feel that beat. In certain tempos, you would be in big trouble trying to count, so you would have to *feel* the structure.

JP: I remember a rare famous *down beat* blindfold test with Monk. He had plenty of unusual responses; it was a riot.

BR: I'm sure it was!

JP: At one point in the test, Leonard Feather commented, "Did I hear you say the tempo was wrong?" and Monk replied, "No, all tempos are right."

BR: Right. He felt any tempo we played was alright as long as we made it happen. There is nothing wrong with a tempo: It's what you're *doing* with it. In my first experience with him, in Amsterdam, we played "Embraceable You" as a very slow ballad. Then he went into "Don't Blame Me." He stood up, looked over to me, and said, "Drum solo!" Fortunately for me, I had

been working at the Upper East Side supper clubs playing a lot of brushes, and I like brushes. So when I played it, I didn't have to double the tempo, because I was used to playing slow brush tempos. I played it right at the tempo he gave me. When we were going back to the dressing room, he just walked by me and said, "How many people you know could have done *that*?" and he kept on going. You see, I had asked him for a rehearsal and he said, "What do you want to do—learn how to cheat?"

It was like going to school. He would always give you a little test. If he thought you had a hold on what was happening, he would do something to test you to see if you were conscious of where you were and what you were doing. At any given moment, he could do something so abstract that—if you weren't aware of what was happening—you were finished. One night, Rouse, Larry Gales, and I were playing good, stretching out, and having a ball, and Monk was strolling. We were playing on the wrong beat, but we didn't realize it. We had lost the beat completely, and at first, I think Monk thought that we did it deliberately. Then, after he sat there for a few choruses, he got tired of listening to it. At the beginning of the next chorus, he dropped his hand down on the piano and said, "One!" That was like somebody slapping you in the face, [laughs] Fortunately, Art Blakey had told me certain little tricks for getting back in right away.

JP: What did he tell you?

BR: He said, "Roll!"

JP: It seems that an open mind and cool head are character traits that you needed for handling that gig. Many other players might have lost their cool if they were surprised on the spot with a ballad brush solo.

BR: I knew he wasn't trying to hurt me. In the era when we came up, nobody tried to embarrass anybody.

JP: That seems hard to believe. What about the famous cutting sessions?

BR: Other people called it a "cutting session." It was stimulating for you to play with another musician who was equal to or better than yourself and to find out just how much that person could really do. It was a friendly situation. Today, I sometimes feel hostility from players when they come in on someone else's job; it's almost like they're going to war. It used to be a war, but a friendly one.

JP: Like padded boxing gloves?

BR: Yeah, you were seriously trying to blow the other player away; don't misunderstand me. Everybody was trying to be the top, but it was not *malicious*.

JP: Do you think today's malicious situation is due to increased competition and the shortage of jazz work?

BR: No. The society as a whole is too violent. The whole value we once had for the Arts is not there. It has been made so much a business and so competitive that there are

literally people stabbing each other in the back. For jazz, there's not that much work, and there's not that much even for crossover. It has caused a war out here. It is really hostile, and it has nothing to do with art. That's sad.

JP: Monk was somewhat of a music philosopher. Did his philosophies influence your playing?

BR: He told me, "You have already learned how to play correctly; now play wrong and make it right." That is like life: There are situations in life that you can't find in any textbook. So the true challenge is to find what you can do with life when it goes wrong.

JP: A musical example comes to mind. Monk's ballad, "Ruby, My Dear" is loaded with dissonances, yet he makes it work as a beautiful, lyrical ballad.

BR: It's beautiful. That is an example of hearing a note in your mind, feeling it in your heart and your mind, and then letting it come out. It takes a very sensitive and warm person to accomplish these things; it means *giving*. We have a lot of takers; we don't have many givers. The music *and* the music business have suffered because of this.

JP: You're a master at drum coloration.

BR: I try to find colors that make the music move and float along. Finding the right kind of cymbals is important for this, as well as staying in the right frame of mind. You can hear it in Sphere.

JP: How have you chosen your cymbal pitches? I noticed in one of your Sphere solos how you framed drum licks within a repeating cymbal pitch pattern.

BR: The cymbals are related in a heavier versus lighter way, although I can't say what the specific pitches are. But I have really spent time looking for cymbals for different colors. I use one that has a soft sizzle sound, even though it's a flat top! Everybody's amazed when they look at it. It's an A Zildjian. Another old one that I used with Thelonious and still use is a heavy A Zildjian. I also use a Chinese cymbal.

I have a tuning style on the drums that is a little different. When I worked with Kenny Burrell, I tuned to his guitar and the bass to get the drums tuned into their ranges. Since I started working with Abdullah, I have had them tuned real deep because of the African sound. With Sphere, I take the tom-toms up a little from that.

I have always listened to other players to find something new to challenge myself with. I get my greatest thrills listening to pianists, because they have so many colors to work with. When playing with pianists, I try to place my head into where they are coming from. I am thankful to Thelonious for making me become a listener. A lot of drummers are not really listeners. I've heard some new young guys like Smitty Smith and Jeff Watts who really listen.

There are so many talented young people today that it makes me glad that I am involved with music again.

JP: Could you tell me about the period during which you left the music business?

BR: I stopped playing for almost four years. It just got to me to the point where I was drowning in it. I saw that I was being used and abused, and I just had to step away from it.

JP: The business side of music?

BR: Yes. I think that's what happens to a lot of people: They suffocate and don't know why, so they won't get away from it to get a look from a distance. When I stepped away from it, then I had a chance to breathe. At that time, I wouldn't even come to Manhattan to hear music. I didn't want to be around music at all. It got to the point where I was really sick. The business and the personality conflicts—people bickering and stabbing each other in the back—I just had to get away from it.

JP: You didn't play at all?

BR: No, I didn't play at all. I wouldn't even turn the radio on. I worked in audio-visual at a school. I needed to clear my head. My life had been so wrapped up that I had forgotten I had a family. It wasn't a happy time for me or my family. I had been going for about ten years straight with this constant push: always pushing and fighting, ducking, dodging—and drinking. One thing got on top of another. Finally, I thought, "If I get away from it, I

will find whether I really want to deal with it or not." Fortunately, when my boredom started driving me to drink, that's when my friends Alice and John Coltrane started trying to talk me into coming back, and Ron Carter insisted that I do some playing with him. That is what got me back on a roll.

JP: Was that frustration a result of what you have described as today's demise of the music business?

BR: Oh, yeah.

JP: Did you feel this during the Monk years?

BR: It was building then. In fact, it was after I left Monk. I just said, "I can't play." I couldn't feel anything. For that period, I had lost the desire. It was a frustrating time for me, because I saw so many things that I knew were wrong and I just couldn't convince anybody else of it. In this business, you see things at times that maybe you shouldn't see, because they destroy the whole concept of the beauty that you have in your music.

JP: What were some of these things that ruined the music?

BR: I'm talking about record companies, managers, promoters—you watch them taking advantage of you and taking *all* of the money. You see people sell themselves to the person who is robbing them anyway.

JP: Was Monk's group a victim of this exploitation?

BR: It happened with everybody, not just

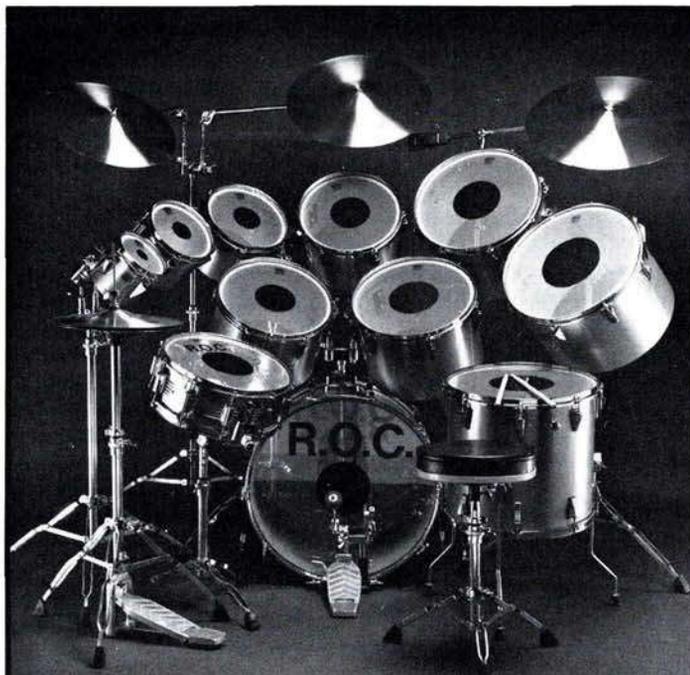
Monk. I believe this has been going on ever since. Now, when musicians deal with their own peers and *they* don't give a damn—you can understand the reasons why some musicians use drugs and some become alcoholics: They're handcuffed. If you *are* a strong person—who cares? There are 10,000 more people coming up, so if you don't want to accept a bad deal, someone else will. And that is why music has gotten to the stage that it has.

First of all, we as musicians have to respect what we're doing. It's like anything else. If you are a lawyer and do not respect your profession, naturally, you will become sleazy. We musicians have allowed this situation to come into our community, and it has almost destroyed us.

JP: You have adapted well to many different artists.

BR: As a drummer, you have to find out what is best for the people you are working with. *Then*, you incorporate what you do. Most drummers go into a gig and say, "Okay, I'm the drummer. Just give me the tempo." But hey, that's not the whole job. The whole job is to hear what they are *doing* in that tempo, make the colors, and make the person who's playing happy.

Speaking of different styles, I even played a set with the Grand Ole Opry when I was in the army, because the drummer was late! I have played everything from jazz to the Opry to bar mitzvahs to Latin music. When I went to Russia, I even



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played with a balalaika band! The way I approach drums is due to having been exposed to different musical experiences that I draw from.

JP: I would like to go down a roster of some major artists you have worked with and learn how you adapted your drumming to support them. First, how about your work with the double tenor team of Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis and Johnny Griffin?

BR: That was my first real road experience with a band. We traveled in a station wagon from New York to California, down South, and through the Midwest. I had to be very hard-driving when I played with them. We played very fast, and I had to think fast and have stamina. To keep up the intensity, I had to learn how to be mentally tough, so that I wouldn't have to play as hard. A lot of people play hard with their shoulders and arms. But if you keep a mental toughness, you can get that sound without using all of that strength. This taught me how to pace.

I had two very individual stylists to accompany. So, I had to give Johnny and Eddie different things. With Johnny, I could open up more and get busy. With Lockjaw, I got into the basic groove, laying down a heavier four feel, so that he could float over it. Junior Mance was on piano, and I had to play differently for him also. At that time, Junior was all reckless abandon—like we all were, being so young. It was a matter of me holding everybody together and being an anchor for Junior.

JP: And with the Woody Herman sextet and big band?

BR: I only played with the big band for about two months and a little longer with the sextet. They were going to Texas and Miami, but in those days, mixed bands couldn't stay together. I would have had to go across town and stay in a different hotel. Woody is a gentleman and I loved working with him, but I decided not to go. For Woody, I couldn't play like I did with Monk—settling into whoever had the best beat. The tempo was basically on me, because it was a big band.

JP: Sonny Rollins?

BR: We didn't use piano, so that was another very different experience for a drummer. It was Jim Hall on guitar, Bob Cranshaw on bass, and me. Sonny was my main phrasing influence. Freddie Hubbard came down to see the group at the Jazz Gallery, and he said to me, "What are you doing playing melody?" [laughs]

JP: How did the absence of piano affect your approach to the drums?

BR: That's why I had to start thinking like Sonny was thinking. He had Jim sometimes playing and sometimes not. Sonny was "hearing" all the chords he needed to hear and most of his stuff was based off of what Bob Cranshaw and I were doing. So I tried to follow his phrasings. I couldn't tell

what all the piano parts were that he was hearing, but I could hear his colors.

JP: When you were coming up, Harlem was alive with jazz. What was that like for a young, growing drummer?

BR: There was music seven days a week, 24 hours a day. You could watch and learn from the masters, and get their good advice. There was always somewhere to play. When they strangled off Harlem, that killed it all because Harlem was the school yard. You could meet all the musicians there. All the uptown and downtown players would meet at those little clubs. You got a chance to sit in, too. In those days, we drummers hung out together. Today, you hardly see that anymore—that exchanging of ideas and experiences. One of the great things about working at all the black theaters was that we were all in that circle that worked New York, Baltimore, Philly, Washington, D.C., Chicago, and Detroit. We traveled with one particular show, so people had a chance to practice with each other every day.

JP: Who were some of the drummers you used to share ideas with?

BR: Mickey Roker was one. Willie Bobo used to show me timbale things, and I would show him time things. Clarence Johnson was the best reader, so he would help us; he brought books to the theater every day. During breaks between shows, we went way up in the crow's nest away from everybody and worked on things.

JP: Do you still do much playing abroad?

BR: I have been going to Europe regularly for the last three years. I'm going again this year with Sphere. We finished an album on Red Records that will only be released over there. I also have concerts and a record date with Andrew Hill in Italy.

JP: The trombonist, Roswell Rudd, who loves Monk's music, was once speaking about Monk and an enthusiastic young piano student told him, "I would love to study with Monk. Do you think he would be willing to give me a lesson?" Rudd responded, "He may, but you would have to be prepared for anything. He might sit down with you at the piano, or he might take you for a walk and point things out to you."

BR: That can be teaching. I remember that Sonny Rollins told me, "Practicing doesn't have to mean sitting down with your instrument." There are certain experiences in life that you incorporate into what you do on stage. Sometimes you have something in your mind and you can't get to your instrument, so you map it out in your mind. When you get to your instrument, you will be amazed at what can happen because of that.

I try to keep aware of the aesthetic beauties around me. I guess that's why I play the way I do: I'm a sentimentalist and a romanticist, although I may not always appear to be. I think that is why I was

attracted to Abdullah's music: It has an airy quality with space that intrigues me.

JP: When you returned to playing after four years, did your drumming gain a new maturity from the experience?

BR: It was difficult to get back. The music seemed a light year away. Even now, I sometimes wonder if I can take this step, because people are quick and I have been away from that competitive edge. But I am mentally tougher for it all. I just had to get back in and sharpen things up.

JP: Mental toughness certainly helps when taking care of business. In what way does it apply to your actual playing?

BR: A lesson the old masters taught me was that, every time you play to the public—every time you get on that stage—everything up there is serious. You don't get up there and not give your best. I'm out of that school, man. Even if I am feeling angry, I can't go up there and not give. It's sacrilege not to give. That is where the mental toughness comes in.

Some leaders used to make you angry deliberately to make you handle the situation. You would have to go up and say, "I'm going to play so good that I will make him sorry that he ever said that." This business is hard on sensitive people who cannot sustain that kind of mental toughness; they will crack up, because there are too many people throwing darts at them.

I usually advise young people who want to be drummers to finish school first. The business will always be here. Young people who quit, like I did, will be in the position that they *have* to make music happen and that will put a double burden on them. The chances of you being discovered or widely pursued are—well, a good example is that this is the first interview like this that I've had, and I have been out there for over 20 years, [laughs]

JP: You mentioned to me earlier that you had an interest in Gospel music.

BR: I am spiritually attuned to the Baptist, holy-roller music, because that's what's happening. That's the blues, and you can't get away from the blues if you want to play jazz. I didn't play at churches, but I attended. That's what made me begin my return to playing. I would listen to the choirs, and that would cleanse all of those negative things out of me. I still go. The only other place I have experienced that kind of feeling was in Africa when I was over there playing with Abdullah. We went to the bush and into a little fishing village. One night, the people gathered, brought their drums out, and we all played together. It was hypnotic. I knew drums were powerful, but I had never experienced *that* kind of power. They have a beat that is just—holy.

When I think about it, it's awesome. The people I have been associated with have been some of the top, heaviest people in the business. I was just young enough not to understand how much was happen-

ing. I might have been scared to death if I had realized what was happening. I didn't realize, because I was so busy trying to improve what I could do to fit all the people I was playing with that I never had a chance to get an ego.

JP: When did it finally dawn on you that you were a part of history?

BR: When I stopped playing. A lot of people came up to me and said, "What has happened to you? We haven't seen you lately." And I never realized that anybody even knew who I was. I was just happy that I was able to play. I am still like that. I don't hold importance on being a big-time whatever. All I wanted to know was, "Are the guys I'm working with happy with what I'm doing, and are the audiences happy with the music we're giving them?" That's my greatest treasure, man. That's the only thing I could ask for.

You don't always realize how many lives you touch and how many people are watching you. There are people who will try to emulate you, so it is important to consider what kind of person you are going to show them. It's a big responsibility. And when that dawned on me, man, I had to get away and think about it, because I was wild and crazy like everybody else.

This is a God-given talent we have; we didn't just get it from school. We are given it as our part of this universe so we have to make use of it. I have seen a lot of young faces intently watching my every move. That makes me want to shine more, because I might do something that will make all the difference in the world to a young person. And if you have something spiritually uplifting to give to another human being that can help that person take one more step, that's really what it's all about. That's why I love music; we're only trying to give somebody a moment's pleasure. I don't think there is anything higher than that.

JP: It's hard for me to imagine climbing to your artistic level, becoming established, and then not even touching sticks for four years.

BR: But I never accepted myself as "established." I still don't. I look at myself as being a person who has taken a step to one degree. I have accomplished something here, but I feel that there is so much more that I'm not doing—or am not aware of—so I cannot be complacent. There's still more for me to accomplish, because I am still here. I know now what I have to work on. Whether or not I can get it all done is

another story. I am pleased with some of the things I have done, but the greatest thing is to have people come up to me and tell me how much they have appreciated me over the years.

I am working on a book now with Don Sickler that uses my drumming excerpts as examples of drum accompaniment styles. It was interesting to sit down and analyze my drumming, because it made me aware of things in my playing that I was not conscious of. Don told me, "You're the best-kept secret in jazz. Everybody talks about the masters, but people don't even know that you are one of the top guys." I told him, "How could that be? Nobody knows!" And he said, "Wait until you see the response to this book."

JP: It is strange to hear you say that you felt nobody knew about you. So many jazz drummers would be shocked by that statement.

BR: I never thought about it much, and I'm grateful to the Almighty that I don't have to have that on my mind, because that's a hindrance. Monk used to say, "If you pat yourself on the back, then you've lost the groove." 

Reader's Platform continued from page 4

FANS AND PHOTOS

Earlier this year, I attended a Rush concert at the Cal Expo Amphitheater in Sacramento. The group put on a great show, but there was one problem: I was denied the use of my camera. The Bill Graham people (who were promoting the show) told me that it was the band's decision, not theirs. This has been happening a lot over the last few years; everyone from Asia to ZZ Top seems to be in on this conspiracy. My question is: Why?

In past *MD* issues, I've read articles about (and by) Neil Peart. I've read his thoughts on the invasion of his privacy at home and on the road. I must agree with him. A few very inconsiderate people can be irritating, and "paparazzi" photographers are cold-natured. I will even go so far as to grant you that there are a lot of rookies who bring their toy *Instamatics* and fire off flashcubes in artists' eyes. I understand that all this is a problem.

On the other hand—here it comes—I have a lot of bucks invested in my photography equipment. I can control the exposure and processing of my film, and I know there is plenty of light to take advantage of on stage. I don't need—or use—a flash. An artist probably wouldn't even know I was out there.

My main reason for going to the Rush concert in the first place was to shoot Neil while he was playing his solo during "YYZ." (By the way, Neil, if you are reading this, it was dynamite!) I'm a beginning drummer myself—something I wanted to do for 20 years before I actually started. I

believe that, when artists are on stage, they become public figures, and as such, I don't need model releases or permission to photograph them. When I have done weddings, family portraits, or model photography, all the pictures I shoot are my property. Why is it, then, that many bands think that the photos shot in concert are their property? Is this the reason for the camera ban? If so, I've attended my last concert! I'd very much like to hear from anyone who can explain this policy to me.

I wish to apologize for being so long-winded about this; it's something I've felt strongly about for a while. I also apologize to Neil Peart for using him personally and sounding like this was an attack directed specifically at Rush. I am actually addressing all the acts that have taken this non-photography stance. I'd like to offer my thanks to *MD* for the chance to get this off my chest.

Phillip Claypool
Sacramento, CA

Editor's note: The question of in-concert photography bans has become a delicate issue among artists, fans, promoters, and especially—as might be expected—professional photographers who make their livings doing concert photography.

There have been several reasons offered by various acts as to why they restrict the use of cameras during performances. One is a rebuttal to Mr. Claypool's allegation that a concert performance makes an artist a "public figure." Many musical artists feel that a performance represents the same type of artistic output that a film, television show, record, or work of gallery art does. The images on a film, the melody

and lyrics in the music of a Broadway show, or the text of a novel all are subject to copyright, and are protected by law from unauthorized reproduction. Many artists feel that their performances in concerts are the same type of artistic creation, and should be subject to the same legal protection.

In many cases, the artists want approval of all photos taken so that uncomplimentary photos or photos that would be detrimental to the images the artists are trying to project are not used. The American Music Photographer Society (AMPS), on the other hand, argues that the artists are "public figures" whether they like it or not. Therefore, photographers have a Constitutional right to photograph their concerts. A U. S. District Court will soon rule on whether or not promoters, groups, or management can ban cameras in state-owned facilities.

AMPS states that flashcubes or strobes rarely bother many acts due to the enormous amount of light that acts use. AMPS also feels that fans who pay hard-earned money for their tickets should be allowed to have photos for their scrapbooks.

This is a delicate question, balancing, as it does, artists' rights to their creation with photographers' Freedom Of Press rights, with fans caught in the middle. Restrictions have been taken to extremes in some cases, while in others, the artists make no photo restrictions whatever. The situation is likely to resolve itself only when artists, photographers, and fans all come to a greater understanding of each other's positions on the matter, and a compromise is achieved. 

The Changing Job Site

by T. Bruce Wittet

The following situation occurred one summer's day in 1985. The setting was a recording studio in which I had worked numerous times before; in fact, it was the very place where I had cut my teeth on a four-track demo ten years earlier. The present occasion, however, was a long, "anthemish" chart—the theme music for a national radio series on politics.

My first indication that this session was going to be very different was that, despite the grandeur of the piece, only three musicians were booked on the date. Whereas a few short years before the floor would have been cluttered with music stands and chairs for the string and brass players, today there were only two guys pondering over an array of MIDI-ed keyboards covering every shred of space ... in the *control room*. The room on the other side of the glass—where the Creator intended that recording and performing be done—was empty. So there, across the bare wood floor, I spread an array of tom-toms, and proceeded to execute some passes underneath synthesized horn swells. Next, I took the opportunity of putting up several of the cymbals I might not have used on a conventional (begging the question there!) session. For example, I recall using a large, hammered crash cymbal that has a rich, dark, and splashy tone, especially when struck with mallets. Normally, it would have bled through every open microphone in the room and would certainly have overshadowed the other components of a drumkit in a tiny drum booth. But it worked that day when, left alone in a large room, I let loose with sounds too long for any computer chip to hold.

The drum machine, programmed to do a 16th-note hi-hat pattern (a favorite of keyboard players) led me through the music; it did its job and I did mine. I had read that things were going this way and, indeed, had played to drum machines before. But I wasn't ready for the prickly feeling I had during the playbacks. Sitting and listening in the control room, I looked through the glass into the vacant room. There were few signs of life out there—no *Coke* cans on the piano, no stragglers discussing a take—just a few cymbal stands looking like stark trees in a desert. The action was all in the control room on the couches surrounding the *Starship Enterprise* where, if you struck a key or pad, things would flash and play as if by their own volition. It's all happening in that little room now, where once your playing was monitored and you thought you were being produced. To be sure, it's all quite fascinating—if you're doing it. But it's frustrating if you can't make the gig. The question is: Is your expertise up to the transition? Will your

tools cut it on the new job site? Will there be a studio left for your drums, or will the studio as we've known it go the way of the automobile: luxurious fins, sprawling hoods, and cavernous trunks giving way to larger cockpits?

The truth, as they say, is probably somewhere between the extremes. Any responsible studio enterprise will require rooms for acoustic sound generation and resonance. However, the electronic element does well in pretty much *any* setting, provided there is an AC wall socket. Thus it is that we hear about many unemployed "acoustic" drummers who made a decent living through the '70s by playing jingles. It is possible now to create broadcast-quality material in a basement studio, provided that all the instruments—including the drums—are direct-input. And if the basement is equipped with, say, a Fairlight (a machine that can sample the sound of any instrument, and then sequence and tailor it to the most complex of charts), it is not just drummers who lose work, although drummers seem to have been hit first and hardest.

Of course, all this is well-known and documented. Even more, the whole issue is indisputable. There really *has* been a change in the traditional conception of what a session drummer is, what he or she does for a living, and where he or she does it. And although I may sound a tad reactionary in my description of the trend, deep-down I really welcome certain facets of it. For instance, how nice it is to be able to "go direct": to plug one's output directly into an amplification system or mixing console, and be reassured that nothing—not a pedestrian engineer, nor an uninspiring drum booth—can get in the way of one's sound and playing. (How many times have you executed a rhythmic figure and had it die a victim of poor acoustics or mixing?) Modern drumming aids, such as programmable machines and Simmons-type setups, are ideal for situations that require a quick, good-sounding drumkit, regardless of room acoustics. True, they will not solve all the problems of mixing—they can be buried just like regular drums—but they can make many quick recording and mixing jobs a breeze. They require none of those perfectly designed resonating rooms, with their exotic coefficients and suspended floors. There are certain studios where Simmons-type kits can be a positive boon.

I have done a fair bit of work in one studio in which it is difficult to nail down a really great drum sound. I keep my cymbal bag well-stocked, so achieving the proper cymbal sounds is just a matter of pulling the right ones out. But it always takes a

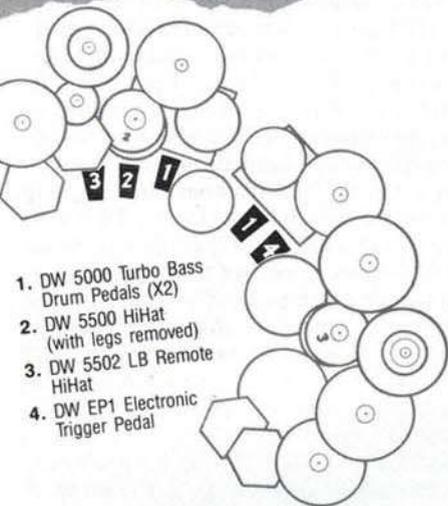
little longer than it should to get the snare, bass, and toms happening, due to an annoying preponderance of highs in this room. The designer of this studio figured that, since his 10' x 8' drum room was to be located on the edge of a forested ravine, instead of alongside a trucking firm, then leakage in or out would be inconsequential. So he put an enormous picture window across one wall. Now, glass, *per se*, is a wonderful thing (especially when half-way through a folk tune a bluebird alights on the fir tree outside, imparting a sort of *raison d'etre* to the take), but in a small drum booth, I view it as an interesting option at best. In this sort of room, where you often have to do all manner of perverse mufflings and crimes against the basic drumset, it comes as a blessing that there are tom-toms that you can plug in and that will yield a preselected sound—maybe even that of your favorite drum, which you sampled the night before in ideal acoustic conditions.

At this point, it gets philosophical; What do electronic drums have to do with the changing studio work place? Is it the fact that recording is increasingly being done in the most makeshift of recording facilities (in which all instruments *but* the drums are easy to commit to tape, thus creating a demand for sophisticated electronic percussion)? Or is it that digital percussion—now credibly and functionally linked by MIDI to keyboard technology—has created a situation in which the traditional recording studio is no longer necessary?

I think that, for most projects, the traditional recording studio *is* still necessary. But it's also true that today's successful studio drummers carry with them a combination of acoustic and electronic drums. That way they can do the usual, primitive "drummer thing"—hitting pieces of wood against a membrane, which, after all, is the thread of music. But afterwards, instead of leaving for the day, they can join the engineers, keyboard players, and programmers, and finish the job.

The point to remember is that, if you are fortunate enough to get studio jobs (I didn't say "make a living") playing regular drums, as I am, then you'd better be prepared to explore the instrument and get further into sound production than you've ever been before, because "they" will need a pretty good reason for choosing you over a machine. Conversely, *you* will need a good reason for playing drums if the work does go the way of the machine. Drummers may never again see a studio empire such as that built up by Steve Gadd. And yet, without the likes of Gadd, it will be pitiful to see what happens to the role of

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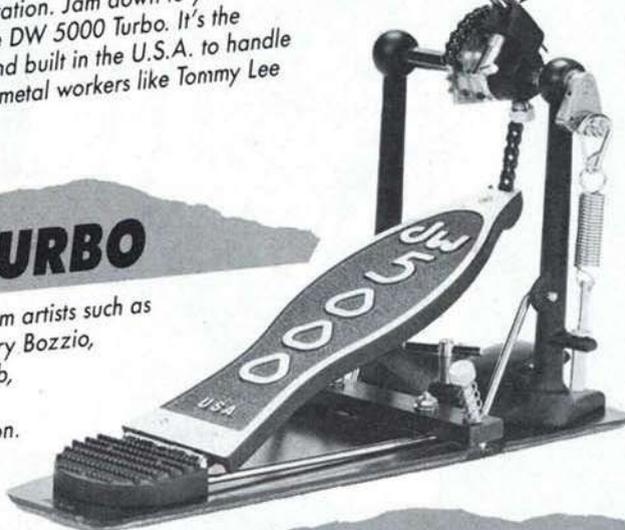
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drums in modern music. Already we see drum machines programmed to play eccentric, incongruous, and over-busy parts to flesh out inadequacies in composition and scoring. As I mentioned, often I will be asked to chase a prerecorded 16th-note hi-hat pattern—even in ballads—simply because the composer wrote the tune at home to the ticking of a drum machine. If such a part is removed, the piece often falls flat; without the insistent, chugging rhythm, there are gaping holes. (Of course, it may be justifiably said that the much-espoused trend towards absolutely simple, no-fills-no-frills playing by today's drummers has left them *open* to replacement.)

Perhaps one consolation is that, even with a reduced drum part to perform, the traditional drummer may be better off than the average string or brass player: The voicings of their instruments (as expressed on a DX7 or digital sampler) are being incorporated as an acceptable standard in many recordings, and thus, these musicians are not working.

Even if the legit recording studio remains the job site for most ventures, it is being reexamined and used in unique ways due to the impact of electronics. Similarly, acoustic drummers should examine the possibilities offered by electronic devices, rather than rejecting them as some illegitimate offspring. The average drummer can exercise the same degree of discretion and creativity with electronic drums as with acoustic; in large part, the issue is still that of hitting something and producing the most appropriate sound in relation to the piece being played. This is where drums triumph over other instruments, which, to varying degrees, have been synthesized or sampled. No one hears of two chips, one of which has a Conn trumpet sampled, and the other of which has a Horton. But in the realm of drums, it is still eminently meaningful—indeed, necessary—that a rusty, old parade drum be sampled and added to a recorded track, or that a Scotch bass drum be blown to chip (remembering that this is a drum particularly unamenable to spurs and pedal attachment). Rather than becoming an anachronism in the face of electronics, traditional drums are enjoying a tremendous resurgence. All manner of percussion hitherto believed unwieldy for recording purposes is coming out of the closet. Even the drumset is coming out of the drum booth, to be tuned up to exploit its true sonic capabilities and recorded in "the big room," wide open and loud.

Fewer of us may work on certain projects, due to the expediency of drum machines. But all of us can have a piece of the action if we exercise the potential of electronics as a tool for exploring hitherto uncharted acoustic horizons. If you believe you have a sound and a feel for your instrument, then you probably *do* have something that is likely not in the catalog of sounds available for inserting into the patch bay of an electronic drum. Let's hear your sound at the new job site!

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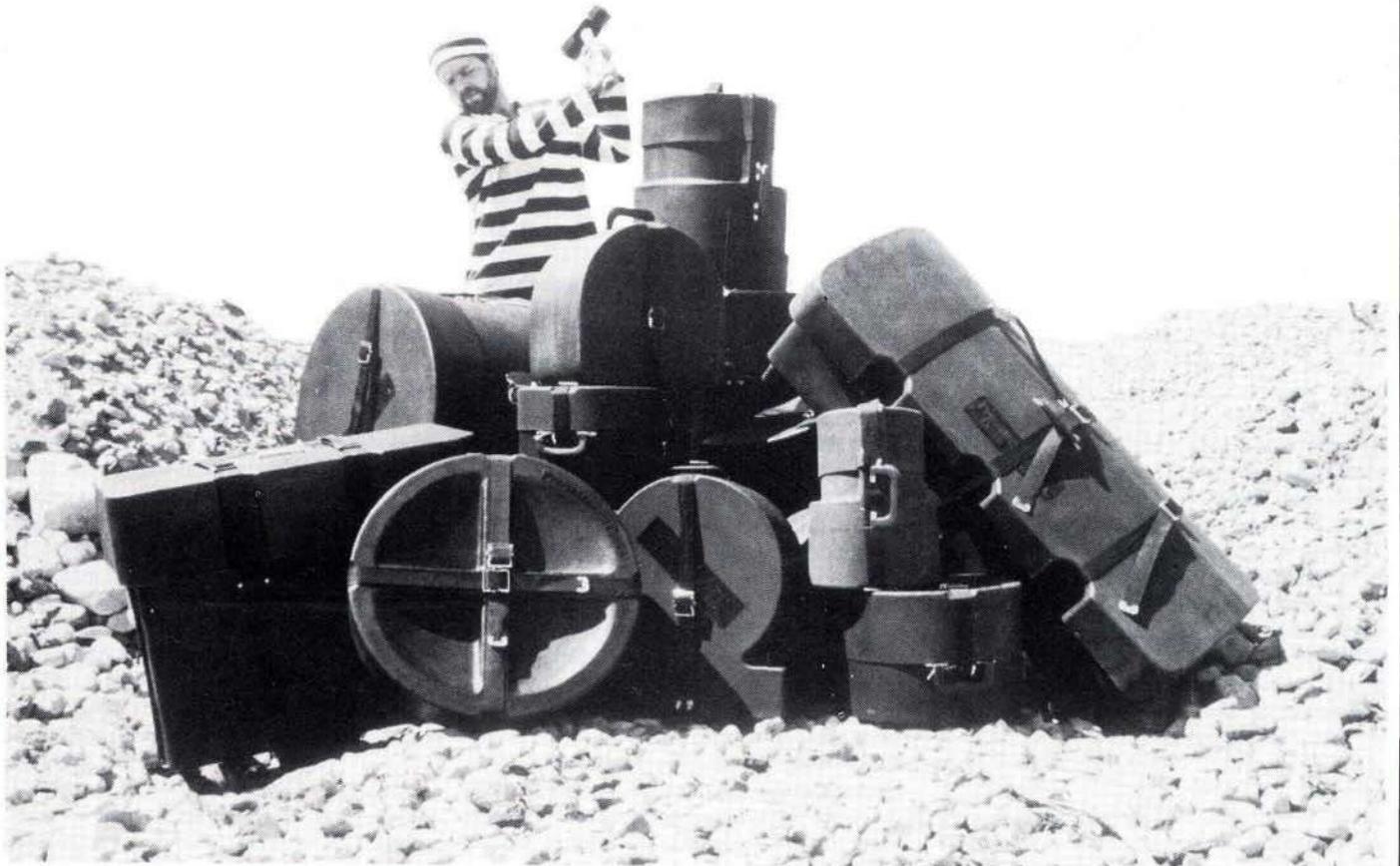
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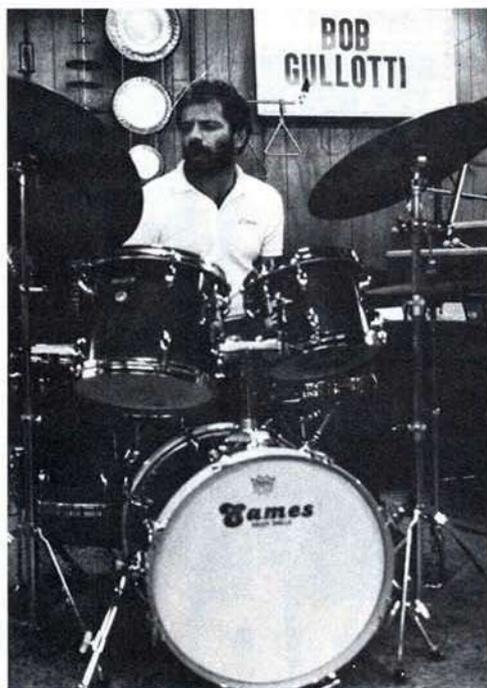
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Bob



As a performer, Bob Gullotti is one of Boston's finest jazz drummers. As a teacher, he is one of New England's most sought-after private instructors. Bob's musical background began at the age of 12. A 1972 graduate of Berklee College of Music, his real education came not from school, but from the wide variety of situations he's been involved with. He's played with artists such as John Abercrombie, Jaki Byard, Bill Elgart, Webster Lewis, Cab Calloway, and Miroslav Vitous, and plays everything from Broadway shows to rock. This wide range of experience helps to make him that much more of an effective teacher, thus allowing him to help all levels of today's drummers.

TS: What was the motivation to become a teacher?

BG: I'll be honest. At first, it was a matter of switching financial gains from playing popular music in clubs to teaching. In the middle of 1977, when the disco thing hit, the money went way down for live bands. I got fed up with playing the same rooms for years for only half the money. All the time, I had been playing as much jazz as I could, but I had to finance my life and my family through commercial music. Teaching became an alternative to earn the weekly salary. Since then, I've been teaching full-time. It's allowed me to play the type of music I want to play. I've always enjoyed teaching and have gained a lot of pleasure from it.

TS: Do you see yourself ever teaching in a public school system?

BG: Probably not. If anything, I would teach at the college level. I've had numerous offers, but until my own thing dies down, I think I'll just stay right here at

home. It's going very well. I can kind of handpick my students a little more, so if it's not working out, I don't have to keep them. I have a lot more control over what gets done.

TS: Have you ever taught in a group situation?

BG: Oh, yeah. But I think private is better. I've found that either group lessons got a little too competitive in a negative way or the acoustics of the room made it too loud to hear one another. It's an alternative, but I still think one-on-one is the best way to go.

In New York, there are classes you can attend in a group setting. You can go to a samba class, where 30 or 40 drummers will be playing a clave all working off each other. Something like that can be *great!*

TS: What do you like to cover in your clinics?

BG: I've been working on getting as much discipline and concentration in your practicing as possible. The basic theme of my clinics has been how to get the most out of your time. Drummers have a tendency to play and have fun on their instruments, and that's all well and good. But what I try to instill in them is that the discipline and work end of it has to be *more* a part of it.

Drums are probably one of the most fun instruments to play. A beginner with a basic sense of rhythm can be playing along with records in a matter of weeks. What happens, though, is that, as drummers get more serious, they don't quite know how to make their practicing more constructive, other than practicing what they already know. So my clinics have been involved with getting them to separate their time, work out very difficult or specific problems, and get a positive flow happening. I also like to cover timing, feel, and sound. I try to keep my clinics as educational as possible, rather than entertaining, so that everyone can walk out and have something to work on when he or she gets home.

There are too many clinics where the questions are like, "What size sticks do you use?" or "What's it like to be famous?" What I do is tell them what I use right away as part of my introduction. That way, they know up front, and then it's time to go to work. In some clinics, the drummer is from a big-name act, so yes, you're going to get all kinds of questions concerning the act or being famous. I guess that's to be expected. I try to deal with more down-to-earth subjects like, "How can I make a living and work towards my

goals."

TS: Who were *your* teachers?

BG: I started off with a fellow named Dick Cutter. He gave me a good foundation. When I went to Berklee, I studied with Lou Magniano, Fred Buda, and Alan Dawson.

TS: Have their teaching styles influenced yours?

BG: Oh, yeah. I think that's inevitable. Alan Dawson has been a big influence on all of us who've studied with him. His way is very exact—so well put together. He's such a *good* teacher, and anytime you deal with someone at that level, it's got to hang over somewhat. It's important to get as much information from as many different sources as you can. As a teacher, what really matters is whether or not you are getting students to think on their own. Eventually, you want them to follow their own paths.

TS: Is the saturation of musicians so great now that only the exceptional player will get ahead?

BG: I don't necessarily believe that's true. I don't think that, in the American music industry, only the best will make it. I *do* think that the level of player who gets even the simplest positions is getting better. There are 16- or 17-year-olds who have amazing facility. The biggest problem is that there are still only a few who have their own sound. So, to say that only the truly gifted will make it is wrong. What I think is that players will develop their own sounds and identities, and hopefully, these things will be needed in groups. It's very popular now to listen to the greats and emulate their styles. In a top-40 situation, if you can sound like the person on the record, you'll have a better shot at getting the gig than someone with his or her own style. In the long run, all those people are either going to have to grow up and get their own styles, or face not really going anywhere. If there are 15 drummers who sound like Steve Smith, Steve Smith is going to get the call, not those 15 others.

Most of the drummers the kids today are trying to emulate are those people who have developed an original sound or concept. They have to realize that *that's* what did it, not that their drums were tuned to sound like someone else's. It's the way they play. All the jazz, rock, and studio greats have a touch of their own. That's what I think people are missing out on. You should study other styles to become flexible enough to adjust your style, but then you should grab for your own style.

This style thing is really out of whack

Gullotti

now. Everyone is trying to copy everyone else, and it just can't be done successfully. Now, with electronic drums, it's even harder to get your own sound. They preset the instrument to sound like everyone else. That, to me, is the only thing wrong with that equipment. Now the companies are making it so that you can put your own sounds onto chips. With these preset things, I can't tell one drummer from the next. I don't think that's very positive.

TS: What do you think will come out of all this?

BG: I think they'll have to get the electronic end of it to the point where it's amplifying someone's ability, not making a set or preset sound. It's moving so fast that it's hard to say what's going to happen. In the long run, the drum companies are going to have to keep up with how drummers feel about the way they sound. Right now, a lot of people only care about what the *instrument* sounds like, rather than what they sound like. Sooner or later, I'll have to learn enough about it myself to educate others on how to use the equipment.

TS: Is it the teacher's responsibility to do that?

BG: No, but in a private teaching practice such as mine, I try to keep abreast of new information and new things. Most of my students are professional drummers, and they're coming to me to work on their problems. It would be beneficial for me to know as much about this as possible.

TS: What aids do you use in your teaching?

BG: I try to work with my students on a very individual basis. I base my teaching on the need to improve their overall playing. I think the goal of any teacher is to get the students to improve in every aspect so there are no big gaps in their music, whether they are drummers with a great rock feel wanting to learn big band, or jazz drummers trying to play more commercial. At the same time, I do have a set series of things that I've come up with myself, which I have the students do when they reach the level where they can cut it. It's quite advanced stuff.

For reading, I use the Whaley series. I feel that they're probably the best books, musically speaking. For a long time, the standards were the Louie Bellson book, the Buddy Rich book, and the Gardner series. I use them occasionally, but I've found that, with most of my students, the Whaley books have more musicality to them. I also use the Alexander Lepak

books and Rick Latham's *Advanced Funk Studies*.

Lately, I've been using something I'm very excited about. I've finally found something that really teaches phrasing. It's called *Charlie Parker's Omnibook*. For many years, Max Roach has been like the "guru" of phrasing. I've studied Max's playing, and have discovered that his beautiful phrasing and melodic content are of the same mold as that of his mentor Charlie Parker. In this book, the students are required to play along with the melody and the Parker solo, all of which are written out. When you put them on a drumset, it's unbelievable! I've been getting great results, and more and more students say their solos and fills are getting more melodic rather than lick oriented. The book comes with a tape that consists of excerpts from Parker recordings, not a studio band doing copies. For years, I've been trying to find something that *really* shows what jazz phrasing is about. I've tried having students do transcriptions and then applying them to the set. This book has already done it.

TS: What would you do for a student with motivation problems—someone who you see has great potential but has a tough time getting it going?

BG: Due to the type of students I have, I don't have to deal with that dilemma very often. But when I do, I try to motivate them by way of positive comments. I praise them for playing well in certain situations, but then go to work *with* them on the things they need to work on. I find that motivational problems are nothing more than concentration problems. They just can't seem to concentrate long enough to get motivated.

Most of the time, if I can build up their concentration level, the motivation thing will cool out. An easy way out would be to give them things they like. But I must balance that with things they're not good at, and make them sit there and do it. Once the results start coming with the things they're not good at, motivation usually triples.

Drummers that aren't motivated are usually those that aren't really serious about improving. They just want to sound as good as they can in their groove. Most of the time, motivation comes with seeing the horizon—seeing what's coming up if they do improve. Of course, everyone has ups and downs. Most students stay with me for a long time, so I'm able to point out that maybe they're just on a down swing and tell them not to worry about it. When

they get back up there, they're usually further along. The down periods tend to put a bit of a weight on someone's music, and when it passes, what generally happens is that the music has a bit more soul and meaning.

Everyone has to pay his or her dues, whether it's physical, mental, musical, or just financial. Somehow, when you come out of any of those negative periods, your positiveness and concentration are up, and you seem to work harder on your problems—musical as well as life problems. Most of the drummers who get these down periods are usually the ones who are really *serious* about it. Someone will come in who's really talented but low, and I will bring this up immediately. I'll say, "Okay, you played lousy last night, and the leader yelled at you. The only reason it hurts so much is that you love it. If you didn't care about what you were doing, you'd tell the guy where to get off."

TS: How do you approach the teaching of feel and sound?

BG: I try to get the students to hear what they're producing. We play a four-limbed instrument, and the balance of these four limbs is your sound. I'll either tape them so they can hear that balance, or while they're playing, I'll make comments like, "Your hi-hat is too loud," or "Your bass drum is too soft," and get them to balance their total sound. By being able to change the balance of your textures, you may start hearing a sound you'll want for yourself, and then you can work on getting that balance consistently.

TS: What would you do for an endurance problem?

BG: I'll have them play a feel or a tempo that's quite difficult, and try to line up a series of recordings they can play along with that gradually gets them to that ultimate. If a student is trying to play up-tempo jazz, the goal would be to play along with "Walking" from Miles' *Four And More* album. It's very fast and long, so the goal would be to get the student to play that tune comfortably. Some rock players have to play very strong all night. They have to learn to relax more. I might give them breathing exercises, or some drum & bugle type rudimental exercises geared towards endurance.

TS: How do you approach teaching improvisation?

BG: Stylistically, I'll go back to a particular era, such as bop or avant-garde, and have the student play along, style- and phrasing-wise. We then turn the record off

and work on emulating that particular style.

For the creative part, I have many internal concepts I use, like the playing of colors and shapes, a mental picture or scenario that you put music to, and natural things that you focus on in a sort of undrumistic way. A lot of the success in improvisation has to do with opening the mind, stopping the rules and technique of the instrument, and just playing from the heart. It's very difficult, but there are ways of focusing a person's mind in that direction.

TS: As a student studies, the levels of improvement seem to get further apart. How do you deal with a student's frustration when he or she just can't seem to get over that hump?

BG: During the first six months after you pick up an instrument, you go from ground zero to pretty good, if you have some talent. As time goes on, those steps seem to get further apart. The best way to help people wait that next level out is to get them to remember the last step they took in

their progress. It's never going to be, "Holy cow, I'm better!" It's more like, "Remember when I couldn't play that way, or think in those terms? Well, now I can." Just look back instead of always looking ahead.

TS: With music videos so popular now, are the images and fantasy-like auras taking away from the seriousness of the art?

BG: I would say, yes they do. I think the music industry is turning kids away from the musical end of it. Because it's so visual and surreal now, the kids are forgetting to practice and forgetting to study the instrument. They're getting more involved in what kind of equipment to use and how many drums are in the set. I've had a couple of students come into my studio, take a look at my five-piece set of drums, and say, "Where's the rest of your drums?"

I believe things like this are due to the influence of video. MTV is good in the sense that it's helped bring musicians more into the public eye and helped lesser-known artists make their mark. But what I think it's doing in a negative sense is making it so *that's* the goal of the kids—to be on MTV—to make it big like that, instead of trying to be fine musicians. In my lessons, I try to deal with the music aspect of it. If you feel you have to buy \$70,000 worth of equipment to make a living, then fine. But while you're here, you're going to deal with music.

TS: What do you get from your students?

BG: I get many things from my students. I learn about personalities and how people have to relate to others in their bands. I learn musical things. I have some very fine students studying with me. One guy is extremely good at reggae, and I'm not. So I'll get him to write out some things that I can study and be more aware of in this particular idiom. From some students, I learn to be humble; from others, I learn to be aggressive. From listening to their errors and their good points, my own awareness increases and helps me to teach better. Because I have students of a high caliber, I'm constantly seeking out more material to explain new concepts, and ideas to challenge them and keep them busy.

TS: What are your criteria for a good teacher?

BG: Someone who has a great respect for the instrument, number one. I would never want to study with someone who doesn't really want to play. There are teachers who teach because they can't play well enough, and some who hate teaching but need the bread. Another criterion for a good teacher is someone who *loves* to teach and is interested in helping others to learn to love it. Also, a teacher should be honest and open-minded.

TS: What's the best advice you would give a young drummer?

BG: Learn to discipline yourself to the point where you can sit down and work out musical problems. Learn to discipline yourself in practice in order to become focused when playing. Never give up on an area. I was horrible in Latin styles. I couldn't play a samba if my life depended on it. I'd do gigs that were way over my head, and every time they'd call a Latin tune, I'd cringe. But I never gave up on it, and now Latin is a very integral part of my playing and teaching. So, learn how to work through the low points, and learn how to practice your instrument constructively.

TS: What's your primary goal as a teacher?

BG: To get as many good players as possible earning a living from what I teach. Hopefully, *some* will make it big. But I'd really like 90% of my students to say, "Hey, I got my stuff together enough through studying with Gullotti that now I'm making a living at it."

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said, "This is my 'Day Tripper' guitar." And I said, "Oh, 'Day Tripper'; that's #10 in Phoenix this week." John looked at me and said, "What are you talking about?" I said, "Well, we did 'Day Tripper,' and it's #10 in Phoenix this week." So he kind of figured we were Beatles fans, I guess—even though our instrumental section on "Day Tripper" is Yardbirds: a little "Shapes of Things." Rick and I were big Yardbirds fans. We used to go to see them all the time.

RT: On your version of "Day Tripper," that drum part with all the tom-tom work is classic Bun E. You seem to like to use the toms—to base your parts around them.

BC: Yeah, I use cymbals mainly for washes, or "ding ding dings." When I started out playing I went to take a lesson, and the guy took the book that had all the L's and R's in it, crossed out the L's and wrote R's, and crossed out the R's and wrote L's, because I was left-handed. I saw The Beach Boys in 1965 in Rockford, and Dennis Wilson was riding left-handed, and I said, "Okay, that's okay," so that's how I ended up doing that. Then I read the Max Weinberg book and found out Ringo led left-handed, and I thought, "Oh, that's how I can sound like Ringo when we do these Beatles songs." I could never figure out why drummers couldn't sound like Ringo. I found out that you have to be left-handed on a right-handed set.

RT: I've noticed on many of Cheap Trick's songs that you lay off the hi-hat until you get into the chorus or something. Some drummers just automatically start keeping time with the hi-hat, but you lay off it more.

BC: Yeah, there's a little Dave Clark 5 thing where he used to ride the snare drum. If you do that, you almost don't have to play the hi-hat, unless you just want to do some "sshhsstshh," some closing, or just do some wash on it—something like that. And it works really nice for me. I wouldn't suggest anything that I do for anyone else, because I don't know if it would work. But it works great for me, and it's the only way I know how to do it. Plus, I'm a fourth-generation drummer—cross my heart—all the way back to the Civil War. My folks didn't tell me that until after I'd gotten a drumset. They didn't want to encourage me, I think. But then my grandma told me, and it was like, "Oh neat. Then I can really drum." That encouraged me—finding out that someone else was a drummer before me. When I didn't get drafted, then it was like, "Okay, now I'll be a drummer." It was either be a drummer, or be a roofer and work for Dad. I said, "Give me a couple of years, Dad." That was when Rick and I started Cheap Trick. After about a year, about 1973 or '74, I was listening to a tape one day. I was a typical drummer, like, "Where can I get the most licks in, and how cool can I sound." I was listening and I thought, "I'm rushing this, and I'm

getting in the way of this guy." One day it dawned; my ears became able to listen to myself objectively. "Okay, I'm screwing this up real bad here." And ever since that, it's been easy. It's like all you've got to do is keep the beat, and you've got most of these drummers beat, you know.

RT: How old were you when this revelation hit you?

BC: I was about 21.

RT: That's not too bad.

BC: I had a record out when I was in high school. We had a single out when we were sophomores. We had done a lot of gigs. This happened about two weeks after we had done some gigs with Mahavishnu—me, Rick, and Thomas Dukey were in a band called Sick Man Of Europe, right before Cheap Trick. And seeing Cobham doing the ambidextrous stuff—he let me sit on his drums. And I started taping every show. Ever since then, I've taped every show and listened to them all. If I do something in the show and wonder if I messed up there, I play it back later and see.

On the latest album, we did 11 mixes of the song "Tonight It's You," and I was thinking, "This doesn't sound right, especially the drums." And then it dawned on me: I was doing all these great Kenney Jones-type Small Faces drum intro licks right there on the vocal spots. So I sat down with Tony Platt, who mixed the album, and said, "Listen Tony, I think we're going to have to bury the drums on this one. Put the drums in mono." So that song came out good, but we had to mix the drums down in the record and kind of disguise them so they wouldn't get in the way, because that's my main job—to make those other guys look good.

RT: Do you always know what the vocals are going to be on a song when you go into the studio?

BC: Yeah, 90% of the time. On *All Shook Up*, we did a tune with George Martin and Geoff Emerick. I put my drums on—all these cool drum licks in all these choruses, and I did a bunch of off-the-wall stuff. And when I was done, George said, "That's a great take. Now I want you to triple everything." So I had to go back to my room, write everything out in Bun E. drum language, sit there for six hours, and run over everything I played.

RT: What tune was that?

BC: "Love Comes A-Tumblin' Down." If you listen to it, you can't even tell. It doesn't even matter, but I sat there for about six hours and tripled everything, just because the producer said to.

RT: What was it like working with George Martin?

BC: It was great. I would say, "George, I'd like to get a little more clank out of my snare drum." He'd say, "Okay. Geoff, can we have a little more clank out of the snare drum?" And Geoff would walk out there, move the mic' about one inch, hit the drum and put his ear down there, move

it a little more, and walk back into the booth. That's the English way of doing it; screw this stuff with the dials, man. Just go in there, place the mic' in a different part, and do it acoustically. That was really a lot of fun. For digital delay on "Who D'King," I did a maracas track, and for the overdub, he said, "Oh, don't worry about it." He got his stopwatch out, set the digital-delay machine on whatever delay it was, and just doubled it on the other side of the channel. Instead of getting a \$10,000 machine to do it, he did it with a stopwatch and some little English machine, which is kind of neat. They can't screw around with you too much when they don't have all those toys.

RT: They?

BC: Yeah, the producers and those people. They can turn your drums into something you never dreamt they'd be, much to your dismay. Usually it turns out okay, though.

RT: Did you find your drums sounding kind of Ringo-ish working with George Martin?

BC: Yeah, a little bit. I took a Tama kit in; I endorsed Tama in Japan for a year. The Tama kit was still in the boxes, so we got the drums out and set them up, and they worked like a charm. And then I gave them away to somebody—my brother or something. Then I started going American. I started buying old drums, and saw they were as good as the new Japanese drums, so I figured I'd just buy American. Even though nowadays all the hardware and stuff is all made in Taiwan anyway. But I try to buy American. They're not that much worse than the Japanese. The parts are easier to get. I'm still a big fan of old Ludwig, old Gretsch, or old Slingerland *Radio Kings*, and if I can't get those, new Ludwigs or new Slingerlands.

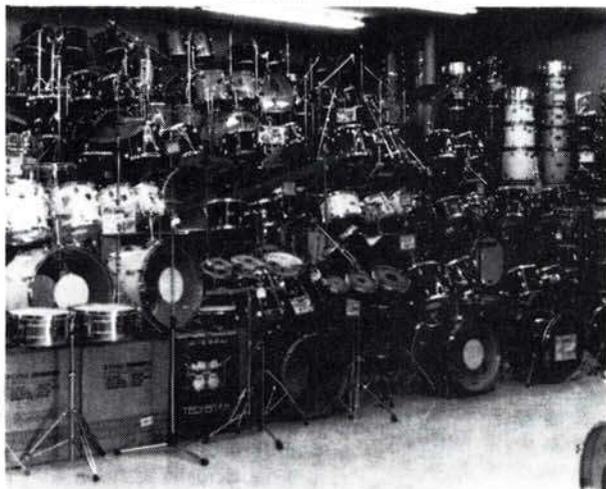
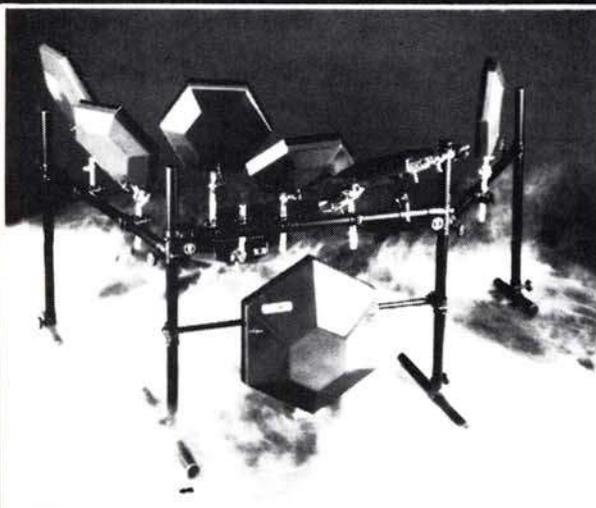
Ludwig takes real good care of me, and Zildjian takes even better care of me. I'm using a K on top of my hi-hat. The thing sounds very nice and bright. It's so loud. I was using a regular medium or a medium thin, and it cracked. So I got the K out. It's a dark K, and the thing just sounds great. The best thing that happened to K's was that they moved to America. I got a 22" dark and a 15" dark, which I'm not using currently but I save them for the studio. I love them so much that I don't even want to take them out on the road. Now I'm using an 18" medium, 18" medium-thin, 20" medium-thin over the floor tom for my main ride, and then a 20" Dark *China Boy*. But since I'm ambidextrous, every cymbal is a ride cymbal, and every cymbal is a crash cymbal—which probably ticks a lot of people off. I mean, you know, if Max Roach saw me, he'd probably shoot me or something.

RT: You're not supposed to play that way, I guess.

BC: Yeah. Lenny DiMuzio brought Louie Bellson to a show in Boston one night. We did one song, and I looked over stage left

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and there was Louie Bellson standing there. I was like, "Aaaaagghhhh," because that was about the third time I'd tried double bass. And so after the show, Louie said, "Oh, sounds great," because he's like the nicest guy in the world. And I said, "Mr. Bellson, I've got a question for you. I just started playing double bass. I'm left-handed but I'm ambidextrous. I want to do a bass drum roll. What do you do, start with your left foot or your right foot for the downbeat?" And he said, "Either way—my feet are ambidextrous." So I felt about one-inch tall. I still haven't figured out double bass. But I'm going to go home next week and set up my Ludwig white-pearl set. I've got two 28"s and two 24"s, so whatever set I like best I'm going to set up and mess around on for three or four weeks, and maybe take those out next year. When you're ambidextrous, it's fun to have drums wherever you go, instead of everything being on one side of you—making you have to lead with one hand. I may have two snare drums. But after seeing Ratt and drummers like that, it made me realize I'd better go back and practice my double bass drum a lot before I go out and play it, because there are a lot of younger kids out there who can do it easily as well as I can. So I'm not going to make a fool out of myself for someone who pays \$15 to see me drum. I try to play for the people on stage with me and for the six drummers out in the house who are saying, "What's that screwball doing up there?" That's what I did when I was a kid. I took set lists off the stage and watched the drummer to see what I could nick. I've got about 10,000 tapes and about 5,000 records to steal off of. I used to talk to drummers' roadies and try to get their drumsticks. I'd figure out a way to get behind them and see what kind of pedal they had. When I saw Mitch Mitchell had a Rogers *Swiv-O-Matic*, I went out and bought two of them in 1967. I used them for eight years. If it was good enough for Hendrix, it was good enough for me. I didn't know any better, and I probably still don't. Now people come up and say, "Oh, you're my favorite drummer." I tell them, "Well, here are the drummers I stole from. Go listen to them and then you can play just like this."

I remember playing at the Cow Palace once with Kiss. It was neat, you know. Rainbow played there. That stuff really made a big impression on me. Meeting famous drummers was neat until we toured with a couple of English bands who I won't mention, but I never bought their records again. I kind of don't want to meet the rest of my heroes now, because I'm afraid I might not like them. But it was always fun to talk to those people when I was younger, nick stuff from them, or just see what they were doing and ask them questions. I learned by watching people—taking the bus to Chicago to see concerts. If there was an afternoon and an evening

show, I'd go to both shows and write down set lists, so I'd know what was coming up in the next show. It worked pretty well.

RT: You were talking about how you lead with your left hand. I haven't seen many drummers use *both* hands as much as you. Even if you're leading with your right hand on the hi-hat, your left hand is sometimes playing 8th notes on the snare.

BC: Yeah. When I lead into a drum fill with my right hand, it's like a little Kenney Jones-type setup thing. My drum roadie—who knows how to play drums properly—and I try to explain it to each other and try to figure it out. We've got to face each other and match our hands. We do little shuffles. We do "Freeway Jam" by Jeff Beck once in a while, and I've got a great shuffle for it that uses little triplets. It's left-handed, and a hand drops down. I was never any good at shuffles, so that's what I work the hardest on. I have a couple of Gary Glitter-type shuffles, but no Texas shuffles. I sat in with the Thunderbirds once in Dallas, and the guy was left-handed on a right-handed kit. He kind of looked at me like, "Hah hah, try to play this kit." He had a hi-hat a mile away and a cymbal a mile away on the left side. So I just sat down and did it. I got away with it, but I'm not too good on a Texas shuffle. "Lame" is probably the word to describe it.

RT: There was one blues tune on the EP you guys did that you did some great bashing on.

BC: "Can't Hold On," from Budokan. That was fun, doing those triplets and stuff. I first got into that listening to "A Little Help From My Friends." That's 3/4 all the way through, and that's like a lesson in cool chops. It's the version of "A Little Help From My Friends" with B.J. Wilson, Procul Harum's drummer, Jimmy Page on guitar, and Steve Winwood on keyboards. There's like a catalog of licks in one song. We did that song for four or five years before we cut it, so Tom and I had those things down very well. I like blues drumming, being that I'm a Chicago-area guy. I got into Delta blues real big, and then electric slide blues when I used to mess around with guitar—"Little Red Rooster" kind of things. I've got a lot of Muddy Waters and Robert Johnson albums. Then I got into using brushes. I was listening to the half-speed master pressings of the Stones, and on "Love In Vain" from the *Let It Bleed* album, that's a pair of brushes. I've seen the Stones a few dozen times, and I thought Charlie used sticks. But I listened to the album last winter with some headphones on and it's like, "Brushes!" I never knew people used those things in this day and age. But they're fun.

RT: I saw you using one brush tonight on "Little Sister."

BC: Yeah, and I set it down in the middle for the roll. It gets weird because of the

weight difference. One hand is flying all over the place; the other one's got a big piece of wood in it. But I think people should use a brush on the snare rather than always riding on the hi-hat. It helps clean up the sound a lot. The hi-hat is such a noisy instrument.

RT: There's one tune on *All Shook Up* that has marimba on it and almost sounds like a Zappa tune.

BC: Oh, "High Priest Of Rhythmic Noise." We did a lot of heavier songs in the old days. "Heaven Tonight" is a song about taking too many drugs and dying. "Gonna Raise Hell" is a song about "Go ahead and raise hell, but you'll get an ulcer." They're anti-drug songs in disguise, and no one knows it. We've had a lot of songs like that. We tried to sneak one in. "Ballad Of T.V. Violence" on our first album was originally called "Ballad Of Richard Speck," because he's a Chicago boy, but the legal department wouldn't touch that title. And "High Priest" was one of those types of songs. We're trying to find a screenplay or something to do with those songs, like all the songs about violence. It's hard to find a place to put those, unless you're Pink Floyd and can just fill up a side with that stuff. But the real reason is that they do it better than we do. We throw in everything but the kitchen sink once in a while. You know, "We've got it; let's use it." When we did "High Priest" live, our sound man would punch in the vocoder part, and they threw it to my monitor. I'd suddenly have to sync up with it in the middle of a verse, no matter where it came in. I'd have to drop a beat, add a beat, or drag a beat. I'd play along with this tape that came in. There was no pulse or anything. The guy cued the tape up at the board, and when the part came, he just pushed a button and hoped it came in at the right time. It wasn't the full length of the song, or we could have done like The Who and gotten a pulse and given me a headset, which I would have preferred. That lasted one tour, and I said, "That's out the window." Drummers of the world, don't let them do it to you.

RT: I think one of your best recorded performances is "Invaders Of The Heart" [*Next Position Please*]. You're just going wild on it.

BC: Oh yeah. We did that at a few soundchecks. And it's all single-stroke stuff. I found out that, if we started with it, I could do it any night we wanted to, but that would be it, because it's an arm killer. There was a group called Patto from England, from 1971 or '72. And it was John Halsey on drums, who was later in the Rutles. That guy is the closest thing to John Bonham that you'll ever hear, or better, and he did a lot of that kind of stuff. And Mike Patto and Ollie Halsall were later in Boxer. They were real influential to Cheap Trick. There are tons of drum chops on there, and I probably ripped off about half of them. We did that song up at

Todd Rundgren's studio—that little A-frame up there. It was lots of fun and a good atmosphere. I don't know if I could have done that in a big studio in a separate drum booth. We didn't have a middle for it, so Rick counted to 32. "Here's the middle. We'll put something in later." But I like that song, too; that's one of the few songs on that album that came off the way it was supposed to sound—that, "I Can't Take It," and a couple of others.

RT: At the end of "Invaders Of The Heart," after the song has ended, the tape keeps rolling and somebody yells, "One more time!" Then somebody else says, "You've got your choice of lousy endings now."

BC: That was me. We kept doing false endings. At the end, I thought they were going to fade out on some cool drum lick, and that was Todd who yelled, "One more time." I said, "No, you've got your choice of lousy endings." We started out talking about The Who, so they started with a couple of bars of "My Generation." It was one of those things. Todd brought a few good licks out of us on that album.

RT: That song on your new album, "She's Got Motion," sounds kind of like a ZZ Top groove. It really moves.

BC: Yeah, that's a clone of a part. It's the same thing we did on *In Color*, on a song called "You're All Talk." It's a chuka-chuka-chuka-chuka beat that's hard for me, because my left hand has to cross over my right hand to hit the snare. That wasn't all Linn, because I played it first, and then we synced up the Linn later. There are all those tom-toms in the middle eight. That's one of the things that the producers put on. That's another reason why I put "Acoustic Drums and Cymbals" on the liner notes. There was an eight-bar buildup, and I didn't know what to play. I didn't know what they were going to put in there. They wanted to put just a *Dream Police* chord buildup thing in there, and I said, "No, don't do that." So I just left it up to the producers. So that's Jack Douglas or somebody on drums.

RT: "Standing On The Edge" has a very tasty drum track, with breakdowns and good dynamics. Do you write your own parts?

BC: Yeah, that one came very easily. On the intro riffs, I wanted to play real sparse bass drum just to accent the chords and to keep out of the way of the singing, because it was mainly power chords. And they threw an effect on the snare drum, so I didn't want the hi-hat to bleed through. So I did one of those Charlie Watts tricks—laying off the hi-hat on the snare back-

beats—you know, a lazy way of drumming. And there's not a drum roll on the song. That's what I like about Cheap Trick songs: I can do that. There isn't one drum roll on "Stop This Game" on *All Shook Up*. On the next song, there are 36 tracks of drums. We were playing brushes on piano stools, playing bass drums like tom-toms, and stuff like that for "Just Got Back." It's pretty wide open in Cheap Trick. If the song needs drums, I'll put a ton of drums on, and if they don't work, we'll just take them off and put a snare drum, bass drum, and a hi-hat on. We're wide open on that kind of stuff. But 90% of the time, I believe less is more, and then about 10% of the time, I like a controlled chaos. You know, what would Keith Moon do if he was here? You should try not to be boring. And I try not to do it the same every night.

RT: What concessions have you made to your appearance on stage?

BC: Well, in our videos, I play left-handed drumkits so I can play orthodox, or whatever you call it, because I think that looks really neat. I think drummers should look good when they play. You should be able to see their heads. They shouldn't be sitting on the floor. One night the drummer in Saxon got sick, and I was going to sit in with them. We were headlining. I said, "Don't cancel; I'll drum for you." So we went out to rehearse, and I sat on this guy's kit. His chair was on the floor, you know. I almost had to stand up to hit his cymbals. Fortunately, the guy got back from the hospital just in time to do the show, because I didn't know how I was going to do it. But it's fun to watch other drummers, and sit on their kits to see how it feels from where they sit. I don't see how they can sit low. I sit about a mile up in the air. Drummers sit on my kit and say, "Whoa, my feet are dangling"—stuff like that. That's my Dave Clark 5 influence; sit up straight and look down on them all. They were always good when I saw them live. Dave Clark made drummers proud to be drummers. Until Ginger Baker, there was no other band named after a drummer. Dave always sat there, smiled, and acted like he was singing. That was why I got my first Rogers kit, too. I saw he had one, and went out and bought one just like it, which I still have. I never get rid of a drumkit.

RT: I noticed that you play your hi-hat up very high.

BC: Yeah, I play the hi-hat up. It just kind of crept up there. It keeps separation for the sound man. As you saw, the hi-hat is open a lot and it bleeds like crazy.

RT: You open it up at the ends of songs

sometimes.

BC: Yeah, to get some dynamics going. Hopefully, someday I'll learn how to really play it. Then I'll really be good at it. That's one bad thing about leading with your left hand on a right-handed kit: You can't do that much on the hi-hat. It's kind of a pain. But I started drumming in 1964, so it was Ringo, Charlie Watts, Dave Clark, and the Beach Boys. I couldn't figure out how they got that "sssss-shhhhhhh" sound. I thought they were playing with brushes or something. I went out and got some brushes. I didn't know anything. So I have no excuse for my hi-hat playing [laughs], except I like to go "sshhiuuuuuppp"—do those little slops or whatever you call them.

RT: Those open-to-closed things?

BC: Yeah, they set up a snare lick really nice.

RT: Watching you play tonight, it looked like you were almost standing up, your seat was so high.

BC: Yeah, I just lowered my chair, too. Now they've got me on a riser, which I hate. Next tour, it's either going to be a 6" riser or I want to be on the floor, so I can look everybody in the eye. You lose a lot of contact when you're up. I don't see how Vinnie Appice can stand being five or six feet up in the air. Plus, all your sound has to be piped in. You're at the mercy of your monitor man. I have Rick coming through my monitor, and if that breaks, I can still hear what's going on, because I'm only 14 inches off the ground. So it's mainly that I just like to sit where I can keep eye contact with everybody and be seen, and I don't trust anybody to get my sound to me. That's why I don't monitor myself. Some night, sooner or later, they'll blow me up or something. I was born deaf, and it took about six months to get it fixed, so I don't want to mess around with my ears. My hearing has never been even, so I try not to get blasted out on stage. And we're a loud band, so it's kind of a losing battle.

RT: Do you work out at all to stay in shape? You're very physical on the drums.

BC: I just work out by drumming or just walk around. And all four of us in the band go on stage dead straight from the moment we get up till the moment we're done playing—no beers, no pot, no nothing. A cup of coffee, maybe, but that's about it. No one gets high or anything, because we can't do Cheap Trick and do that. So half of it right there is keeping our noses out of trouble. No one gets blasted before going up to play. When something goes wrong, then everybody can get out of

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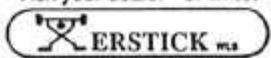
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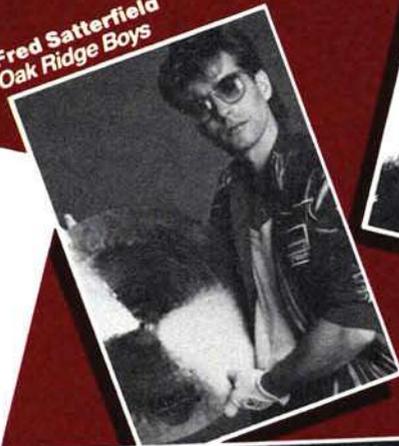
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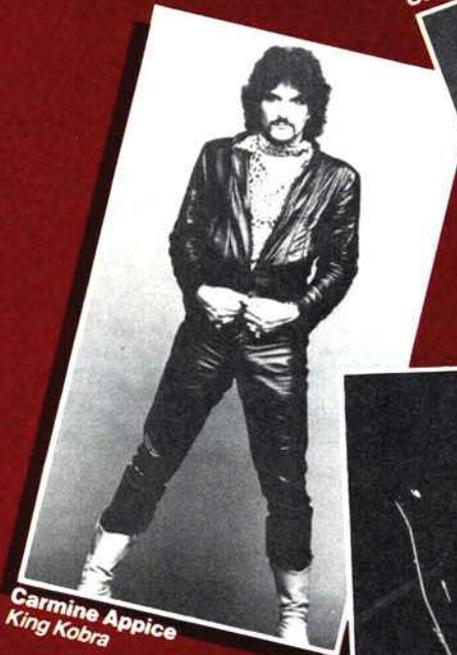
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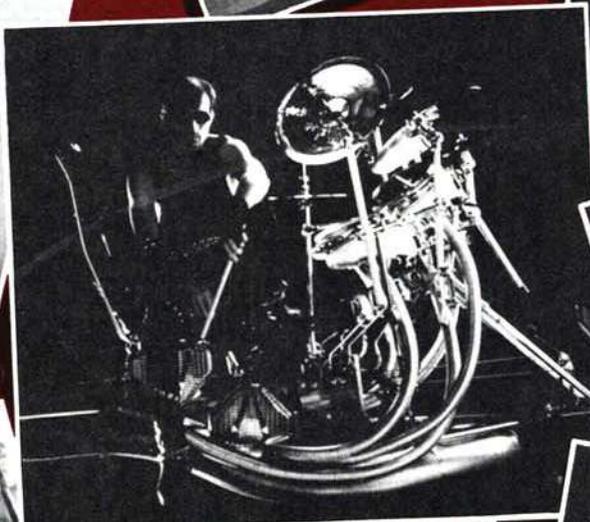
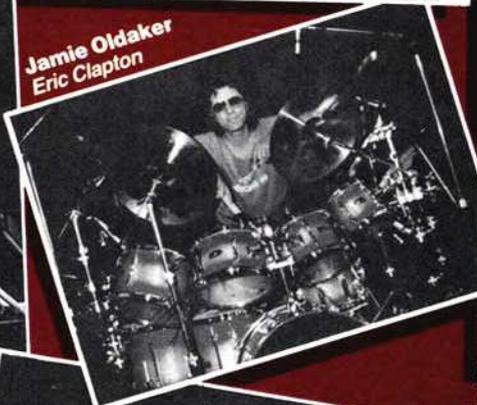


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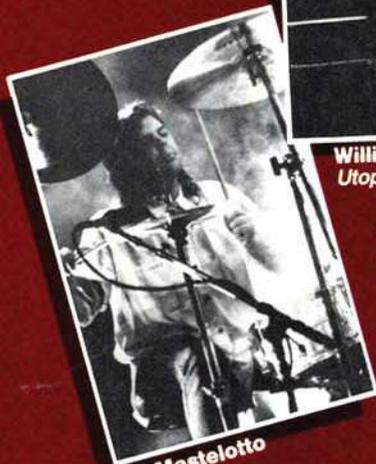


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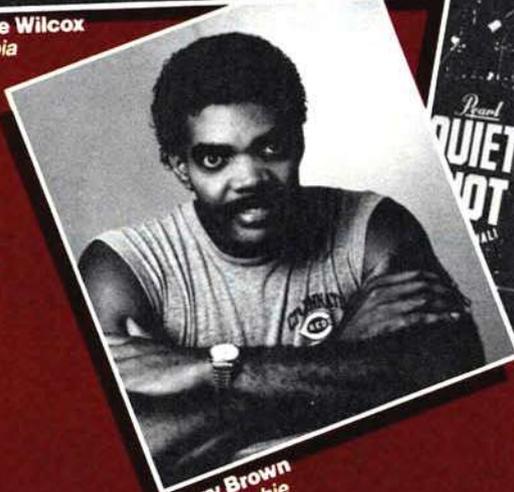
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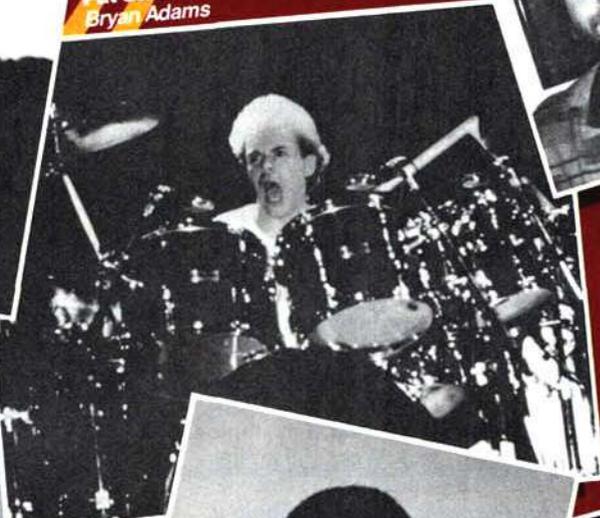
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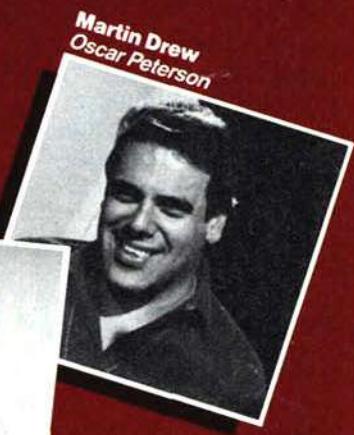
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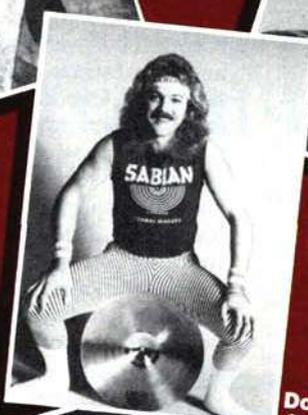
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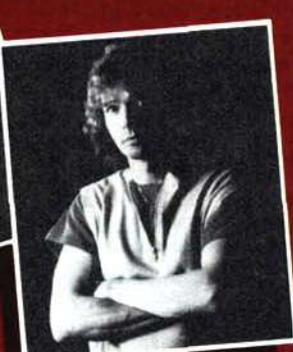
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SMITH, HELLBORG, SHRIEVE— *All Our Steps*. Relativity Theory TR 8101. M. Smith: pno. Michael Shrieve: dr, perc. J. Hellborg: bs. *So Let It Be Spring / The Seventh Way / All Our Steps . . . / Jonas / Neap Tide / Sense / The Virgin Bride*.

The only way that I could label this music would be to come up with something ridiculous like ECM meets Varese meets rock meets . . . Suffice to say that there are a variety of influences woven through this music, with the common element being exploration. The musicianship is superb throughout, with Michael Shrieve proving once again that he is one of the exceptional drummers of our age. He is constantly putting himself in different situations as a way of discovering new things about himself and his instrument. The result is an artistic maturity that is well documented on this record. It might be hard to find, but the effort will be worth it.

— Rick Mattingly

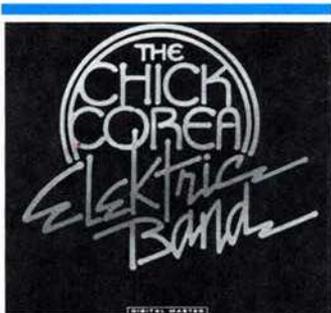
instrumental work in a fusion-esque vein. Several of the selections feature odd-time signatures, but the striking characteristic of the work is that it is more *musical* than *technical*. While all of the playing is exceptional, you get more of a feeling of "tunes" from this album than from many recent "fusion" releases by other artists. This is due, primarily, to the fact that the instrumental *sounds* are more accessible here than on other albums. The keyboard is often a piano (or at least a piano *sound*), and the guitar generally sounds like a guitar; we aren't barraged by layered synthesizer lines of abstract tonal character. Most importantly, Geoff Dunn's drum sound is exceptional: acoustic drums and cymbals, mixed well up, sounding large and full. This is in stark contrast to the "choked-snare-and-electronic-toms" sound prevalent on fusion recordings today. Dunn plays exceptionally well, exhibiting abundant energy without sounding frenzied. He's fast, clean, tasteful, dynamic, imaginative with his sounds, and absolutely *into* the music (as opposed to playing busily over or around it). This may be due in large part to the fact that he is credited as a composer on several of the cuts. Pick this one up to get a different angle on how drumming with a high-energy, progressive instrumental band can be approached.

— Rick Van Horn



FIRST LIGHT—*How The Land Lies*. I.O.U. Records PW101. Geoff Dunn: dr. R. Johnson: gtr. R. Shipston: kybd. G. Harewood: bs. *How The Land Lies / Home Again / Bis / George & Betty / Seven / At The Old Mill / As The Eye Can See / The Profit*.

This is an album of excellent



CHICK COREA—*The Chick Corea Elektric Band*. GRP Records GRP-A-1026. C. Corea: kybd. J. Patitucci: bs. Dave Weckl: dr., perc. S. Henderson: gtr. C. Rios: gtr. *Rumble / Side Walk / Cool Weasel Boogie / Got A Match? / Elektric City / No Zone / King*

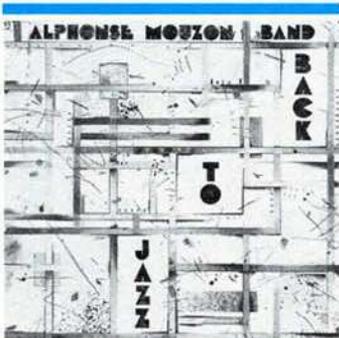
Cockroach / India Town.

The word has been getting around about Dave Weckl for a while now—the word was that this guy was happening and that something big would eventually happen for him. Well, it doesn't get much bigger than Chick Corea, and Weckl handles it well. To put it simply, Weckl burns.

As mentioned in the title, this is an electric band. Weckl's interplay between electronic and acoustic percussion works to lay down a "rhythmic backdrop" that propels the music without getting in the way. Weckl's playing style involves a lot of rhythmic independence between his limbs. He'll play a complicated groove and then drop in a tasteful fill, which is a nice change in fusion drumming: It used to be the amount of notes in the fill. Also on this album, there are a few sections of just trio playing. Chick solos over bass and drums without a multitude of overdubbed, over-arranged keyboard parts. "Got A Match?" is a good example of this, and Weckl also has some solo space on the cut.

The best part of this album is the way that the musicians make the electronics sound "alive." Many of the fusion artists prominent in the '70s have been recently letting electronics do the playing, and allowing the electronics to take the heart and soul from the music. On this album, the music is alive, even *with* the electronics.

— William F. Miller



ALPHONSE MOUZON—*Back To Jazz*. Pausa 7196. A. Mouzon: dr, perc, syn. D. Norwine: al sx. J. Daniel: pno, syn. W. Gite: bs. J.P. Mouzon, A.P. Mouzon: vcl. *St. Thomas / The Next Time We Love /*

Poobli / Space Commander / Peace On Earth / The Baker's Daughter / Just Because OJ You.

This is jazz in terms of the song forms; most cuts consist of head, solos, and head. But in terms of the rhythms, the record could have been called "Back To Funk." As a funk player, Mouzon is solid. He has retained the energy that typified his work in the fusion era, without giving way to the excessive chops displays that, unfortunately, were also typical of fusion. Although electronic drums are listed in the credits, the album has primarily an acoustic sound and feel, with the exception of a solo percussion track, aptly titled "Space Commander." All in all, this is one of the most straight-ahead records that Mouzon has put out in a while.

— Richard Egart

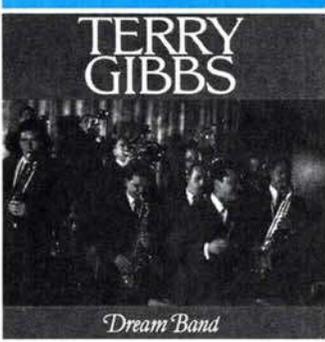


LEVEL 42—*World Machine*. Polydor 827487-1 Y-1. M. King: bs, vcl. Phil Gould: dr. M. Lindup: kybd, vcl. Boon: gtr. *Something About You / World Machine / Physical Presence / Leaving Me Now / Hot Water / It's Not The Same For Us / Good Man In A Storm / The Chant Has Begun / Lying Still*.

This band is starting to get a lot of air play in the States, and why not? Level 42 combines rock and funk in such a way that ends up being commercial, but this kind of "commercial" music is happening. Every tune on this album grooves hard. Phil Gould's drumming is efficient, and works well within the arrangements and with the bass player. The title track opens with a drum machine that "sambas" along through the first chorus, where the drums come in and combine to churn

out a driving feel. This is a great example of drum machine and live drums working together.

— William F. Miller



TERRY GIBBS—*Dream Band*. Contemporary C-7647. T. Gibbs: vbs. A. Porcino, R. Triscari, C. Candoli, S. Williamson: trp. B. Enevoldsen, V. Friley, J. Cadena: trb. J. Schwartz, B. Holman, M. Flory, J. Maini, C. Kennedy: sx. P. Jolly: pno. M. Bennett: bs. Mel Lewis: dr. *Begin The Beguine / Don't Be That Way / Cottontail / Stardust / Opus One / After You've Gone / You Go To My Head / Let's Dance / Kissin' Bug / Jumpin' At The Woodside.*

It is often said that, before

you can break the rules, you have to know what the rules are. Mel Lewis has been breaking the rules for years—using a small-group approach with a big band. But if you ever thought that Mel was playing that way because he wasn't familiar with more traditional big band drumming, then this album—which was recorded in 1959—will prove that Mel has a total mastery of the typical swing style. His sound is more driving and aggressive than what we have come to expect from Mel, but it is a style that fits this music perfectly. The record is made up of big band standards, which Mel plays authentically. And yet you can hear the roots of the unique style that Mel went on to develop, primarily in his occasional use of bop phrases and kicks, which a traditional swing drummer would have never used. Overall, this is a delightful, energetic big band record. Terry Gibbs' vibes solos are short and Swingin', and Mel Lewis both supports and propels.

— Rick Mattingly 

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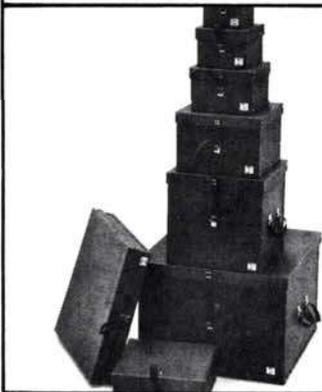
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who play in bands on weekends with other lawyers. We have about seven or eight senior citizens who are taking lessons, and they've got senior citizen bands. The youngest drummer we have is six, and I'm not sure how old the oldest student is. There are also a growing number of female drummers now. Things are opening up now at last, and it's not just a male-dominated activity anymore. The future is limitless, and girls should be involved. Why not? The macho thing is history as far as drumming is concerned. So the whole spectrum is here—from the pros who come in to take master classes with the greats to the kids who just put sticks in their hands. We're also putting a thing together for pre-

school-age kids, where we talk about rhythms from everyday life, and just try to show them how to enjoy making music with rhythm."

When asked what advantages drummers have in shopping at the Drum Center, Jerry replies, "To tell you the truth, pricewise, some of the prices are little bit more, and some prices are a little bit less. You can get a good price at a lot of places. First of all, we're an hour from New York City. Forty-eighth Street in New York City is literally the retail music market capital of the world. Also, I've got some good, strong, hard, clean competitors on Long Island, and there are tremendous mail-order houses. So pricewise, you can do well in a

lot of places, but I think what it's going to boil down to is service and after-the-sale support. So much happens after the sale. If you get a good competitive price, great. But my heavens, look at all the things drummers are always adding on. Things break. Cymbals are breaking. Lugs will crack. Drummers need someone to deal with sending things back to the factory. You need a retailer who will fight to get you the credit, or get it replaced at little or no cost.

"We try to stay as current as possible on our knowledge of the changes happening in the industry, so we can pass that information along to our customers. The only way we can really compete is through service, so we try our best. All of the people who work at the Drum Center are drummers, unlike many music stores where the person behind the counter is a guitar player who doesn't know much about drums. The same guy who sold you a set six months ago is still here, and is willing to help you if you have problems or want to add on. I think the services we provide keep us competitive along with our educational programs. Those are the things that keep people coming back to us.

"One other very important area to me especially is honesty with the customer. So many times, retailers pass along faulty information to keep a customer happy. For instance, someone is ordering a part, and the manufacturer tells the retailer that it takes a month to get it, but the retailer tells the customer that it will take a week. I will never do that. Customers shouldn't be played with that way. If you're honest with them, give a good price, stick with them, and try to educate them, drummers will keep coming back."

Since Jerry Ricci deals with drums and drum sales on a daily basis, he notices the purchasing trends of drummers. "Lately, people are spending money on the state-of-the-art sets. I know this is crazy, and I bet there are going to be a lot of people reading this and saying, 'I can't believe it,' but lately drummers are not blinking an eye at buying. Our three biggest sellers are the Yamaha *Recording Custom*, the Premier *Resonators*, and the Tama *Superstar* and *Artstar* sets, but even more so with *Artstar* now. We're starting to sell top-of-the-line sets more than anything else. The entry-level sets are selling well, like they normally do, but the middle-line sets aren't moving. Drummers are jumping from their beginning sets to the top-of-the-line models. Also, drummers are definitely leaning more towards the birch shells. Birch is definitely the wood right now. Finished shells, the nice clean tones they're getting out of the birch drums, the high-tension lugs all the way across the drums, and the molded hoops rather than the stamped hoops—they're going for good equipment.

"I think that, right now, the buying habits of the drummers reflect exactly those of the entire country," says Ricci.

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Jerry also has seen the trend happening in drum cosmetics. "I think the cosmetics are great, because the more variation and the more variety and the more options open, I think, the better. A lot of people say, 'It gets too confusing.' It is confusing to a retailer, because for instance, with cymbals, there are a lot of cymbal companies, and last year, I did try to be all things to every company. I tried to stock everybody and sell as much as I could, and I have had to narrow it down this year. I wouldn't even say what companies, but I have had to narrow it down a little bit, because I've found that, if I did stock everything, I'd probably go out of business."

"Luckily, not too many drummers have been buying with their eyes," says Jerry. "However, one guy came in with that Simmons ad from *Modern Drummer*. Remember that Simmons ad where they had that SDS9 with the black rack going around it? It was a black SDS9, a black Ultimate Supports stand, and black cymbals. A kid came in with his mother. He put the maga-

zine on the counter and said, 'That's what I want.' And he bought exactly that picture. It was the freakiest thing. He didn't want to hear it, didn't want to listen to the cymbals, didn't want to set up the SDS9, and didn't want to know how to work it; he just bought what was in that picture. His mother wrote a check out for the deposit. We ordered the whole thing. She came in, picked it up, and it was gone. That doesn't happen very often."

With the coming of electronic drums and drum machines, the Drum Center cautiously followed the action. Says Jerry, "I was hesitant at first about the electronics. I'm only 35 years old. I'm not an old-timer where I've got to have all acoustic, but I mean, I do have clientele like that. When we first displayed the electronics, it was difficult to have someone play them and listen to them, while another customer was trying to check out a cymbal. So we took it slow. We had a very conservative approach just to see what would happen. Well, things have kept growing, so we have increased our stock. Now we've got Roland, Dynacord, and the Tama *Techstar*, as well as the Simmons. We also handle the CB700 models from Simmons." Commenting on the future of electronics, Jerry says, "At some point, it should level off. Right now, about 30% of my sales are electronic. Drummers are starting to open up to it. The way things look now, drummers are using sets that combine acoustic

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and electronic. These hybrid kits are what's happening."

The Drum Center also sells drum machines, even though many players see them in a bad light. According to Ricci, the drummer on the street is definitely still at odds with drum machines. "The key to bringing drum machines and drummers together is through education. If drummers understood all of the different ways to use them, there would be no problem. First of all, you can use them to play a few songs at gigs. They free you up, so you can get up from behind the kit, and sing or play a timbale solo or something. Playing with a drum machine is a great way to improve your time. These are just a couple of things that they can do."

At many music stores, there is a "hands-on" attitude towards customers trying out equipment—not so at the Drum Center. According to Jerry, "If we have it here and it's on the floor, they can try it out. It's not as good as we would like it. I mean, still too many people are buying drumsets and not really trying them. There are a lot of reasons for that, too. For instance, we just don't have the room sometimes. All the rooms will be going with lessons, plus I'll have somebody who can't practice at home waiting to come in and grab the room for a half hour to practice. Then, I've got someone who wants to try out a set of drums. I try to schedule those people for the morning, when it's not so crazy. But we're working on it. We want to try to get it to

the point where customers can try out more things. They *can* try anything on the floor. If you notice, everything's got stick marks all over it. It doesn't matter."

The Long Island Drum Center is also involved in different aspects of the drumming business. The Drum Center has a book publishing division called D.C. Publications, which is involved with some excellent drum books. Also, the Drum Center has a shop that does drum re-covering, repairs, and customizing. The Drum Center covers a lot of territory, and all decisions are made by a group. To quote Jerry Ricci, "Almost everything we do here is a group decision. We have lots of meetings that cover a lot of topics. We also have a little board of advisors that helps us. Dom Famularo, Jim Chapin, Al Miller, Frank Marino, and Joe Franco all help us immensely in guiding our operation in the right direction."

The most notable feeling one gets from the people of the Long Island Drum Center is a positive, sharing attitude. "Doing well and trying to be successful are, to me, only half of it," says Jerry. "That's only half the goal, because if you have an emotionally and mentally bad work situation but are successful, it's not worth it. We all work together and try to help people grow. A lot of these people working here are my former students. That's the exciting part—to see them become successful and feel that I am a part of that, even if it is a small part."

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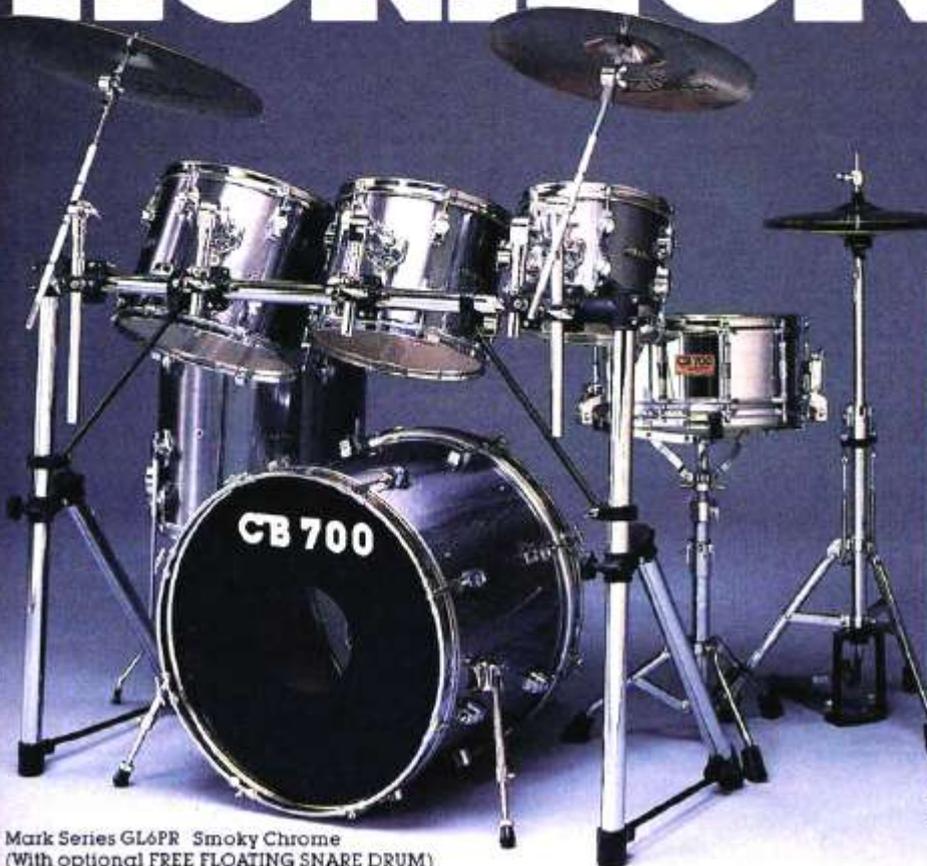
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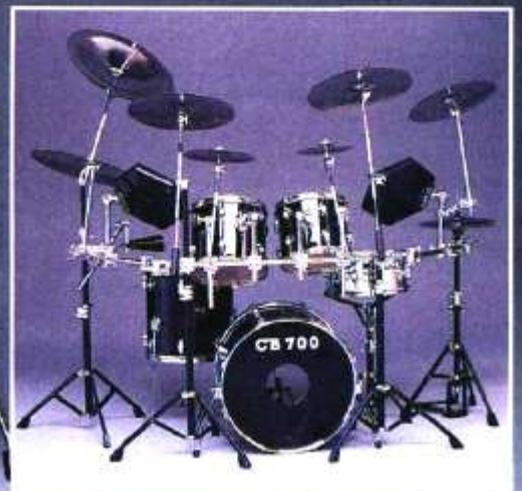
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by Roy Burns

Drummers And Drum Shops

The drum shop is a special place. When I started on my way to becoming a professional drummer, I studied at Jack and Johnnie's Drumshop in Kansas City. Jack Miller and John Terry were two of the best drummers in Kansas City during the 1950s. John Terry still teaches and plays in L.A.

Not only did I take lessons at Jack and Johnnie's, but I would also hang around for the entire day, talking—and sometimes practicing—with other students. We would exchange information, discuss equipment, and occasionally ask Jack or John to settle a difference of opinion.

The traditional drum shop is a friendly place. At Henry Adler's shop in New York City (no longer there), I met and talked with many famous drummers. I once watched Buddy Rich pick out a pair of hi-hats in the back room of Henry's store. After he found a pair he liked, he played a five-minute solo, just on the hi-hats. Henry and I were the only ones there, and it was a thrilling experience.

Louie Bellson used to drop in at Henry's whenever he was in town. He would talk to everyone, give advice, and sometimes grab

a pair of sticks and demonstrate his point on the ever-present practice pad on the counter.

In many ways, Bob Yeager's Pro Drum Shop in L.A. is typical of the traditional drum shop. Unlike many large music stores, this shop has a complete repair department. The Pro Drum Shop also stocks obsolete parts, just in case your set isn't new and the manufacturer is no longer in business. In addition, this store offers a large selection of books, music, and learning materials.

No one is ever in a hurry in a drum shop. If you want to take extra time to select sticks or pick out a cymbal, that's okay. There are no high-pressure or heavy sales tactics. The owner will have time to give advice and help whenever it is needed.

Much can be learned in a drum shop. In many cases, the owner is also a drum teacher. He or she is as interested in drumming as you are. Group discussions about technique, tuning, playing styles, and music in general are commonplace. Where else can you hang out with a group of drummers in a friendly atmosphere? You may also learn something in an easy and non-stressful way.

Drum shops come in all sizes. Ed Hameric started Atlanta Pro Percussion in a very small store. Today, it is one of the largest in the country. His stock of drumsets and cymbals is as complete as any I have seen. Ed still plays every week, promotes clinics constantly, and is as interested in drumming as he ever was.

Drum shops often offer very specialized equipment not found in the average full-line music store. The Modern Drum Shop in New York City is a favorite hangout for pros. Owner Joe Cusatis (an old friend) makes his own drums, sticks, and other items found nowhere else. Joe, like most drum shop owners, is happy to provide personalized service for any drummer with special needs.

Drum shops also promote clinics. It takes time, effort, and money to have clinics on a regular basis. Often, these clinics will feature top drummers and percussionists. But many shops also promote clinics by great young players who may not yet have established a big name. These clinics

tend to be less of a show, more down to earth, and often more educational. Clinics of this type are most often held in the store. Drum Headquarters, in St. Louis, Missouri, is a good example. The people there ask clinicians to do two clinics, -because they can only accommodate so many people at one time. This allows everyone to be close to the artists, and makes for an intimate and friendly atmosphere.

Once in a great while, a person who is not a drummer will run a drum shop. Bill Crowden's Drums Ltd. in Chicago is a good example. Bill doesn't claim to be a player, but he loves the drum business and drummers. He sells drums, cymbals, and books, and he regularly promotes clinics. He also has a great collection of rare old pedals, snare drums, and unusual instruments from all over the world. I sometimes feel that somehow Bill "thinks" like a drummer.

Most drum shops have a pot of coffee going or available all the time. Sometimes it is not the *greatest* coffee—especially late in the day—but it's the thought that counts.

I should add that there are a great many full-line music stores that have excellent drum departments. Usually, it is a separate area in the store devoted just to percussion. In a great many cases, these departments are carrying on the tradition of the drum shop. They have their own little world amidst the guitar and keyboard areas. The people who run these departments are just as dedicated as those in the established traditional shops.

One of the great advantages to traveling with a group or band is the opportunity to visit drum shops in various cities and parts of the country. The people at drum shops are always happy to see you, whether you're a "big name" or not. There are so many drum shops across the country that I can't possibly mention them all. As my examples in this article, I've only referred to a few that are run by friends of mine. However, as far as I'm concerned, *anyone* who runs a drum shop is a friend of mine.

Every drum shop is a labor of love. Drum shop owners are not in it just for the money. Their hearts are in it. The people who start drum shops are drummers, not people with business degrees. They enjoy being around drums and drummers. All drum shops contribute something special to that unusual fraternity that is like no other: the special fraternity of drummers. Drum shops help to bring drummers together. Visit your local drum shop or favorite drum department soon. The people there will be glad to see you.

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by Rick Van Horn

On Self-Satisfaction

I was in a club recently, visiting with a drummer on his break. The "joint was jumping," the crowd was happy and excited, and the band had sounded great on their last set. But the drummer was miserable. All he could do was tell me how depressed he was and how dissatisfied he was with himself. When I asked him what, specifically, was bothering him so much, he told me that he'd had the good fortune to attend a Rush concert a few nights earlier, and had been "blown away" by Neil Peart's playing. He had then gone right home and jumped on his practice kit, where—to his dismay—he found that he couldn't reproduce a single one of Neil's patterns.

Before we could continue our discussion, it was time for him to go back on. He went on stage and counted the band into a blistering version of Huey Lewis & The News' "Power Of Love." This was followed by a succession of recent hit tunes, all with a strong R&B or straight-ahead rock feel: tunes by Bruce Springsteen, Bryan Adams, and even James Brown.

The drummer was solid and driving, the band was tight, and the crowd continued to enjoy itself immensely all through that set. Yet, when my friend came offstage for his next break, he picked up his lament from the point where he had left off.

When he had finished speaking, I told him that he ought to look around. He was totally unaware of the effect that his playing had had on his audience. Instead of being wrapped up in what he *couldn't* do, he ought to have taken pride in what he was doing, night after night. He was a *very good* straight-ahead rock drummer, capable of providing absolutely everything that was necessary for his band to be tremendously successful at what they were doing. I asked him if his group did any Rush material at all, and he told me that they didn't. I told him that it didn't surprise me that he was unable to play in Neil Peart's style when he wasn't playing any of the music that Neil performs. I had had the same problem earlier in my career, when I went to hear Buddy Rich or David Garibaldi. I had immediately wanted to play the kinds of patterns that those two amazing stylists played. But my band didn't do anything even remotely like the material that Buddy or David performed. I could woodshed all I liked, but without having the opportunity to work with other musicians playing the same music (and thus gain input from them as to feel and style), I would probably not achieve any real authenticity in whatever I played. On the other hand, I was good at what I did with my band, and we were quite a successful group.

I'm a very big believer in the adage that you play best what you play most. I also believe that you have to allow yourself time to develop skills at anything new, before you begin to evaluate yourself at it. My friend was used to playing straight-ahead rock, and he was very good at it. With that background, even if his group did decide to attempt some Rush material, he would likely not have been able to just jump right in and start playing it authentically. He would have needed to work into the new material along with the other

members of the band, so that it became as natural to him as the more familiar styles in which he was already proficient. In the interim, he would probably experience more dissatisfaction with himself, unless he realized that the process of developing a new style takes time and gave himself that time before becoming too self-critical.

Larrie Londin—who is a drummer I respect tremendously—is a classic example of what I'm talking about here. Larrie is widely known as a top session drummer—particularly on country-oriented albums. What isn't widely known is that Larrie didn't start out in Nashville, or even in country music. Larrie got his start in the studios playing R&B music in Detroit. When he made a move to Nashville, he didn't even know what many of his first producers were talking about when they asked him to play in certain ways. But he stuck with it, learned by doing, and became what he is today by "working into it." In recent years, Larrie has branched out into commercial rock projects like Steve Perry's 1984 solo album, *Street Talk*, and most of Journey's new album, as well as projects with Adrian Belew. I'm quite sure that Larrie didn't sit right down and play the patterns that ultimately wound up on vinyl or on stage with those artists. But he had the basic talent and skills from which to draw, and he allowed himself the time to develop the style and technique necessary to excel on those new projects.

My drummer friend had lost sight of the fact that he was actually a tremendous success at what he was doing. He could only see that he was having no success at doing something else. This type of attitude can only lead to depression and dissatisfaction with one's abilities, which, in turn, can affect one's current performance level. If you don't feel good about your playing—even if it's playing that you aren't actually doing on stage—then you're not going to play well when you *are* on stage.

Please don't get the idea that I'm against woodshedding or against the idea of attempting to learn a style that you aren't currently performing. I think that such an effort is very positive, since it can expand your range and make you more versatile. All I'm saying is: Don't expect to achieve expert status at a style of music that you don't have an opportunity to play regularly. The only way to become truly proficient at a musical style is to play in that style with other musicians. In that way,

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ideas are exchanged, details and nuances can be explained to you by others with more experience, and a real education can be obtained. Learning the patterns of other artists (either from transcriptions or from recordings) and even playing along with records are methods that are only moderately effective when it comes to giving you the real foundation upon which to build your new skills.

I do feel that I should caution you about one potentially dangerous aspect of practicing and developing styles of drumming other than those you are currently performing. When you do become reasonably proficient at a new style, your natural inclination is to want to apply it to what you are doing regularly. You're like a child with a new toy; you can't help but want to play with it. The unfortunate situation is that often the music you are performing simply cannot accommodate drumming in the new style. (My drummer friend could not have gotten away with Neil Peart fills in a James Brown tune, for example.) Consequently, here you sit with all this new technique but with no outlet for it. That can be very frustrating and can lead to further dissatisfaction. Only this time, it's not dissatisfaction with yourself but, rather, with the music you are performing. You stop looking at the music in its own light and start seeing it only as material that you can't play the way you want to play (whether or not "the way you want to play" is right for the song). This, in turn, can cause friction within the band and could ultimately lead to serious problems. I don't mean to imply that your practicing a different style of drumming is automatically going to break up your band, but you should be aware of the frustration factor that exists in such an activity. You might want to take a hard look at that, and evaluate whether or not it's worth even the potential risk. In other words, why knock yourself out to learn something that you won't be able to play regularly, when that lack of opportunity might eventually cause other problems for you? It has to be a conscious decision made after considerable thought.

In the meantime, be aware of the quality of work that you *are* doing. Rather than get down on yourself because you can't play like Bill Bruford (even though you aren't playing *any* King Crimson material), take a look around and see if what you *are* playing is entertaining your audience. Do you get a nice round of applause at the end of a tune? Are people smiling? Are they dancing? If they are, you have nothing to be dissatisfied with. You're obviously doing your job and doing it well. Give yourself credit where it's due, for what you are able to accomplish. Then, if you wish, go out and strive for more with a positive attitude, instead of feeling that you have to catch up.



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Drumfire DF-2000 Percussion Synthesizer



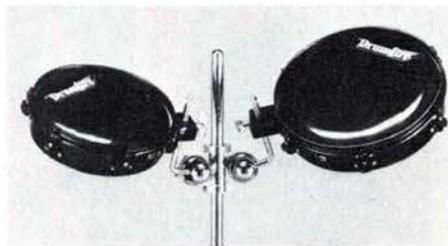
The Drumfire *DF-2000* is a two-channel, rack-mountable analog drum synth. Each channel on the *DF-2000* is capable of two different sounds, which are changeable at the front panel or via a footswitch. All sounds are set up by the user. This is easily done; the two channels each have double sets of controls. The "manual" mode has color-coded rotary knobs, while the "manual preset" mode controls are smaller black knobs. Each channel has a push button (with LEDs) to select either manual or preset. (I can't understand why it's called "preset"; there's no inner memory storage or lock-out provision preventing the knobs from being turned after you've found the sound you want.) Also, each channel has a push button to turn that channel on or off, without shutting down the entire unit. The channels can self-trigger via yet another push button (with LED) on the control panel. This enables you to sample your sound setup at the panel, rather than at the drumkit. The *DF-2000* will trigger from mic's, metronomes, and drum machines, as well as via sensor pickups and drumpads, which are both produced by Drumfire. More on those two later.

Controls for each channel are: sensitivity, oscillator 1 and 2 decay, noise decay, sweep, pitch, wave shape, noise filter, balance, volume, and impact click. The rear of the unit has 1/4" jacks for separate channel outputs and inputs, as well as for a remote footswitch selector. It should be noted that, although the *DF-2000* is capable of producing four different analog sounds, the sounds themselves cannot be individually inputted and outputted; only the two main channels can be triggered or routed to a mixing board.

All sounds are typically analog. If it's a realistic drum sound you want, you won't get it from this particular unit. Since there are no true preset sounds, all parameters of

a sound must be set up individually, and the entire operation and sound sculpting of the unit are in the hands of the user. The control dials are quite sensitive, and the most minute alteration of settings will alter the sound. Experimentation is the only way to get to the sound you want. It also may be a good idea to treat the sounds with EQ or gating to get more "current" drum sounds and effects. (Drumfire also makes an eight-channel stereo mixer to aid in this.) The Drumfire's sounds are ones we've all heard before from other analog units. What sets it apart from the rest, though, is its extremely reasonable price of \$195!

Two companions to the *DF-2000* are available: drum trigger pads and sensor pickups. Drumfire makes 10" and 12" round electronic pads. They have real drumheads with foam underneath, and are fully tensionable. The shell is black, the heads are black, the hoops are black—even the tension rods are black, and the pads have black plywood bases.



A W jack on the side of the shell allows connection to the *DF-2000*. The pads will fit onto almost any L-arm style holder. (Drumfire also has a double holder stand available at \$127.) The pads have a good feel and natural rebound, and they are pretty well impact-dampened. The 10" pads retail at \$115; the 12" at \$132.

Drumfire's sensor pickups are designed to be mounted onto an acoustic drum. The sensors are basically one-inch rubberized squares with an adhesive patch on the pickup side. A cable with 1/4" plug is permanently attached, and (as far as I can tell from only seeing two of them) they are all color-coded. The sensors allow triggering of the control unit from virtually anything—a drum, a cymbal, a tape box—anything that you can strike and the sensor will adhere to. The sensors do work well. I haven't seen any specs on them, but I imagine they would trigger other drum synth units, also. A set of five retails at \$75.

As I stated earlier, the *DF-2000*'s remarkably low price makes it worthy of attention on that attribute alone. I know of

no other unit near the \$195 price that has the features of the Drumfire. If you can't afford the digital bucks, it may be worth your while to take a look at this unit.

Gretsch ED-200 Pro Dual



As a follow-up to its *Blackhawk* electronic drumkit (reviewed *MD*: May '85), Gretsch has developed the *ED-200 Pro Dual* setup. The system consists of two round black pads, a rack-mount brain, plus a floor stand on which to mount the pads. The pads are approximately 11" in diameter, and have a somewhat hardened playing surface, though not as rigid as the old Simmons *SDS5* pads had. When playing the *Pro Dual* pads, your acoustic stick sound is quite audible.



The *Pro Dual* mixer brain has two channels, each with controls to adjust sensitivity, decay, bend, pitch, noise/tone balance, and volume. Each channel also has a selector knob, which enables you to choose between preset bass drum, snare drum, high, mid, and low tom sounds. The "manual" setting allows full use of the individual function controls. When modifying the presets, all controls are operable, except for pitch.

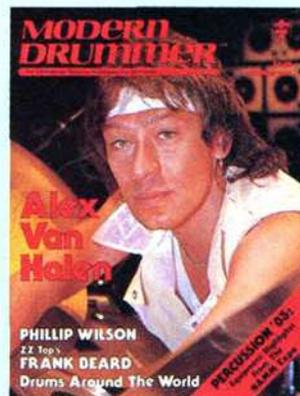
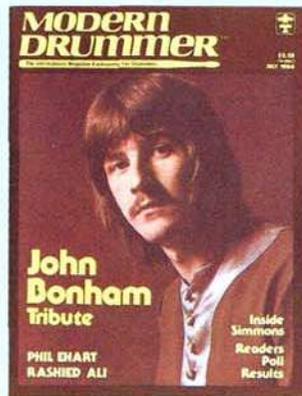
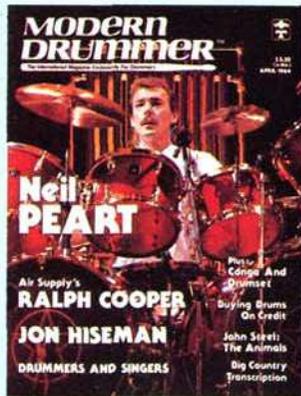
The rear of the brain has a 1/4" master output jack, plus XLR jacks for the two pad inputs. If desired, headphones may be used, via the master output jack. An AC adapter is used to power the unit.

A double tom-tom stand is included with the setup. It has a double-braced tripod base, with a memory lock at the height tube. Atop the tube is a tri-hole adapter block that accepts the two tubular mounting arms. These arms have a concealed ratchet adjustment and pass through the pad shells.

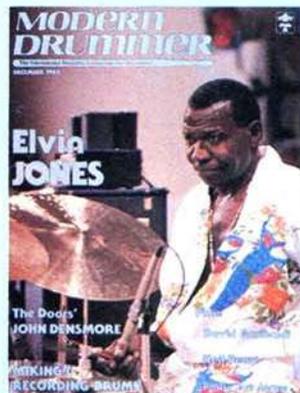
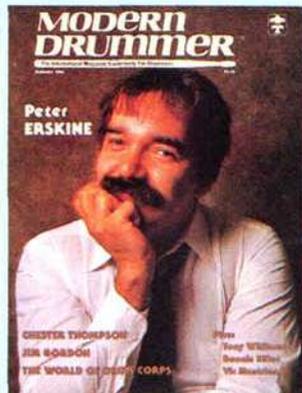
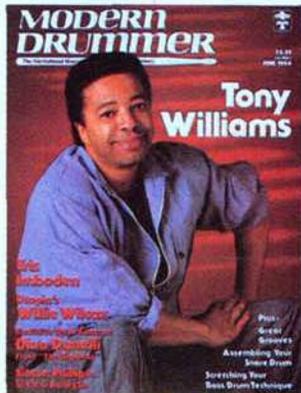
The preset sounds of the *Pro Dual* are very electronic-sounding and maybe even a little "behind the times." They aren't as powerful and "drummy" as other analog sounds I've heard, but for \$399 complete, the *Pro Dual* may be useful for getting budget-conscious drummers started into the field of electronic drums.

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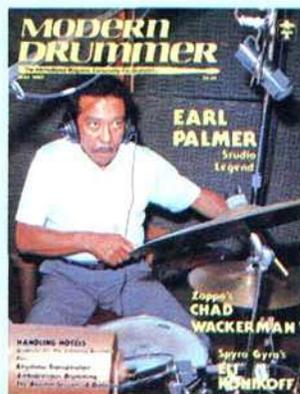
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DRUMMERS COLLECTIVE OFFERS CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

For the first time ever, Drummers Collective is offering a Certificate Program. This ten-week program began in July 1986, and will be held at regular intervals throughout the year. Courses included will be Studio Drumming, Third World Rhythms for Drumset, and

Contemporary Drum Styles, as well as ensembles and master classes with such drummers as Steve Gadd, Lenny White, and Max Weinberg. For more information, contact Drummers Collective, 541 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10011, or call (212) 741-0091.

DEAN MARKLEY, SHURE SPONSOR MILLER MUSIC ROCK NETWORK

Dean Markley products (including that company's line of drumsticks), and Shure microphones and sound reinforcement products are among those offered in support of the Miller Brewing Company's Miller Music Rock Network, a program that offers a comprehensive promotion and marketing program to the up-and-coming bands on its roster. The sponsors supply each of the 16 popular regional and semi-national bands with equip-

ment, thereby maximizing product visibility at the grassroots level. According to Gary Reynolds, who developed the Rock Network concept and whose promotion agency coordinates the national program for Miller High Life, "The equipment sponsor concept is an important aspect of the overall promotional package. Their support goes a long way toward enhancing the bands' performances."

WILLIAMS ENDORSES AQUARIAN STICKS



Photo by Laura Friedman

Buddy Williams, top New York session drummer and member

of the *Saturday Night Live* band, now endorses Aquarian *Formula X-10* drumsticks. Roy Burns, Vice President of Marketing for Aquarian, said, "We are very excited to have someone of Buddy's caliber using our sticks. His work with Manhattan Transfer and on *Saturday Night Live* attests to his ability as a top professional drummer." According to Buddy, "I won't record or go on tour with anything but my X-10s. They are my 'equalizers.' I can make any drumset sound good with my 'equalizers'; they produce a great sound from drums and cymbals. Even the sound engineers agree."

JAY SCHELLEN SIGNS WITH TAMA

Jay Schellen, currently performing with L.A.-based rock band Hurricane, has recently been added to the Tama endorsement roster. Jay's credits include performances with Badfinger, Peter Banks,

and Lita Ford, as well as studio and stage work across the U.S. Jay's current setup includes a custom snakeskin *Superstar* kit and Tama's *Power Tower Cage* rack system.

BROWN AND SABIAN OFFER UNIQUE CLINIC

Drum clinics have become a major vehicle for both promotion and education. And what better way to combine selfish interests with those of the multitude: Manufacturers get their wares displayed in a most credible setting under welcome scrutiny, and students are afforded a rare opportunity to hear famous players carry on their craft outside of the usual hockey-rink venues. Ordinarily, what happens is that a local music dealership makes an arrangement with a prominent manufacturer, which, in turn, agrees to send a noted artist to one or more cities in which the product(s) endorsed by the artist are amply represented in friendly retail outlets. More often than not, the manufacturer kicks in door prizes and attractive promo packages.

Recently, however, the manufacturer-dealer relationship was bypassed in Ottawa, Canada, where Ambience Recorders held the first in a series of music clinics. The 24-track, downtown studio—which holds major accounts for national airlines and imported beers—feels that perpetuating business means injecting something into the local scene. (A refreshing attitude!) I was originally slated to launch the series, and I felt capable of cutting it, since, in addition to being the Canadian correspondent for *MD*, I had done a couple of "drum recording" seminars for apprentice engineers. I also do a lot of jingles, short films, and similar projects in Ottawa. But I don't do records or touring, so the situation boiled down to "Who's Bruce Wittet?" So I approached Sabian for help. With typical graciousness, Sabian's Roy Edmunds said, "I think I can get Gerry Brown." I was especially pleased at this, since I used to woodshed Gerry's licks on Chick Corea's *Music Magic* LP.

So it was that Gerry appeared, right on the studio floor, to a capacity crowd—most of whom found seating in the main room. For the overflow, Gerry's kit was lightly miked with a couple of *U87*s, and the sound and picture were

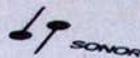
carried to anterooms on video monitors.

Gerry is a master at working a crowd. He slips from sober observations of working relationships with top stars like Lionel Richie to Eddie Murphy-type flashbacks to his formative years. What was really a treat was his ability to transport some basic rudiments—things we all should have learned—into hot playing in a solid, contemporary context. Performing on a Remo kit, tuned just this side of loose, he was capable of extraordinary delicacy. And, as might be expected from a man well over six feet in height, he can smack the drums hard. Gerry has taken back-sticking (a marching technique of rapidly alternating from butt to bead of the stick on the playing surface) to great musical heights. Particularly enjoyable was a delightful samba in which one stick flickered across the hi-hat with lilting 16ths, freeing the other to travel drum-to-drum.

Gerry had inadvertently left his cymbals at a rehearsal, so he breezed through the Sabian office in Toronto, where Roy Edmunds helped him round up a set in the HH line, including the new *Leopard* ride (a heavy item surprisingly expressive for all styles). One of Gerry's plugs for Sabian HHs was that, whereas the hand hammering makes each cymbal unique, the quality and rich, shimmering sound are built in consistently. Thus, while he couldn't recapture the sounds he left in the rehearsal hall, he succeeded—in 15 minutes—in securing a new, equally pleasing combination right off the rack!

Gerry went an hour overtime, fielding questions patiently, and announced that the response was encouraging him to consider returning for master classes. The evening was an unqualified success in a city starved for clinicians, and suffering a demise of club life and community musical activity. Hats off to Sabian for taking a big chance in supporting an education event with absolutely no retail dealership participation.—*T. Bruce Wittet*





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*Suggested retail price. Does not include cymbals.

CALATO CHESTER THOMPSON STICK



Photo by Chris Cuffaro

Calato Manufacturing, makers of *Regal* wood-tip and *Regal Tip* nylon-tip drumsticks, recently announced the introduction of a new model stick,

developed by Chester Thompson and Joe Calato, Jr. The stick, which will bear Thompson's signature, is 17" long and .580" in diameter (which makes it similar in diameter to a 5A but one inch longer), and has an oval wooden bead. It is made of top-grade U.S. southern hickory.

Commenting on Thompson's new status as a Calato consultant/endorser, a spokesperson for the company said, "The years of experience and expertise of Chester's playing with groups such as Weather Report, Genesis, Frank Zappa, and Phil Collins will be a great asset to the Calato company."

UNO 58 HEADS FROM EVANS

Evans Products, Inc. recently introduced the *UNO 58* single-ply drumhead for drummers in all aspects of the music industry. Although better known for two-ply heads (marketed for nearly 30 years), Evans reports that the new one-ply head has been well received by both students and professionals. According to Evans President Bob Beals, "We expect the *UNO 58* to gain its own loyal following."

All Evans drumheads are available in several different finishes and/or colors, in sizes that range from 6" tom-tom up to 40" bass drum. A total of 89

different heads make up the *UNO 58* line at the present time. Evans' drumhead design features a belted fiberglass composite flesh-hoop, with the film evenly imbedded. The hoop makes the only contact with the drum's counterhoop, and because it is slightly flexible, allows the head to fit perfectly even on drumshells that are out of round. Evans heads are available through distributors nationwide and internationally. For free *UNO 58* literature, write or call the manufacturer at Evans Products, Inc., Box 58, Dodge City, KS 67801, (316) 225-1308.

ZILDJIAN SCIMITAR CYMBALS



The Avedis Zildjian Company recently announced the introduction of its new *Scimitar* series, directed toward entry-level drummers. The new models are the result of the latest Zildjian Sound Lab design technology. Each cymbal is created from a special metal alloy formulation, and is made with

a combination of new technology and traditional skills. The result is a cymbal with fast response, quick decay, and even overtones, so that young players can attain a high quality of sound. Every *Scimitar* is sound-tested by an experienced drummer before it leaves the factory.

The new line features the following models: 20" ride, 18" crash/ride, 16" crash, 14" hi-hat, and 14" band pair. For further information, contact Colin Schofield, Avedis Zildjian Company, 22 Longwater Drive, Norwell, MA 02061, (617) 871-2200.

KORG DDD-1 DRUM MACHINE

The *DDD-1 Digital Dynamic Drums* unit from Korg U.S.A. uses a sophisticated computer sampling/editing program and an EPROM "burner" to store a variety of drumset and percussion sounds. The *DDD-1's* software is designed to bring those sounds to life in exciting, flexible grooves. The unit's PCM-encoded sounds include two bass drums and two snares (one heavily processed with lots of gated reverb), two sets of open and closed hi-hats, ride and crash cymbals, three tomtoms, cowbell, tambourine, claps, Cabasa, and rimshot. Tuning, decay, and dynamics are programmable for every drum on every beat. Each sound can be assigned to any of the 14 pads, or each pad can play different tuning/decay settings of one sound. Sounds can also be "stacked" on a pad. The pads are touch-sensitive, for control of accents and grace notes when programming rhythms. Cymbals can be set to retrigger with each attack in the fashion of typical monomode digital drum machines, or set to provide a more natural poly-mode playback, where the first sound continues to ring even when the cymbal is triggered

again. The *DDD-1* has one-button automatic control of rolls and flams, and the speed of the rolls is programmable. The *DDD-1* is provided with multiple output capability for mixing and equalizing individual channels, as well as stereo master outputs. The unit features MIDI in and out, along with sync-to-tape capability, and can also function as a sequencer. A sampling option allows recording of sounds directly, and the unit's on-board memory can store sampled sounds when the unit is turned off. The memory also can store up to 100 patterns and ten songs, and displays the name of each with an alphanumeric readout. Programs can also be "dumped" onto tape or RAM (Random Access Memory) cards. A slot for the insertion of RAM cards is provided on the front of the machine. ROM (Read-Only Memory) cards may be inserted into four slots in the machine's front panel to expand the number of sound sources. For further specifications and performance information, contact Korg U.S.A., 89 Frost Street, Westbury, NY 11590, (516) 333-9100.

MIDI LINK FOR DRUMS

Whether you are playing MIDI pads or keyboards, or running signals from sequencers, the *midrum* generates a specially designed pulse train to give perfect control of the whole *ddrum* dynamic range. *Midrum* makes it possible to trigger a *ddrum* rack from a drum machine that doesn't have separate audio outputs, turning it into an extremely flexible and great-sounding digital drum system. It even allows you to

play with dynamic volume and pitch from a nondynamic MIDI source. The *midrum* unit is a rack module for *ddrums*, usable with or without the *ddrums* mixer. It can be used to trigger both *ddrum* rack modules and stand-alone *ddrums*. For further information and performance specifications, contact *ddrum*, 1201 U.S. Highway One, Suite 250, North Palm Beach, FL 33408, (305) 622-0010.

SABIAN "REINTRODUCES" B8 CYMBALS

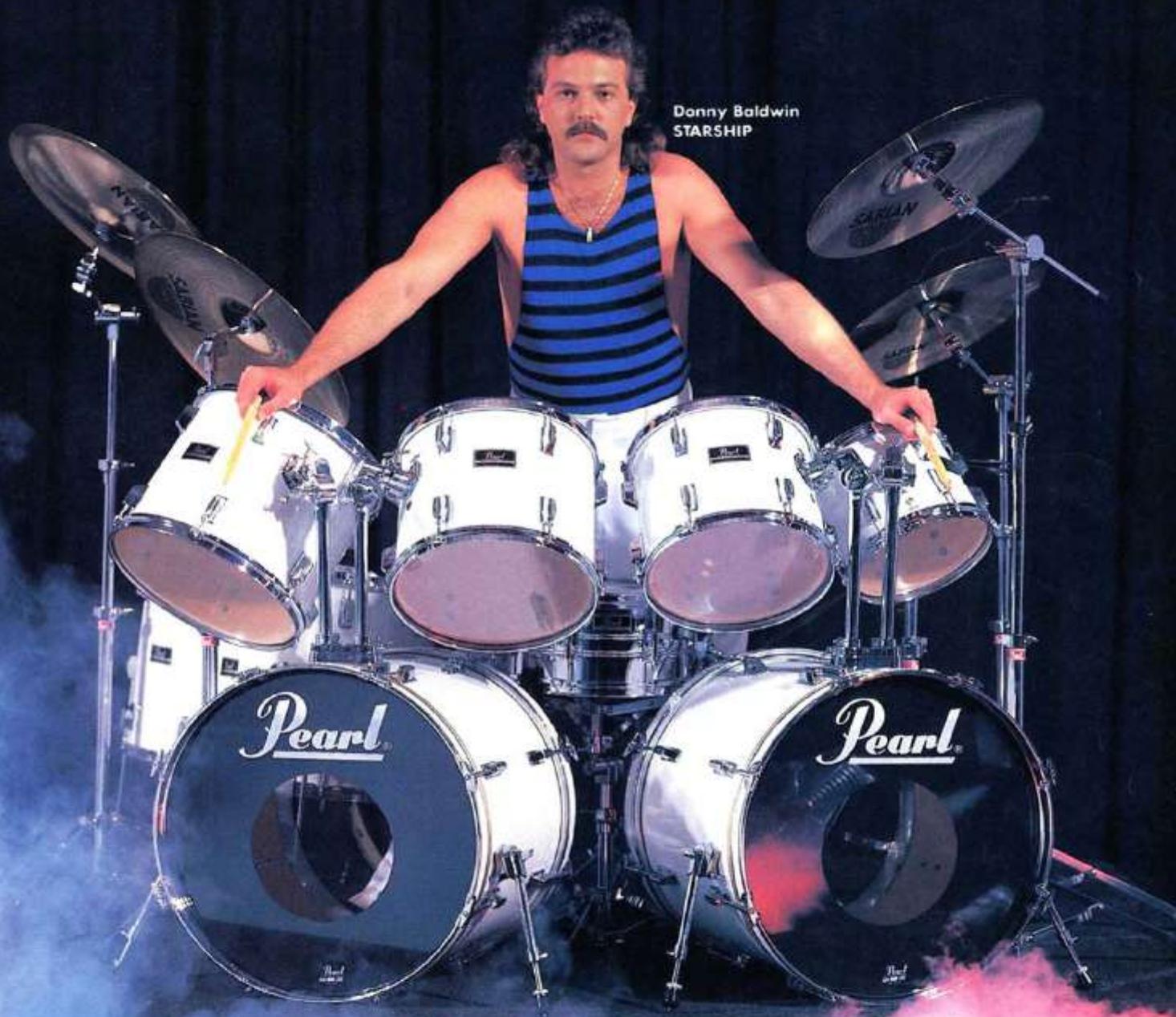
The *B8* line of starter cymbals is receiving new attention from Sabian. New and very modern production equipment has recently been installed at the Sabian plant in Meductic, New Brunswick, Canada, totally dedicated to the manufacture of *B8* cymbals. Sabian has also made plans to increase its mar-

keting attention to the *B8* line, including new catalogs and ad material. According to David McAllister, Marketing Vice President of Sabian, "We believe that the *B8* is unquestionably the best combination of sound quality and price for the beginning drummer."

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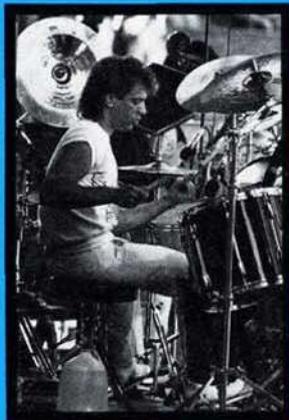


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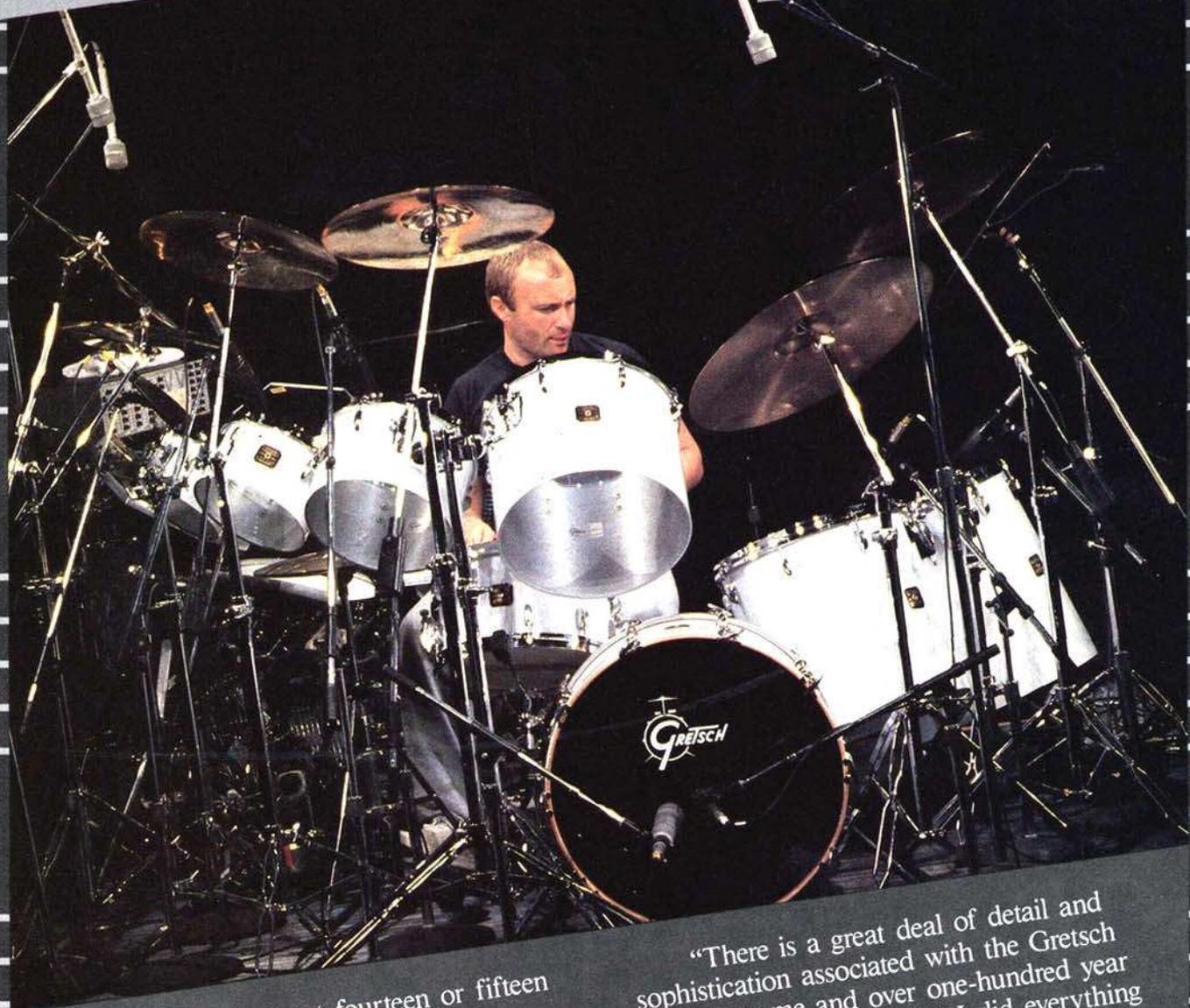
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Why do I play Gretsch?

Phil Collins
Genesis, producer & solo artist



"When I was about fourteen or fifteen years old, a good friend of mine who played drums in Joe Cocker's grease-band was playing Gretsch. I persuaded him to sell me his kit. From that moment, I was a Gretsch player. I still own that kit and it still sounds great today."

"Gretsch has always been 'a drummer's drum' and when the opportunity developed allowing me to play Gretsch again, I jumped at the chance."

"There is a great deal of detail and sophistication associated with the Gretsch product, name and over one-hundred year heritage. Sometimes I wish I did everything as well as they do."

"How do I like my new drums? They're beautiful in sound and looks...And most important, they're Gretsch."



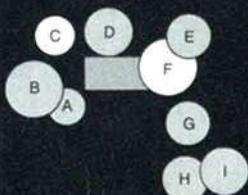
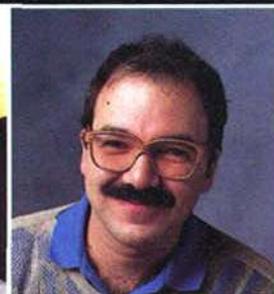
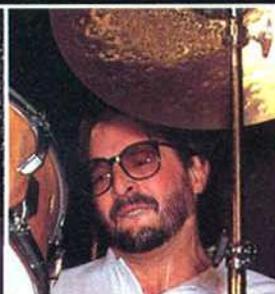
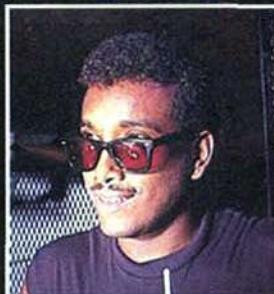
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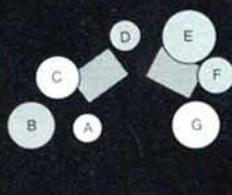
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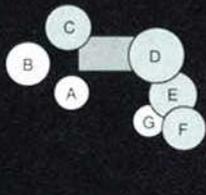
TONY THOMPSON

- A. 15" Quick Beat Hi Hats
- B. 22" Swish
- C. 16" Z. Light Power Crash
- D. 19" Thin Crash
- E. 17" K. China Boy
- F. 22" Z. Light Power Ride
- G. 17" Paper Thin Crash
- H. 18" Thin Crash
- I. 19" K. China Boy



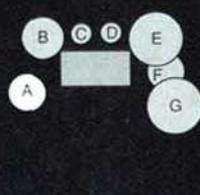
STEVE SMITH

- A. 13" Z. Dyno Beat Hi Hats
- B. 20" K. Flat Top Ride
- C. 18" Z. Light Power Crash
- D. 12" A. Splash
- E. 22" K. Ride
- F. 16" K. Dark Crash
- G. 20" Z. Power Smash



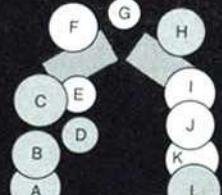
PETER ERSKINE

- A. 13" Z. Dyno Beat Hi Hats
- B. 16" Z. Light Power Crash
- C. 17" Crash Ride Brilliant
- D. 20" K. Ride
- E. 18" K. Flat Top Ride
- F. 16" Swish With Rivets
- G. 12" Z. Splash



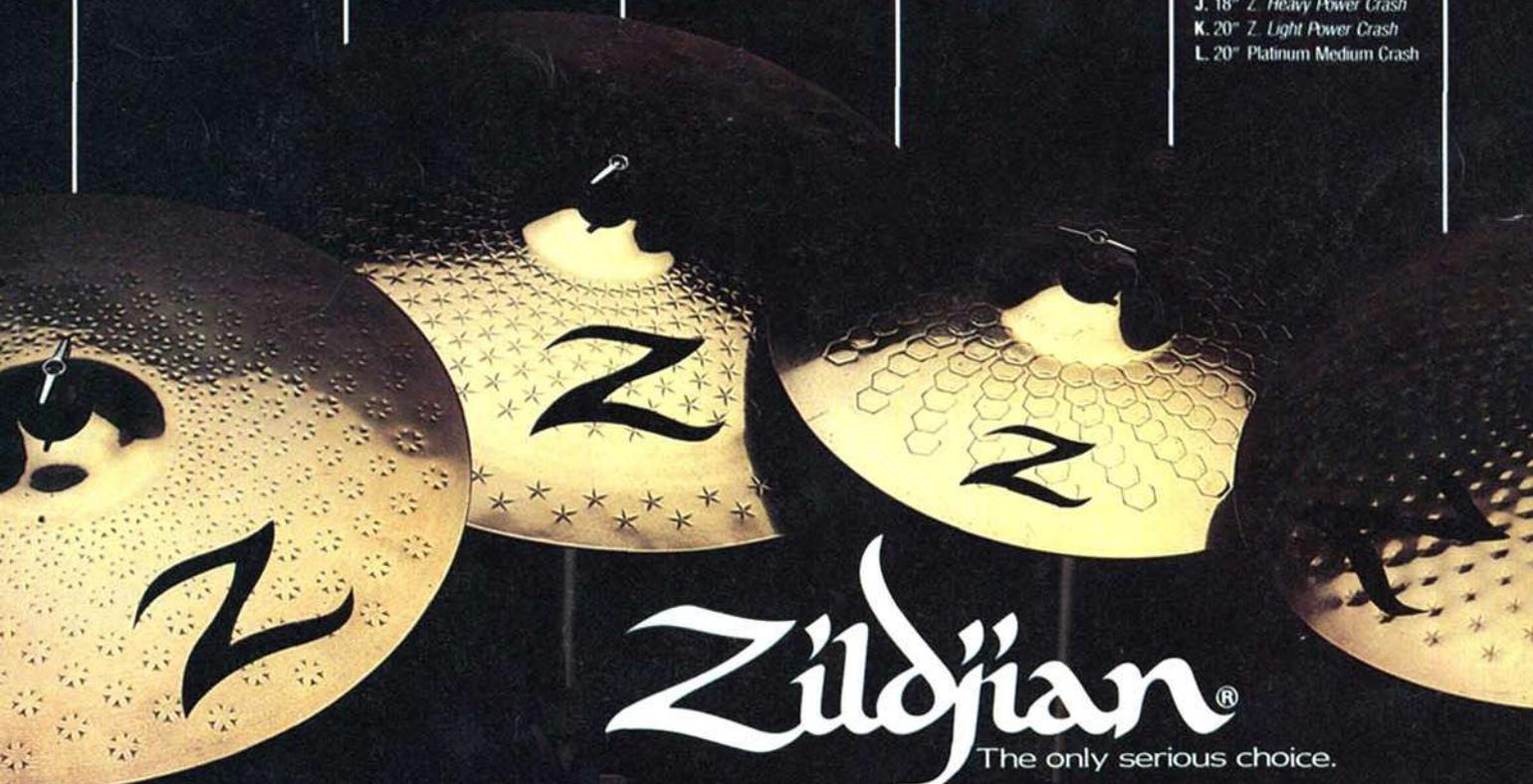
SLY DUNBAR

- A. 13" Z. Dyno Beat Hi Hats
- B. 16" Thin Crash
- C. 8" A. Splash
- D. 8" K. Splash
- E. 19" Thin Crash
- F. 17" K. China Boy
- G. 20" China Boy Low



TOMMY ALDRIDGE

- A. 19" Platinum Medium Crash
- B. 18" Platinum Rock Crash
- C. 20" Platinum Thin Crash
- D. 14" Rock Hi Hats (closed)
- E. 14" Z. Dyno Beat Hi Hats
- F. 18" Z. Light Power Crash
- G. 12" Z. Splash
- H. 18" Platinum Rock Crash
- I. 22" Z. Light Power Ride
- J. 18" Z. Heavy Power Crash
- K. 20" Z. Light Power Crash
- L. 20" Platinum Medium Crash



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