

MODERN DRUMMER

The World's First International Magazine For Drummers



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Randy Castillo

CURT
CRESS

CHRISTIAN
DRUMMERS: PART 1

Plus: Shop Talk With Pat Foley ● Korg's DDD-1
Ringo: The Middle Years ● Ed Shaughnessy
On Dig Band ● Carl Palmer's "Brain Salad Surgery"



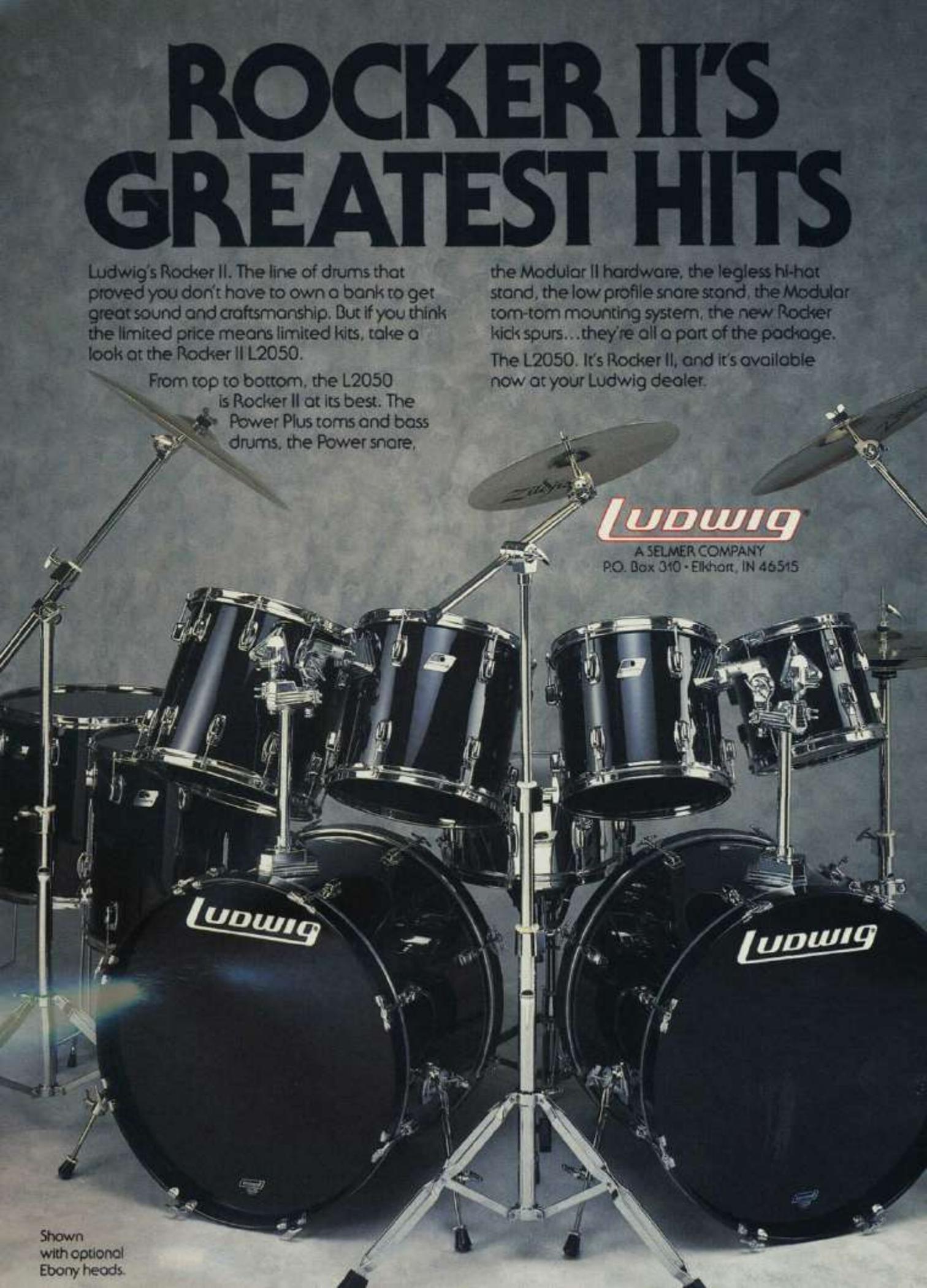
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RANDY CASTILLO

Imagine this: You are at home with a broken leg, and you get a call to audition for Ozzy Osbourne. That happened to Randy Castillo, and he got the gig. Here, he discusses such topics as his double bass drum work and showmanship in drumming.
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Known for his work in Germany's recording studios and his playing with the band Passport, Curt Cress has also recorded with Freddie Mercury, Meatloaf, and Billy Squier. Curt explains why the German approach is attracting British and American artists and producers.
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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



A Bigger And Better MD

Three years ago, Modern Drummer Publications introduced a second magazine called *Modern Percussionist*. For three consecutive years, *MP* made a very worthwhile contribution to the percussive arts. As many of you know, *MP* covered the symphonic, keyboard percussion, drum corps, and Latin/ethnic areas of drumming. I'm extremely proud of the accomplishments of *MP*, and I think the writers, photographers, columnists, and in-house staff, under the competent guidance of Editor Rick Mattingly, are to be commended for producing such a superb publication.

Despite all this, we've unfortunately been forced to discontinue the publication for economic reasons. However, we will be carrying a goodly portion of editorial material normally run in *MP*, back into the pages of *Modern Drummer*. Feature material on prominent percussion artists will become a part of *MD's* regular format, as will many of *MP's* very popular column departments. You'll begin to notice the effects of this editorial expansion with this issue. Columns such as *Master Class*, *Timp Talk*, *Corps Scene*, and *Orchestral Percussionist*, among others, will gradually be absorbed into *Modern Drummer* during the next several months. And many of the same respected professionals like Vic Firth, Dave Samuels, Ed Mann, Anthony Cirone, Dennis DeLucia, John Santos, and Emil Richards will continue to write articles for these highly specialized departments.

The response to *MP* from percussionists worldwide has been extremely satisfying. And it's because of this that we wish to continue publishing material of this nature. We've also, over the years, had a substantial number of *MD* readers express

an interest in reading more about percussion in the pages of *MD*. We've therefore decided that the best way to please everyone is to combine the multiple facets of drumming and percussion, and cover the complete spectrum under the single heading of *Modern Drummer*. We'll accomplish this not by dropping relevant drumset material from *Modern Drummer*, but by adding percussion-oriented material to each issue.

For those who've been reading both magazines for the past three years, you'll now be getting the content of both in one tidy package each month. And you'll only need to keep tabs on one yearly magazine subscription, rather than two.

I also can't help but think that there's another subtle, hidden benefit to all of this for drummers. We all know that, in this day and age, versatility has gotten to be a *key word* in the vocabulary of every serious-minded drummer. It's imperative, now more than ever, that we make an attempt to learn as much as possible about drumming and percussion, and be as well-versed as we possibly can in both areas. By doing so, we benefit by increasing our value as musicians in the tough, competitive world of music, where knowledge and versatility are essential ingredients for success. I strongly believe that *MD* can perform the greatest service for all serious drummers by combining all of drumming and percussion under one heading.

The primary purpose for the existence of *Modern Drummer* is to aid you in becoming the best musician you can possibly be. Keeping you attuned to the *total world* of drumming helps us to accomplish just that.

RS

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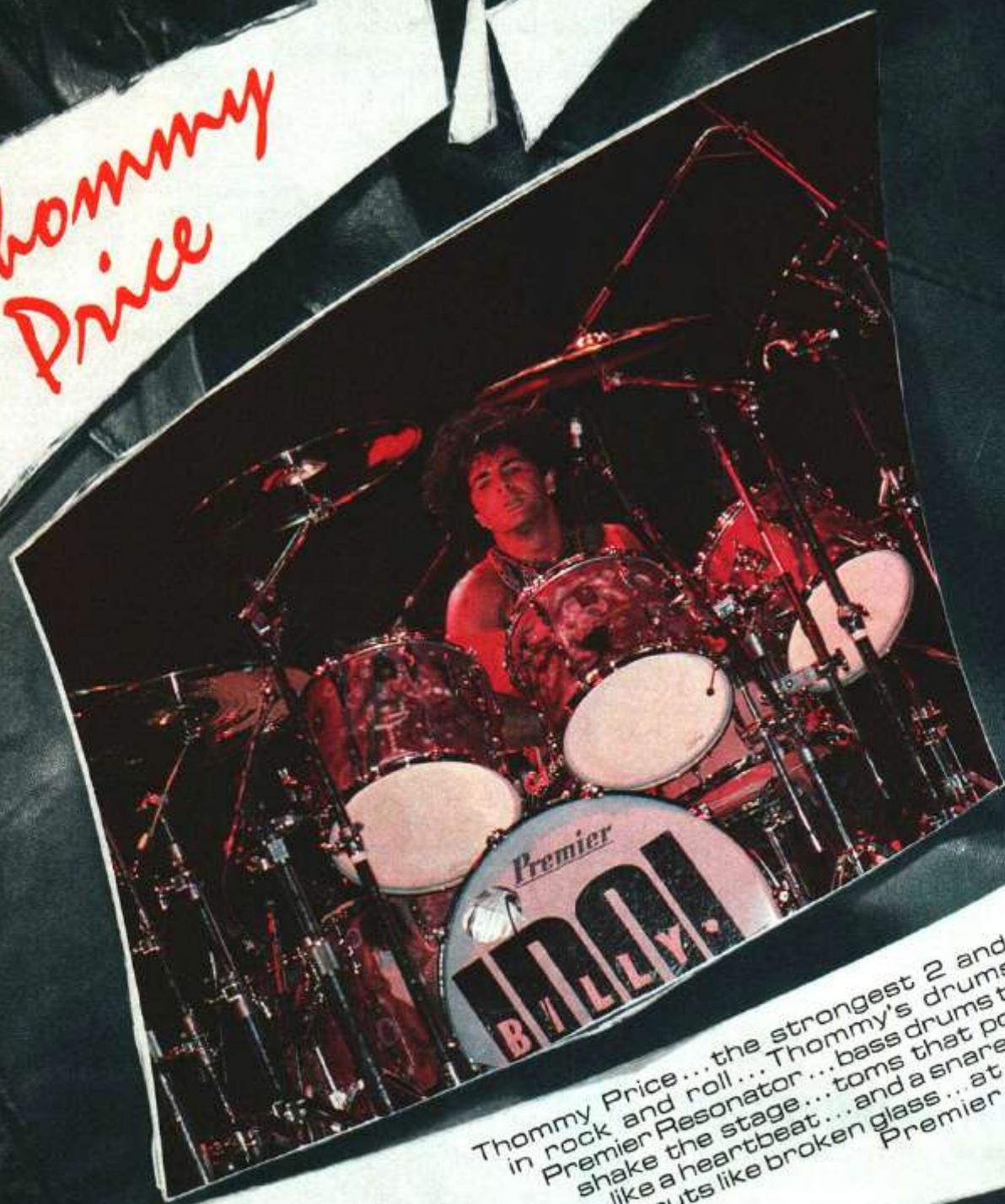
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ISSUE DATE: November 1987

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PREMIER

BUDDY RICH TRIBUTE

I would like to take a moment of your time to thank you for your publication's marvelous tribute to Buddy Rich [August '87 *MD*]. Out of all of the accounts I've read concerning Buddy's career and his passing, your articles were by far the most accurate and honestly reported by any news media. The *MD* staff is to be commended for its efforts of excellent reporting and tremendous photography. I'm sure that even Buddy himself would be touched by your tribute.

Charles Braun
President—Buddy Rich Fan Club
Warminster PA

Please accept my sincere thanks for the very poignant tribute to Buddy Rich. I heard of Buddy's death at a time that was very busy and stressful for me. While I was shocked at the loss, it really didn't hit home until I read your tribute issue. I am enclosing a check to purchase an additional copy, since some of the pages of my original copy were soaked by the genuine tears of mourning that I cried as I read it. Reading the letters of "average" American drummers like myself echoed most of my experiences and feelings toward the man. I, too, was a rock drummer in my youth who had never heard of Buddy Rich until seeing him on the *Tonight Show* late one night, which I was watching with my parents. My parents could not believe that I had never heard of Buddy; they had grown up with him. I became an instant fan and big band drummer because of that first viewing of Buddy Rich. While I do not play much anymore, I have come to realize that, along with a few influential music teachers in my growing years, it was due to

Buddy Rich and his special kind of joy in music making that I went on to obtain a music degree and become a high school band director.

The likes of Buddy Rich will not be seen again. I only hope that videos of Buddy's countless inspired performances will become available for all future drummers to experience. Even with a band director's busy schedule, reviewing Buddy Rich's inspirational life through your magazine tribute has made me become a proud drumset performer again. And when I play, it will be with a big band in the best tradition and swinging legacy that Buddy Rich has left us. Thank you, Buddy, for steering me toward a joyous career in music. And thank you, *Modern Drummer*, for recognizing the enormous influence of Buddy Rich on the history of drumming.

Richard M. Chiapetta
Director Of Bands
East Lyme High School
East Lyme CT

The August *Modern Drummer* is a sad—but classic—issue. Nobody lives forever, and the great Buddy Rich was no exception to this rule. Yet, this was the one issue of *MD* that I, like many others, did not want to see come to press. However, you put out an outstanding *MD* #93, highlighting the most incredible drummer of all time. I felt completely empty when I heard he was gone. May God be with him.

Howard Tantholt
North St. Paul MN

RICK'S THOUGHTS ON BUDDY

I just wanted to thank Rick Van Horn for his "Thoughts On Buddy." Like most

drummers, I had many feelings and thoughts about Buddy that I felt the need to express. Putting them into words as tastefully and affectionately as Rick did has earned him a special place in my heart.

Pete Smith
President, Rollor U.S.A.
Encino CA

The sincere comments of Bellson and other recognized authorities in tribute to Buddy Rich are appreciated. Rick Van Horn's article is not.

Firstly, he repeatedly injects self-praise among nondescript acknowledgments of Buddy. Secondly, he ridiculously offers token evidence of his own authority on drumming and Rich, in order to justify criticisms which follow. These are laughable journalistic and pretentious social gaffes. Unforgivable, though, are Van Horn's statements "Buddy's sense of time wasn't quite where it should have been," and on the subject of Buddy's personal relationships. They are unforgivable, not because the musical criticism is disprovable, citing decades of performances and countless recordings as evidence; not because Van Horn—a nonentity—criticizes while giants praise; and not because, as Van Horn concedes, he is not in a position to comment (but does so anyway). They are unforgivable because no critique, half-baked or otherwise, deserves inclusion in an issue called "Tribute." Van Horn's classless, graceless blunder suggests that his, not Buddy's, "sense of timing" wasn't quite where it should have been."

Mark Overstreet
San Antonio TX
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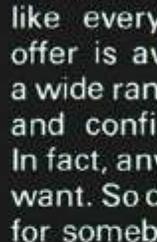
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When **Donny Baldwin** joined the Starship, there was no promise that the floundering band would be revived and become reacquainted with the pop charts through a string of number-one hits. But since the hard-grooving drummer's backbeat and background vocals were added to the Starship arsenal in 1982, it's been nothing but warp speed for the 36-year-old Baldwin.



The group's new record, *No Protection*, was largely written by outside composers, like Starship's previous album, *Knee Deep In The Hoopla*. "We had songs, but songs sent by other songwriters were better," Donny says. Peter Wolf, who produced *Hoopla*, was again at the helm for several tracks, as was Keith Olsen, and Narada Michael Walden was behind the board for one.

"The drum things that I did with Keith Olsen were pretty much acoustic. We sampled a

lot of tom sounds, and I played the sounds on the Simmons pads. With Peter Wolf, we kind of built the drum tracks. I bought a Dynacord *Add-One*, and we sampled all the toms again. We'd do the kick and snare, maybe come back and do tom overdubs, and then do cymbal overdubs and different tricks and sounds. You've got to watch Peter Wolf all the time. He gets crazy," laughs Donny. "He was a drummer in his past life or something. He's great to work with, but he gets carried away. I would ask

Peter, 'I've got to go out and play that stuff?' "

"Nothing's Gonna Stop Us Now," produced by Walden for a movie soundtrack, had to be completed while the group was on the road, so the famed drummer/producer was forced to lay down the drum track himself, with help from programmer/sampler Bongo Bob. Baldwin appreciates the effort Walden put in to make the part something like what Donny would have played. "It's a great simple drum track. I would have played the song that simple, because that's my thing. I play very straight ahead."

Baldwin uses *Drastic Plastic* pickups inside his Pearl drums to trigger his samples and has three Dynacord pads in his setup as well. "I can have my acoustic sound for the older Starship stuff, or I can punch in the Dynacord and have amazing sounds. They're still

acoustic sounds, but they sound amazing. I'm getting spoiled."

Singing drummers take heart: The new Starship record again features Baldwin's vocals, although his blend with Mickey Thomas is so good you might not even notice. "I love to arrange background vocals, and Mickey and I have been together for so long that our voices match up real nice." Baldwin and Thomas lent background vocals to a recent Kenny Loggins LP.

Speaking of matching up, the Starship has a new bassist, Brett Bloomfield, who replaced Pete Sears. Baldwin is quite enthusiastic over the chance to work with Bloomfield, who he's been playing with off and on for ten years. "We've played together for a while, and we know each other. The band has never sounded better."

—Robin Tolleson

When Hall & Oates stopped working in 1985, **Mickey Curry** had to keep going, and keep going he did, with no problem. Between the end of '85 and the fall of '86, Mickey worked on the records of such artists as Steve Jones, Richard Thompson, Stevie Winwood, Tina Turner, Carly Simon, Los Lobos, Andy Taylor, Debbie Harry, John Waite, David Sanborn, Tom Scott, Eric Martin, Jude Cole, Marty Jones, Rock & Hyde, Honeymoon Suite, T-Bone Burnett, Elvis Costello, Bananarama, and Helix. "Helix was great," he laughs at the oddity of the gig. "The band does real straight-ahead and kind of bash-out songs, which I love doing."

It was good practice for

resuming work with Bryan Adams in the fall of 1986, when they recorded *Into The Fire*. "We recorded it in his house. The drums were in his dining room, and we had the board downstairs. We had video cameras and TV screens set up downstairs and upstairs, so we could see each other. It was great."

Mickey also thinks it's great that no electronic drums were used on the record, and they're not being used on the tour. "I really get to play a lot and step out quite a bit. I've been recording with Bryan for six years, so it's very comfortable for me to play his music. The band consists of bass, drums, guitar, and keyboard, so there's a lot of room to move around. Plus, Bryan's music

just lends itself to that. The drums on Bryan's records are always pretty out front, so I enjoy doing that live. This gig is less calculated, musically. With Hall & Oates, we have a lot of synthesizers and drum machines going, so there is a lot of precision and exactness in the playing, whereas with Bryan, we just play.

"The drums are a lot bigger sounding because there's less cluttering up the sound system. I won't say that it's better not to have electronics; it's just different. I don't have a drum machine keeping time, and playing the kick and the snare, so I've got to keep good time and make it feel like something.

"I'm also playing a lot harder. Yamaha built me a set

of drums that are a bit smaller with power toms, and for some reason, they sound bigger. They really project in a big hall. I've been getting blisters, although I can't figure out why. I haven't gotten blisters since I was 13 years old. I tried a glove, but I don't like it because I can't feel the stick in my hand."

Last month, the tour finished up in the States. They are in Europe until December, and they plan to tour Japan and Australia after the first of next year. By then, it will probably be time to record another Bryan Adams album, and Curry hopes the timing will be right to allow him to work also on Hall & Oates' new album.

—Robyn Flans

The British trio The Outfield were conceived as a three-piece band when they pooled their respective talents four years ago. But when they initially took to the road, they went out as a five-piece, adding two extra session players: one on second guitar, another cover-

ing keyboards. These days, The Outfield are back to the original concept as a trio, and if you catch their show in support of their latest release, *Bangin'*, you'll hear drummer **Alan Jackman** fattening up a good portion of the sound.

"We've done three tours of

the States so far, but the first time we toured, we felt pressure to turn it into a five-piece," says Alan. "We had gotten our record deal as a three-piece band, and I guess we felt pressure from the record company to add the extra players. We also felt a

certain amount of pressure from ourselves; it was just fear of the unknown. We had only done clubs and pubs around London at that point, and we didn't know what to expect.

"We weren't all that strong about adding two people, but we were told, 'You've got to

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recreate the sound of the album when you play live,' so we did it. After the tour was completed, we knew the band didn't sound as good as it did with just the three of us, so we switched back."

On stage, The Outfield render a rich sound on their own, but a lot of the credit goes to Alan, along with the aid of a multi-digital sampler that he's triggering live. "We've got an Akai Digital Sampler—an

S900," he explains. "I'm still using a basic acoustic kit, so it's not another drumkit sound that we're going for. Instead, I'm actually playing rhythm guitar and drums on certain tracks. The sounds are stored on a disk, so the more varied sounds we make and store, obviously, the more interesting we'll sound as a three-piece, and we don't have to rely on anybody else but ourselves. I've got things on there like the

guitar riff, a crack, a Vibraslap, a gong, three timpani—all on one disk."

The Outfield (originally called the Baseball Boys) scored big with their debut LP *Play Deep*, pushing the band to the top of the charts with the singles "Say It Isn't So" and "Your Love." But their recognition and popularity in their native Britain has been minimal (perhaps having to do with their strong American image).

And although they seem to have captured the American market by storm, Alan maintains that success has not been instantaneous. "We've been together five years, but previous to that, we had all been playing for 14 years. It took us four years to get to the 'overnight success' that everyone seems to think we are."

—Teri Saccone

When we talked during the summer, Nashville's **Tommy Wells** had several cuts on the country chart including Ricky Van Shelton's "Crime Of Passion" and the Michael Martin Murphy/Holly Dunn duet, "Face In The Crowd." With as much work as Wells does in the studio, chart hits are a constant reality. He also split the work on Murphy's album *Americana* with Eddie Bayers, and he shared the work on Ronnie Rogers' album with Kenny Malone. Tommy also played on Ray Stevens' new album, including the topical hit "Would Jesus Wear A Rolex." "We did that record in about two and a half sessions," Wells recalls. "Ray goes fast. He knows his tunes, and all you have to do is jump in there and cut a track. He fin-

ishes them up with his Kurzweil, and the record is ready to press."

Tommy says that Jo-El Sonnier's new RCA offering was a lot of fun to do. "We cut everything live in the room, including horns and three or four keyboard players at once. Stevie Winwood came in and played organ one day, and we had 10 to 12 players playing at once sometimes. It was no pressure, though. We had a week to do it, and [producer] Richard Bennett is so easy to work for. You do two or three takes, and he picks the one he wants. You think he's going to go for this one because it's perfect, but that's not necessarily true.

"Another record I'm really happy with is the new Foster Lloyd record. The drums are

real ambient sounding. We miked up the room at Treasure Isle and just let the sound crash around in the room. It's all down on the tape, too."

When asked what one has to know to play sessions, Wells laughs. "Well, that's not an easy question to answer briefly, but you have to know when to play and when not to, how to keep good time, and when to use the click and when not to. I turn it on when I perceive that it's rushing or dragging more than it should. I do a run-down with the click on, but then I turn it off to cut the track. As far as reading, if you can read number charts, you can usually get by. If you're going to do jingles, you've got to read. There are certain producers who will give you a full-blown chart, but most of them do

not. Aside from being able to play the drums well, getting along with everybody is important, too."

While doing studio work is his focus and main love, Tommy enjoys playing around town with Jimmy Hall & the Prisoners of Love. "We just do it for fun. It's important for me to play live. When I know there's a Prisoners' gig I can go to at the end of the week and just blast away, I'm happy. It's funny, but when it looked like we were going to sign a record deal, the fun started to go away," Tommy laughs. "Then the pressure began. When we decided that we weren't going to do that, the fun came back again."

—Robyn Flans

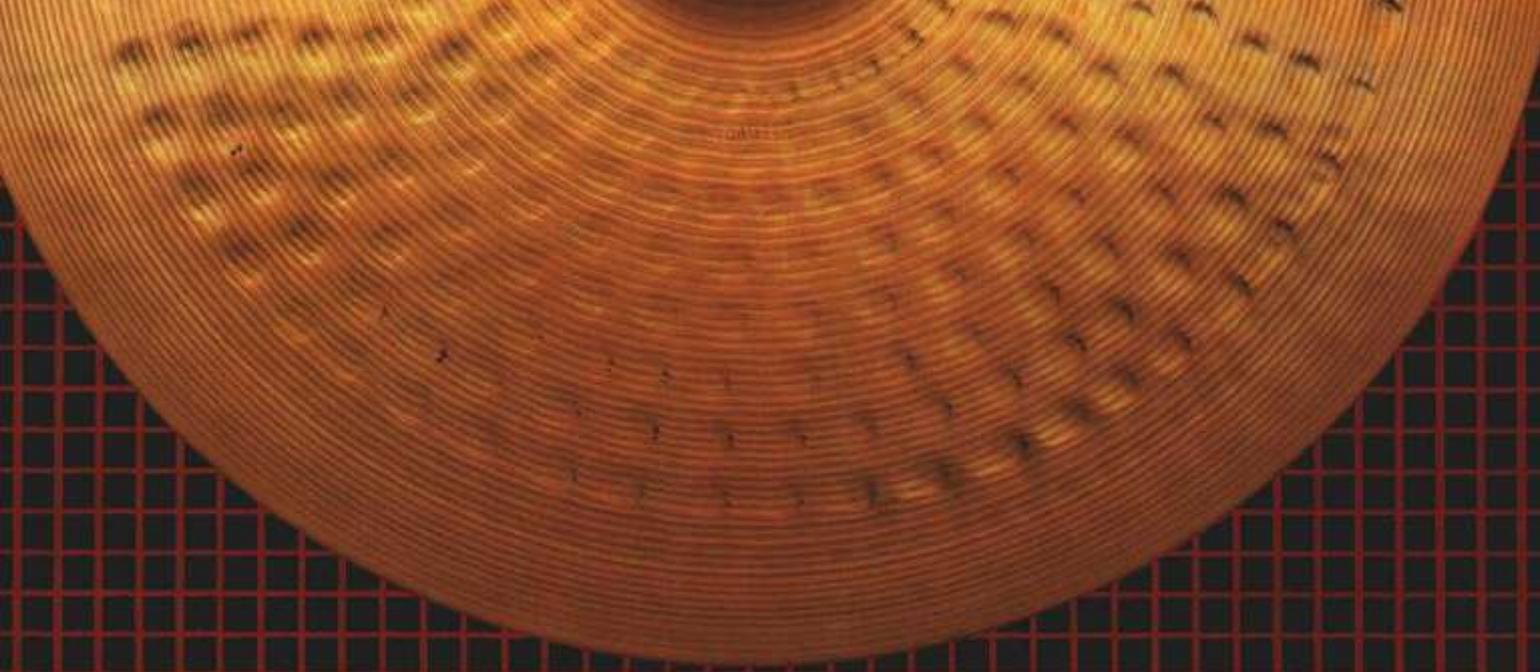
Vinny Appice on the new Dio LP, *Dream Evil*. He also has an instructional video recently put out by Silver Eagle Design. **Craig Ostbo** on the Monkees' new Rhino release, as well as on a project for Fernando Ortega. **Alvino Bennett** still on the road with Chaka Khan, although he's done some live shows with Leon Ware and Linda Hopkins of late. **Craig Krampf** in the studio with Lisa Hartman, Dolly Parton, David Palmer, Scarlett & Black, and Rod Stewart's soundtrack song for *Inner Space*. **Michael Derosier** working with Richard Marx. **Kenny Aronoff** in the studio with Bill Carter and Belinda Carlisle. His new drum video distributed through DCI will be out this fall. **Steve Smith** doing live dates with Ahmad Jamal, while he is working on his new Vital Information album. Look for

Danny Gottlieb's solo album, *Aquamarine*. **Les DeMerle** recently completed another in his series of Jazz Drum Spectaculars. Held in Chicago, the event featured Les and his band Transfusion along with four noted Chicago-area drummers: Ed Mattingly, Simon Horrocks, Mark Anderson, and Mike Arturi. Les has also just completed a new drum book called *How To Beat The System*. **Billy Amendola** has put together a new band called True Blue. He has also been working with Madonna keyboardist Fred Zarr, who produced a Debbie Gibson single that Billy played on. Billy also recently worked with Alisha and Brian Drux. **Joel Maitoza** on Gangland's new Metal Blade release. **Bobby Sanabria** has been performing lately with Latin-jazzist Mario Bauza and his Afro-

Cuban jazz big band. He has also been performing with Latin/jazz trumpeter Louis "Perico" Ortiz and can be heard on his latest release entitled *Breaking The Rules*. **Marvin Kanarek** has been recording a Janis Ian and Rhonda Kye Flemming project, Janie Street's movie track for *Fly*, and working live dates with Burton Cummings and Randy Bachman, as well as some shows with Bo Diddley & The Bone Daddies. The City College Jazz Quintet was the only American group chosen to compete in the recent San Sebastian International Jazz Festival with **Jeff Siegel** on drums. **Ben Gramm** has been playing live dates with his brother Lou Gramm. **Walfredo Reyes, Sr.** is working with Wayne Newton. **Buddy Williams** on the new Manhattan Transfer live album.

Munetaka Higuchi on Loudness' release *Hurricane Eyes*. **Martin Parker** in the studio with Lynn Anderson and Marie Osmond. **Steve Ferrone** on tour with Duran Duran. **Kelly Keagy** on tour with Night Ranger. **Adam Nussbaum** recently involved in the World to World 2nd International Drums & Percussion Festival. Marimbist **Leigh Howard Stevens** recently toured Poland and France. **Ian Mosely** recently in the studio with Marillion cutting *Clutching At Straws*. Marillion plans a year-long tour. **Cozy Powell** has a new group called Blue Murder. **Carl Palmer** informs us that the Emerson, Lake & Palmer reunion did not work out, but he and Keith Emerson are forming a new group together.





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LARRIE LONDIN



Q. First of all, I love your playing; I can see why they call you the "drummers' drummer." My problem is that, when I play my kick pedal, I'm getting an extra bounce that is not meant to be there. I play a DW 5000 pedal with the tension as tight as it will go and the beater as far back as it will go. I've tried playing both flat-footed and with my heel up, but nothing seems to reduce the problem. Can you offer any suggestions?

Robert Jones
Aiken SC

A. I've never heard a compliment put quite like that. Thank you very much. Of course, it's hard to help you with your problem without seeing you play. But the DW 5000 is a great pedal, and I think you could try a few things to make it work for you. First, make sure that you're not too far away from the set. What I mean is that perhaps your legs are stretched out too far. With the pedal being that tight, you must be over the pedal so that you can control it. Try looking down and making sure that your knee is directly over the instep of your foot. That should put your leg in line over the pedal, which gives better control of a tight pedal. If this does not help, then try a toe guard (if you don't already have one on the pedal). Drum Workshop offers a toe guard as a retrofit item, so it's not difficult to obtain or install. With the use of a toe guard, along with being correctly over the pedal, you can control the pedal, instead of it controlling you. Please try these suggestions and then get in touch with me, in care of MD, to let me know how things worked out.

GIL MOORE

Q. On the *Sport Of Kings* tour, you used a pair of green, lighted sticks. I would be interested in buying a pair for myself, but cannot find anyone who carries them. Could you please give me the address and phone number of the place where you got yours?

Dave Svec
San Jose CA

A. The drumsticks were not colored, but were made of clear acrylic plastic, through which green laser beams were shot. The light came into the sticks via fiberoptic cables that attached to the butt ends of the sticks and ran down my arms to the light power source. All the lasers for our tour were done for us by Lasermedia, of California, and they also rigged up the sticks for me as a custom item. I don't think they'd be commercially available, but you might try to contact Lasermedia and ask about this.

NEIL PEART

Q. I have noticed a big change in your bass drum sound since the *Moving Pictures* album. How would you describe the difference between that sound and the sound you have now? And why the change?

Angelo Foggia

Sault St. Marie, Ontario, Canada

A. Just around that album, I began to experiment a lot with different bass drum setups and ways of recording them. Sometimes we'd use a full front head, sometimes one with a small miking hole cut in it, and other times no head at all. There were also experiments with different mic's and mic' placements, and things like isolating the bass drum with heavy blankets. All of these things have worked well in different applications. In many cases, I think that the music around the bass drum sound affects it more than anything. If you could hear a few different sounds in solo, you might be surprised at how the bass drums really sound.

On *Moving Pictures* in particular, the arrangements were more sparing than some others, especially in the bottom end. Thus, the bass drum often had more space to "breathe" by itself. This gave it a lot more presence.

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SDS1000M

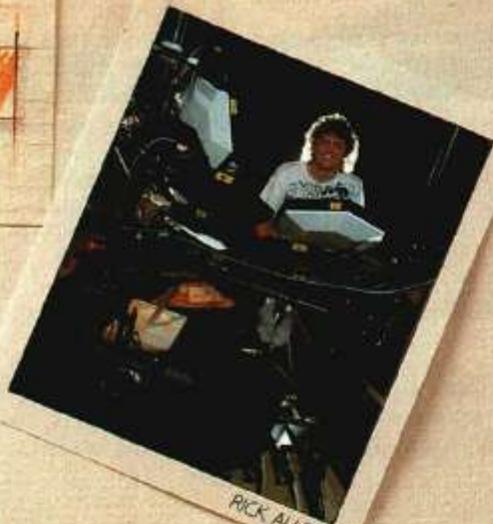
Simmons Design Brief

To develop a five piece electronic drum set with a wide variety of killer sounds, and access to a whole lot more from samplers and drum machines via MIDI. This kit has got to be easy to program, built to take life on the road, and most importantly, it's got to feel good to play. Pay special attention to the snare drum sensitivity and dynamics.

RICK ALLEN ON THE SDS1000M

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RICK ALLEN

SDS9

Simmons Design Brief

Give drummers an instrument that satisfies the basic requirements for an electronic drum set—great sounds, a high degree of sensitivity, subtle dynamic control, playable rim-shot—and then pack it full with unique features, to create an instrument capable of taking the percussive arts to new levels of innovation.

Simmons Design Brief

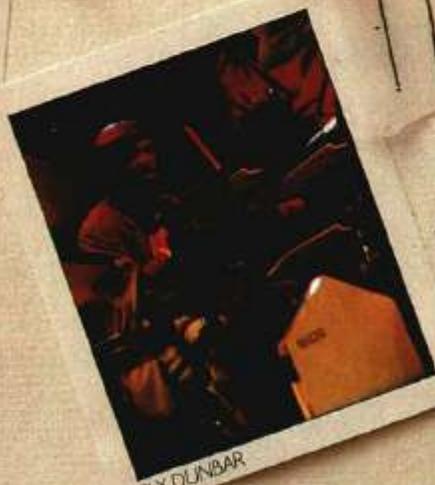
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BILL BRUFORD ON THE SDS9

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SLY DUNBAR

SLY DUNBAR ON THE MTX9

"I think it's great 'cause while playing it helps the drummer add extra color. I've been looking forward to something like this for a long time to save carrying a large kit around. So I think all drummers should check it out—it's great."

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Q. I purchased a set of Camco drums in 1979 from a well-known music store in Florida. At the time, I was under the impression that Tama was in the process of "buying out" Camco. I specifically ordered a *Mahogany Studio* five-piece kit from a Camco catalog. It's a five-ply wood shell with Camco lugs. I've played the drums in and out of studios all over the country, and everyone seems to really like their sound. I'm perfectly happy with them. But the question still remains, are they, in fact, truly Camco drums, and not the first series of a Tama replica?

Changing the subject a bit, I have one floor tom that somehow has discolored. It no longer has the beautiful luster of the other drums (which are fine). Can you explain how a mahogany finish can fade like this on only one drum in a set, and how I can restore it to normal?

C.G.
Lakeland FL

A. We spoke to Tama's National Sales Manager, Joe Hibbs, who gave us the following information. The "Camco" drums produced by Tama after the buy out you mention—which took place in 1979—featured six-ply, American-made maple shells (unlike any of the birch shells used on Tama's own brand at the time). It was by no means an entry-level drumkit. The drums featured the Tama floor tom legs, tom-tom holders, and bass drum spurs of that period. In addition, the lug casing was actually a bit different from the original Camco lugs. The original Camco lug was entirely round, and the swivel nut for the tension rod came right out of that round casing. The Tama/Camco lugs had slightly squared-off edges where the tension rod entered the casing. Using these details as indicators, you should be able to tell clearly whether you have an original Camco set or one of the Tama/Camco models. It's entirely possible that your set is a pre-buy-out Camco, delivered from inventory that existed at that time. Joe also told us that, if

this question is really bothering you, you're welcome to send a snapshot of the kit to him at Hoshino, USA, 1716 Winchester Road, Bensalem, Pennsylvania 19020. He'll examine it and get back in touch with you with any information he can provide.

In the matter of your floor tom, Joe informs us that changes in the finish can be the result of two things. One is the sanding process of the floor tom, and the other is the point in the can from which the stain was taken when the drum was finished. Stain taken from the top of a can is generally heavier, while stain from the bottom of the can is lighter. A drum that is the first one done from a new can of stain can end up being darker than others on the same kit. As far as correcting the problem goes, Joe states that Tama can refinish the drum for you, but would require that you send not only the floor tom, but another drum from the kit as well, so that there will be something to match.

Q. After years of experimenting with my double-bass setup, I need one more piece to complete my puzzle. I've duplicated my set so that I can play "righty" or "lefty" at will. The only thing I lack is the ability to play my hi-hat with my right foot. Does anyone manufacture a regular hi-hat stand with a remote pedal as well, so that I could operate the hi-hat in its traditional position with either of two pedals? If not, is there anyone I can contact who could design and build such a stand?

J.T.
Oneonta NY

A. According to all the catalogs that we've researched, there is no hi-hat such as you describe currently being manufactured. The problem inherent in your concept is that the operation of the hi-hat via one pedal would be interfered with by the "works" or "connection" of the other pedal. A possible alternative might be to use both a regular and a cable remote hi-hat, with the cymbals of each placed in the same general vicinity—perhaps one angled over the other. (This is assuming that you require your hi-hat cymbals to be in the "traditional" position to your left. If you can play the remote hi-hat elsewhere on the kit and still maintain your design concept, a cable remote hi-hat should be just the ticket.)

Q. I am writing with regard to an article you published about building a portable drum riser of some sort. I can't find this design in any of my *MD* back issues. Could you tell me which issue had the article?

L.T.
Webster NY

A. In April of 1981, the Shop Talk department featured an article by Vince Gutman entitled "Upstaging." Vince offered a design for drum cases that doubled as a drum riser. More recently, Rick Van Horn's Club Scene column featured a three-part series on designing and building your own drum riser. Rick offered several different designs and suggestions for riser construction. The series appeared in the January, February, and March issues in 1986.

Q. In your November 1985 article on Ed Soph, there was mention of a video tape called *The Drumset: A Musical Approach*. I am very interested in obtaining this video, but have no idea where to do so. Could you please tell me who I should contact for this video?

R.B.
Roanoke VA

A. The video you mention is now being distributed by D.C.I. Music Video Inc. You may contact them at 541 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10011, or call 1-800-342-4500 for ordering information.

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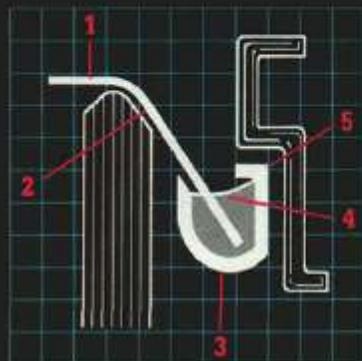
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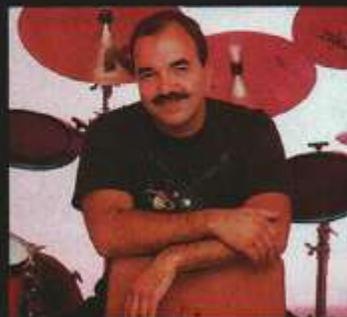
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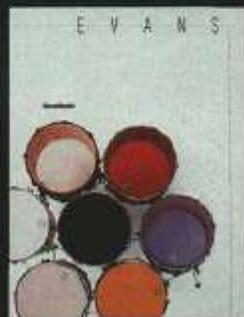
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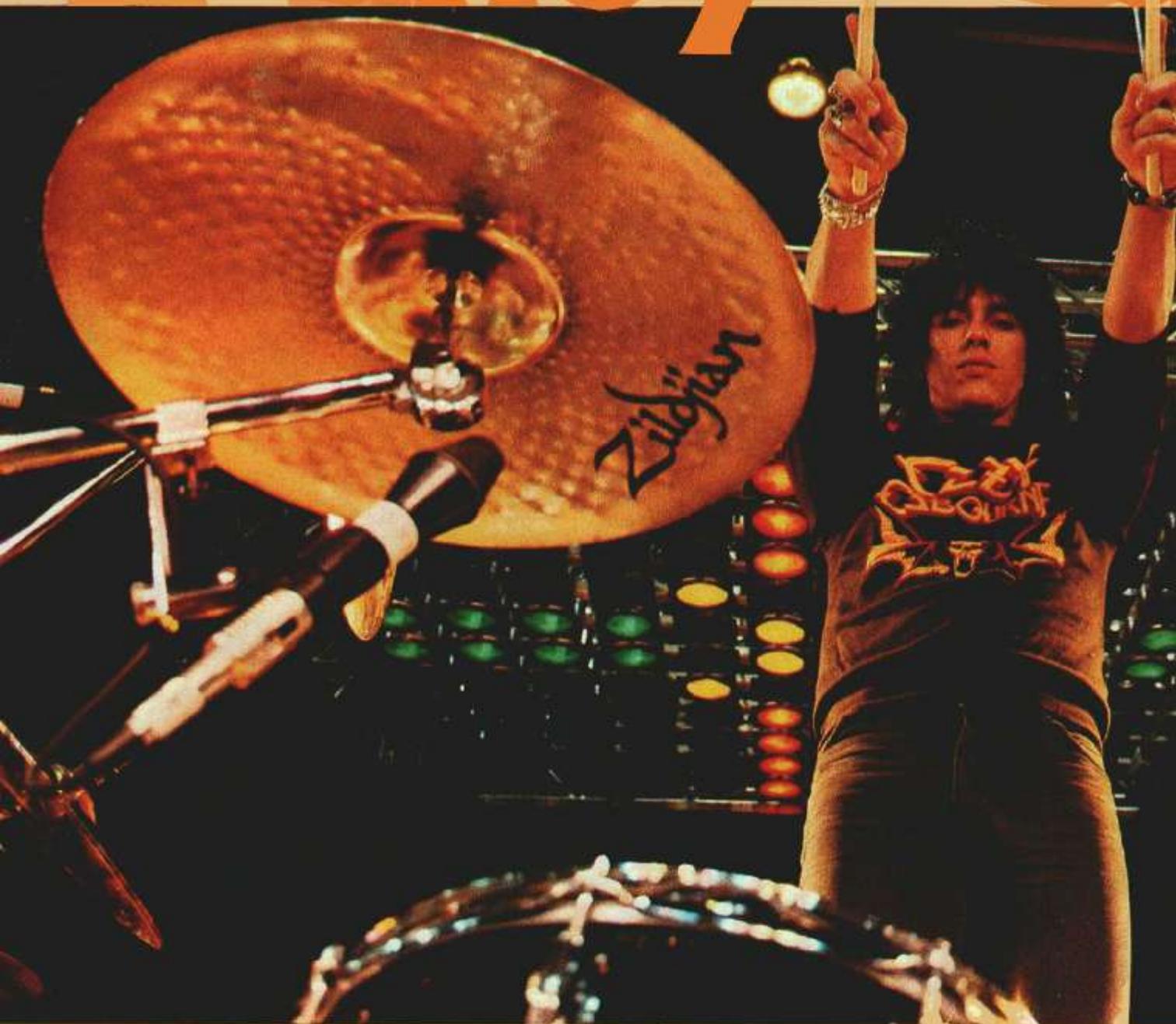
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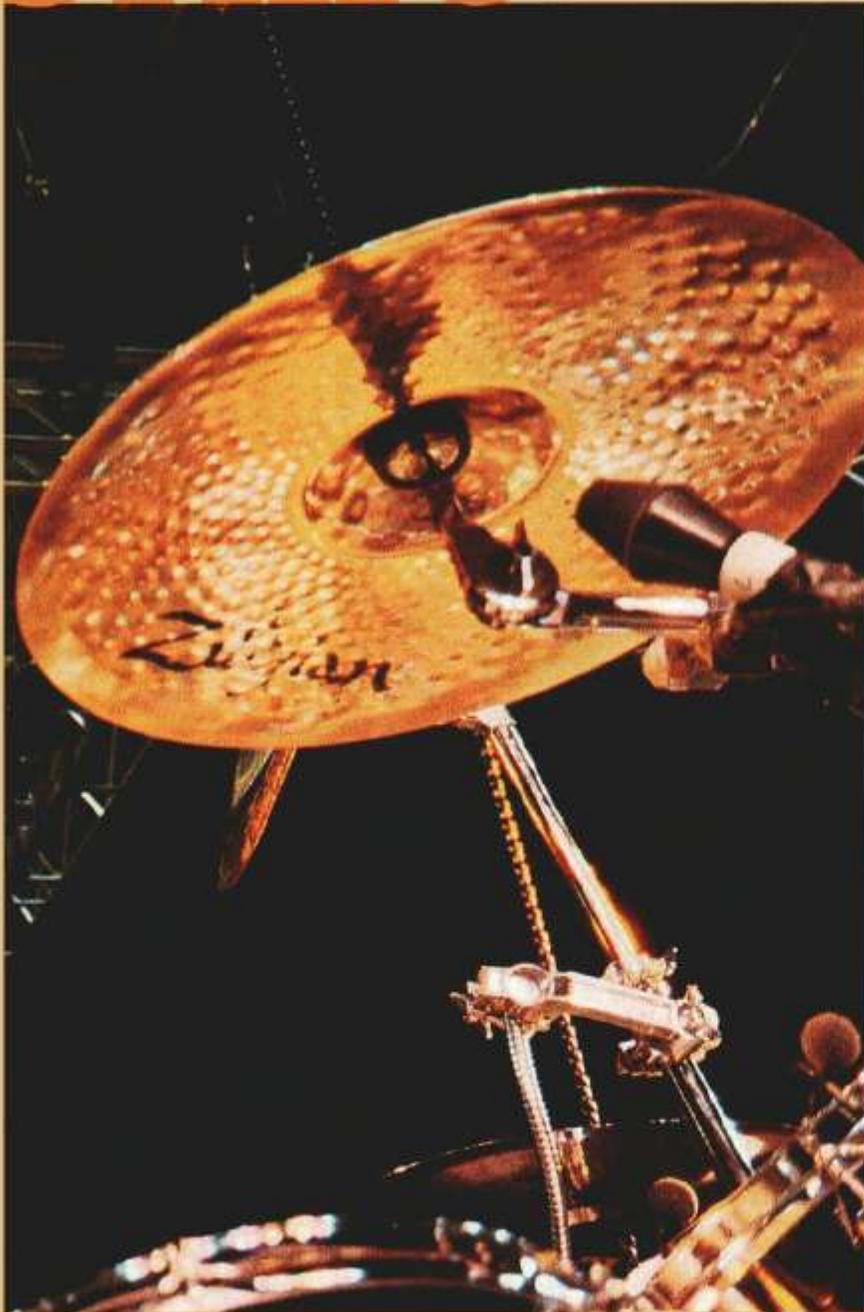


Photo by Michael S. Jachles

RANDY Castillo has always looked at the bright side of situations since day one, when he suffered the disappointment of getting fired from his first band. He could have quit then, but he rose to the challenge and ultimately enjoyed the victory of being asked back into that same band. He went on to pursue his dream, leaving his hometown of Albuquerque, New Mexico, to move to L.A., where he played with such groups as the Motels, Lita Ford, Code Blue, and Ozzy Osbourne.

Today, looking at the positive side of things again, Randy is talking about just having auditioned 80 guitar players for Ozzy's group, and having to play "Crazy Train" six times a day for a week. "But d'ya know what's good about it?" he asks, and I expect him to resume with his normal manner of joking. "I started playing things in these songs that I had never played before, which improved them for me."



Photo by Michael S. Jachnies

RF: How did you learn to play the drums?

RC: When I got fired from my first band, the Sheltons, I said, "I'm not going to let this happen again, and the only way to get better is to take lessons."

RF: Why did they fire you?

RC: Because they had another guy who was better. It was hard for me to handle, but it was a great lesson. I'm glad it happened to me, even though it hurt at the time.

RF: How had you taught yourself up to then?

RC: Playing with records on the table or whatever was available, including my sister's head. It was a great cymbal. We had a lot of good fights back then.

RF: Did you have drums?

RC: I used to borrow drums. Finally, my mother believed in me enough to convince my dad to buy me a kit. My dad was also a musician. He played guitar and sang, but I didn't want to hear about it. I wanted to bang away.

RF: Who did you go to for lessons?

RC: A guy named Nick Luchetti, who has a store in Albuquerque. He taught me the rudiments and how to hold the sticks. I was doing everything completely wrong. He pointed me in the right direction and was like a father in that way. Once I got past that point, it opened all sorts of doors, because all of a sudden, I knew the technique of playing drums. It started making sense to me, whereas before, I was trying to do things that I knew nothing about. Teaching yourself, you can only go so far. You have to have some sort of mentor who can really steer you.

RF: How long were you with him?

RC: A little over a year. He just taught me the basics, and that's what opened up everything. Once I learned the technique of things, my imagination could take over, because I didn't have to go through my body anymore. My body already understood what I had to do. He just connected my mind to my body, so I could play whatever I heard.

RF: Did you do any playing in school?

RC: I was in the high school band and orchestra, and I did all the competition stuff, but at night, I was playing in clubs. My dad would be there with me until 1:00 in the morning and then have to wake up at 6:00 to go to work the next day.

RF: That is really a good parent.

RC: Oh yeah, both my parents really put out. That lasted about a year and a half before they said, "You can do it." They were really supportive, and I give them a lot of credit for the mess I've become today.

RF: What was the name of the band you were in?

RC: After the Sheltons, I played in a band that went to a Battle Of The Bands against the Sheltons. It was a great feeling of revenge when we won. I ended up joining the Sheltons again: They were making money and were real popular in Albuquerque at the time.

RF: Did you have any drum heroes at the time?

RC: At that time, rock drummers were just starting to come into the picture. People like Dino Danelli from the Raspals, Carmine with Vanilla Fudge, Charlie Watts, Ringo, John Bonham, and John Barbata from the Turtles were coming on the scene. Rock was just coming of age, and there was a whole new style of drumming as compared to all the drum heroes from the jazz scene. Rock 'n' roll created new drum heroes. And with time, they got fancier. I always loved a flash drummer. I always loved Dino. I got so much from him.

RF: Is being a showman real important to you?

RC: Yes it is, because I like the attention, I like the ego, and I don't like to hide behind a drumkit. I hate it when I see a drummer completely covered by drums. I like to see a drummer as much as I like to see a lead guitar player.

RF: Is that okay with the people you've worked with?

RC: Oh yes, it always has been. I do the job, but I also happen to have a little flash. I don't do it to the point of overshadowing anybody or trying to steal the limelight from anyone, though. It's tastefully done, I think.

RF: So you stayed with the Sheltons for how long?

RC: A couple of years. Then I got into a band called The Mud. It was a combination of two different kinds of bands. It

was a soul band meets a surfer band. In Albuquerque, it was divided in half back then. There was the Valley and the Heights. The Heights was where the surfer, anglo-type crowd hung out. The Valley was all these Mexicans and blacks. So we put a band together that had half of each. It was great, because everybody found out what was good about both sides of music. We would do Zeppelin, and then turn around and do an Otis Redding song. We played clubs and then started going on the road a little, like to Colorado and southern New Mexico. I really got into a lot of different kinds of music, but that melted into obscurity eventually. That was around the time of Yes, Jethro Tull, and the progressive rock of Genesis, and I joined a band that a bunch of other guys started called the Wumblies. We wanted to be the most technical, wacko musicians who ever lived. It was Mahavishnu meets Led Zeppelin meets Jethro Tull.

RF: When did you get into all this heavy technique?

RC: Around '73 or '74. We just started copying Yes, and there was a club circuit in the Midwest that we played. We went into it with a full production of lights and smoke, so it was a miniature Led Zeppelin/Yes/Jethro Tull concert.

RF: What specifically were you playing?

RC: I was applying polyrhythms and independence techniques. We played a lot of stuff in odd-time signatures, and I got into that real heavily.

RF: Do you apply any of that to your current gig with Ozzy?

RC: In the solo, I do a lot of stuff like that. Within the structure of the songs themselves, probably not. They're all straight-ahead rock songs—2 and 4.

RF: In order to get Ozzy's gig, you really didn't need to know a great deal of technique?

RC: No odd-time signature kinds of things. But what I learned from having that technique was that I can apply it to the Ozzy thing. It has helped me. Anything you can learn can help you.

RF: How does it apply if the material is pretty much 2 and 4?

RC: Because I'll do certain rolls within that context that



will be kind of odd-time rolls. I'll make them sound polyrhythmic and give them a weird sense of feel, but it ends up on the 2 and 4. I can fit it in. I can do a triplet type of roll in a 2 and 4 song. It will sound weird, but it will always land on 1. Once in a while, Ozzy will turn around and say, "What was that?" It's really in my solos that I get to apply those things, though, because then I can really do what I want.

RF: How did you learn how to play that kind of thing?

RC: I would just slow the records down and learn the licks, one thing at a time. Then I would add my own things to it. The Wumblies was such a techno-flash type of band, though. Nobody was dancing. The girls were getting bored, and the only people who really liked it were other musicians. "How did he do that lick?" It was very intense, and we were just totally involved in ourselves as a band. We never paid attention to the audience. We were all looking down at our instruments.

RF: What do you think about that now?

RC: I would just be bored to tears. That was just a phase in my life. Some part of me wanted to do that. If I ever heard something I couldn't do, I'd have to learn it. It would drive me nuts if I couldn't do it, so I'd teach myself how to do it. Once you find out, it seems so much easier in retrospect. You look back and realize, "It's not that hard," but before you know anything about it, it's a mystery. I looked up to so many drummers like Dino and Bill Bruford, and there were all these things I'd hear that I couldn't do.

RF: Like what?

RC: Stuff on a Vanilla Fudge album that Carmine did—I thought, "God, that's amazing"—or the first Led Zeppelin album. I listened to it for months until I knew exactly what was going on, and I forced myself to learn it. I figured there had to be a physical way to do this, or it wouldn't have been done. I'd just sit in a room and listen for hours on end, on slow speed sometimes.

RF: Did you learn how to read?

RC: I did at first, but I never had to apply it because of what I was playing, except for a couple of studio things in Albuquerque. But after that, I didn't have to read, so it faded. I never kept up on it or practiced it, so I didn't stay on top of it.

RF: What was the goal? What did you want?

RC: I wanted to be a rock star, but I wanted to be respected, too, by other people in the business.

RF: Did you think you'd have to leave Albuquerque?

RC: I always knew I'd have to. I always dreamed of the day I could leave Albuquerque.

"YOU CAN'T JUST GO UP ON STAGE AND PLAY . . . YOU'VE GOT TO BE A LAWYER AND A BUSINESSMAN."



RF: Where did you think about going?

RC: Anywhere—on the road, period.

RF: You ended up on the road with the Wumblies.

RC: We played every little club and dive between Phoenix and Chicago.

RF: How did you survive on the road when it's so expensive?

RC: Back then, we played for so little that there would be four or five guys to a hotel room. We didn't care. We were young, stupid, and idealistic. We thought we were it; we were going to do it, and this was just a part of the process. That was the longest I was with any one band—almost six years, from '73 to '79. We came real close to getting a deal with Chrysalis, but then there were internal problems within the band. Being together under that kind of circumstance with the same people for so long tends to make it rough. There seemed to be more opportunities in L.A., so I came out to L.A. in '79.

RF: Did you know anybody out here?

RC: Hardly. A friend of mine who used to work for the Babys would tell me about auditions. I auditioned for Al Stewart, but I was too loud and too heavy for him. I agreed, but I wanted the job so badly. I was living off friends or in my pickup truck that had a camper on it. For two months, I parked it in front of a friend's house, put my drums in his house, and slept in the truck at night. I went through all the motions of paying dues.

RF: Did you take a day job?

RC: No, a bass player by the name of Randy Rand, who is in Autograph now, and I started a three-piece band, the Offenders. We went out on the road and played the club circuit that the Wumblies did. We just did it out of a pickup truck. We had my drumkit, one bass amp, one guitar amp, and we rented P.A.'s everywhere we went. We made good money, because we had no overhead and no expenses. It was kind of a punk, hard-rock-meets-ZZ Top kind of band. We did some cover material and a lot of originals. We all wrote, and we did an independent album, which we sold wherever we went. We wanted to have something to show for all our efforts. Eventually, it was just the same thing, though: playing the club circuit and going nowhere. You're earning your living, and that's about it. We went back to L.A., and this friend of mine from Albuquerque, who was the bass player for the Motels, called me. Their drummer had gotten sick three days before they were supposed to leave on tour with the Cars. They asked me to try it out, and I did a tour with them, opening for the Cars.

RF: You had to get that together in no time.

RC: In three days. We were recording the Offenders album at the time, too, so I'd rehearse with the Motels, go into the studio and do my Offenders' tracks, then go home, put on the Motels album, and go to sleep with it. I'd wake up, go back to the studio, and do it all over again. It was like that for three days. I got no sleep, and then we had to do a show in Denver.

RF: "Only The Lonely" is not what you would consider heavy rock.

RC: No, although a lot of their other material had a harder edge to it—especially live. I just fit right in with that. Touring on that level was a great experience for me, and it whetted my appetite. It was, "This is it;

this is what I want to do." Watching how everything was done for the Cars, I thought, "Yeah, that's the way it ought to be."

RF: What about it really excited you?

RC: There has always been a part of me that had to travel to see things. To see the sunset go down, I'd go west. I had a romantic thing about it.

RF: Still?

RC: Yes, I still do. I'm a little bit more jaded now that I see what's involved in the whole process, but the thing that has always worked for me is that the two hours on stage are worth all the bullshit you have to go through to get there. That never changes. It's as pure as the driven snow, and it's as good as it was the first time I did it, 18 or 20 years ago. It's just as much fun now, if not more fun. It's just that the bullshit has gotten thicker. You can't just go up on stage and play, and have it be a gas anymore. You've got to be a lawyer and a businessman—an all-around type person instead of just a musician who goes up and plays.

RF: Do you still like the traveling and the hotels?

RC: Yes, because the hotels are a hell of a lot better than they used to be. We used to have five guys in a room! Now I have my own room and great room service. It's not bad. There's the other part of me that loves home, though, and being in one place, not even thinking about music.

RF: Do you need to get away from music sometimes?

RC: Yes, and that's great because it makes my music even better. It inspires me. If I don't practice or play for a month or six weeks, I'll go back and it'll be so fresh. It's exciting again. If you're on a long tour like our last one, which was 130 dates in ten months, after a while, you just lose that spark. If you walk away from it for a while, it's like a girlfriend you haven't seen for two or three months.

RF: How did you keep the music exciting after 130 shows?

RC: I think the audience did that for me. Even if I was really tired and thought, "Oh God, I

**"YOU CAN'T JUST
LEARN ALL THE FLASH
AND FORGET ABOUT
THE BASICS."**

don't feel like going up to play tonight," once the curtain went up, the lights came up, and all those lighters out there lit up, it was an amazing transformation. Even if I was dead tired, I all of a sudden had a rush of adrenaline and energy, so it never got old for me.

RF: Did you play the same songs every night?

RC: Yes, but I didn't play them the same way. I did different fills, and my solo was never the same. I improvised a lot of stuff and tried different things. That kept it fresh, too.

RF: Do you practice at all?

RC: I do every once in a while. Before rehearsal I'll go in early or I'll stay afterwards to practice things, or when the band takes a break, I'll practice stuff. But I'm not obsessed with practicing like I used to be when I first started playing. I would feel guilty if I didn't practice, but you can overdo it. You can overpractice and over-exercise, and you'll burn out. I know people who practice incessantly, and it works for them. If they didn't, they wouldn't be able to do what they do, so it is different for everybody. I don't recommend what I do for everyone. Don't avoid practice, particularly in the early stages.

RF: So what happened after the Motels?

RC: I came back and heard about an opening in a band called Code Blue, which was on Warner Bros, at the time. It was at the time that the Police were breaking, and it was that kind of band, but with a little harder edge. It was a real popular band in L.A. at the time. We did the local club circuit, and it got me a lot of exposure among other L.A. musicians. It was a good band, and I really liked it. The album I did with them was on Greenworld/Enigma called *True Story*, way before the Talking Heads. I was proud of that band. It had a lot of integrity. Dean Chamberlain is a great songwriter. That band taught me the importance of groove. I was so into technique—doing this and that and showing off—that when I joined that band, that kind of stuff didn't work.

RF: Why didn't it?

RC: Because we wanted people to dance. If you heard a U2 record with Billy Cobham licks all over the place, it wouldn't sound like U2. That snare on 2 and 4 is so essential, and there is a technique to playing that. People think it's so simple to do something like that, but it's really hard to play a good groove.

RF: How did you practice that?

RC: The other musicians helped me a lot, plus by listening back to tapes of myself, I could hear what I was doing wrong, like speeding up, slowing down, pushing things, or playing a roll in the wrong place just for the sake of playing a roll. What I thought sounded cool wasn't working for the band. I learned a lot about playing with a band in that situation. It meant sitting back and playing a solid groove that the melody could just dance over. It was a new thing for me to just play simple and make it effective. It taught me that what you don't do is just as important as what you do do. I loved that band, and I was disappointed to see it end.

RF: What happened?

RC: Other opportunities arose, and I was getting money dangled in my face to go somewhere else. I was so poor at the time, and we weren't getting anywhere. We got dropped from Warner Bros., and things looked real bleak, so I gave in to temptation and went to Chicago to join a band called U.S.S.A. There was a lot of money behind the band, and there were a lot of labels interested

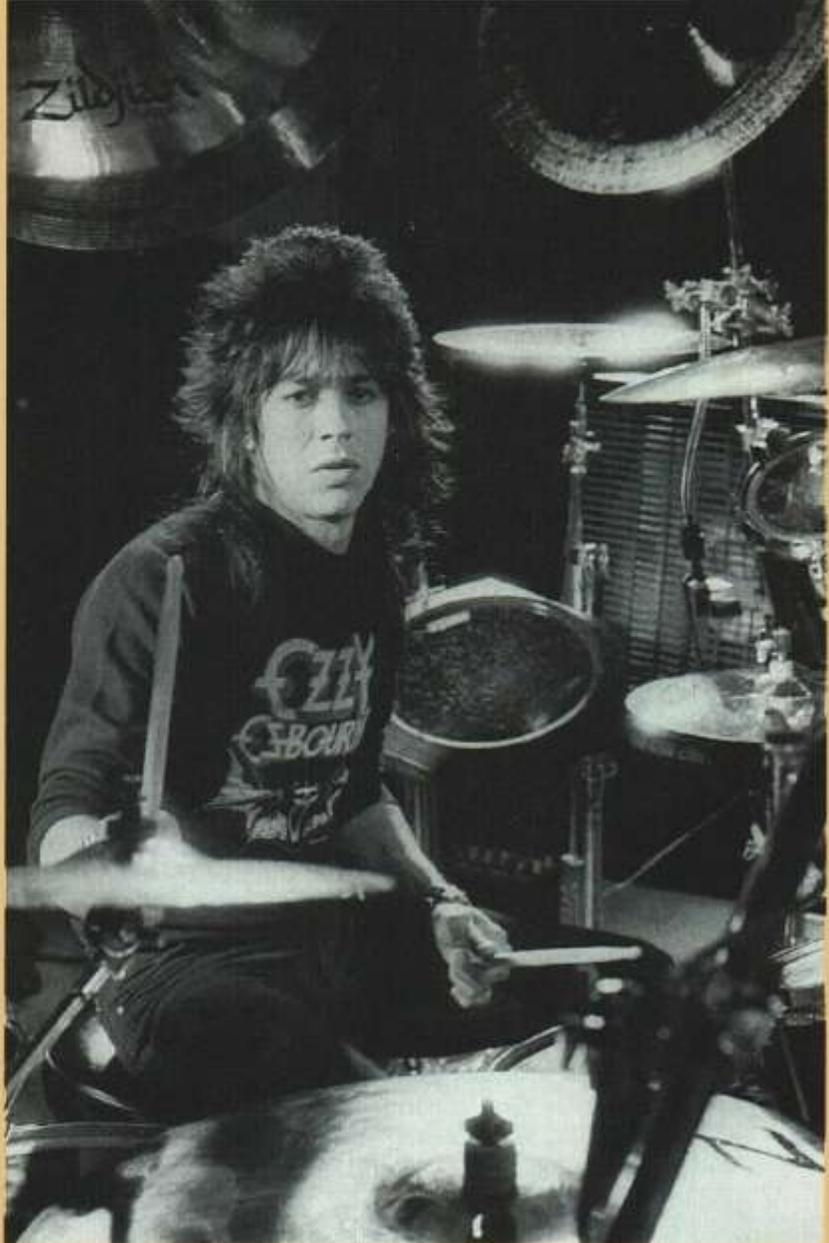


Photo by Michael S. Jachies

because there were some players with a little notoriety, like the ex-bass player for Cheap Trick, Pete Comita, and Bob James, who had been in Montrose. We had all this financial backing, and it started off great, but it didn't work. There were all kinds of problems, and after a year, I realized it was a dead end, so I decided to come back to L.A. My roommate, Randy Rand again, had just joined Lita Ford. Lita had just fired her drummer, and I was the designated hitter, so I went down and got the gig with Lita.

RF: What was that like?

RC: It was great. I love Lita. I think she's going to be a big star. She's a great talent. She's the only girl who has the balls that male rockers have, but still maintains her sexiness and femininity. Then Randy left the band, we got another bass player, and I did an album with her called *Dancing On The Edge*. We did it at the Power Station in New York, which is the ultimate drum studio. It's a beautiful room with this naturally incredible sound. We worked with a producer by the name of Lance Quinn and an engineer named Larry Alexander. They got an incredible drum sound on an old Ludwig kit. I sat at the drums and listened back, and when you hear that kind of sound in your headphones, it inspires you to play a certain way. I'm real proud of that album.

I was with Lita for about a year and a half, and we did a lot of touring. But when she decided to stop touring, we parted. I wanted to keep working, but she wanted to take a break. I couldn't sit around watching TV, so I joined a band called Stone Fury after their album was recorded. We did a little tour with Aerosmith.

RF: What was Stone Fury like?

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CURT

CR E E S S

by Simon Goodwin

CURT Cress is a German drummer with an international reputation. It is fair to say that he is currently Germany's number-one studio player. He manages to combine all the necessary and desirable qualities for this work: He has a chameleon-like ability to blend into any musical situation, but on the other hand, he is always ready to introduce his own ideas and originality. He is adaptable, having taken on board the full range of electronic percussion, and he is quite happy to program something rather than play it, if that will achieve the desired result. Curt is a jazz/rock player who originally made his name in the band Passport, and his own special creative ability has been demonstrated on his solo album, *Avanti*. A new album, *Power Of Echoes*, will have been released by the time this article appears.

Curt enjoys live playing and often goes on tour. I caught up with him in Vienna, where he was in the middle of three weeks of rehearsal with the Austrian singer Falco, prior to going on a world tour with him. The interview that follows was conducted before, during, and after a grueling rehearsal session, at which I was privileged to be able to watch Curt at close quarters. Nothing was too much trouble for Curt, the perfect interviewee, or for Marcus, his drum tech.

SG: Could we start by talking about the studio scene in Germany?

CC: There is a big studio scene in Germany. There are literally hundreds of world-class studios, particularly in Munich and Berlin, but also in Frankfurt, Cologne, and all over. The standard of musicianship has been going up and up. There was a time when there were no "straight" drummers in Germany. They would play around, but the *studio* approach was missing. However, people worked hard, and now the standard is very high. It's healthy. It's good to be in Germany. A lot of international artists come here, and of course, from Germany, you can go everywhere: France, England, Italy. I have had the chance to go to America and work there permanently, but I feel good in Germany. Psychologically, I like to be more down to earth. In America, I might lose this feeling and then crash down.

SG: Why do international artists come to Germany to record?

CC: First of all, there are some excellent producers in Munich who are particularly popular with Americans. I think that America has always looked to England for the creative pop; England has always been first for the crazy stuff. So Americans have always been receptive to European ideas, and this included the Munich disco scene. That was something very new, at the time. Germans are always good with machines [laughs], and they got all that together very fast. In Munich, they started the idea of recording the bass drum and snare drum separately. The Americans would never have thought of asking a drummer to play everything separately, but the Germans are crazy when it comes to perfectionism. The Americans achieve that perfectionism but in a different way. They keep an eye on Germany. There have been some unusual things starting here, like the electronic pop music—which I think was stupid—but it was completely different. The funky music going on was American, so they had all that themselves, but we had the crazy stuff and the studio techniques—some good stuff. So artists and producers come over, and they like Germany. It's a good place, so they keep coming.

Photo by Jaeger Kotos





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"THERE ARE A LOT OF DRUMMERS WITH A LOT OF TALENT WHO NEVER GET THE CHANCES."

Another reason for people from other countries coming here to record is the cost. English bands record in Munich or Berlin, because they are paying 50 to 80 pounds an hour for studio time, when in London, they would be paying 150 to 200 pounds. You get full facilities with all the effects; you don't have to rent them as extras, as you do in some other places. So you can produce so much more. It ends up costing about a third of the price. I believe also that, for some people, there are tax advantages if they record outside their own country.

SG: How has this internationalism in the studios affected your own career?

CC: It's been really great for me. There have been German things that I have been involved in which have had international success, like the band Passport and the film music for *The Boat*, which I did with Klaus Doldinger, but I have also worked with international artists. For instance, there were Ike and Tina Turner, which is interesting because Tina is now very big in her own right. But this was six months to a year before they split up. I played with them in Munich, and Ike asked me to go over to Los Angeles with them. They sent airline tickets for me and my wife, so I went. That was good experience. I also did the first solo album for Freddy Mercury, the singer from Queen. I'm on the new Meatloaf album. Then there was Billy Squier, who sold about eight million copies of the first record, and I'm not even mentioned on the sleeve—but that doesn't matter, [laughs] I've worked a lot with people like Mark Spiro and Harold Faltermeyer, who are well known in America, and I've even played on American Hollywood film scores that have been recorded in Munich. For instance, I'm on some of the music for *Dallas*. It was very interesting to see how they work in America. With 60 or 70 people in the studio, you really get wet hands the first time! It's "One, Two, Three, Four," and you *have to read*. It's incredible.

That was a good challenge for me. I studied reading for a year at the Music High School in Frankfurt, but I didn't keep up the work on it, because I was so busy in the studios and on tours. This was a pity, but that one year did give me the grounding I needed. The Hollywood sessions were very good for me, particularly when my nerves came down to earth.

SG: How did you start playing?

CC: I was born in 1952, so when the Beatles came up, I was 10 or 11 years old. I started playing drums in a band that consisted of three girls and myself when I was 11, but about a year later, I was able to graduate to a better band. I lived near a town called Hanau, which is near Frankfurt, and Hanau had a lot of American army clubs. By the time I was 13 or 14 years old, I was playing in three or four bands and working practically every night, but I still had to go to school in the daytime.

SG: Hanau is quite famous for its U.S. Army clubs. Lots of people have worked there at one time or another, including me.

CC: It's more America than Germany [laughs], and this was very important for me. Although I started out listening to Beatles music, it was the black American music that we would hear in the clubs and on the A.F.M. radio stations, which inspired me further

and helped my development. So even living in Germany, I was able to absorb the American soul music, so that playing it was no problem.

When I was 15 or 16, I was in a band called Orange Peel. We had a record that went to number one in France and Belgium. We didn't know what was happening. We were big stars without realizing it. The record company kept all the money. People's first experiences are so often like that: The artists get screwed!

After that, the band split up, and I started working with Dieter Dierks, who is now The Scorpions' producer. At that time, he was just building up his studio, and I had the chance to play on everything that he was producing. Dieter was working a lot at the time with Peter Hauke, who has recently done things like Planet P. I did about 25 albums in one year, and by the time I was 18, I was already studio trained: I knew what a microphone was, and I wouldn't get nervous when the tape was running. This helped me a lot later.

My first involvement with an international production was when I was 19 and I joined the band Atlantis, with the singer Inga Rumpf. We recorded in England. After Atlantis I joined Passport, with Klaus Doldinger. I was with them for four and a half years, and during this time, we did lots of big road tours: Australia, Japan, Brazil, America, lots of places. We toured with Herbie Hancock in America.

SG: You took over from Udo Lindeberg in Passport, yet your styles are different.

CC: Udo has been known, rather unkindly, as "the sleeping drummer." He has a slow, relaxed, solid sort of style. He was one of the first German drummers I really liked, and he has been a big rock star in Germany. At that time, I could combine the hard rock sort of playing with the more sensitive sort of stuff, and I could also play really wild. I used to play until I died every evening; my hands



Photo by Jaeger Kotos



would bleed, but it didn't stop me. The audiences loved it.

But after four and a half years, it made no sense to me to continue playing free jazz/rock with the same people. If you're playing in an organized way, that's fine. But playing free as we were doing in Passport, we'd go on, play the theme, and then off we'd go. After a while, you can't stand the bass player's phrases anymore. You know exactly what the person on the saxophone is going to play. Even if it's free, you can smell it.

I left Passport in friendship and formed my own band, Snowball. I had Roy Albrighton, the singer from Nektar, an American bass player named Dave King, and Christian Schuetze on keyboards. We had initial success; we were selling the same number of records as Passport, but after a year, we had some problems: Roy and I wanted to go more into the pop field, but the other two were interested in the more sophisticated jazz/rock style. I didn't want to go there anymore, so we changed the band. I was the boss. I had to make the decisions, but after a few years, I was going crazy. I wanted to stop the continuous rehearsing and touring. I have three kids, and I wanted to be at home sometimes. Also, we seemed to be losing more money than we were making. I had gone to America with a friend to try to sell Snowball, but all we did was lose money. I made up my mind to stay in one place, and work only in the studios for two or three years at least. But it was good experience, and I think I would know how to do it better next time.

SG: Was the money you lost your own, or did it belong to a production company?

CC: It belonged to me and a friend, Datty Ruth. I started a publishing company when I was 25, and I got advance money. But this was all on *my* shoulders. There was a time when I could pay people to rehearse every day and they wouldn't have to work, but then they left the band and all that money was gone. That's when you start to see minuses on the paper. Then you've got problems. In fact, I've still got a few problems from that time, but after a while, you find ways to pay it back, so it's okay.

SG: Coming around to the present, could we talk about this unusual setup that you are using for the Falco tour?

CC: The drums are all Yamaha *Recording Series*, and the cymbals are Paiste. I've got a 22" bass drum and an 8" deep metal snare

with 14" heavy 3000 hi-hats, all in the conventional positions. But in front of me, I have a 2002 22" ride cymbal mounted on the bass drum, on the right a 20" crash, and on the left an 18" crash. These cymbals are where you would normally expect to find the tom-toms, and although they are 2002, they are color—black and white. Low down on the right, where you would normally expect to find the floor tom, I have an inverted 24" Chinese cymbal. I don't know where it's from. It was imported by Meinl.

The tom-toms are mounted on either side of me, up high where you would expect the cymbals to be. There are four on either side going from 10" to 15". All the toms on my left contain specially constructed pads, so you don't hear the actual sound of the drums. I have different sounds available to be triggered from a Simmons or a *Percuter*. I can use a drum-to-MIDI converter to link up with an *Emulator*, a *Fairlight*, or anything else. I have done this on my latest record, but on this tour, we have so many samplers on stage already that this would be a bit too much.

On the right-hand side, I have normal acoustic toms with May EA microphones that are connected up to an I.M.E. With this machine, I can control whether the sound that goes out to the audience is the "live" sound, the Simmons sound, the *Percuter* sound, or a mixture of two or three of them. The I.M.E. is a trigger terminal. It's built by Peter Filzer in Munich. This, the Simmons *SDS7*, and the Dynacord *Percuter* are linked up through a Yamaha eight-channel mixer.

The heads I use are *Ambassadors*. There is an Evans oil-filled head on the bass drum, which seems to work very well live with the May mic's and the electronic stuff, but in the studio, I usually use an *Ambassador* on the bass drum as well. The pedal is a Ludwig *Speed King*. I've always used one of these, and I never plan to change. The sticks are my own model and come from Paiste.

SG: How did you develop this unconventional setup and why?

CC: Well, this Falco tour is a real *show*. The visual aspect is important. For me, it is a challenge. I first used this setup on the Spliff tour. I wanted to play with the tom-toms at the side and the cymbals in front, and it worked. It was *heavy*, but it worked. It's easier with this music, because the drumming is all fairly straight ahead. There are no fast fills. It's groovy music, so I have a lot of time to

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Drummers of Contemporary Christian Music: Part 1

by
Stephanie
Bennett

CONTEMPORARY Christian Music is as diverse as its individual members. One thing it is not is an organized bastion of Gospel-preaching radicals who have banded together for a common cause. All of the drummers interviewed are "regular" people, and although on the whole they seem to possess more than a few common traits, their backgrounds, equipment, playing experience, and view of work are all quite unique.

No longer can this type of music be categorized into one or two basic groups, such as black Gospel or country. Since the latter part of the '70s, Contemporary Christian Music has been emerging as a force to be reckoned with; it is a mode of playing that can no longer be satisfactorily labeled "second-rate" or outdated. CCM has developed at a rapid rate, and has drawn many top-notch professionals as it continues to be progressive and fresh. The drummers involved in Christian bands speak openly about the challenges, the satisfaction, the motivation, and the downright hard work that is involved in playing the many styles that are within the realm of Christian music.

The evolution of CCM has set a new standard in the expression of religious belief. Throughout the country, and the world as well, bands are emerging that have shed their secular life-styles, yet retained their strong rock 'n' roll roots, to convey the message of Jesus Christ through music. The styles can be as varied as jazz, pop, rock, funk, heavy metal, fusion, country, reggae, and even rap. Drummers who are working with these groups are not always the traditional "preacher's kids" who have grown up in the church. Nor can we always point to the proverbial prodigal son whose rebellious ways have led to burn-out and then a "religious" experience. In fact, the drummers making a mark in the world of CCM are surprising. They come from so many various walks of life that the only true common denominator that can be seen is a strong faith in God and a dedication to the Gospel message. All of the drummers interviewed expressed a strong desire to play and a commitment to excellence in their field. Of the drummers interviewed, my one regret is that this article could not be more inclusive. There are a great many good bands out there in the field, particularly those that are less well known. For now though, we will discover and get to know some of the best drummers from some of the more well-known bands.

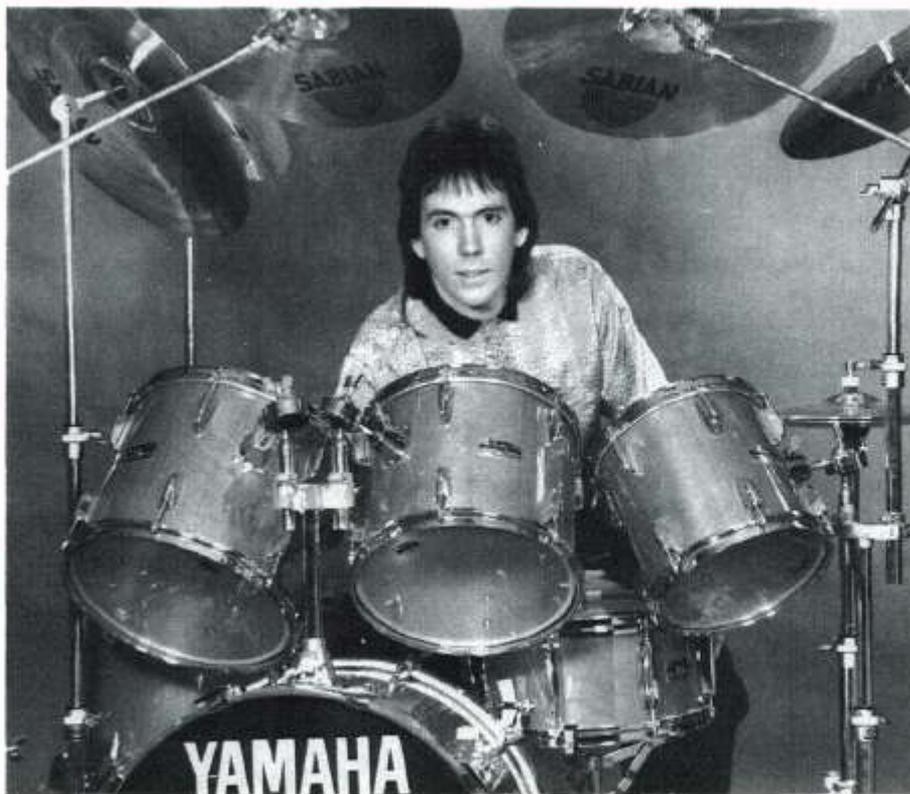


Photo by Kevin Baum

John Gates

John Gates is 34 years old, from Downingtown, Pennsylvania, and is currently playing with a band called Glad. The band recently cut its latest LP, entitled Who Do Ya Love?, which is John's first album with the band. Most of his experience in the last ten years has been in the studio, doing sessions for people like Gladys Knight, Samantha Sang, Freda Payne, Helen Schneider, and Creme D'Cocoa, to name a few. To his credit are such television shows as Johnny Carson, Merv Griffin, Mike Douglas, and many others. He has performed on commercials both as a drummer and vocally. The Fonzie Doll jingle, Burger King, and Saturday Night Live are just a bit of the work he has done.

SB: Why did you leave the studio and go into Christian music?

JG: That's a huge question. First of all, I didn't really leave the studio. When I can find time to do some sessions now, I still do, but most of the time I'm too busy with Glad. Secondly, I had wanted to be with a Christian band for a long time. In 1977 I was born again, and shortly thereafter, I came into contact with some contemporary Gospel albums by Andre Crouch. After I heard Andre, I was blown away. In

1982, I went to Creation [a large three- to five-day outdoor camp gathering of contemporary Christian bands] and Glad was there. When I heard them, I was blown away again! I became a fan that day and followed Glad's albums. I was really waiting for the right timing to become a part of CCM, but I wanted to do it when it was God's will for me to do it and not push my way into a situation on my own.

SB: Can you explain just what style of music Glad is into, and what you're required to play?

JG: Glad was never into mainstream sound. The band always had a very unique sound. I'd say that there's quite a bit of jazz influence involved and pop, as well. Bob Kauflin, our ex-keyboard player, wrote much of the stuff, with Ed Nalle. Since he left the group, we've sort of changed direction and are much more progressive in our approach. Electronic triggering of sounds, synthesizers—the sound of the '80s has finally had a full impact on the band. Tom [present keyboard player] and I are very similar in our musical approach. We're into R&B, so grooving together is real important. We like to lay it down, you know? With the new album, we've really taken advantage of all the

advancements in quality recording. Glad has definitely entered the '80s.

SB: You mentioned electronically triggered sounds as an important part of the new LP. Is your kit solidly electronic?

JG: As a matter of fact, no. I use a Yamaha *Power Tour Custom Series* kit. It's redwood, with 10", 12", 13", and 16" toms, and a 6 1/2" wooden snare. I like the bigger sound of the power toms. They're a little deeper, and I like the way they look. On the new album, I used Simmons pads to trigger a Fairlight *Series 3* computer. Ardent Studio in Memphis has two of these things; they're really outrageous. All of the sounds that were sampled were triggered through a Simmons *MTM* interface. We had two different snare sounds on each tune on the album.

SB: How about your cymbals?

JG: Well, I endorse Sabian cymbals, and I use a 21" *Dry ride*, 19", 17", and 16" crashes, and 14" *Flat Hats*.

SB: What do you like about the *Flat Hats*?

JG: The bottom cymbal is flat, and it's got three holes in it that let the air out when the hats come together. It just has a real bright sound to it.

SB: What about your setup? Is it predictable, or are you always experimenting?

JG: My setup is always the same. The guys even kid me about it. The rug I set up on has little dots on it, like connect-the-dots puzzles, you know? That comes from the studio experience. It's easier if you get used to a particular setup in the studio.

SB: How about muffling your drums? How important is it to you?

JG: It's real important. I'd say it's a matter of taste. Probably because of my studio roots, I go for a real studio sound—not real wide open. I muffle the heads, and tape them up with paper towels or whatever happens to be around at the time. On my toms, I use *Pinstripe* heads, and on the kick drum, I use a white coated head. On the snare, I use a two-inch ring cut out from an old snare drum head. It takes away the overtones and there isn't a lot of ringing, but it's not real dead. I keep clear *Ambassador* heads on the bottoms of the toms. The sound is real different from the sounds that are on the older Glad albums.

SB: It sounds like you take quite a bit of time preparing your drums for the best sound. Do you ever get into any hassles or conflicts with sound engineers or producers?

JG: In a live situation, the sound engineers always love how my drums sound. Most times, I get everything set up and miked, and then I do a soundcheck and have somebody else play my drums. Then I go out and listen to it. Pretty much, I tune and muffle my drums according to the type of tunes being done, but then, as I mentioned before, since I've played in studios quite a bit, I always tend to move toward studio

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Photo by Keith Baum

fall as well. We toured the U.S. and Canada. Also, we did a 12-day tour in Australia, and that was real exciting. Throughout the fall, I was particularly busy, because I was doing two tours plus a little studio work squeezed in there as well. One of the tours was for the Benson Company—a Christian recording company in Nashville. The Benson tour was with three artists, Jesse Dixon, Burt Lamb, and Angie Lewis. It was really a neat tour, because the main thrust was to raise money for the homeless in America. During late fall and winter, I did some custom albums. Right now, I'm working on a wedding-album project with Benson.

SB: Tell me about the tour with David Meece. What's his music like?

AN: In the last year or so, David's music has totally changed. He's branching out in a lot of ways that other Christian artists aren't. That's something that I want to get across. People hear about Christian music and often feel, "What *is* Christian music?" I'd like to clear that up. It can be rock; it can be R&B; it can be any particular style of music. The difference is the lyrical content. It pertains to what we believe in and what we're trying to help others believe in as well. We're actually changing people's lives through CCM. It's very different from what people think. Many people just don't understand Christian music. I have a blast playing Christian music, and it can be just as difficult as secular music. Some will look at CCM and think, "Oh, this player can't be very good. Why is he playing *Christian* music?" That's just not true. Many of the Christian bands out there are really hot. I've done a lot of secular work, and now I'm very involved in the Christian market. There's no difference in the musical quality. It's a good place to be, and I'm real happy to be a part of it.

SB: You sound happy, but isn't it a little tough now that you have a wife? Financially, the Christian music market has never been as lucrative as the secular market.

AN: Pay works different in every situation. When I was with Glad, I was on salary. With David, I get paid by the night. With session work, I get paid by the job. I can honestly say that I've been blessed that I make a decent living. Sure, it's not a 9-to-5 job with a secure paycheck at the end of each week, but my wife has been tremendously supportive, and I'm really doing well. I'm grateful for that, because I know a lot of musicians—secular *or* Christian—who are starving. If you can make a decent living in the music business, you can consider yourself successful.

SB: Let's switch gears and talk about the technical side of playing. What kind of kit do you use?

AN: I have a Tama Wild Cherry *Superstar* set. I use 10", 12", and 13" power toms, a

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Art Noble

Art Noble is a Christian, and he is a drummer. Although presently not attached to one particular Christian band, Noble is very busy doing sessions for a number of Christian artists and recording companies, and he recently finished an extensive tour with David Meece. This past year, Art and his wife, Barbara, took up residence in Nashville. Since that time, he has continued his work for the Benson Company, David Meece, and various other studio spots along the East Coast.

SB: You've done quite a bit of studio work in recent years; your drums can be heard on about 16 different albums. Can you point to one main element that would nurture a successful studio career?

AN: Well, I think a real important factor is that, when you go into the studio, you shouldn't go in with a head that says, "This is *my* sound; this is what *I'm* going to do." It's real important that, when you do go into the studio, you have a level head. The smoother you make things work, the smoother the session is going to go. You have to work closely with the engineer, and if he says, "Tweak the head," then tweak the head. If he says that the floor tom sounds funny, then the floor tom sounds funny, because a lot of times the sound that is heard from behind the sound console is quite different from the sound in the room. You've really got to put some trust in the engineers. Just make yourself a

real servant to what they want to do. In this business, if you get a bad reputation as being hard to work with, it'll destroy you very quickly.

SB: How did you break into the studio?

AN: In college, I did a few movie soundtracks for the Presbyterian church, but I didn't heavily break into recording until I joined Glad. I was with that group for five years, and that was really my ground-level experience. People started calling me for sessions when I was with Glad. Then I did some work for a studio in New Jersey and some jingles at Omega Studio in D.C.

SB: So you really branched out during that five-year period with Glad. Why did you leave Glad?

AN: I needed a change. I just came to a place in my life where I felt like I was being called in a different direction. I mainly wanted to be a session player, but I do love playing live. Eventually, I want to have my schedule about 70% in the studio and 30% playing live. I think it's so important to play live; it gives you an edge. Playing all the time in the studio can really burn you out.

SB: Since you've been in Nashville, what has your direction been?

AN: Well, we moved there in February of '86, and about a month later, I received a call to go on tour with David Meece for the spring and summer. That extended to the



Keith Thibodeaux

Keith Thibodeaux has been the drummer for the Christian rock band David And The Giants for about nine years. Although he is to a large degree unknown as a player, he has been noted as "one of the best" in the country. You may recognize his name more readily as Richard Keith, the stage name he used in the '50s and '60s while appearing on the I Love Lucy show as bongo-playing "Little Ricky," or on The Andy Griffith Show as Opie's friend "Johnny Paul." Presently, Thibodeaux resides in Jackson, Mississippi, with his wife of ten years, Kathy, and their seven-year-old daughter, Tara. He plays with conviction and, when performing, gives all to the audience—driving the band, exuding energy, and adding tasteful color to the entire show.

SB: Were you really playing the drums on *I Love Lucy*? Weren't you just three or four years old?

KT: Actually, I was five, and yes, I played. I've been playing since I was two.

SB: Did they put a pair of sticks in your hands in the delivery room, or what?

KT: [laughs] No, first it was spoons and knives. I'd pick up anything and tap, tap, tap on the furniture or anything I could

find. When the neighbors heard me playing on the trash can lids out back, they called my parents.

SB: To complain about the noise?

KT: Actually, no. They called and said, "Hey, your kid keeps hitting those garbage cans outside, and we really think it sounds musical." They suggested that my parents buy me a drum, so they bought me a snare. From there I started performing for civic groups, and then my dad took me to an audition for the *Horace Heidt Show*. I won that amateur contest, and Horace asked my dad if I could join the show. I started traveling cross-country with the show until it ended up in L. A.

SB: How old were you at this point?

KT: I was about four. My dad came with me to everything.

SB: So how did you find your way to *I Love Lucy*?

KT: Dad had a friend in L.A. who heard about the audition. So we went, and I got the job. I started it at age five, and continued until the show went off the air in '59. I was seven.

SB: With all this natural rhythm, some of it had to be genetic. Did anyone else play the drums in your family?

KT: My father played around with the drums, and my mother played piano by ear. The biggest thing is that my parents were super-supportive; they never discouraged me. They picked up on my inborn talent very quickly.

SB: Did they get you a whole set when you were still a preschooler?

KT: Yeah, my first set was a 1956 Gretsch kit. In fact, I still have that kit. Right now, I'm in the process of restoring it.

SB: The set you're using presently is a Tama, right?

KT: Yes, it's a maple finish Tama *Superstar* kit. I use a 14" snare, 12", 13", 14", and 15" toms, and a 22" bass drum. I use Zildjian cymbals: 14" *New Beat hi-hats*, an 18" medium-thin crash, a 16" medium-thin crash, a 20" medium ride, and an 18" thin crash.

SB: Do you use any electronics?

KT: In the studio, I've used a Simmons *SDS7* on one song and a *LinnDrum* for some rhythm things on several tracks. Live, I use a Yamaha *RX-11* drum machine.

SB: Yeah, I noticed something pretty funky happening when I saw you play live. What exactly did you do with the bass player and the drum machine.

KT: [laughs] That's just something that we used to do with David And The Giants when we were playing secular music. We keep doing it because the audience really likes it. During the middle of the drum solo on a song called "Highway To Heaven," I program a steady groove on the *RX-11*, and then I get up and play the bass guitar with my sticks.

SB: The audience did eat it up. You guys seem to have a lot of fun together, and you groove together so well. How long have you been a band?

KT: Basically since 1969. We played together as David And The Giants when none of us were Christians. We were doing everything that other secular rock 'n' roll bands were doing . . . you name it. Then I came to know the Lord in 1974 and started telling the other guys about God. One by one, they became Christians, too, but it took a while. There were quite a few changes along the way. I left the band, went to California, and then I went to Atlanta, where I rehearsed with a band called Starbuck. You may remember they did a song called "Moonlight Feels Right." From there I went to Jackson, Mississippi, and went to college. I played in a jazz combo, did a little country & western, etc., and it was during this time that David, Rayborn, and Clayborn came to the Lord. They called me and asked if I'd do some recording for them, so I did. At the time, I was playing with a disco group. I was praying for direction and felt that I should call David back after the recording session. When I called, he said, "You

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INSIDE

by
Susan
Alexander

a near-perfect performance of each chart they play. All this is presented under conditions representative of the demands of the music business. The students are regularly videotaped and evaluated by their instructors. Grove has also made it possible for handicapped people to attend by providing special parking areas and elevators.

All the programs are comprised of three categories. The first is musicianship classes, which include modern harmony, sight reading and ear training, and improvisation. Before classes begin, the students are evaluated to determine which level they should be placed in in relation to the school's structure. Once the levels are decided, the students move up one level per quarter in each area.

The second category is the core classes. All programs have eight hours a week of these core classes, which concentrate on technique, reading or writing, and equipment or orchestration in each area.

The third category is applied classes. Instrumentalists are put into playing situations, improvisation, ensemble and sight-reading groups, showcases, and mid-year and final projects.

Musician/composer/educator Dick Grove started the school in 1973 as a workshop. "I was a very active writer," Grove says. "I was doing, I think, two television shows a week, so I would do this on Saturdays. Then it became Saturdays and Sundays." Then he added Monday nights to the schedule.

With over 1,500 students taking his workshops, and student hours escalating from two to 20 a week, Grove realized that he needed to get accreditation. With that, the workshops evolved into a full-time college. Along with accreditation came the opportunity for financial aid for students through various Federal Aid Programs, including the Veteran's Benefits program.

By this time, Grove had enlisted the help of Allyn Ferguson and Nick Perito. Fergu-

JUST before cresting the hill on the 405 freeway, you are suddenly hit by a wall of heat. Leaving the cool of the Los Angeles basin behind, you drive through the Sepulveda Pass and down into the desert heat of the San Fernando Valley. Ventura Boulevard is the first street you come across. Get off here and drive east for about one mile to Van Nuys Boulevard. Turn left, and you're almost at the new home of the Grove School of Music.

Los Angeles is one of the music capitals of the world. It is also the home of the motion picture and television industries. With both businesses requiring music for their productions, it becomes obvious why so many musicians flock to this entertainment center by the sea. Grove School of Music is situated in the Valley just over the hill from Hollywood. This puts the school right in the heart of the entertainment industry. It's a very advantageous position for the school's students. They can attend clinics by famous guest instructors, and take advantage of the knowledge and experience of the school's highly experienced faculty.

"I think we teach music in the most effective way it can be taught," says Dick Grove, president of the school. "Along with that is the application of it."

As one graduate of the school puts it,

"Grove is a great school. I learned quite a lot at music school, but at Grove, it really came together. I feel that I have a much better understanding of how things work and why. Now I can make that knowledge work for me. I'm a much better musician because of the school."

Grove School of Music enjoys a good reputation, and faculty members such as Dick Grove, Allyn Ferguson, Steve Lukather, Peter Donald, David Garibaldi, Peter Erskine, Dave Samuels, Roger Linn, and Luis Conte ensure that it is well deserved. The school offers 11 full-time programs in guitar, bass, percussion, keyboard (including synthesizers), general musicianship (including recording engineering), vocals, composition and musicianship (including songwriting), composing and arranging, and film/video composing. These programs are all geared towards career goals.

The school's premise is that the key to every professional musician's success is experience. Every program is designed to give the students the kind of practical experience they might otherwise take years to acquire. The instrumental students play in sight-reading situations and as soloists. They learn through theory and ear-training geared to their instrument. Sight-reading Ensemble students are required to give

SCHOOL OF



son has composed over 35 film soundtracks and has been nominated numerous times for Emmy awards for his television work. He has written for such jazz greats as Stan Kenton, Buddy Rich, and Freddie Hubbard, and won an Emmy in 1985 for the underscore to the TV special of *Camille*. He is also the co-founder of the New American Orchestra.

Peter Donald is the Program Director for the Percussion Program. Donald is a jazz and studio drummer who studied at Berklee with Alan Dawson. He has played with Peter Allen, Helen Reddy, Olivia Newton-John, John Abercrombie, and the Lew Tabackin-Toshiko Akiyoshi Big Band, and has done much television work. He started with Dick Grove when the school was still in its workshop stage.

Grove, Donald, and Ferguson are very proud of their record with the school. As Ferguson puts it, "The proof is in the numbers. The percentage of graduates that are working in the business is astonishing. It's over 80 percent."

"If you go to any other serious conservatory or school in the mainstream of education, it's something like eight to ten percent. Every year in this country, there are something like 4,000 fine string players graduated. Do you know how many jobs there are for them? Two hundred. Most of those people are not functioning as musicians, because they never learned how to apply their craft."

Donald: Basically, to enter into the program and have a dedicated year in the percussion department, there are certain standards the students have to meet. I can't teach them if they don't know something about basic music notation, etc.—the rudimentary knowledge. They can get that if they come to some of the school's workshop programs. But there is a standard, and we try to maintain it so people can get the most out of that year. We're selling quality, and that, in itself, is an experience that will give them something. It's hard to



Dick Grove teaching a class.

keep that quality at a certain level. You can't just put the net out on Ventura Boulevard. If they're going to start, we have a vested interest in their finishing.

Grove: We feel that part of what they're paying for is to get with experienced people who have an overview of the business. The school has been going for 14 years. In that time, the whole business has changed. Rather than continue teaching as we did 14 years ago, we have to be on the leading edge. We feel that, for musicians to be successful in the '80s and '90s, they have to be what we call a hyphenate, which means the day of the specialist is changing.

All students, whether they are voice students or percussionists or engineers, have to have a year of musicianship—our brand of musicianship. Along with their major and applied classes, which are hands on for players, they are playing showcases and so forth. That means that, if drummers can write material or know something about production, when they come out, they have a comprehensive understanding that's greater than their competition, and that helps them survive.

Donald: Plus with the playing program, we have a lot more applied classes and playing ensembles, and we're getting more and more all the time in different styles. That gives them an overview. They can make choices intelligently rather than limit themselves by not experiencing things.

Grove: That reflects itself in the percussion program itself, which has five areas. Dave Garibaldi does contemporary drumset. Luis Conte does Latin drums. Dan Greco does mallets. Electronics is Dave Crigger. Peter does jazz and studio drums, and so forth. That makes the students more well rounded, as opposed to only being rock drummers, jazz drummers, or mallet players. If you're doing a record date, they're not going to hire two drummers if they want four bars of timpani.

We try to be very objective. We do all styles, whether it's heavy metal or this, that, or the other thing. We feel that the point to start from is the objectivity that a professional has. Our students get that knowledge from the kind of stuff we teach them. Also, they rub shoulders with professionals, and they see their attitude

MUSIC



Peter Donald instructing a student.

about it. When you go on a jingle, you don't know what you're going to play—whether it will be a march, a Viennese waltz, or whatever.

Ferguson: The world of music is a lot bigger than Top 40. There are a lot of areas out there where you can function as a musician, and a damn good one, without being in that little world of Top 40. And so we're addressing the fact that, if you're going to function as a professional musician, there are a whole bunch of things you can do. You don't have to just do Top 40. As a matter of fact, most people who just do that are washing dishes two years later—seriously—because that's a very ephemeral kind of pursuit. You're a star today, and two years later, no one's heard of you. People can work up to a certain level, and it will be so good that they get a chance to go to the next level. Maybe they can just stay above the water there. They go up to the next level, and suddenly, they can't do it.

Grove: Exactly, so if you don't have that foundation, there will be a point where you'll fail. That's what we try to give them out of our experience. We're drawing peo-

ple who are looking down the road and not basing their whole lives on what they're going to do in the next week.

SA: I see why the percussion program features such a wide variety of percussion instruments.

Donald: Well, one of the things that adds to the range is the mallets and the "legit" percussion. It prepares drummers to be more involved in doubling. Some students find out they really like it, and they end up wanting to be percussionists, which is great. It's a great thing to see someone get turned on and go in another direction. You're giving some kind of new lease on life. I think just looking into the possibilities of what's going on is important. Everybody ends up doing what he or she likes doing and feels the most satisfaction from. But if you haven't checked a lot of things out, you're limiting yourself.

SA: I would imagine that most students are more familiar with the drumset as opposed to mallets or other percussion.

Grove: Well, with most of the students we get, their experience is mainly in drumset, but it could be limited as far as styles go. I think Peter would agree with me that most of the emphasis is on drumset. Then there are the peripheral areas of the Latin drums or electronic drums and mallets.

Donald: Yes, and as a result, they spend more class time with percussion, because most people need that kind of tutoring. Dan Greco teaches them repertoire in the mallet instruments and so forth. Then, in the drumset at this point, they spend an hour and a half a week with both me and David Garibaldi—three hours total.

For the last six months, my course has tracked the Composing and Arranging Program—C.A.P. Every week, there is a different style that the writers cover. We move through that, and we anticipate each week. So the people who are playing in a C.A.P. thing will know how to deal with that style that week. The students who aren't playing can at least learn about it. I encourage the drummers to get together with the composers, if they're friends with them, and say, "Hey, I think this is much hipper if you do that."

SA: With all the electronics and computers that come into the industry, it must be hard to keep up to date in order to give that information to your students.

Donald: It can be ruinous with so much hype going on. There's a new gimmick on the market every month, and they're leaping frogging each other. Who knows what's best? From the drummer's standpoint, you've really got to know something about

it. Otherwise, you're going to get badly burned and spend a lot of money.

Five years ago, I didn't know anything about programming drum machines, or computers or synthesizers. I was kind of dragged, kicking and screaming, into it because I knew I had to survive. I ended up loving it. I'm always experimenting with it. I've certainly become more practical about it. I dumped a lot of money down the drain just because I didn't know what I was doing. It's a daunting thing, and that's why we address it very specifically in this school. It affects the labor situation. It's got all kinds of ramifications.

Grove: But see, there are ways to deal with that. If you teach the concept of, say, a digital approach or an analog approach, the students really understand that, rather than just pushing buttons. Then the manufacturers come out with an enhanced model the next year, but it's the same principle. We go all the way up to the Fairlight, but it's still music. It's just a tool to deal with music and orchestration.

Ferguson: We try to address the fact that it's the human being who programs it. The machine itself has nothing to do with it. That's not the message. The message is what you did with the machine. Unfortunately, there is an awful lot of confusion about that among most people. We're not confused about it. It's how you program it that matters.

Grove: It's become a very integral part of the school, because it affects arrangers, film composers, songwriters, keyboardists, drummers, guitar players, and bass players. It's one of the fundamentals of the school now to stay on the cutting edge of that.

We do try to work it within the musical context, and realize that's just today's way of getting the job done on the marketplace. You have to deal with it, and be able to talk the terminology and not get confused.

Ferguson: It's also staying ahead of what some of the trends are today. There's an awful lot of synthesizer being used in motion picture scoring and television, particularly. Some of the stuff is being done by people who are not very musical. See, if you press a synthesizer key, it'll go for three hours. It doesn't breathe, and it doesn't act like a human being. When we're dealing with it, the first thing I tell my students is, "Think of this thing as a human being. Don't just sit on it. Let it breathe a little bit, and let it be a little musical."

Donald: The other extreme is, now that you know how to make it musical and how

to make it breathe, *don't* make it breathe. You can stick something like that in the middle of a musical set. It's amazingly effective. That's the thing about music—playing or writing it. It shouldn't be predictable. Somebody's going to come up with ways of utilizing these instruments that's going to blow us all completely away in ten years.

SA: Speaking of electronics, I understand that you utilize audio and videotape as teaching aids.

Grove: Yes. We have a lot of textbooks. Everything is documented. But we also have a lot of audio/visual things that we supplement that with—play-along tapes for players, transparencies for lecture classes, and video things.

SA: I see in your catalog that your writing and film-scoring students have to write a new piece of material every week, and that material is performed every week. Is this performance given by other students?

Grove: No, we hire professionals for that. We're simulating pre-records and record dates.

Donald: Students who are capable of doing it participate, if they're up to the level the writers need.

Grove: They have to earn the right to do that.

Ferguson: But the point is that they are paid. In most schools, the students feel put upon. They say, "What are we doing here playing this guy's music? We don't want to do this." The result is that you don't get a good performance. You're not able to stand in front of the orchestra and behave as a professional because they're not behaving as professionals. The minute you pay them, the whole thing changes. So they're all paid to be professionals, and therefore, the student who writes a cue and



The GSM percussion staff: (l. to r.) David Garibaldi, Dan Greco, Peter Donald, and Luis Conte

records it can get on the podium, behave as a professional, and say, "Wait a minute, that's out of tune."

Grove: We have two main writing programs. The students will do at least 20 orchestrations or cues, and they get 15 minutes each to get a take. So, they have to work under pressure. That's where they learn how to get down to business. There's no nonsense.

It's interesting to see graduates who are now doing a lot of things in this town and other places. They deal with it without that 20 years of experience. They don't get blown down when a producer says, "Make birds out of elephants."

SA: I see that you have counseling and career guidance. Who does this counsel-

ing?

Grove: Mike Julian does both career guidance and job placement. He also does counseling. I do counseling, also.

Ferguson: We all do counseling. If it's a percussion thing, Peter does it.

Donald: Yes, I always stay in touch. At least once a quarter, I spend a few minutes with each student. The classes are small enough, and there's enough access to me or to the other guys in the department that students can talk with us. But the thing is that Dan Greco will come in and say, "I just worked with James Horner yesterday. This is what happened and how I dealt with it." That's counseling. That's the kind of thing that really is so valuable.

SA: I understand that you like to limit the number of students in your classes.

Donald: Most schools in our position have gone through periods of great expansion or are going through it. It seems like they don't know where to stop. They get very big, and the students start to lose touch with the core faculty. They also have assistants teaching. They have instructors, but they don't really have the core teachers. And that contact, I think, is important. I only want the percussion program to get so big, and then I want to stop. I don't want to have 200 drummers.

Grove: You see, we have like 30 sections that move through the school in all these different disciplines. Each one of those sections is directed by the guy who wrote the program, so there's that control over the

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Omar Hakim



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Being one of today's most respected drummers, Omar has compiled a list of credits that reads like a Who's Who in the music business. Equally at home in either the studio or on the road, it's easy to see why he is considered one of the very best, a true player's player that will settle for nothing less than excellence, from himself and his drums. So what kind of drums does Omar play? The answer is obvious . . .



Thurman Barker

At age 40, Thurman Barker has spent over half his life at the forefront of jazz. At 16—an age when most boys are more concerned with paper routes or high school sports—Thurman was a charter member of Chicago's avant-garde music organization, the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM). In 1967, just one year out of high school, he made his recording debut on Joseph Jarman's *Song For* and continued to appear on many of the early, pioneering albums by AACM members. While venturing out into the musical fringes with the AACM, the virtuosic Barker also worked the musical mainstream in Broadway show pit bands at Chicago's Shubert Theater. By the mid-'70s, he was working regularly with two of the most important groups of the period, the Sam Rivers Trio and the Anthony Braxton Quartet.

Moving to New York City in 1980 marked a turning point in Barker's already illustrious career. In a short time, he established himself as the drummer for creative, leading-edge improvisers to hire. His warm, dark sound, lightning reflexes, and willingness to experiment while still keeping in touch with jazz roots made him one of the most in-demand drummers on the city's jazz scene. He has recorded with Muhal Richard Abrams, Billy Bang, Amina Claudine Myers, John Lindberg, Leroy Jenkins, Leo Smith, Hugh Ragin . . . The list goes on.

Besides his busy schedule as a sideman, Thurman is now finding his voice as a composer, bandleader, and solo percussionist. He has toured Europe with his trio, been to Boston twice with his group with special guest Sam Rivers, performed a concert of his music at Cooper Union with Joseph Jarman and Amina Myers, and presented solo concerts in New York at Neither/Nor and at Brandeis University outside Boston. The spring of 1986 saw him in Europe with Muhal Richard Abrams and the Cecil Taylor Unit.

Barker is a lean, dapper man with a big, warm smile that lights up his whole face. He is a thoughtful, articulate conversationalist, who listens and responds to questions with the same quickness and wit he brings to the drumkit.

EH: Are drums the only instrument you ever played?

TB: No, actually I got into music by tap dancing. I started in grade school. I loved

it. And I took piano lessons for about a year. Then at a school assembly in 1959 or 1960, this guy brought in a drumset. It was the first time I had ever seen one. He was a rock 'n' roll player and had a huge setup, like a modern player. We're talking 15 tom-toms and lots of cymbals. He played a solo that just smoked me away. So I went home, and told Mama that I was dropping piano and getting a set of drums. Fortunately, they started me out at the American Conservatory, which I think was the beginning of a serious career for me. After starting at the Conservatory, I didn't see a drumset for a year. I just took snare drum and harmony lessons. That helped me look at drums as a serious musical instrument. I had a serious concept of drums from an early age. That was it. I've been playing ever since.

I like playing *with* people. I like playing together. There are people who don't want you to play with them. It's what Anthony Braxton calls "opposition." He says, "This is a form of improvisation where we're playing together, but I really want you to play something opposite to what I'm playing," which means that, if he's playing fast, I play slow. If Ray Anderson is playing short and staccato, I'm going to play legato. It's interesting and kind of fun, but at the same time, if you don't want me to play *with* you, what are we doing up here together?

I don't think everybody could pull it off, though. That kind of improvisation can only happen with certain people. I think a person needs to have a good background to be able to make music out of nothing. You have this whole mass of space, out of which you must choose one note to create this whole picture. That one choice becomes very important, because you're adding this element to all these other elements, and if it doesn't fit, it's really going to stick out. Just like if you were playing changes and one guy plays a G-flat major 7th and the next guy plays a B-flat augmented, it's going to stick out. Just because you're improvising *doesn't* mean you're just throwing notes around. It *does* mean really thinking about it. You have to have a little patience. Just because somebody played something over there doesn't mean you have to jump in there and play. You think about what you're hearing and what direction you would like things to take. It requires a lot of thought. That

split-second thought can make a difference in the note you play.

EH: Playing with Sam Rivers, without written material, must have required a lot of split-second decision making.

TB: With Sam Rivers, it was really magic. That band was very unique, because Sam and Dave Holland definitely respect tradition but are also into some new ideas. So I fit right in. I definitely have a strong feeling for the jazz tradition, yet my association with the AACM made me open to new ideas. I was just the perfect drummer for that band when I got in.

It was hard, though. At first, I didn't know how to deal with going on stage naked like that. We actually went on stage with no preconceived ideas. Sam only rehearsed and had music for the big band. For the quartet, there was no music, and it really was like magic.

EH: Did you think about it before you went on?

TB: Yes, I did. I like to have a game plan, because drums can sound very chaotic or very musical. It's not like a trumpet or piano, where any two notes can make sense. With drums, it's either a bunch of noise or it's musical.

I used to psych myself up around four o'clock by taking long walks—thinking about the music and clearing my head. I didn't know what I was going to do. Nobody knew. Dave Holland was up there with his cello and bass. I didn't know where he would start. Sam had piano, flute, soprano, and tenor. I didn't know what instrument he would start with. I had to have my own game plan in order to feel secure.

EH: Would your game plan change during the performance?

TB: Yes, it would change a lot. But we knew that we would take time to adjust to the change, and that helped. We knew the music would never stop abruptly, unless it was the end. We would gradually let something fade, wait for the cello to make an entrance, or hold back and let a section come to rest and start again with a different instrument.

It was actually as if we were reading music in front of us. We just had to sort of think there was a plan. There again, I don't know if it could happen in just any band. Sam and Dave are masters who have a lot of tradition in their music and can extend it. It was scary though, believe me.

by Ed Hazell



Photo by Alan Nahigian

EH: So you never talked about the music before you played?

TB: No, we never did. In a way, I'm glad, because it gave each of us a way to form our own music. I don't know if Sam did it that way purposely—so we would have our own concept of how we wanted to treat the music—or if that was just his style. I would like to think that he wanted us to create our own music, bring it together, and write a composition on the spur of the moment. It was rough, though, because sometimes we just didn't know where to begin. If somebody gives you a piece of music to play, no matter how you feel that day, you have a foundation. If your old lady kicked you out of the house or you had a fight with your father or something like that, you can still go and play. Even though you feel rotten, you have a foundation in the music. But with Sam, you had to get psyched up for the gig.

EH: Did you find it more exhilarating when the music clicked without a score than with a score?

TB: I did. But on the other hand, sometimes it didn't work. But that's the way the music is. I'm sure there are classical people who perform works and don't quite "feel it" on some nights. But the nights that it did work, we would know right away. We would know within the first ten seconds of the performance what the rest of it would be like. It's a great feeling.

EH: Does the audience help?

TB: Definitely. They help just by being there. And I like the audience when they respond to the music. I don't like them to just sit there and soak it all in. I'll sing and dance to get something out of them. I like feedback from the audience. I don't like the stiff-backed chin-rubbers. I like people to give a shout now and then, clap their hands, or stand up. The music we play reacts to that. We're up there trying to communicate.

The audience for the new music is very educated. With new music, we musicians are lucky because the people there—whether it's ten or five hundred—have come out to support us. They have heard of us and heard our music. That's different from traditional music, where people just come in off the street into a club for a drink. With new music, the audience is definitely there to listen to the music.

EH: I think the AACM had a lot to do with people taking the music seriously as an art

form and not as background.

TB: Definitely. And we did that by taking it out of the clubs and putting it in alternative settings.

EH: Do you think new music improvisers know how to write for drums?

TB: Sam [Rivers] does. Muhal [Richard Abrams] does, but he had to work at it. I think Sam has a closer tie to traditional music than Muhal. Right now, Muhal is trying to get a brand-new musical language—new notation and stuff like that.

I just feel that a lot of newer composers haven't really found a way to incorporate the drums into their music, in general. I mean the traps. It's just something I've experienced through performing and recording. They haven't found how they want the drums to fit into their music. If they knew, that would solve a lot of the problems.

EH: How do you think the drums should fit?

TB: First of all, if you want drums to go "tinkle, tinkle" here and "tinkle, tinkle" there, don't hire a trap drummer. Get a percussion player. Don't have a trap drum player up there to give a little rimshot here and a little rinky-tinky there. What's the point in having the full set there? Trying to get the instrument to do something it wasn't designed for seems to defeat the purpose. A drumset is a rhythm instrument. It was designed to play multiple rhythms using any combination of all your limbs. If you approach the instrument with a classical concept, it doesn't make music the way it's supposed to. There are exceptions. Sunny Murray doesn't play traps in

a traditional way. I just haven't been satisfied with how people write music for the drums. They don't want you to approach it as one whole instrument. They want you to break it up so the snare drum is separate from the bass drum. Well, the trap set wasn't designed like that.

I like to think of the drums as a piano. My bass drum and my tom-toms are the bass register of the piano. The snare, my upper tom, and my cymbals are kind of the upper part of the piano. I don't really separate it. I like to think of the instrument as one. I would like my drums to move with one sound, sort of like Sunny Murray's concept.

EH: Do the new composers think of drums that way?

TB: No, they don't. I don't know how they think of it. That's the one big problem. Drums are the rhythm instrument, designed to play a repeated rhythm, whether it's in the bass drum or the right hand. Unfortunately, that's just what the new composers *don't* want. So how does the drumset fit in with the new music? It took a lot of creativity, listening, and looking at the drums differently. I had to play the drums differently whether I liked it or not. I had a job to do. I'm a musician first.

EH: How do you fit your style into an ensemble?

TB: I go with the sound of the band or instrument that's soloing. If I'm playing with a saxophone player who's playing all high notes, I'm not going to play high notes, too. I'm going to play my lower notes. I'm going to give a little bottom there. If I play with a trumpet player, I'm

going to play some snare drum and cymbal, because that blends well with that instrument.

With a lot of people—I don't care how new the concept—you've still got to think about holding the band together. If the band falls apart—I don't care if the music is traditional, old, or new—they always turn around and look at the drummer. I don't know why. Actually, *everyone* in the band should be keeping time. Why is it that, if the time goes haywire, all of a sudden, it's the drummer's fault? I've been in situations where they blame the drummer, even though it was the fault of someone else.

You have to lay down a good founda-

tion for the band, no matter how abstract you eventually play. With a big band, I play more bass drum on "one." I'm very conscious of making "one" very clear. In a small band, where you're playing bebop and lots of syncopated rhythms, you can get away with not being so strict with the "one." But I still have a tendency to play a big band like a small group.

EH: You've said elsewhere that you didn't like the way you've been recorded. Why not?

TB: On the earliest recordings I made, the drums just weren't present. They were recorded too low. I can't blame the engineers. The music was very new. It was just as new to us. But the drums are essential to

any band. They're the heart of the music; let's face it. I think some of the newer composers are trying to change that. Maybe that has something to do with the way drums are recorded. Maybe the drums get in the way of some of the new music.

With bebop, the drums are still a vital part of the band, and the musicians treat it that way. In performance, the drums are miked. Whenever I go to a concert, they don't want mic's on me. The only time I have a lot of mic's on me is when I make a record, and then they mix it down. I want to know when drums were replaced as the real heart of the music. Unless you have this European concept, I think drums are always the heart. Are we, as black composers, abandoning that tradition—the tradition of African music, where drums are a vital part? Why are jazz players trying to adapt the European system of music? If you want to use that approach, then you should have a timpani player and a xylophone player. Don't have trap drums playing a classical role.

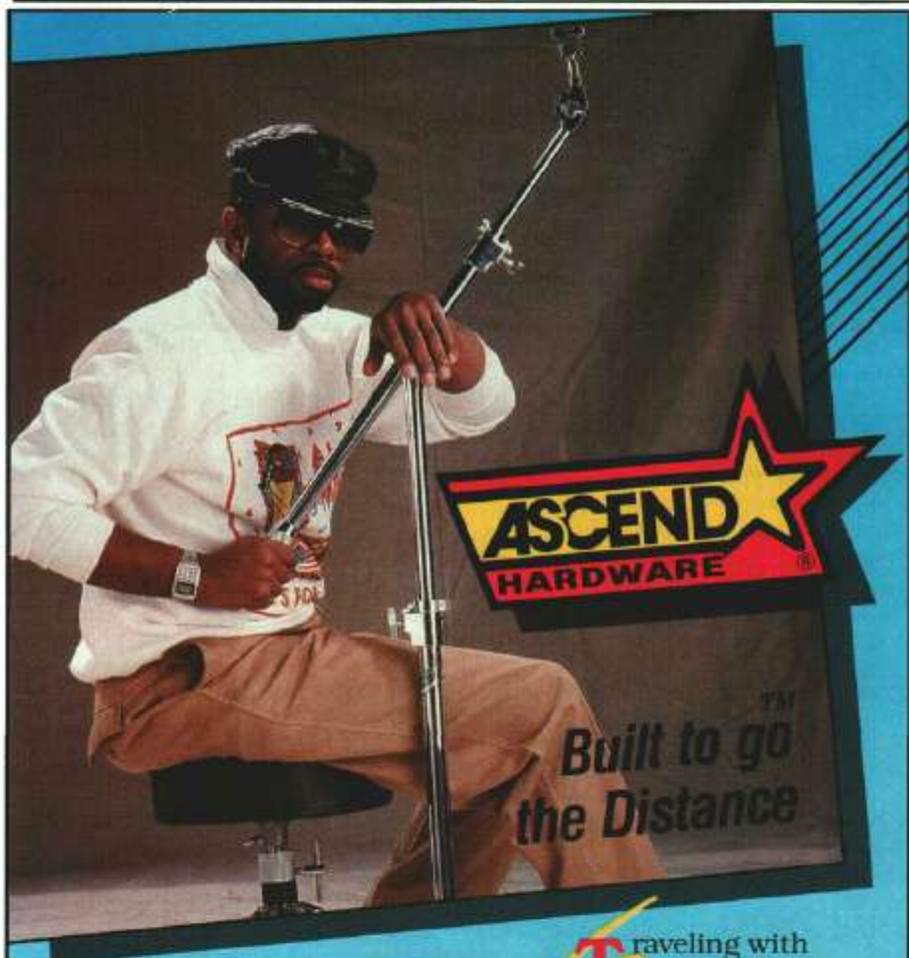
That's why, with Sam Rivers, I felt complete as a performer and an innovator. I feel that I'm unique and different. I played this music at a very early age. With Sam, I was able to perform music of the tradition—and perform it very well, with some of the best people—and also stretch and experiment. You can't have any freedom unless you have some discipline. You can bet that Sam has some things that he lays down for himself that he uses to spring off from.

EH: How do you approach writing music for your own band?

TB: I would like to try to bridge the gap: adapt the newer forms of composing to create a new space, but maintain a traditional plateau for the drums. I write melodies that fit my style. I have a style where I can play definite rhythms and then another layer of abstract rhythms on top of that. I'm not a heavy, loud drummer. That's a plus for me, because I can play as loud as I want, and I'm never too loud. I know I'm a thinking, linear player—as opposed to Elvin Jones, who I look at as more of a vertical player. The new music does require some finesse and touch, because its composers are writing classical form. So I developed a style that fits that music.

I didn't realize these things until I heard myself on record. You really don't know what you sound like until you actually go in the studio and hear your sound. You can make tapes for days, but it's not the same.

I've made at least 22 records as a sideman, but I don't have my own record out. Here I am. I came up out of the AACM and the new music, but I don't have my own record. If I had grown up in the bebop period and made records with, say, Johnny Griffin, I'd have a couple of records under my own name by now, because in the bebop scene, drummers are very present.



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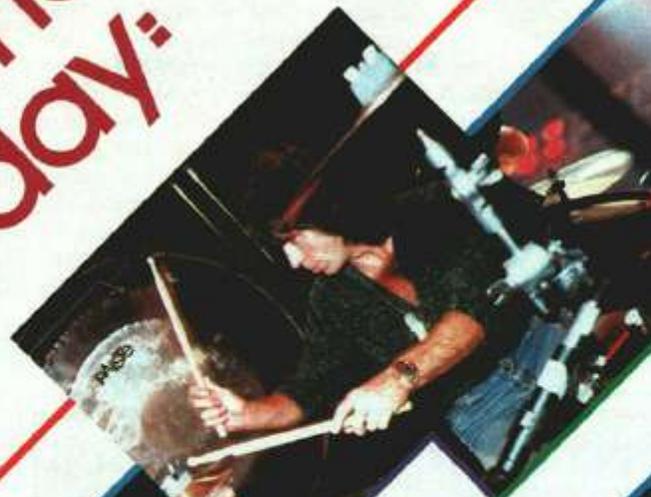
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I wish I could get more musical support in some situations. Here are these composers looking at drums as a new instrument. They're writing these notations for music and learning new concepts of composing. But they still need to find more or different things to feed me to get my music off the ground.

EH: In bebop, drummers are directly credited with inventing and innovating. Look at Kenny Clarke. But in the AACM, it's mainly people like Muhal and the saxophone players who are acknowledged.

TB: Exactly. People like me and Steve McCall haven't gotten any credit from the press for developing a newer form of playing traps. Tony Williams and Elvin Jones

got credit for developing and playing drums the way they did. The music Miles was playing in the late '60s was a lot newer than the music he was playing in the '40s. Tony was the perfect drummer for that band, to help the music go in the direction it did. In the same way, I think Elvin was very important in Coltrane getting where he did. Steve McCall and I haven't gotten the same or equal credit from journalists and record producers for helping the AACM get to where they did. We came out of that period, made all kinds of records, and haven't gotten any credit.

EH: What about Don Moye?

TB: Moye is a different case, because he got in the AACM and then immediately

went with the Art Ensemble, which, by the way, is a funny case. I was called for that gig first. If you want to know one thing I regret in my life, it's this: I started working for the Shubert Theater in 1968. I don't want you to think I got this big phone call because someone heard how great I was. Out of 20 or 25 house players, there were four or five token blacks, and I was one of them. Anyway, there I was. I had my big full-time job—very young, very successful. At the time, I was doing *Promises, Promises*. I was still close to the AACM but not as active with them. I was married, 21 years old, and had this illustrious job to go to every day.

Then I got this call in the middle of the night. It was the Art Ensemble in Paris. They said, "Hey, T-Bird, we need you. We want you to come and join the Art Ensemble." Well, it goes to show you how your life-style will affect you. I immediately said, "Well, are you guys working?" If they had told me that they had a big tour for the next year, I would have quit Shubert and gone to Europe. But they were very honest and said they didn't have any work; they were operating on a shoestring, just going from town to town and playing. So I turned them down, and it was one of the biggest mistakes I made in my whole life. It shows you how being 21 with full-time employment at home can affect you. I had no way of knowing the Art Ensemble would take off the way it did. So I just want to say that I was the first choice. You can just never tell.

EH: But wasn't it important for you to be making a living working as a musician, even if it wasn't necessarily creative?

TB: It was very important!

EH: How did it help you?

TB: It helped my attitude about the business, for one thing. The AACM guys always put the Shubert down. They thought I'd sold out. Well, I knew I hadn't sold out. I was getting a lot of training.

I learned how to play with a full orchestra and a conductor, and I learned how to play with a percussion section. That was very good training, and I'd recommend it to anyone. The discipline of going to work every day helped my attitude. And I liked the responsibility. I liked the fact that 21 musicians, the conductor, and all the people on stage were depending on me. I was a big deal! Other people were complaining about not working, and had a negative attitude about this and that. I never had a negative attitude about the business.

Fortunately, I had a very successful drum teacher named Harold Jones. He was with Basie from 1967 to 1972. After that, he went to California. He plays with Sarah Vaughn. His attitude was, "You don't turn down any work, whether it pays \$10 or \$1,000. It's not about the money; it's about the music." That stuck with me. He was never out of work, because he had a good attitude. He got me into the Play-

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boy Club, working three nights a week when I was a junior in high school.

I sort of had this dual musician's life-style at the time. I was dealing with the AACM—who were condemning the commercial stuff—and working at the Shubert at the same time. The people in the AACM were all eight or nine years older than me and were starting to write their own music. They'd *done* the other stuff. I didn't let their attitude affect me, because I knew that. I did the Shubert during the week and went to AACM meetings on Saturdays. I played the AACM concerts on Sunday, if I didn't have a Shubert matinee, and kept in touch. I'm glad I did, because at that time, there was a world of knowledge to be

gained going from a disciplined situation to a new, abstract, and creative situation. It helped me realize that all music is vital. There's a lot of commercial music that's good. But the fact that I started out playing newer, creative music helped. If I had started playing shows and then tried playing new music, I probably would have said that the new music wasn't happening.

I think everyone is ready for the newer music. The people who *hear* it for the first time like it. It's always the ones who *read* that Arthur Blythe is no good or that Albert Ayler is too way out who don't like it.

The problem is that somehow the "middle men" have developed the attitude that

the new music isn't any good. I think the DJs, record company executives, and club owners want to hold on to what they've got. They won't accept change. They want to go with what's easy and what they're used to.

Fortunately, in New York, if you have something new, there's an audience for it. There are places like the Alternative Museum, and organizations like the AACM and MOBI. If more organizations like that spring up around the country, we won't have to deal with the DJs and the old stuffed-shirt record people. I just feel the time is right for it. Why should an artist in San Diego have to come to New York for his first record or for someone to hear him? I love New York, but I think that idea is really absurd. First of all, not everyone has a New York life-style. It's unfair that everything is centered in New York. There are excellent musicians in Idaho and Florida. It's just stupid for them to have to pick up, leave their homes, and go to New York City, just to be heard. I would like to see that change.

EH: Since you think of the trap set like a piano, does that help your mallet instrument playing?

TB: Well, no. The mallets help me to get closer to looking at the trap set as a melodic instrument. I would like to be able to play a song on the drumset and have people recognize it. I want to play a form or structure, and duplicate the melody on the drums.

One thing mallets do is make me feel equal with the horn players. I can play "Donna Lee" just like the saxophones. I took the instrument on with that in mind—not so much to get gigs. I took up marimba because it keeps up my technique on drums, too. On marimba, to sustain the notes you have to roll, so that keeps up your drum chops. If you lay off practicing drums to practice marimba, you don't lose that much, as opposed to vibes. You lose your technique with vibes because you have the resonating pedal to sustain notes. I like the sound of vibes, but I prefer marimba.

Recently, people have started to hire me as a mallet player, rather than as a percussionist who doubles. It's a real good feeling. I would like to get my mallet playing equal to my drums, but that's going to take a lot of time.

EH: Does coming to the marimba as a drummer affect the way you play it?

TB: I play marimba like I play drums. The only thing that changes is the technique. The mallet grip is different, or I may be holding four mallets. I think marimba has helped my drumming as opposed to drums helping my marimba.

I don't look at it as a classical instrument. I have notes to play, so melody is definitely there. But when I play marimba, I really have a *sound* in mind, more than a melody. I like to create sound with

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marimba. I love the sound.

I also want to create a picture on marimba. I did a State Department tour of Africa in 1979. We did seven countries and were in each country a week. We always had to perform in the capital, but we also did concerts in the community about 40 or 50 miles away. Driving back, we could hear music in the night—especially in the Muslim countries. We'd hear a lot of string instruments with an undercurrent of drums and mallets. When we got back, I wrote a piece called "Kalingalinga." It's a marimba piece with a tambourine mounted on a floor tom and orchestra bells and triangle. I tried to create that African flavor again. Plus, I just like the sound of it.

EH: Speaking of sound, how do you get your personal drum sound?

TB: Well, I don't tune my drums to a specific pitch. But I definitely try to get some kind of melodic statement around the drums. I like to have a little resonance, so I play with both heads on the drums. I tune them pretty close—about a minor third apart. I try to get a good tom-tom sound and have them be very distinctive. My floor tom should get a good timpani sound. I like the bass drum to be flat, but with a little resonance. I don't look for a tone, but I do look for it to be a little on the flat side, rather than a very sharp sound. I like the snare to have a sort of dry, dark sound, instead of a bright, crisp sound. I prefer a

sound more like a marching drum than a classical sound. My cymbals are K Zildjians. They have a dark sound, too. Overall, I like my kit to sound uniform. I want to create a warm feeling from my instrument, no matter how loud or soft I play. When I hear drums, I immediately go back to drums in Africa, and all those drums I heard were very warm, hearty, and meaty. I like a very musical sound that's warm and dark. I play with sticks with wooden tips, too; plastic tips don't get the sound I like.

EH: Do you practice?

TB: Yes. I'm a firm believer in practicing. And I enjoy it, because I really don't separate practicing from performing. I don't practice out of books anymore. I don't have a set formula. I get to the drums, and I start playing with a metronome for about an hour. I work with each limb very independently. I work with combinations of different cymbal beats with the sock cymbal—just right hand and left foot. Then I do exercises for three limbs, and then all four. Then I get into my ideas—my creative things. Right now, I'm preoccupied with playing a song on the drums. The way I go about it is to play a rhythm to start with, using either my hands or my feet. Then I add a counterpart, and then solo over that. I want to play solo on a drumset and make it make sense in a real musical way.

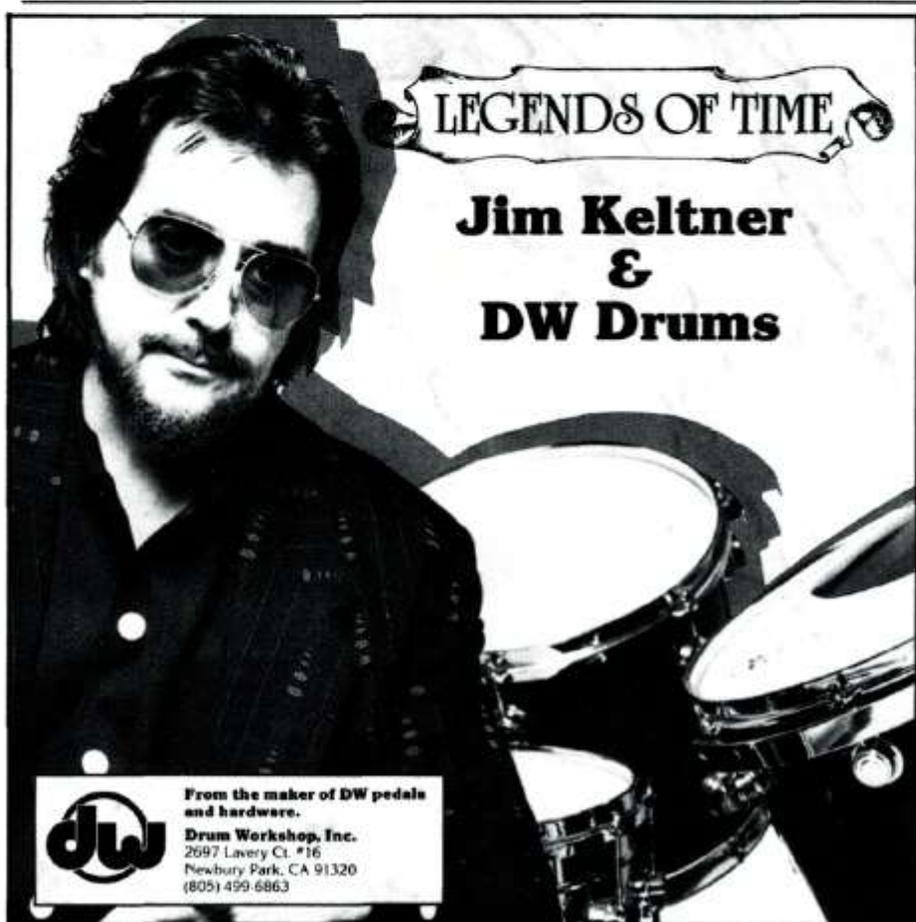
I definitely feel that I have my own sound, which is distinct from my contem-

poraries like Steve McCall and Andrew Cyrille. I respect both of them; they are two people who have definitely made a contribution to new jazz drumming. I learned a lot from them, even though I had my own style before I ever heard Andrew Cyrille.

I feel I came out of an important music scene in Chicago. I'm a good player. But I have all this music inside me that people have never heard. I'm glad I waited to start composing, because I have the support of the musicians. That's important in this business. I hired Joseph Jarman and Amina Myers to play for my concert at Cooper Union in December of 1985. It was my first big gig under my own name since I moved to New York. I needed to define my musical ideas first, before I asked them to do the gig. That was important. I like to have everything organized and together, because that's how I want them to deal with me.

My job right now is to keep writing music and get a record out. I have this idea that people don't know I can swing. I can't blame them because it's not on the records. I feel that I still have something to prove. People like Muhal and Jarman are directing their attention to their own things. When they got me, I was a junior in high school, and I was ready to play anything. I didn't realize that someday I was going to have to show that I could keep straight time. That's one of the reasons I wrote some music with traditional structure—AABA form with a bridge and all that. I would really like people to respect my compositional efforts. It's up to drummers. We have to change that attitude of five musicians and a drummer.

I love drums, and I love drummers. Sometimes, I go out just to hang out with drummers, as opposed to hearing them play. I think drummers take more abuse than any other musicians on the scene. We have the hardest job. This isn't my complaining period; I just thought I'd get this out. [laughs] People expect us to adapt to any musical situation. Our instrument is the loudest; it's the driving force of the band. People depend on the drummer to get their inspiration. We have to fight for our rights. We have to fight for a little extra money to ship our instruments. If the drummer isn't there, the music doesn't work, and the other musicians are the first to tell you that. To me, drummers are *definitely* a rare breed.



LEGENDS OF TIME

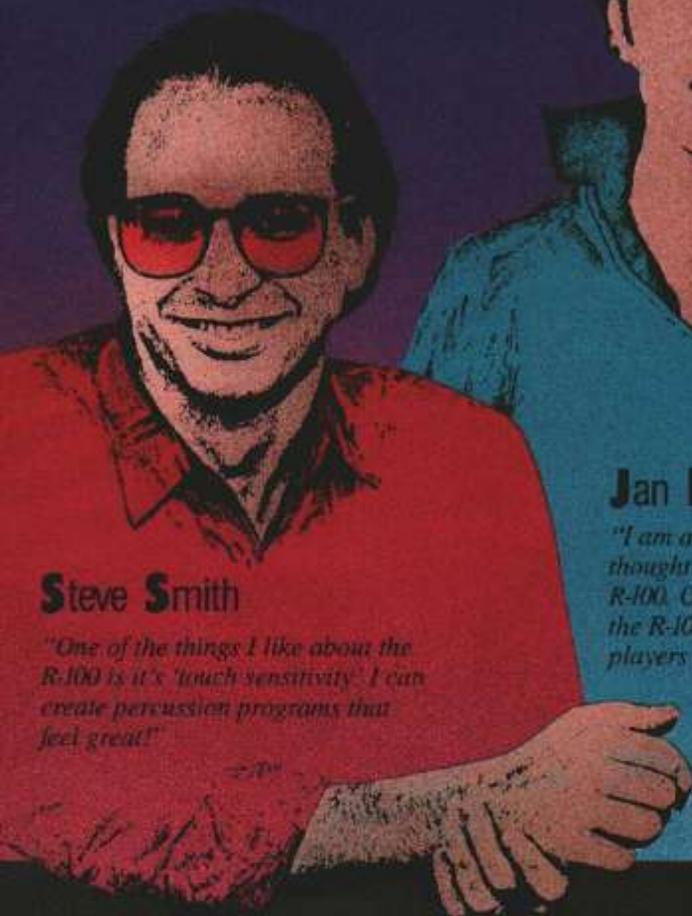
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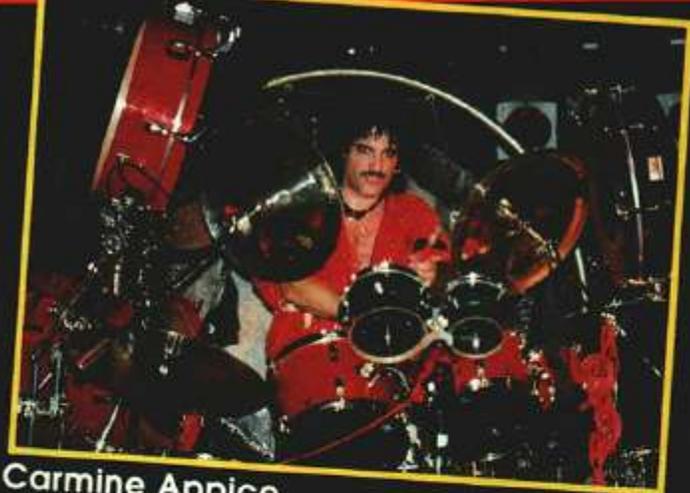
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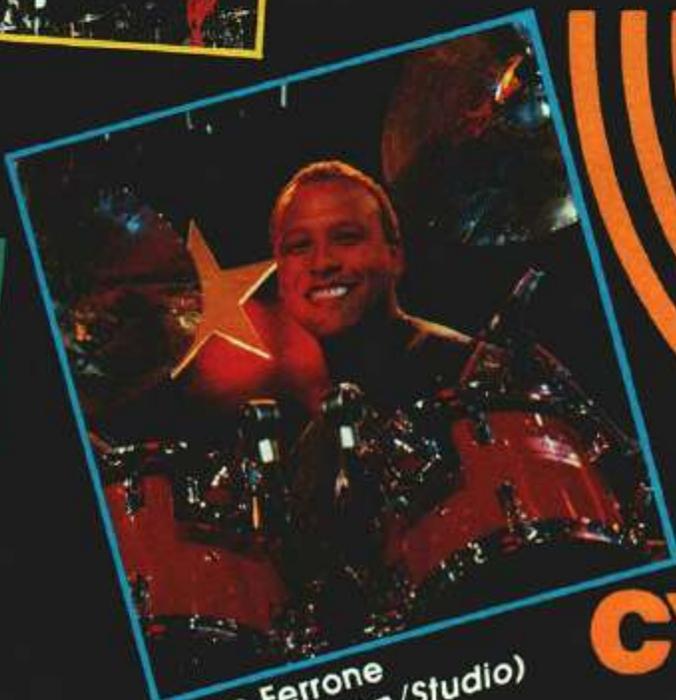
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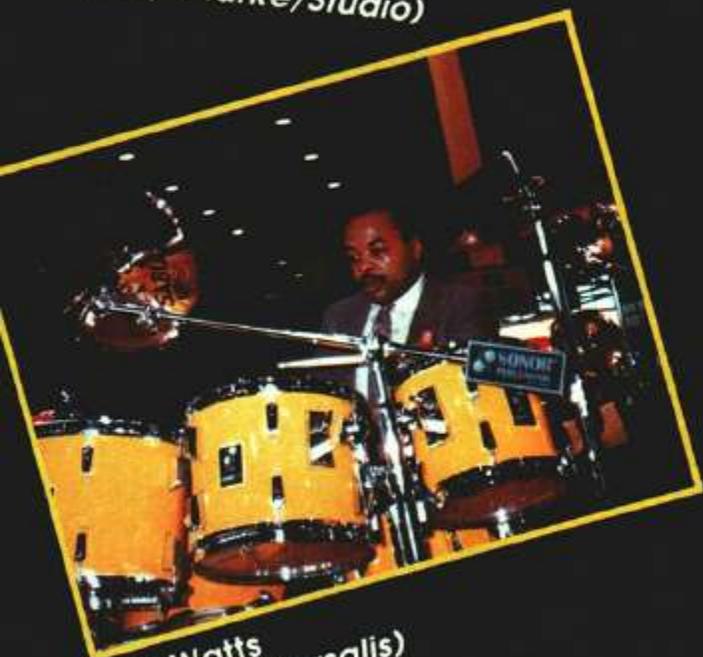
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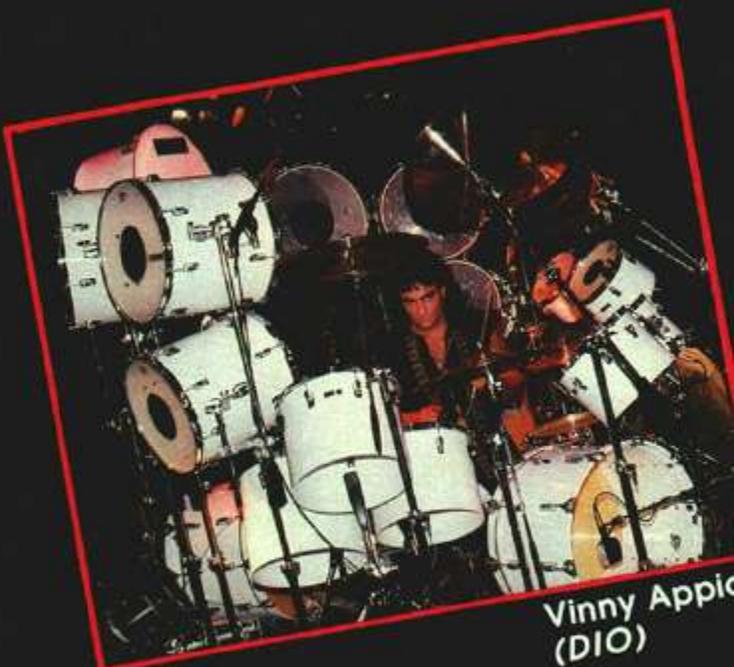
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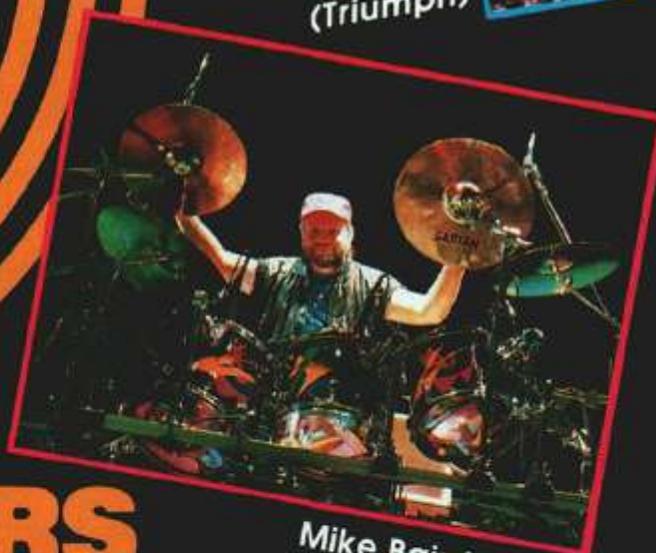
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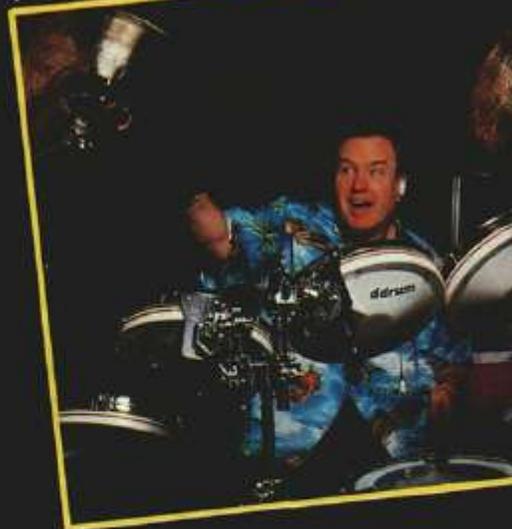


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(Triumph)

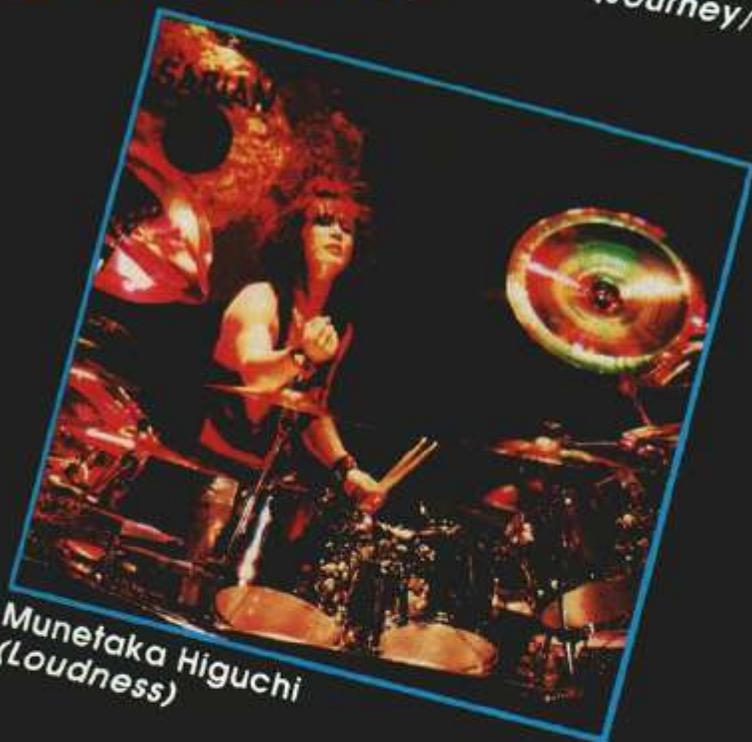
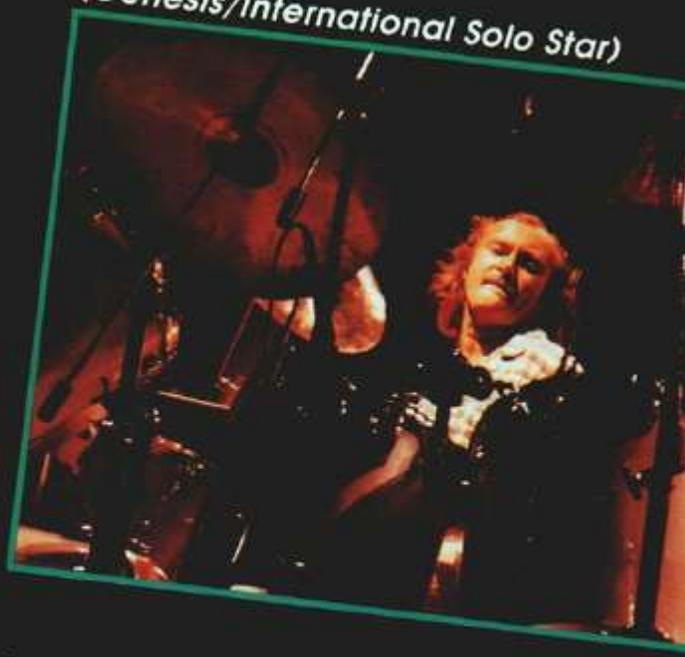


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Playing In Two or Four



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MUSIC KEY

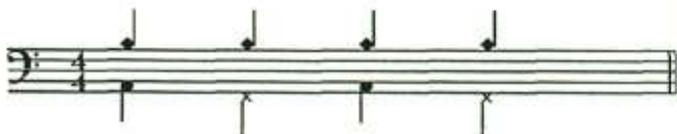


I get to hear dozens of young drummers in my travels across the country. Unfortunately, it's become increasingly obvious to me that 99% do not understand a very basic rhythmic truth, and that is that playing a 4/4 jazz rhythm can be done in two types of feel: two beat and four beat.

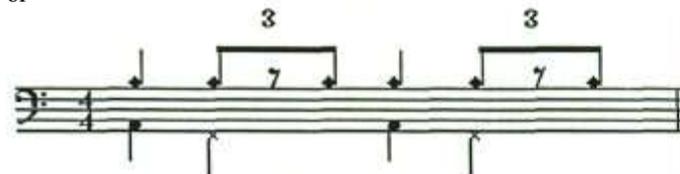
A critical problem I hear is that unknowing players have just one approach to all bass drum playing, and that is a two-beat bass drum feel.

Example 1

Two-Beat Feel

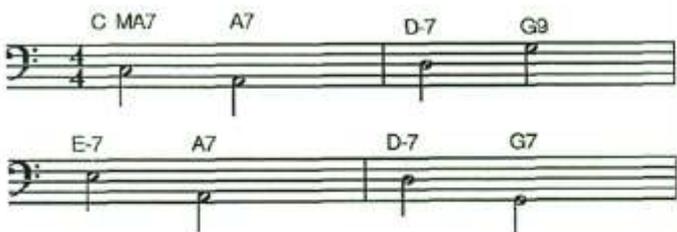


or



The above feel is *only to be played* if the bass player is playing in a two-beat mode. See the bass example below.

Two-Beat Feel



Now for the big difference. When the bass player is playing four beats to the bar, as in the example below,

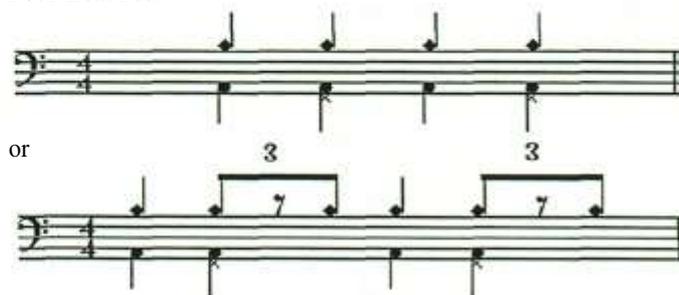
Example 2

Four-Beat Feel



then we must play with a four feeling, particularly with a light bass drum on all four beats.

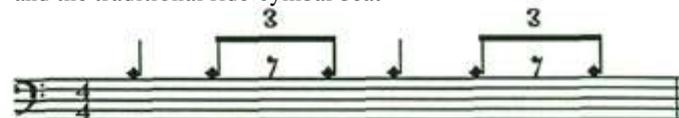
Four-Beat Feel



The stylistic mistake most commonly made is playing Drum Example 1 with Bass Example 2! If you're a drummer who has never built up the skill needed to play a light four-feel bass drum, I encourage you to get "in the woodshed" and *master* it. It will be some of the best practice time you will ever spend. Put on some good jazz records (particularly those with good acoustic bass players) and practice with a strong ride-cymbal beat, both straight quarter-note style



and the traditional ride-cymbal beat



combined with a light four-feel bass drum, and the hi-hat on 2 and 4. Later, you can practice hi-hat on all four beats for another often-used feel.

It seems logical to me that today's younger drummers have run into this stylistic problem because rock drumming is, for the most part, based on a two-beat bass drum feel. This thinking can understandably carry over into other areas of rhythm playing. I cannot stress enough, however, that you must clearly know your rhythmic styles and play the right feel to be a complete pro-level player.

Recommended listening for four-feel rhythmic practice can be found in the following:

- Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers: Any and all albums.
- Miles Davis: *Four & More*, *In Europe*, *Steaming*, and *Relaxing*.
- Tony Williams: *Civilization* and *Foreign Intrigue*.
- Jack DeJohnette: *Album Album* and *Irresistible Force*.
- Any Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and Woody Herman Band albums.

Tonight Show Band albums: Volumes 1 and 2.

Recommended listening for two-beat and four-beat feels in big band drumming:

- Ed Shaughnessy: *The Tonight Show Band: Volume II* (Amherst 3312) "The Jersey Bounce" AABA Form (First 16 bars in two-feel, bridge and last A in four-feel).
- Buddy Rich: *A Different Drummer* (RCA AMI-1090) "Chelsea Bridge"—mixture of two-beat and four-beat feels throughout.

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by Craig Krampf

Those First Sessions

Photo by Jaeger Katos



This has been quite a busy month for me in the studios. I've worked 23 out of 31 days. Some of those days were double sessions, and two of them involved three separate sessions.

One rather interesting, perhaps even startling, statistic is that I played acoustic drums only *three* times during this whole period! All the other sessions involved programming and laying down tracks with a Linn 9000, triggering my drum samples from existing drum tracks, and overdubbing "live" cymbals and hi-hat on machine and computer tracks to loosen up the feel. Though this might appear to be the perfect place to segue into a discussion on the use of machines and computers in recorded music, I feel I should save those topics for a little further down the road. To gain perspective, let's first briefly talk about how many of today's studio drummers got into the studio scene in the first place.

The late, great Shelly Manne once said, "If you went to every studio musician alive, people who you would call 'studio musicians,' none of them started out to be studio players. . . . You start to play drums because you want to play drums, and you dig the music." When Robyn Flans asked Hal Blaine in an *MD* interview how you get started in the studios, the great session drummer replied, "You get into the studios through a series of evolutions—one band to another—which might eventually lead to a band that records, or demos, and you start getting studio experience." After speaking with many drummers, that appears to be the

recurring theme on how one gets started; you're part of a band that's going to record, or you're asked to record with someone because you're considered a "pretty good drummer."

These first sessions usually result in two very distinct feelings—one of pleasure (you've finally heard yourself on tape), and one of frustration (why don't I sound like the drummers on the radio?). It was, and is, pretty much the same for *everyone* the first few times in the studio. The first time I heard myself on tape was in 1957, when my brother Carl and I sang and played Buddy Holly & The Crickets' "Lookin' For Someone To Love," and "Peggy Sue" into a tape recorder my uncle had given us. We recorded it in our bedroom. It sure was fun, but we couldn't figure out *why* I didn't sound like Jerry Allison! The question remains the same; only the names are different.

A lot of young drummers have asked me why they don't sound like John Bonham or Phil Collins on their freshly made demos. Well, there are so many variables that go into making up the sound you hear on a record that it's almost scary to think about. We'll be discussing these variables in future articles.

The point I'm trying to make is that you should enjoy your first few recording sessions—but don't get too frustrated! Learn from them and try to do better the next time. You may not be able to achieve your ideal drum sound, simply because you haven't been able to experiment with your kit in a recording situation. So you may have to put that "dream drum sound" on hold for a while, and that's perfectly alright. But there's a lot you can do almost immediately to become a better drummer in the studio.

If you're a realist, you should critique everything you heard on those first playbacks and work on any noticeable flaws. First of all, listen to the *whole* of the playback. Listen to the overall sound and performance of the piece. Does it hold up as a single work of art? Most inexperienced studio players have a habit of listening to themselves first before they can answer the above question. So many times, an individual's performance may not necessarily be his or her best, but it has a place in the

totality of what's on tape. So listen, *as a producer would*, to everyone's performance as a whole.

At the same time, learn to be conscious of what you were doing that either *contributed* to, or *detracted* from, the take. There are so many checkpoints to listen for on the playback and so many opportunities to ask yourself some serious questions. For example, how was my touch? Did I play consistently? Did any part of the tune jump out when it shouldn't have? Was anything played too weak? How was my time? Did I rush anywhere? Young drummers usually rush the fills going into a chorus, because the exciting part of the tune is about to happen. A few more questions to ask: Did I speed up when I played loudly? Did I slow down when I played softly? Did I play *only* what was necessary for the song? Did I do any overplaying just to satisfy my own ego? Did I groove with my fellow musicians? Did the bass player and I work well together as a team?

In short, don't stop listening and learning. And maintain the attitude that, if you really work hard on your weak points, you *can* and *will* do better the next time. If you or someone in your band owns a tape deck, keep on recording. Like I said earlier, don't get so involved with your drum sound that you lose sight of becoming a better player. Now don't get me wrong about the drum sound. I always want my drums to sound great on record, and I'm disappointed when they don't. I simply mean that, in a garage with a four- or eight-track player, or even in a small, limited recording studio, don't expect to recreate the *So* album by Peter Gabriel, or have your drums sound like Bonham or Collins.

Keep striving for "sound," but keep your *priorities* on performance and musicianship first and foremost. The "sound" will come as you learn more about how it's actually done. And don't lose hope if you're not in a band at this point. As I said earlier, you might earn yourself a reputation as a "pretty good drummer" and be asked to back an artist on a recording. Most of all, remember the words of Shelly Manne and Hal Blaine, and keep playing, practicing, and having faith in your ability as a player.



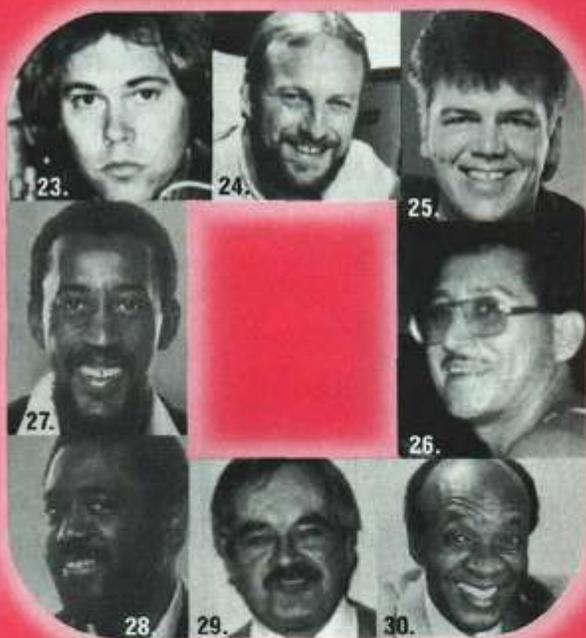
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Let's apply the following figure to the drumset.

First, play the cymbal and snare with the right hand, and play the hi-hat with the left hand.

Add a bass drum pattern, and you have your first two-surface ride beat.

By making one slight alteration (that is, playing the downbeat of beats 1 and 3 with the right hand on the hi-hat, we can adapt the infamous off-beat cymbal pattern to this technique.

Now, add the bass drum.

Alternating single strokes work well when applied to 6/8 time.

To apply this to the drumset, the right hand plays the cymbal, while the left hand moves between the hi-hat and snare, as follows.

Now, add the bass drum.

Now try the reverse by beginning the left hand on the downbeat. This may feel awkward at first, because we are so used to leading with our strong hand.

Now, add the bass drum.

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by Rod Morgenstein

Part 1



Photo by Rick Makin

The following beats use the four hand patterns previously discussed. (In order to present coordination and counting challenges, some of the bass drum patterns are syncopated or placed in awkward parts of the measure.)

Next month, we'll apply rudiments to the concept of two-surface riding. See you later!



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Castillo continued from page 21

RC: That was an Andy Johns production, like a Led Zeppelin kind of thing. The singer sounded a lot like early Robert Plant, and it was great stuff. They called me up and said they needed a drummer "with hair." So I put on my best wig—just

joking. That lasted for about six months and I was really happy, even though I wasn't making a lot of money.

I used to go home every two months to Albuquerque to ski. I was skiing one day in Santa Fe, when I hit a weird rock and I

broke my right leg. About two nights later, about 4:00 in the morning, I got this phone call from Bobby Blotzer and Tommy Lee at some party out in L.A. I had been friends with both of those guys for quite a while, and I love them both. So they said, "Hey dude, we've got a gig for you." I was still half asleep, and they put Ozzy on the phone. He said, "We need a drummer. Come out here." I said, "Guess what? I have a broken leg." They had just auditioned about 100 drummers, so he said, "Come out anyway. If you can pound on the table, we'll get the idea."

So I flew out the next day. They were all in the hotel lobby when I came in on crutches and in a cast, and they all just looked up to the ceiling and said, "Brother!" I went down to the studio, and Fred Coury, Cinderella's drummer now, was auditioning. I couldn't even hit the bass drum. I just used my hands, because every time I pushed on the pedal, I got this massive pain in my leg. I didn't get the job. They hired Fred, so I threw all my Ozzy albums in the trash. I took them out a couple of days later, though. I was still in Stony Fury, and even though I tried to keep it from them, they found out I had auditioned for Ozzy. About a month later, I got a phone call from Ozzy. He was in Scotland and said, "We want you to come out." I was real excited about it, and there was no way I was going to turn it down.

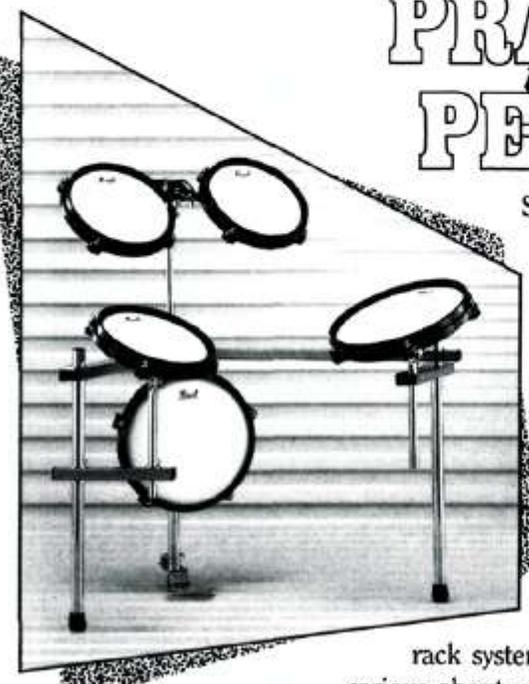
RF: Was your leg healed by then?

RC: I had taken the cast off myself. I couldn't take it anymore—the itching syndrome. They flew me to Scotland, and it was about an 18-hour plane ride. When I got there, they said, "Let's go to the pub." When we got back I thought, "Finally—I get to go to bed." But they said, "Okay, let's play." That was Ozzy's way of testing me, I guess, and my stamina. We ended up playing for three hours, and I hadn't slept in something like 35 hours. We just jammed and knocked stuff out. He's the kind of guy who won't quit. He'll just go and go and go, and you wonder, "When is this guy ever going to fall over?" I wanted the gig, so I stuck with it.

RF: How long did you have to learn the material for *The Ultimate Sin*?

RC: We had plenty of time, but then we

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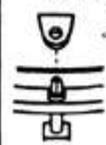
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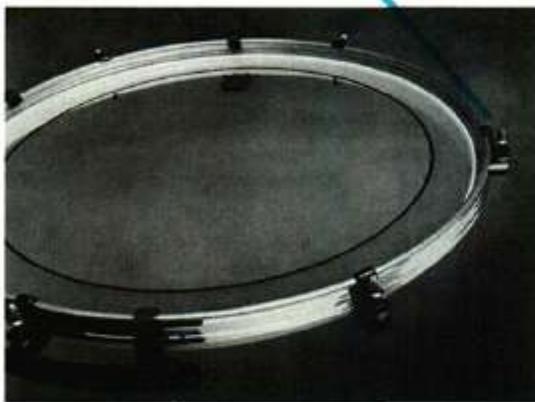


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didn't have a bass player. We had a couple of interim guys working with us. So Phil [Soussan] came into the picture after we auditioned a bunch of bass players. I had met him in London when I was with Lita Ford, and we had become friends, so it was great when he stepped in. Alright—somebody I know and like!

RF: Is the bass/drum relationship one that is crucial to you?

RC: Oh yes, it's so essential. It's a close tie—a close affinity. The bass player and drummer naturally work together, being that foundation of the band.

RF: What do you like in a bass player?

RC: Besides the fact that we play so well together, we're compatible in personality and we're great friends. That's just as important to me as anything else. We like the same things—the same kind of music—and it brings out the best in both of us. We kind of push each other in a lot of ways. There are a lot of things I don't know about that he shows me, and a lot of things that he doesn't know about where I push him into certain directions. It's a real healthy thing. In any band I've been in, I've always had the best relationship with the bass player.

RF: Playing-wise, what's important to you in a bass player?

RC: His groove, the way he locks in, and if he plays with me and not against me or at me. It's just something that came out naturally between the two of us. With Phil, it

happened real quick. And we were friends before we were ever playing together, so it happened on that level first, like brothers. To me, that was more important. When we did sit down and play, it was, "Wow, how perfect!" It was the icing on the cake.

RF: You just said the word "feel." There are some people who might say, "What is he talking about? That kind of music doesn't require feel. It's just a bunch of noise and bashing." What do you think about that?

RC: I think that's just blind ignorance. I respect and admire both Charlie Watts and Billy Cobham, but if you ever put Billy Cobham in the Rolling Stones, it would be awful, and if you ever put Charlie Watts in Mahavishnu, it wouldn't work. The Stones wouldn't be half as good, even if they had an incredibly great technical drummer like Billy Cobham. So that's how I describe feel.

RF: What's appropriate for the music.

RC: Right. And what the player puts into the music.

RF: What's appropriate for Ozzy?

RC: For one thing, it's so much fun because it's so physical. I love playing loud. There are a lot of subtleties in it, too, and you have to see it live to appreciate it. You can also see a live video of *The Ultimate Sin*, and I'm doing a Star Licks instructional video, which will give me a chance to do stuff that kids ask me about.

RF: Like what?

RC: How I play certain things or what kind of tricks I'm doing. They're as interested in the tricks as they are in the technique of my drumming. I want to teach them, first of all, what it takes to get there, and that you can't just learn all the flash and forget about the basics. If you do that, you're cutting yourself off from a whole world of knowledge, which is real essential to getting anywhere in this business.

RF: So what does Ozzy's music require of you?

RC: It's a real challenge, technically and musically. I have to have my chops together. I apply everything I've learned to this gig: the real hard groove, rolls, and double bass drum chops. There's a little bit of everything in the show. Ozzy's always had great players in his band, especially when he went solo. He had Tommy Aldridge, Carmine—guys with great reputations—and I felt really honored and challenged to step into that situation. The other main requirement is the attitude. There are great players who have really bad attitudes or ego problems, and nobody wants to play with them no matter how good they are.

RF: Can you describe what you're doing in the title track, "The Ultimate Sin"?

RC: When I came out for the audition with Ozzy, Ozzy wasn't there. Jake [E. Lee] came up, turned up his guitar, and started messing around. He started playing this lick, and I started playing this tom beat.

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Where most drummers would just go into a regular hi-hat/kick/snare beat, I didn't rely on that. I was playing the toms a lot, and he liked that.

RF: Have you always used the toms a lot?

RC: Yes, because I like that low-end power—that kind of stuff that hits you in the chest. I love that lead-heavy music. That beat was part of the song before I was even in the band.

RF: What are some of the other songs on the album that you're particularly proud of?

RC: "We Rock." I love driving-home, nail-it-to-the-wall songs—the AC/DC school of rock. It gives me chills. I like "Thank God For The Bomb," because it's so energetic. Lyrically, it's not what everybody thinks it is. If that's the only thing that's stopping war, then thank God for the bomb. That song is real high energy, and there's real forceful playing there. It's pretty straight ahead. And I like "Killer Of Giants," because it starts out real slow and breaks into this real intense middle section where I use double bass drums. Then it goes back to the slow thing. There are a lot of meter changes in there. I like "Bark At The Moon," because there's a lot of double bass drum work and accents. "Crazy Train" is probably the one with the most drums in it. At the beginning, the middle, and at the end, there are all kinds of fills I play with double bass drum.

RF: Tell me about your double bass drum

playing.

RC: I had never played double bass drums before Ozzy, so I had to learn, essentially, in the studio.

RF: How did you do that?

RC: I didn't think I could do it. I was really scared about it. I thought, "Oh God, here comes a double bass drum part. I'm going to blow it." But I had to learn it. I actually have another leg that I forgot about. Toward the end of some of the takes, I felt like it was going to fall off, but it got easier the more I did it. Like anything else, I had to force myself to learn it. I don't think anything comes naturally. You have to make it happen, and I forced myself to learn it. Anything in life that you want you have to pry open.

RF: Was double bass a requirement for this gig?

RC: Yes, it was. There are just things you can't do with one bass drum. I have a real good right foot. I used to get by real well with just one bass drum, but there are things you can't play with one foot that you can do with two. In a heavy metal band, there are a lot of things that you play that just won't work with one bass drum. So I was forced into it. I would say that, 80% of the time, I just use the single bass drum.

RF: When you went in to audition, weren't they put off by the fact that you didn't know how to play double bass?

RC: One leg was broken, so I had *no* bass

drums. I lied and said, "Yeah, I know how to play two bass drums." I knew what to do in my head, but I had never done it. Of course, I wasn't very good at first, but I had plenty of time to get it together. From the time I joined the band until we recorded the album, I figured a lot of stuff out.

RF: What tips could you give to young players just learning to play double bass?

RC: Try to do exactly what you do with your right foot with your left foot. Practice that, and practice single-stroke rolls and even some rudiments.

RF: Do you have tips for young players just learning to play the drums?

RC: Listen to everything you can. Steal from everybody and learn. No matter how you play, you're never going to sound like anybody else. You're always going to have your own original style. Don't try to copy too much, because then you will sound like a copycat.

RF: How do you develop your own original style?

RC: I think it's just a natural thing. You steal certain things from people, and you have all these influences. If all you ever listened to was Buddy Rich, then you'd probably sound just like Buddy Rich. But if you listened to everybody, you'd sound like a mesh of everybody, and you'd end up having your own style.

RF: Tell me about your equipment.

RC: I have a beautiful black set of Tamas.

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It's a pretty efficient kit. I have small bass drums: 22 x 16, which, to me, sound better than big ones. If you mike them right, you can get a great punch that you can't get with big bass drums. With big bass drums, you just get a boom. With small ones, you can get both a boom and a punch. Also, the power toms, which I like, sit lower. They're not in my face. I don't like to have to go up from the snare to the toms to play a roll where I lose 2/10 of a second in that space alone. Plus, I can be seen. It's a real efficient setup. I use Zildjian cymbals—mostly the Z's, which I love because they really endure. They look good, and they sound great for heavy metal music. I have a few other Zildjian *Platinums* for different tones.

RF: How many cymbals do you use?
RC: Altogether, 12 cymbals and two hi-hats. Some of the cymbals I may only hit once during the whole night, but I like the fact that they're there, and I can hit them if I want to.

RF: How many toms?
RC: I have four racks, two floors, and a set of *Octobans*, which we mike with those PZMs. They're more omni-directional, and they sound wonderful live.

RF: Where do you use the *Octobans*?
RC: In my solo.

RF: Tell me about your solo.
RC: I walk all the way around the kit, playing the kit and the shells themselves. I have an electronic bass drum in the middle of the kit, facing into the kit, and as I play the rack toms, standing up, I do a lot of bass drum accents. I wiggle and shake a little bit, and then go all the way around the kit and back to my seat again.

RF: What's important to you in a solo?
RC: In my solo there's flash, and we have some great pyro going on: It's a good solo technically, too. I get to wail on it. It's almost 15 minutes long. It's almost like a song. It has a beginning, a build, a solo part within the solo, a climax, and an end, and it leads into the next song. The solo I did on tour had all of that, plus pyro, and the drum riser moved to the front of the stage when I did it. It was on electric motors, so I was an easy target for bottle throwers. I only got hit once. Then it moved back. It was a great spot; I got to do

anything I wanted. There was no frustration on this tour at all as far as music went.
RF: How hard are you on your equipment?

RC: Real hard. I beat my stuff up. It's very aggressive, physical music. But the stuff is so well made; it's geared towards heavy music.

RF: What heads do you use?
RC: Usually Black Dots on my snare and the rest are all *Pinstripes*. I like the tone of the *Pinstripes*, but they don't last very long, so my roadie has his work cut out for him. They get changed every other night.

RF: How do you feel about electronics?
RC: I love them. I hate electronics for just electronics' sake, and I hate the fact that you can't get the real subtleties of real drums. I can always tell a real drummer on a track. It sounds so much richer and better to me. It puts a smile on my face. Electronics can be real monotonous and boring.

RF: Do they have a place in heavy metal?
RC: Oh yes, if there's a real player, and you use them to enhance what's human. I can't stand just the electronic drum sound on a record. It drives me up the wall.

RF: Which electronic drums do you use?
RC: Tama's electronic drums.
RF: You just said that it's very physical music. Do you do anything to stay in shape?

RC: The playing, really. I like to swim a lot when we're on the road, but I don't usually get out to run or anything. I do walk a lot and things like that. But doing the show itself is what keeps me in shape.

RF: What about the fact that heavy metal has a bad reputation with drugs, booze, and all those things that are bad for your body?

RC: You can't go out on stage night after night and impress people when you're stoned out of your brain. You think it's this cool thing when you're a kid, but it's not. It eats you up. I'm not an angel. I've done my share of self-abuse, but I came to realize that what I love about life is not going to go on if I live a destructive lifestyle. Then you just drown. It's like a whirlpool, and it'll swallow you.

RF: You do a two-hour show.
RC: Yes, so there's a lot of stamina

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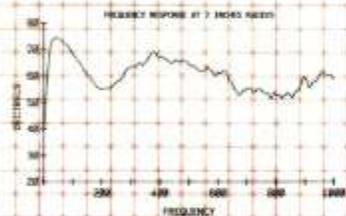
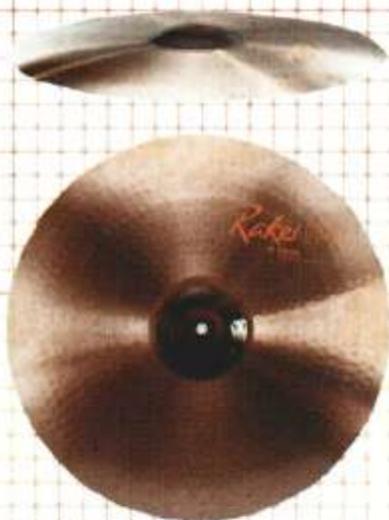
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involved. You can't do that on drugs. You just can't last.

RF: How do you keep that stamina going?

RC: You just get used to it. There's nothing that's going to teach you. It was rough at first. The first two weeks of the tour, boy was I sore, and I had blisters right and left. We used to practice three or four hours, but it wasn't the same. You can practice and practice, but you don't expend half the energy you do in a real show. After a couple of weeks, I started getting into the rhythm of it.

RF: Did you feel you had to hold-back a little at first?

RC: I learned how to conserve energy, because when we first started, I'd go out there burning. After 15 minutes, I was dead tired, and I still had to keep going. You learn how to pace yourself, and you learn how to relax.

RF: How do you relax with all that adrenaline rushing?

RC: Just don't worry about it. A lot of drummers play with their arms or use too much of their bodies. I just let the sticks do it, without losing any of the impact or power. It's a whip effect, as opposed to beating something. It's more graceful, like the way a dancer would do something. You utilize the most amount of power with the least amount of energy expended. It just fell into place after playing for a couple of weeks.

RF: Do you do anything to warm up before you go on?

RC: I don't do anything extensive at all, but I'll stretch and then kind of mentally go through the gig in my head. I'll close my eyes and think to myself, "It's going to be great," and it is. There are times that have been great and times that have been good, but I have never really had a bad night.

RF: What makes it great?

RC: There's nothing that *makes* it great; it just clicks. It's not just me playing great by myself. When everybody happens to play great at the same time, it makes a great and memorable performance. Some nights Phil would be great, and some nights Jake would be great and everyone else would be okay. But every once in a while, everybody is great at one time, and it's like magic. The audience knows it and goes nuts. It's like a big train coming right at them—you can't stop it—and those are cool nights. Sometimes it would happen in the smallest places or the weirdest towns.

RF: You're getting ready to do an album.

RC: Right. This one is more of a band project, because after this tour, I think we really became a band. We lived together, played together, and we got real close. Ultimately, I think that's what Ozzy wants as a band. That's when he feels the best and the most creative. It's the same with us. It's a golden opportunity for us to come through and shine, and I'll always

thank God for that because it's opened up so many doors for me, just as a player. My recognition level has gone from zero to 100. Plus, he gives everybody a chance to shine in the show. He doesn't say, "It's the Ozzy show, and everybody else is in the back." Everybody is a part of it.

RF: You don't feel like a sideman.

RC: Not at all. It's really great. This album will have a lot more of my influence on it. With *The Ultimate Sin*, the songs were, more or less, written a certain way, and I adapted to that. Now, I don't have to adapt to anything, because I'm there while it's being written and I'm also writing.

RF: How are the songs actually written?

RC: Any kind of way possible. The way I write is that I'll hear something and hum it into a little Sony. Later on, Phil will put it down on guitar. Once you hear something in your head, you can communicate it somehow.

RF: Are there riffs you might play that will turn into a song?

RC: Sometimes I'll just start a certain beat that will spark the band into playing something along those lines. It's a great way to write, because if you have a strong beat to something, it's going to be good.

RF: What do you want? What's your ultimate goal?

RC: I want to get a lot better than I am now. I know I haven't reached my full potential as a drummer.

RF: How are you going to do that, and what is your full potential?

RC: I just keep finding out as I go along. I'm writing, and that's expanding me, and I'm working on music and lyrics. I know my weaknesses and what I'm not as good at. I think my hand speed can get better, and I could get more accurate with the things I do. That would improve my playing, but hopefully, I never will reach my full potential. If I did, or thought that I did, it would bring me to a halt. I just want to keep moving forward.



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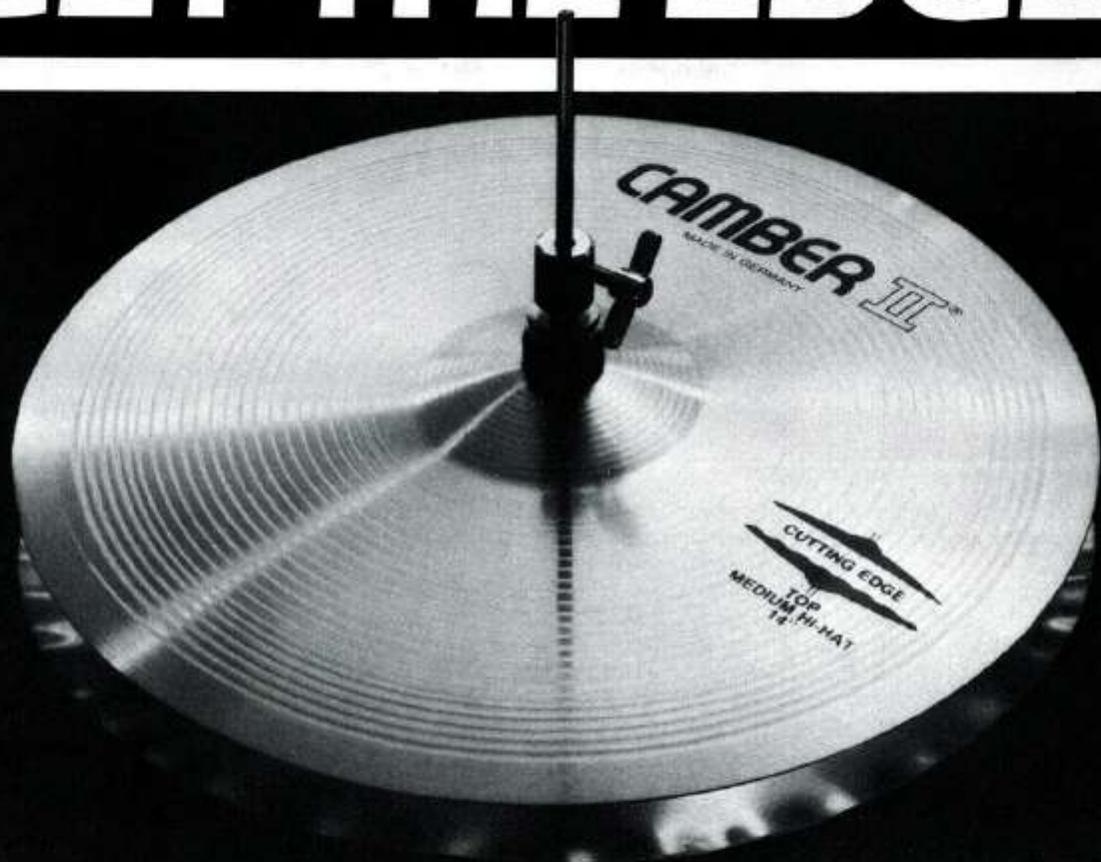
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Airoto and Mike Shapiro

Mike Shapiro

"People always come up to me after gigs and start speaking Portuguese," laughs Mike Shapiro. Although Mike is the drummer with Flora Purim and Airoto, and he plays with authentic Brazilian feel, he is as American as his birthplace, Washington, D.C., and speaks only the native tongue. "People tell me, 'Your drumming really sounds and feels Brazilian,'" he says. "In this musical situation, that's the best thing anybody could say."

Debates have always ping-ponged over the question of whether musicians outside of a particular culture can truly deliver that culture's authentic ethnic feel. Whichever side of the "nature versus nurture" debate you subscribe to, the nitty-gritty gets down to how the bandleaders feel—because they're the ones hiring. When it comes to Brazilian rhythms, no one can deny that Airoto Moreira is an authority. And in Airoto's experience, it is a rare find when an American plays what he considers to be a truly Brazilian feel. Mike Shapiro, age 24, is one such find.

What is it in Mike's drumming that singled him out in Airoto's eyes? "One important thing is the relaxed feeling he has playing Brazilian rhythms—not just the samba, but all the other Brazilian rhythms and their derivatives," explains Airoto. "The feel involves an attitude of the drummer—to lay back, listen, *relax*, and play. I don't know what it is about American drummers; maybe it's because they have so much technique, and they have studied and practiced so much. When most of them play the samba, the tendency is to stay on top of the beat, which sounds stiff. Michael doesn't sound like that. From the beginning, I could feel that he would get that right attitude—relax and go with the music."

When Airoto and Flora originally formed their new band, there were no plans to hire a drummer. Airoto was preparing to perform on stage surrounded by a special setup that would allow him to switch

between percussion and drumset, and sometimes play both simultaneously. So when Mike literally came knocking on Airoto's door expressing his desire to be part of the band, he had to prove himself in a big way in order to make Airoto consider a change of plans. "I told Mike, 'Okay, I will check you out,'" says Airoto, "and we will play together. I will ask you to play certain things, and then if you make it, I will have to hire you. [laughs] If there is anything wrong or if I have to work too much with you, then I can't do it.' We sat down behind the drums, and I was pleased to find that somebody played the way I liked."

When Mike moved to Santa Barbara, California, he didn't realize that Flora and Airoto lived three houses over, but it wasn't merely the coincidence of locale that led him to Airoto's door. Mike had been active as a house drummer in a local studio, and was also a member of a popular area band that included bassist Randy Tico and keyboardist Tom McMorran. Randy had played with Airoto and Flora on and off over the past years, and they had always admired his work with the late and greatly missed modern big band Matrix. When Flora and Airoto were searching for new band members, they called Randy. At Randy's suggestions, Flora and Airoto dropped by a local club to hear the band. Later, they sat in with Mike, Randy, Tom, and friends at an informal studio jam. Flora and Airoto asked Randy and Tom to join the new group they were forming. Because there were no plans for hiring a drummer, Mike feared that he would be left out in the cold. Realizing that moping would do no good, Mike decided to seize the moment, and he marched over to Airoto's house.

"I wanted the gig so bad that I went over and knocked on the door," Mike remembers. "Flora was in. I told her, 'I want this gig. I don't care what it will take for me to do it. I know a drummer is not in the cur-

rent budget, and I really don't know Brazilian music that well.' There I was telling her things she didn't want to hear! [laughs] But I told her I needed this experience. She was almost in tears, because she was so happy that I was saying how much I loved their music and how inspirational they were to me. So she said, 'I understand, and I'll talk to Airoto.' She called me later and said, 'Tell Airoto exactly what you told me.' I went back over and started to talk to Airoto. He said, 'Stop! I'll give you a chance.' "

The following weeks were filled with hands-on sessions, in which Mike strove to absorb the subtleties of his new mentor. "When we started working together, we had two drumsets facing each other. I would play something, and Airoto would play the same thing. The way Airoto played some of these things made an *amazing* difference in the sound. The way he played the hi-hat and bass felt very different, so it gave me something to work off of. It didn't take long because he was right there all the time. He would come over to the house, sit down, and just say, 'No, it's not like that; it's like *this*.' "

Airoto had realized from hearing Mike's playing that he had a great sense of feel and time, and it would only be a matter of woodshedding for Mike to internalize the specifics of the Brazilian approach. Mike was usually coached in a nontechnical way. "He asked me to do such things as 'widen the spaces between the bass drum notes,'" says Mike, "or he would ask for a 'rounder sound,' and I knew what he was talking about. Anything can be developed in a short amount of time. It took me two weeks to get to the point where I was playing samba comfortably for Flora and Airoto. From the time that I learned to play what Airoto considered samba until the time that we cut the album was a period of three weeks. Every time we learned a song, he would say, 'You go ahead and learn it, but I'll play it on the record.' So I would

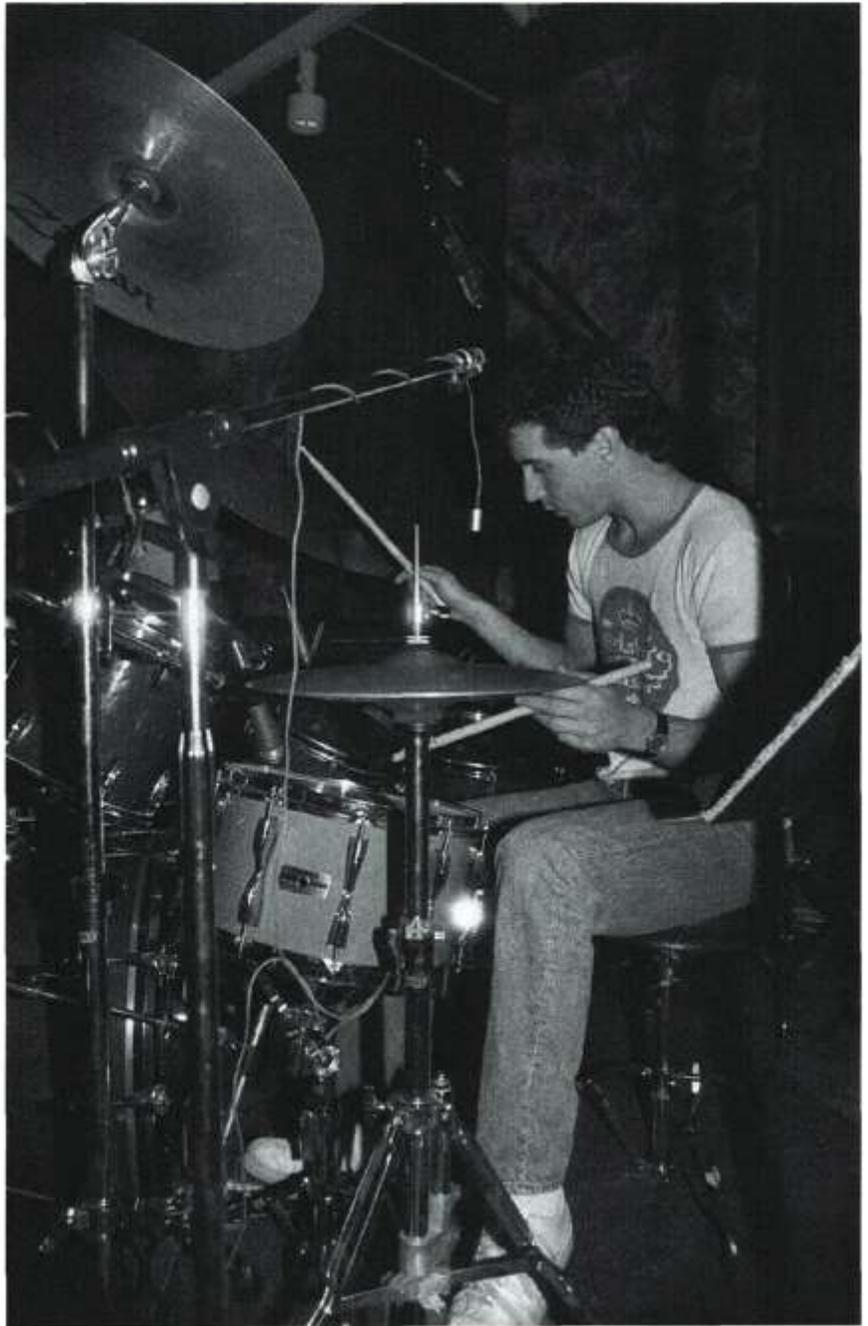
by Jeff Potter

learn the hell out of it because I wanted to play it on the record, which I often ended up doing.

"I've found a way to pick Airto's brain: I'll ask something like 'If I'm feeling down and I want to play a sort of samba blues, how should I approach it?' I approach Airto this way because I don't want to find out just one little technical thing; I want to know a lot of other things that have to do with the music. And just hearing the way Airto *explains* things always adds a new perspective."

The band's appearance at Fat Tuesday's in New York proved it to be a truly cooperative ensemble. Especially sensitive to dynamics and space, the band, which consists of Airto, Flora, Tom McMorran on keyboards, Jose Neto on guitar, Randy Tico on bass, and Mike, exudes a positive warmth. All the musicians avoid overplaying or stepping on each other's ground. "If we overshoot," Mike says, "we get 'the look.'" As Airto explains it, "The purpose of this band is not to be a 'killer band'; it's supposed to be a band that makes people feel good." The band accomplishes just that, and it's clear that Mike is right at home with the rhythmic rolling wave that distinguishes the Brazilian feel. *The Sun Is Out*, the band's album on Concord Crossover Records, is a beautiful showcase for this spirited ensemble.

During Mike's intensive weeks of woodshedding, he discovered that the technical secret that would help him find the groove most pleasing to Airto lay primarily in the bass drum. "Our joke when I started playing samba was, 'Man, it's so white!' [laughs] So I asked, 'What do you mean?' Airto explained that the bass drum sounded very much on top of the beat. The way that the Americans play that figure seems to be more of a shuffle—a dotted 8th note followed by a 16th—and very much on top, while making the second note accented as if that's what counts and the first note is only a grace note: 'da-DUH.'



But in a Brazilian bass drum feel, both notes are equal, and they fall like the first and third notes of a triplet. That seems to be the challenge for most feels: the placement of each note and the space left *between* the notes. There are notes played over the top of that bass drum rhythm on the other drums, but those, bass drum notes *have* to be placed properly for the samba to flow—to swing. We Americans tend to play samba fast. But samba isn't necessarily meant to be played fast. Samba is generally played around 110 or 120 on the metronome.

"There are other samba rhythms indigenous to Brazil that are not derived from

that bass drum feel. In one such feel, the snare is played on 1 and the 'a' of 3, and then the snare comes back on the 'a' of 4. I may play that, and Airto might play the traditional samba bass drum groove over that. Sometimes, he will play 1& and 3, which fills in between what I am doing and creates another rhythm indigenous to Brazil—only broken up in a different way. But in order to play these variations, you have to be able to hear the traditional samba rhythm in your head in order to space all the notes properly. So it is real important, when learning how to play samba, that you break all the parts down and really work on bass drum feel. This is because samba

was not originally developed for the drumset. It was developed for separate parts: the surdo, agogo bell, and tambourim.

"There is one physical alteration I made that helped me achieve the samba bass drum feel. I had been used to playing heel up on the bass pedal in order to get more power. But I changed to heel down just for that particular feel, and all of a sudden, it was much easier to control and to get the space. Now that I've got that feel, I can also play it with the heel up. I'm also used to a real loose bass drum pedal. Steve Smith sat in on one of our gigs in Victoria, Canada, and afterwards he said, 'How can you play this pedal?' I adjust it to different tensions, but once again, it's like the idea of finding out what's good for you. With the bass drum, the more different techniques you know, the better off you will be playing *any* style of music.

"Another technical point I had to work at a lot was cross-stick method. It's not difficult when you're playing a cross-stick on 2 and 4, and you have time to raise the stick up and bring it down. But when you're playing samba and hitting seven or eight notes per bar on the rim or doing several 8th or 16th notes in a row—as Airtó does amazingly—you find it is difficult to make it sound right. Airtó gets a sound out of the rim that is so consistent and *big* that it's scary. Another challenging technique involves moving from cross-stick to

another drum and back to the cross-stick position again. I noticed that I wasn't getting a consistent sound out of the drum while playing cross-stick, like Airtó could. In a lot of the sambas, I often played the same notes together on the snare and ride cymbal, and I had the bass and the hi-hat happening, but I noticed that every other note on cross-stick sounded different. So I had to find a position that would work. I changed my grip a little bit so that I could effectively play more notes per measure, more consistently. When playing cross-stick, I used to hold the stick between thumb and forefinger, and rest my other three fingers against the drum. Now, I keep my hand off the drum. And when I play cross-stick backbeat, I now sometimes bring the stick completely off the drum as opposed to leaving the tip of the stick on the head. I've even become comfortable with the fingernails coming down and hitting the surface first—to block the sound of the snare—and then swinging the stick into the rim. It gets more sound. Keeping the hand off the drum also helps me get to the floor tom and back, and it gives me a good measure for exactly where my hand should be placed when it returns from the floor tom to cross-stick position on the snare, which results in a consistent sound."

As a young boy of ten, Mike was rebellious towards formal technical training.

His mother would drive him to the lessons she had arranged and drop him off with the instructor's fee clutched in his hand—which he would promptly spend at the skateboard shop during glorious afternoons of hooky. "Of course, I got caught," he recalls. "But I just didn't like instruction, because at the first lesson I ever went to, I was holding the sticks matched grip and the instructor said, 'No, *this* is the right way, and what does that form? Right! It forms the shape of a house!' [laughs] I don't condone someone changing the way you sit, the sticks you use, the way you hold them, and so forth. When students ask me my opinion, I tell them, 'You have to take the time through trial and error to find out what works best for you.'

"I'm certainly not a model student. I went to Berklee and dropped out after three semesters. Even at Berklee, I didn't really take formal lessons. I spent the time with my teacher, Skip Hadden. He didn't sit me down and say, 'Buy these texts.' He put on an Elvin record, and we sat there listening for a while. And he turned me on to some Philly Joe, Al Foster, and stuff that I didn't know about at all. We played and he showed me certain rhythms, but we spent quite a bit of that semester just listening.

"I basically learned all the stuff that I know on the gig and also from learning off of records. When I went to Berklee, there were guys who already knew all the licks off the records I had been listening to. So I was a 'little thief.' I would stand outside of the practice rooms, and when I heard a certain lick I wanted to learn, I would knock on the door and say, 'Can you show me that—break it down for me?' The more talented drummers were usually the ones more willing and open to sharing knowledge."

One formal training situation Mike did find inspiring was with a teacher he sought out himself. "Hearing the first Steps Ahead record with Peter Erskine changed me musically. I had never before identified with one specific player. But after hearing that record, *all* drummers I heard became important. At this point in my life, I was feeling that I should make a move: Either I was going to become a drummer or I wasn't. So I called Peter Erskine and asked for some lessons." Mike took a few lessons with Peter, and on one occasion he had the opportunity to spend a day observing Peter on studio sessions. Although the training period was short, it had a great impact on Mike. "In a way, it inspired me to get out of Berklee and start playing," he says. "Peter was the first guy I ever let get close to me and say, 'You should think about what you're doing there.' He never once said that something was wrong, because that's not how he got where he is."

After leaving Berklee, Mike returned to D.C. and played with area bands for six

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months, until he felt that he had grown as much as he could in that town. A keyboardist from the West Coast who was a former Berklee classmate of Mike's called him to audition for a pop/funk/R&B band. The keyboardist's parents were backing the band with studio fees, a band house, and a producer. "After the audition, they called me in D.C. and said, 'When can you move out?' So I loaded all my stuff in the car, kissed my mom and dad goodbye, and split to L.A., where the band starved in that house. Atlantic records gave a little financial support, but the band didn't have it, personality-wise, to stick together." Billy Osborne, the band's hired producer, gave Mike some work after the group's demise including two tracks on the *Osborne And Giles* album. Feeling a bit stranded, Mike accepted an invitation to do a steady week-end gig in Santa Barbara for little pay but plenty of musical satisfaction. It was there that he fell into studio work, hooked up with Randy and Tom, and developed the connections that eventually led to Airtio and Flora.

On some numbers in the band's set, Airtio plays drumset while Mike switches to percussion. Both players agree that Eames drums are a wise choice for their needs. They use the nine-ply birch Eames shells, and their snares include 5", 6", and 8" 15-ply birch Eames. "I rarely use a metal drum," Mike notes. On the toms, Mike uses Remo *Pinstripes* on top and *Diplomats* on the bottom. The snares have *Ambassadors* on the tops and bottoms. Mike endorses Zildjian cymbals, metal percussion by Pete Engelhart, and Dean Markley *5B* wood-tip sticks. His electronic sound source is primarily from the Emulator *SP-12* triggered through a Simmons *MTM*. "For a while, Airtio was very against electronics," says Mike, "so we developed a system together. We sampled a lot of voice sounds, bird calls, and many acoustic instruments that we couldn't take on the road. Jeff Pack, who runs a company in Redondo Beach, California, named *Techtonics*, builds drum triggers for me that we use to trigger off of percussion instruments—cowbells, woodblocks, bass drums, and so forth."

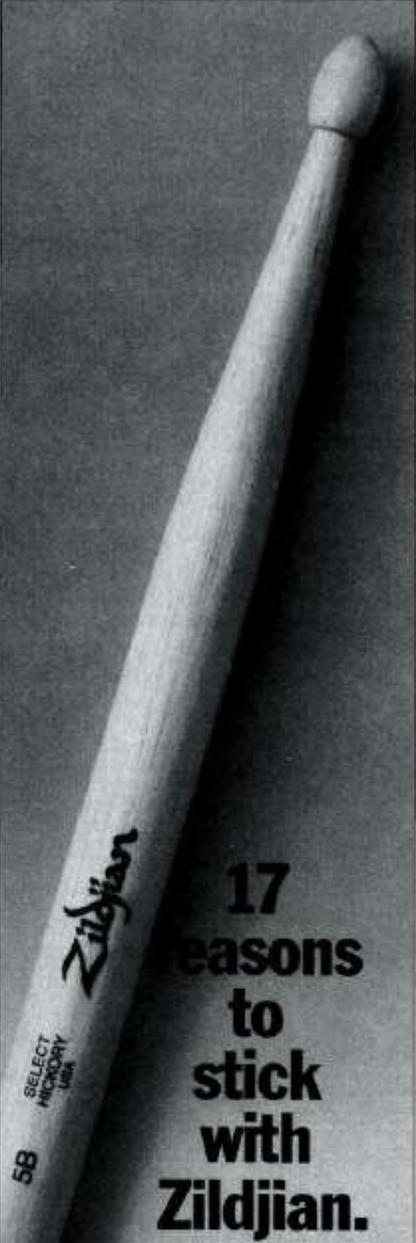
When Mike has not been busy touring or recording with the band, he has been playing studio sessions and producing his own material, on which he plays keyboards, bass, guitar, and drums. Other recent recording projects include an upcoming

Reference Records CD featuring Joe Farrell, Mark Egan, Kei Akagi, and Airtio, on which Mike played percussion on two cuts. He also coproduced a solo Airtio album, on which he played bass on one cut! A special highlight in his career was the June 6, 1987 concert celebration for Dizzy Gillespie's 70th birthday. Flora and Airtio had been asked to organize an all-star band for the event, and they rounded up the best: Eddie Gomez, Freddie Hubbard, Dave Valentin, James Moody, and keyboardist Kei Akagi. Originally, Airtio was to play drums, but he decided to handle percussion and so passed the awesome responsibility of that drum chair to Mike. And of course, Dizzy sat in. The huge gala was televised by PBS.

Mike considers himself very fortunate to be in a nurturing ground side by side with Airtio, his mentor/friend/fellow band mate. He feels it is the right place for him to be now, especially since the other drummers who are Mike's major influences were also inspired by Airtio. "When I started listening to Airtio's records to find what makes his feel so hip, I remembered something Peter Erskine told me. He said that, when he was with Steps, Eliane Elias told him, 'You Americans don't know how to swing samba,' which is what made him get off his butt and hone in on that. During one of his lessons, Peter had said, 'You've got to check out Airtio's drum playing!'"

"Most of my drum influences are players who can play many styles. Airtio is a perfect example. He's also one of the greatest straight-ahead jazz drummers ever. Peter Erskine is the same, and Ricky Lawson is another drummer who consistently blows me away. Ricky also played with Airtio and got together with two drumsets like I did. In an interview, he mentioned that he got his Brazilian chops together from listening to Airtio. But ultimately, Airtio doesn't just get your Brazilian chops together; he and Flora get *all* your chops together.

"My role with them is supportive, but I don't feel like a 'backup' musician. The band really thrives on its togetherness. As a band, we have grown so fast, because Airtio and Flora have put us on the spot and made us do things we have never done before. We've had to play dynamics and rhythms that we never have before. The list of musicians who have passed through this band—who have been *groomed* in this band—proves how much musicianship can be learned through Airtio and Flora." ♣



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Here are five hints to playing better flams: (1) Relax. (2) Keep the grace-note stick *down* (2" off the drum). (3) Don't let the grace note alter the *rhythm* of the pattern. (4) Keep the grace-note stick *down* (2" off the drum). (5) Finally, keep the grace-note stick *down*!!!!

Below are four exercises that are designed to improve your flam skills. Some are very easy and others are *very* difficult, so proceed *at your* best (and most accurate) speed.

①

②

Evaluating Your Present Drumset

My intention for this column is to answer some of the many questions I receive about drums and drum repairs. Over the next few months, I will try to cover the subjects that are brought up most often. Probably a good place for us to begin—before we get into specific repairs or custom work—is how to determine whether to replace those old drums or to fix them up.

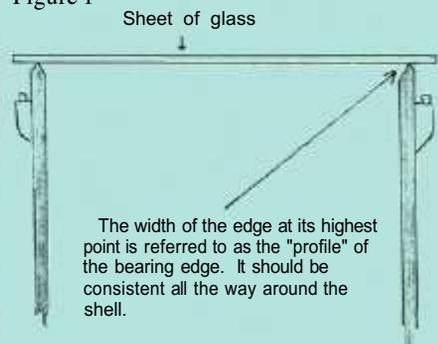
Many drummers buy a new kit for all the wrong reasons. They get tired of the color of their drums, or have stopped bothering to take the time to take care of their drums and really get the most out of them. I often see normally responsible and intelligent drummers make the worst decisions regarding dumping their old sets of vintage drums for shiny new kits that may never have the tone that their old kits could have had with a little work. Then, they walk into a music store and play brand-new kits with new heads top and bottom (which have been tuned to perfection). Right then and there, they decide that it's time to replace their "junk" old kits."

There are so many important things to consider when making a decision like this. We could do a whole column just on comparing new kits to each other in the music store. For instance, the placement of the set in the room, how live (reflective) the area is, how far the drums are from the walls or corners—all these factors will change the characteristics of the set so much that it's amazing. But let's back up and look at some of the things we should consider before we even think about shelling out the kind of money good drums cost today.

Appearance

If color or the visual condition of your drums is the problem, that's easy to han-

Figure 1



dle. If your drums have a lacquer finish, they can be refinished in natural wood grain or any stain or color you choose. This is a subject with which I'm particularly familiar. (*MD* did an extensive article on drum refinishing in the *December '84* issue.) This is really quite a lot of work, and requires a good bit of skill and equipment. A really professional lacquer job is probably best *left* to a professional. It isn't cheap but still doesn't compare to the cost of a new drumset.

An alternative method would be to re-cover your drums with sheets of plastic re-covering material. This is a project that can be done by anyone with a little skill and patience. (See my article on re-covering shells in the *May '84* issue of *MD*.) If done properly, a re-covering job will result in a finish that really does look like new. Repearling kits are usually advertised in this magazine.

While you have your drums apart for whatever refinishing method you've selected, polish all the chrome. The best polish I've found is called *Semi-Chrome* and is available at auto parts stores. You'll be surprised at how well this stuff will remove tarnish and even the "pitting" that you may have in the chrome on your lug casings.

Acoustics

Now let's look at the other important consideration: the sound or playability of your drums. Probably the most important thing to check is whether or not the drums are round. It's very easy to check for roundness. First, take off both heads and hoops. Next, simply set a *new* head on the drum. If the drum will accept a new head without it having to be really forced on, the drum can't be too far out of round. Ideally, you should be able to spin the head on the shell without it binding. Some drum companies make their shells a bit bigger, in which case the heads will be snug.

If you have to pound the heads on or off with a hammer, it's a good bet that the shell is at least slightly warped. A drum should be almost perfectly round; otherwise, it will never tune properly. This is a good reason to think about buying those new drums.

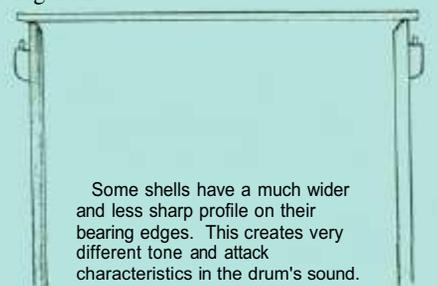
The next thing to check for is trueness of the bearing edge. What this means is that the edge is level and has a consistent profile all the way around the perimeter of the

shell. (See Figure 1.) To check the overall levelness, take a sheet of glass and lay it on top of the shell. Put some weight on top of the glass or push down slightly with one hand. Take a business or playing card, and try to slide it between the glass and the bearing edge. Ideally, you should not be able to get the card through at any point around the edge of the shell. A little bit of space is tolerable, but if there are any major dips or low spots, have your shells looked at by a *good* repair technician. You can inspect the profile of the bearing edge visually. It should be consistent all the way around. Any spots where the edge—the highest point, which will make contact with the head—gets wider or narrower will cause tuning problems and should be corrected. The bearing edges on a drum are probably the single most important factor in determining the type of attack and tone that drum will have, and whether it will tune *easily* or be a source of frustration when you're trying to get the right pitch without annoying buzzes coming off the head. (See Figure 2.)

Of course, there are many factors that contribute to the overall character of every set of drums. Most drumshells are made of layers of wood veneer—in effect, of plywood. The type of wood used is usually of a much higher quality than ordinary plywood, however. Combinations of maple and birch are widely used, and sometimes mahogany. A shell might have three plies of maple with three of birch in between. Sometimes, less expensive types of wood are used as a filler between the plies of good hardwood. Some drums are made of one solid layer of wood—usually maple—pulled into a circle, but most wood shells by far are plywood.

The type of wood used and the number of plies would seem to have some effect on the sound produced. Different brands of

Figure 2



drums do have their own distinctive sounds. Each drum company has its own formula for making drumshells. Each company also has its own way of cutting bearing edges. These two factors combined create the characteristics of "that great Gretsch sound" or the legendary "Camco sound" that studio players talk about. The type of heads used would also obviously affect the sound. Then there is the type of hoops, how many lugs, how the drums are mounted, etc. Perhaps in a future column, we'll discuss how different types of bearing edges change the sound of a drum. I'm sure we'll also cover other ways to affect the sound and—hopefully—improve it.

Other Factors

Some other good reasons for replacing your set would be to change to different size shells or deeper "power toms." Maybe you prefer the tone of shells that are made from a different type of wood, or that are thicker or thinner than what you presently have. I wouldn't discourage anyone from upgrading equipment or changing brands of drums. I just hope that, before you make that decision, you have thought about what it is you are expecting from your new set, and whether there is a way to achieve the same results without spending quite so much money.

Sometimes, we want to replace equipment just to try to get a sort of "kick in the

pants" to make us take our playing more seriously. We believe that a new set will get us to practice more. One thing a new set *might* do is make you fall in love with playing again. It may sound overdramatic, but I see it a lot and know the feeling myself. If you really feel great about your instrument, there is a bond created. After all, you work together to create art. But this can also be a result of reconditioning your old drums. It is a great feeling to have some work done on your drums and get the results you'd hope for. Sometimes I get a customer who has struggled with, say, a snare drum for years, and finally decides to try getting it looked over before unloading it. Maybe it's an old *Radio King*. The drummer has always heard how great these drums are, but his (or hers) just seems to be a dog. If I can find the problem and make that drum really deliver, the drummer gets so excited that he or she can't stand it; the drum is like an old friend who finally came through. Seeing that excitement in people is one of the most satisfying feelings I know. That renewed love for one's instrument can be the same sort of inspiration to put more into one's playing than a new purchase can be. Also, confidence is an important quality for a musician. Having confidence in your equipment means that you can keep your attention on the music and your contribution to it.

If you're considering buying new drums because you just need a change, or as a way

to rekindle your creative flow, you might consider adding some new drums to your setup or trying some of the many good accessories that are available instead. Experiment with a double bass drum pedal, add a couple of electronic pads, or try putting triggers in your acoustic drums. These are just a few ideas that can create that same feeling of excitement—a new challenge to your abilities.

I hope you've found something in this article that helps you to take a fresh look at the potential of your kit. Next time, we'll start looking at some specific repairs and upgrades you might find useful. Please let me know (via *MD*) if you have any specific questions, or any suggestions or tips that have worked for you that you'd like to pass along. Until then, stick with it, and keep rockin'.

Patrick Foley is probably the best-known drum customizing and repair artist in America. His special, one-of-a-kind finishes have been seen on Gregg Bissonette's kit for David Lee Roth's Eat 'Em And Smile tour, Jonathan Moffett's Victory tour kit, Myron Grombacher's unique "Camouflage" and "Japanese" kits, and A.J. Pero's "Trash Can" kit—among numerous others. Pat was the feature story in Modern Drummer's inaugural Equipment Annual in 1986, and is generally recognized as the preeminent practitioner of his craft today.

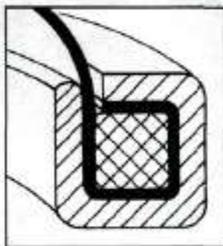


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Cress continued from page 25

lift my arms. I can go to the right with my right hand, and still play the 2 and 4 with my left. Then I can change, and play the toms on my left with my left hand and the snare drum with my right. I can

also try making fills from both sides without crossing my arms across my body. The challenge is in getting the sounds, rather than in technical playing. It is also in remembering where the various sounds are. [laughs] I can have a bass drum sound on one of the triggered toms on the left, and play double bass drum patterns between my left hand and right foot. That's great because people wonder where the second bass drum is. I have done the same sort of thing with an acoustic bass drum on the floor behind me.

On this tour, we are doing 24 tunes from three different albums done by three different producers with sounds that are different in each case. But with the setup I have, I can reproduce all of them. I like doing that and being part of the show. When you are playing in front of 10,000 people, some of them are hundreds of meters away, and you have to give them something more than a demonstration of technique. If I wanted to do that, I would go on tour with Passport or play in clubs. I once did five days in Frankfurt with Steve Gadd and Ralph MacDonald. Then we were able to get into some heavy technical stuff. That was very enjoyable, but it was a different thing.

SG: You seem to be playing with sequencers a lot. Does this cause any problems?

CC: No. It isn't a problem for me. I play a lot with clicks. I can hear a click, and I'll go with it. I started doing that very early; it's second nature to me. Actually, I work so well with machines that I was asked to play with an English computer band called Art Of Noise. A guy named J.J., who used to be a programmer with Trevor Horn, is in it. They have all this stuff going on from computers, and they wanted me to sit there and play drums along with it. It would have been interesting, but also frustrating, because there would be no possibilities to explore.

SG: There is no written music at this rehearsal. Was there some in the early stages, and if not, how do you learn your parts?

CC: Nothing is written down, but you have tapes of the original



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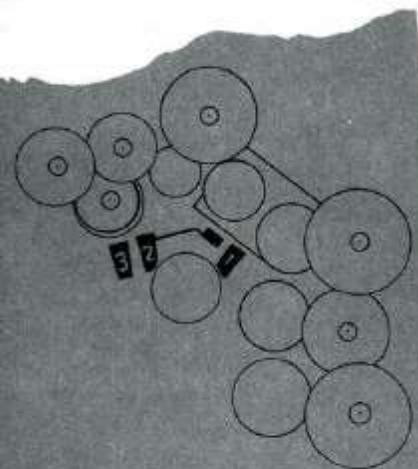


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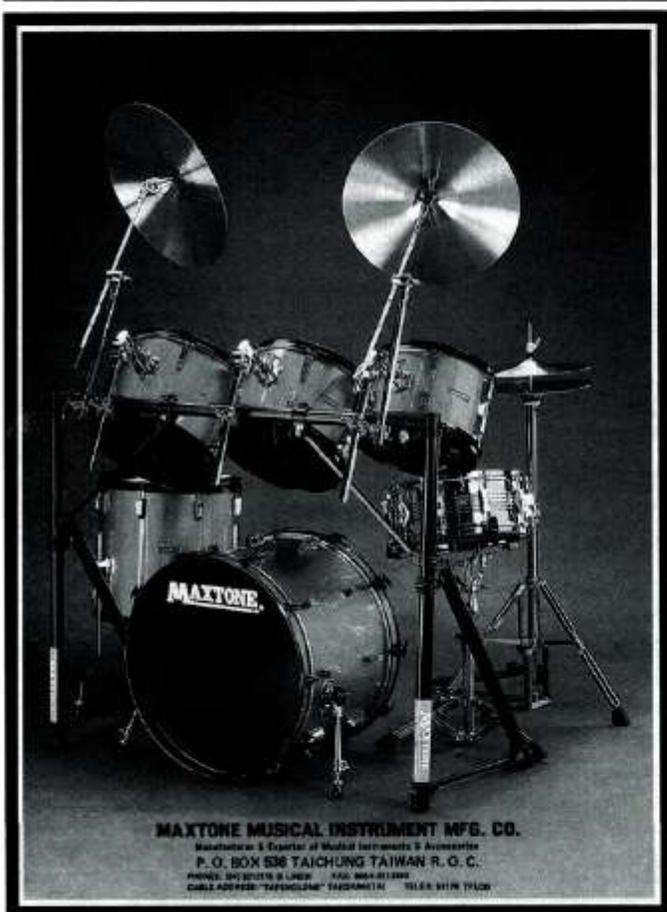
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recordings to listen to in advance. You make notes. In my case, it is the tempos, number of verses, middle part, solo, how it ends—that sort of thing. I play it through, listen to the song again, and forget the paper. Then I make notes about the various programs I need to use, and after about three days, I am making all the different sounds, while at the same time, still keeping the song in my head.

I was once on tour with a band in which I was the only member who hadn't done it all before. The other band members knew everything but I didn't, and the drummer should know the material better than anybody else. You have to take the tempo, make signals for the other musicians, and control the endings. It all belongs to the drummer. I had to learn very, very fast. I'm used to that. I'm used to having three or four programs of music in my head. When I go with Passport, we rehearse for half a day, and then we're off!

If you train your memory, you can handle that sort of thing. If you read a lot, you can't play things straight out of your head; you forget. In the studio, I usually try to read a tune once the first time through. Then after that, I'll play it straight out of my head. If you're concentrating on one tune at a time, it's easy.

SG: A studio drummer needs to be adaptable, but how much of your own adaptability comes from the necessity of doing what is required of you and how much comes from your creative imagination?

CC: I like to change, and I like to get into the idea of a song. If I hear a song that is different from anything I've done before, I start to think, "What can I do that is different?" I don't like to play the same old thing or try to mold a song to fit preconceived ideas. If somebody comes along with something that sounds as if it could be a disco tune, I ask whether he wants it to sound that way or whether he would like me to try something special. I might not *even play* drums; I might program something and combine my sounds with the I.M.E. I can get unusual sounds and then, perhaps, play my sounds on top of it. But if anybody says, "No, that's not right. I want it different," I don't get angry. Some people who don't know about drums have special ideas. You would say it's not possible, or you would never think of it, but some people can program something at home, before coming to the studio. They think that a drummer can play it. *Machines* can play it, but a drummer can't. You have to work out how to get the same effect—something that will *sound like* it. I had to do something with the left hand playing the hi-hat and the right hand the snare, but the snare was sounding very close to the hi-hat. I could get some crazy grooves going, and it would sound like I was playing 16ths on the hi-hat, but I was only playing the "offs." Things like this come out of working with non-drummers—sometimes even non-musicians. I like this very much.

SG: How can a drummer free himself or herself from playing a string of set patterns?

CC: There's always a way to make it groove. As long as the balance between the beats is there, you can leave things out. You must have that groove, that swing, or whatever you like to call it, but if for instance you have an 8th-note feel, you don't need to *play* all eight to produce that feel. This is the secret with Steve Gadd. What he plays is so *simple*, but nobody can do it like he can. There may be people around who can play better technically than he can, but they can never get this deep groove that comes from his heart. It's something you can't explain. You can take the most used drum patterns in the world, and you can take ten drummers and each one will make them sound different. It's the relationship and balance within the drumkit: how hard you play the bass drum, how hard you play the snare. There's the motion you use while you play. I have tried playing time on the hi-hat with a sideways motion, and the feel changes. Playing the same pattern but moving your hand from side to side, instead of straight up and down, can produce quite a different groove.

SG: How did you develop your ability to play time?

CC: There were times when I used to play really wild. There were rolls everywhere, getting faster and faster, which is okay for developing technique. At that time, I played out everything I had. And then when I was working with Dave King in Snowball, we used to

practice together regularly with just bass and drums. We controlled every beat. We recorded ourselves together, and we would listen to it playing back at half speed, so that we could check that we really were together. If not, we could work out why. We went very deeply into being tight and perfect. Then we would work on *not* being quite perfect: being perfect but getting a loose, dirty type of feel on top of it. This was a typical German and American relationship between us: studying every aspect of our playing really deeply. Stupid? But it worked, and it was very helpful.

Working with machines, your timing has to be perfect. You often have to be able to play using just one foot and one hand. You mustn't have to rely on using your right hand to keep the other limbs in time, because the right-hand part isn't required. I had to develop this, so that I could play with just the feet, one hand and one foot, or whatever. It enables me to split my head. It has developed through all the different work I have done.

This is a big problem with so many musicians anyway. Who the hell has all the chances? Take Simon Phillips. He had a lot of opportunities in his life. He was able to play with a lot of people, starting very early on in his father's big band. That's great, I had a lot of luck; I was always at the right place at the right time. For me it was great, but there are a lot of drummers with a lot of talent who never get the chances, or maybe when they get them, it is harder for them. I don't know.

SG: I often find this attitude in people I interview, but perhaps you are being a bit modest. Most people who manage to make a career of music at your level have something special, even if it is a quality other than pure playing ability, which helps them to get on.

CC: There are some drummers I know and get along with very well. Simon Phillips is someone I would love to play in a band with. Unfortunately, he is a drummer, too, so we would play ourselves to death! [laughs] Others I'd like to play with are Steve Gadd, Billy Cobham, and Alphonse Mouzon. I get along well with these guys. One thing they all have in common is that they are very positive! They are happy people, but they are strong. They go their own

way—not beating other people down, but being positive.

I heard a radio interview with a goalkeeper, and he said some things that are very true about being a drummer as well. You have to be strong, you have to take criticism, and you are the one who is blamed if things go wrong. If he lets in goals, the team loses; if the drummer is bad, the band is bad. You really have to stand firm. Like in the days when there were no click tracks in studios, there were often problems about time. People would say, "You went faster here," and I would say, "No, the guitar went slower!" Today you can say, "This is the click, and I'm in time." You can measure it, but in those days, you just had to be strong.

SG: We've seen how you can adapt your drum setup for live work. You have probably come up with some interesting ideas for the studio as well.

CC: In the studio, I normally use four tom-toms. I have them in front of me, facing into the room, with the heads *nearly* vertical. When I play in the Weriton Studio in Munich, I am in a very resonant room. It is just brick walls and a wooden floor. The tom on the left faces the wall on the left, the tom on the right faces the wall on the right, and the middle two face the wall in front. I have the sound reflecting off these walls, and the balance within the kit is there already. You can just point two stereo mic's at the kit, and the sound comes out very powerful and balanced. If, for instance, I was using two rack toms and two floor toms, it would sound completely different. You would have to mike things differently, because you wouldn't be getting that balance. It's a bit hard to play the cymbals, because they have to be high up on either side. But you do get a very good stereo range. Sometimes I have to leave out the hi-hat, because the echoes in the room make it too much. Then I have to overdub it later, which is strange, but you get used to it.

SG: You are using a Dynacord *Rhythm Stick*. Could you tell us about that?

CC: You get the different sounds by placing your fingers in the appropriate places on the "guitar neck" section. There are eight different fields, and each one is a pad that produces the sound you

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select from the *Percuter*. So you select the sounds with the fingers of the left hand and play them with the right, like you would do with a guitar. The right hand only has two pads to play, with forefinger and thumb, but you can have one sound, like the hi-hat going continuously. The dynamics are very good. I have a MIDI stick now, which can be linked up to an *Emulator* or a *Fairlight*, which is fantastic. It's a new instrument, and you have to learn how to use it. The problem for me is that, when I stand up to play *Rhythm Stick* after playing drums for an hour, I tend to play too hard and hurt my hands. So I have to have it really loud in the monitors, so that I don't feel the need to hit hard. I will get into it more, and it will be easier.

SG: Could you tell us something about your solo records? Where did the idea come from?

CC: The suggestion originally came from a friend of mine who owns a studio. I was a bit reluctant at first, because I never enjoyed listening to solo drum records myself and wasn't sure who something like that would appeal to. Also, I hate drum books. I can never read a drum book. I get tired of playing things on my own at home. I much prefer to play with a band. So I said, "Another drum album? It'll be one of thousands that nobody wants to listen to!" But he said, "Try it. Go into the studio, take your time, and see what happens." Anyway, it was another challenge, so there I was in this large room, with an engineer waiting to see what I would do. I started with drums playing a groove, but I divided it into an arrangement with 16-bar sequences, breaks, solo sections, a quiet section, and so on. Then I played some free stuff on top. I wrote down where the various sections were. I did some overdubs with timbales. I played some themes with echoes on tuned toms and put some Simmons on top. The bass was done with the *Syncestion* from Pearl.

When the album came out, it sold 44,000 copies in Germany. That's more than an average Passport record sells, and more than most records sell in Germany. There was even a disco hit from it in Germany, and now after four years, other countries are starting to release it. We have now remixed it for compact disc. There were requests to put it on compact disc, because some people like to use the record to test their stereo speakers at home. [laughs] There's a wide range of dynamics.

SG: When you are working on your own like that, do you plan and arrange things in advance?

CC: No, I just create the sounds at the time in the studio.

SG: Isn't there a problem when you are doing things spontaneously that some cliches start to slip in, and then perhaps you have to limit yourself by consciously trying to avoid cliches?

CC: Yes, this *is* very hard. The answer is just not to think too much about it. [laughs] Sometimes I listen to what I've been doing when I get home, and I call Berlin and say, "I don't like it. You can scrub the tape." Then my coproducer calls me, and tells me it's fine and we should keep it. It can drive me crazy. On the other hand, I don't have to be commercial. I can do what I like.

So I've been working on another album. This one is going to have some guest artists on it. Falco is going to sing on a couple of the tracks, and Stanley Clarke did two tunes for me in Los Angeles. It's beautiful having these guys on my record. But I can't say whether it is commercial or avant-garde; it's just my whole personality.

SG: Having a drummer who is able to play melodic and harmonic sounds from pads works for what you have been doing in the studio, but do you think it has any scope beyond this?

CC: Yes, I think it has. I want to play some of the material I have done on the records in clubs. I will have two or three percussionists playing electronic percussion and playing synthesizers from percussion. There will be another drummer in addition to myself. The material will be mine, but we will discuss it and possibly rearrange it. There will also be room for improvisation. This comes under the category of my showing what I *can* play. It's a specialist thing. But I'm not only a freak drummer. I like rhythms and basic stuff very much, so it has to be happy music that people can dance to.

SG: Having heard some of the stuff from the new album, I have to

ask where you draw the line between electronic percussion, electronic keyboards, and keyboard percussion?

CC: You don't. There are so many possibilities now that you don't need to draw any lines. You could hear this last tune I did and think it was played on keyboards. The first record I did was definitely just drums, but on this new one, I have been trying to *compose*. You can take five tones and make a melody out of it.

SG: You said just now that you don't enjoy practicing on your own, but do you do it?

CC: For the first six or seven years that I was playing, I didn't know what to practice, but when I spent a year at Musical High School, I had a teacher who showed me the rudiments, and taught me to sit up and not to slouch. After that, I joined Atlantis, and we were all living in a house together near Hamburg. The rest of the band used to stay in bed until about 4:00 P.M., but I would get up at 9:00 A.M. It was boring. There was nothing to do except practice, which I did. I would practice everything. I would sit in front of the TV with a practice pad and work really hard on the rudiments. Then sometimes the guitarist would get up at midday, and we would work on some things together for a couple of hours. After that, I would carry on on my own until the band started rehearsing at 6:00. We would finish at 11:00, and they would go into town to a disco. Sometimes I would go, too, but often I would go to bed so that I could get up and practice the following morning. That lasted for a year, and at the end of that year, my technique had developed so much that it was incredible! That was a very important year for me.

I practice a lot on tour. When I'm in hotel rooms, I read the newspaper while practicing on a pad. I work through the rudiments, do continuous things with one hand and then the other, and practice things harder and faster. When I'm at home, I don't sit down and say "Now I'm going to practice something new." I would like to find a teacher who would be unkind to me. [laughs]

SG: What would a drummer of your standard look for in a

teacher?

CC: Every human being has something special. A good teacher will help with control and discipline in practice that I wouldn't have left to myself. You don't *have* to be a better player to be a good teacher. There was a guy who started playing when he was 15 years old. He used to come to every gig I played. He was very much into my style. He became a great critical influence for me, because he knew everything about me. If I changed my style slightly, he would recognize it instantly and be able to analyze it. He is now a "critic" whose opinion I respect, because he is so deeply into it. You don't find many people who really understand what you are doing to that extent.

SG: Is physical fitness important to you?

CC: Yes, very much. I like to be in shape. I had a bad time once. Everybody knows what the bad time is: You take too many nice things to make you feel happy. But I stopped all that, to get my body in tune and have more discipline and concentration in my playing. I play tennis, I ride horses, and I go skiing. There isn't always much time to do this, but if I have a free minute and it is possible, I do something like this. Sometimes I just run. It is important to make movements other than drumming, in order to get your body working to the limit so that you see stars in your eyes. At the moment, I have myself so fit that I can play tennis and run for four hours, and then do an eight-hour rehearsal. Two months ago, I couldn't play tennis for one hour and then make a studio date; I'd be too tired. But right now, I feel really strong, which is a very good feeling. To be a drummer, you have to stay in shape. I know that, when you are 20 or maybe 25, it sounds stupid; you say, "I don't need to watch my body. I like to drink and go out at night instead of sleeping," but it doesn't last. Now, if I'm working 10 or 12 hours at a time in the studio, I don't go to a disco afterwards. All drummers should treat their bodies as their most important piece of equipment.

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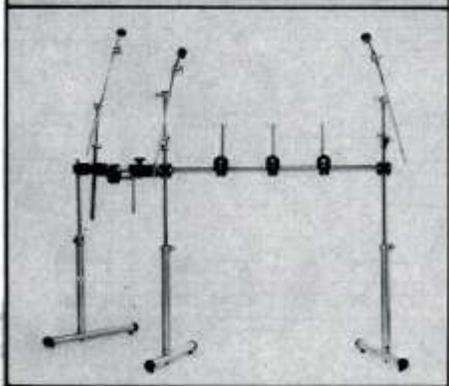
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Portraits In Rhythm: Etude #9

We have talked about many technical and musical considerations during the first eight etudes of "Portraits In Rhythm." I would now like to begin delving into the compositional considerations of a snare drum solo. As we approach the middle section of this book, I would like to point out certain devices that are used in creating these solos. By the time we get to Etude #23, which begins the section on musical form, I hope we will have enough information to clearly understand the compositional concepts used.

This etude presents a clear example of a snare drum solo with an opening theme that is repeated throughout the piece. All of our great composers used this simple device to create hours of magnificent music. The repetition of a theme is the key to organizing music in its simplest and most effective form. The factor that determines the success of this compositional device (repetition) is variation. The way a composer handles a theme as it continuously returns throughout a work determines the success of the work.

When writing for a melodic instrument, there are many ways to handle the problem of variation, such as key changes, interval expansion or contraction, inversion, retrograde, etc. These devices only work when a melodic line is present. Snare drum music is concerned with one specific element: rhythm. This does limit the use of such compositional devices, but there are still enough to maintain interesting variations. Examples of devices that apply to both melodic and rhythmic themes are: dynamics, tempo changes, articulation, time signature changes, etc.

The opening four measures of Etude #9 expose the thematic material for this solo. It can be easily seen returning in lines 7 and 11. Looking beyond the four measures, each time, there is a variation in the music that follows. What sets this theme apart is the decrescendo and the staccato. It's certainly not the rhythm, which is simply 8th notes. As this solo is performed, each presentation of the theme should be clearly distinguished by the dynamic and staccato effect.

Observations

1. The use of staccato in snare drum writing may seem a bit redundant, since the snare drum sound itself is very short. However, what this marking does tell us is that the sound must be exaggerated. I will discuss the technical considerations later.

2. In line 2, measure 4, the decrescendo measures should be played as one phrase. Normally when there are no phrase markings, a phrase is marked by the bar lines. In this case, play the four measures as one phrase. A more correct notation is as follows:



3. Beginning at the last three bars of line 3, we have a series of three-measure phrases. The dynamics set this apart very clearly in a question-and-answer format. Following this are two five-measure phrases.

4. Notice there is a *forte* marking in the third measure of line 6 and another *forte* marking in the fourth measure of line 7 without any change in between. This may seem to be unnecessary. However, there is a good reason to repeat the *forte*. Since the theme returns in line 7, it is necessary to repeat the *forte* so the thematic material is exaggerated. The second *forte* is actually louder than the first.

5. The two *fortes* in line 9 are not necessary and are actually a mistake.

Interpretations

1. The staccato effect in the opening and when the theme returns is produced by tightening the grip on the sticks by using more pressure at the fulcrum point where the sticks are held. The stick is also held more firmly in the hand by the remaining fingers. This technique is only used when a tight, dry sound is needed. The amount of tension will determine the level of staccato sound.

2. In line 7, the last three measures begin a series of dotted 16th and 32nd notes. Be sure the 32nds are on the short side, especially when the triplets begin in the next line. The danger here is in playing the 32nd notes like a triplet.

3. All of the grace notes (four-stroke ruffs, drags, flams, and seven-stroke rolls) are to be played closed, as in orchestral style.

4. The seven-stroke roll is especially difficult to execute, since the tempo is very fast. The solution is to begin the roll on the first beat of the measure.

Allegro vivace ♩ = 120

pp *f* *pp*
f *p*
f
f *dim.* ----- *p*
f *f*
f *dim.* ----- *p*

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MIDI System Interconnections

As we've seen in past articles, MIDI percussion systems can be quite large and detailed. Usually, as the system grows in size and complexity, the user is faced with many possible equipment configurations. Often it is desirable to switch between various configurations in a swift and logical manner (for example, in a live situation). Also, due to certain equipment limitations, special devices may be required before all items in the system work together cohesively. In this month's column, we're going to be looking at just such devices.

The THRU Box

If you refer back to some of our past work, you will notice that most of the interconnections were made via a simple daisy chain. This sort of system connection is quite straightforward and is very inexpensive to implement, since it only involves the purchase of a few MIDI cords. However, it does have a few drawbacks. For most users, the major drawback will be the necessity of plugging and unplugging cords every time the system layout is altered. While this is not difficult, it can be time-consuming, and it's certainly *not* the type of thing most people like to do on stage.

Secondly, certain pieces of equipment do not have MIDI THRU connectors for the daisy chain. Obviously, in this case, some extra gear is required. Finally, you

may desire to alter the MIDI data stream to certain pieces of equipment in such a way that daisy chaining is impossible. The solution to these problems is to use a different form of data distribution. Instead of running all of your voice units in a series manner, you may elect to feed everything from a central point. There are various devices to do this (with varying complexity and cost). The simplest of these is the bare-bones MIDI THRU box. This device consists of a single MIDI IN jack and several MIDI THRU jacks. Each THRU jack outputs a copy of the signal presented to the MIDI IN jack. In this way, the THRU box acts as the center of a distribution "star." These devices are invaluable if you own equipment that doesn't contain MIDI THRU jacks.

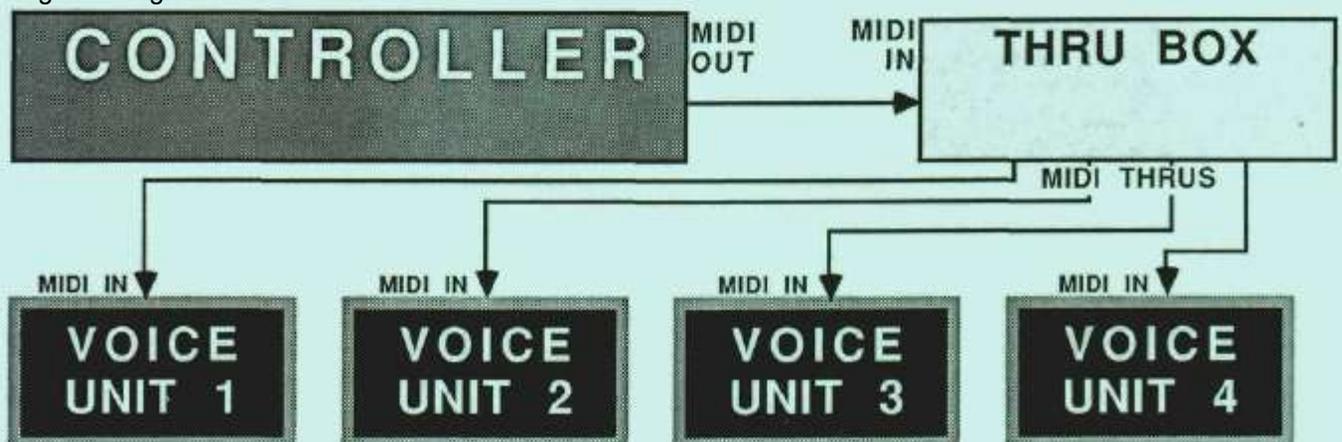
A typical connection is shown in Figure 1. Here a pad controller feeds a THRU box. The THRU box, in turn, feeds each of the four voice units simultaneously. Configurations vary, but the simple single-input THRU box will usually contain from three to six THRU jacks and be powered from either batteries or AC adapters. More expensive units will have the power supply built in. Note that in Figure 1 our THRU box is acting as a sort of "jumbo MIDI Y-cord." Normal Y-cords, such as those used for audio signals, will not work here due to the design of the MIDI hardware.

THRU boxes are also claimed to mini-

mize "MIDI delay." If you recall from earlier discussions, information cannot be sent instantaneously. MIDI requires a certain amount of time in order to transfer note information. For ordinary performance requirements, the MIDI data rate is acceptable. Supposedly, daisy-chain connections exaggerate the MIDI delay, and it is therefore logical to assume that the use of a THRU box minimizes this delay (or so the theory goes). To put it mildly, this is simply not true in the vast majority of cases.

The "daisy chain delay" problem is one of those little items that seem to crop up from time to time due to fundamental errors in the way people think circuitry works. While a typical MIDI message may take a millisecond (Viooo second) to transmit, it takes several milliseconds of audio signal delay before it becomes audible as an echo. The real question here is, "What is the delay produced by the THRU jack itself?" Assuming a typical hardware implementation, the delay will be on the order of a few microseconds (millionths of a second). At this level, several devices connected in a chain would produce significantly less delay than even a single simple MIDI message. In extreme cases, very long chains can distort the shape of the MIDI bits enough to produce errors. The exact number of units allowed before errors occur will vary. In my own system, I regularly use three to four units in a chain with

Figure 1: Signal distribution with a MIDI THRU box.



no problem. Usually, the major source of audible delay in a system is the software delay caused by the voice unit itself. In short then, a THRU box will do nothing to speed up data transfer.

The THRU/Switch Box

In more complex situations, more complex THRU boxes—including patch units—may be used. It may be desirable, for example, to feed a number of different voice units from two different controllers (say, a pad controller and a sequencer). In this case, a THRU/switch box may be used. This is essentially a simple THRU box with two or three MIDI INs and some form of switch. This setup saves you the time and hassle of constantly plugging and unplugging the various controllers from the THRU box. All you need to do is select the controller desired by means of the switch. This selected input will now feed all of the MIDI THRU as in the simple THRU box.

The Patch Bay

It may be desirable in larger systems to use a number of different controllers simultaneously, each feeding a different voice unit (or group of voice units). As an example, we may have a pad controller feed a drum machine while a separate mallet controller feeds a sampler and a digital synth. Our simple THRU box doesn't allow for multiple controllers, and while our switch box has multiple INs, they can't be used simultaneously. Our only recourse then would be to individually connect the controllers to the appropriate voice units. This gets the job done, but certainly not with the utmost efficiency. What if we would like to have the pad controller access the sampler and drum box, and the mallet controller just the synth? What if we would like to do this with minimum

fuss and bother on stage? Obviously, what we need is some form of patch bay (or matrix switcher as it is sometimes called). These devices typically consist of a few (perhaps four) MIDI INs and a number of THRU s (perhaps eight). Some form of switch array will allow you to connect a given MIDI THRU to a specific MIDI IN. One IN may feed several THRU s, but each THRU will receive its data from only one IN. Even moderately sized systems have a number of possible interconnections, and in an effort to ease your brain pain and knob twiddling, a few manufacturers are producing programmable patch bays. Here, one or two keystrokes will recall the connections required for a complex patch. A given unit may remember dozens of possible patch configurations.

MIDI Blenders

If you'd like to combine the signals from different controllers so that they can simultaneously access one voice unit, you will need a MIDI blender. Again, unlike audio signals, the MIDI data stream cannot be combined with Y-cords or even an audio mixer. MIDI blenders are rather specialized devices for a rather special function. They're basically a one-trick box (although some do contain a "panic button" to cancel stuck notes. I haven't seen any with a multi-speed chop/grate/puree function, or any that will turn potatoes into hundreds of julienne fries in just seconds). If you happen to own a Roland *Octapad*, you'll be pleased to know that its MIDI IN and OUT interact to form a blending function. Expansion to a second *Octapad* or other controller is then simply a matter of feeding this controller into the *Octapad*.

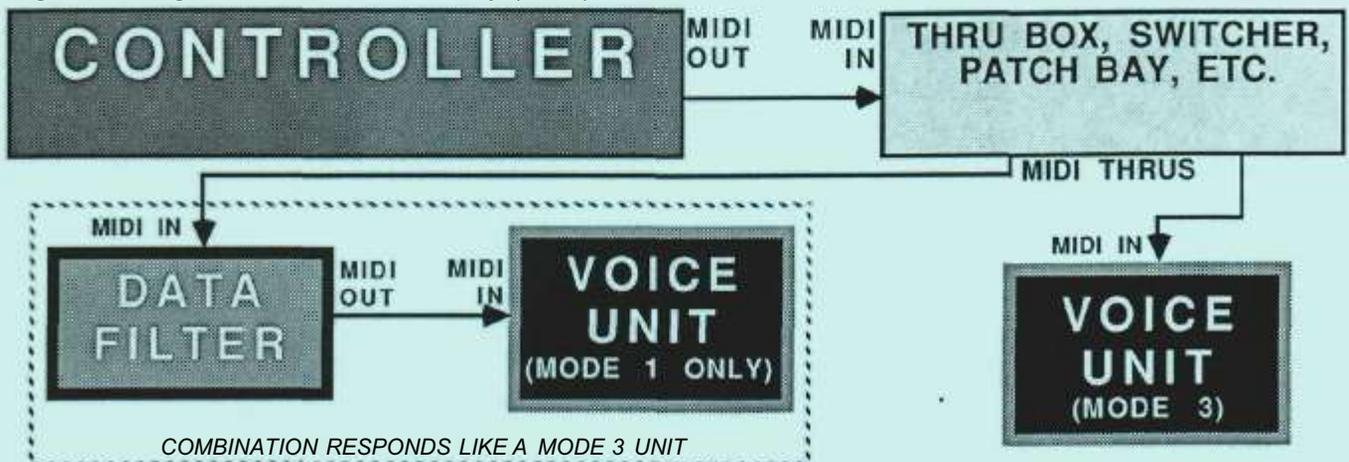
MIDI Filters

Finally, if you plan on interfacing to

some of the older MIDI gear, please be aware of a couple things. First, many of the "first wave" MIDI synths only respond in OMNI mode (mode one). Remember, this means that channel information is ignored, and thus, notes presented on any MIDI channel will be acted upon. Obviously, this can create quite a headache if you're trying to send messages to specific voice units. In order to get the older synth to ignore all of the data on the other channels, a MIDI filter may be used. In its simplest form, the filter will allow through only data on a specific channel that you have selected. For example, if your controller is sending notes to three voice units on channels one, two, and three, respectively, and the offending OMNI-only synth is number two, place the filter just prior to synth two and adjust the filter setting to retain channel two. (See Figure 2.) The synth/filter combo now acts like a single mode three (OMNI OFF) unit set to channel two. More complex filters will allow you to selectively cancel other MIDI messages such as aftertouch or various controllers. The second item to remember is that many of these same synths produce MIDI code without regard to channel. If you're using this device to input data into a sequencer, this can spell trouble. In this situation, a channelizer can be used to send info on a given MIDI channel.

In large systems, a number of THRU boxes, patch bays, filters, and the like may be required for good results. There are still other special-purpose MIDI tools that we haven't looked at, like MIDI echoes, note reassigners, splitters, etc., that can perform still more amazing MIDI miracles. We'll get to those in future articles. In the meantime, I hope that this info makes your system configuration a little easier to work with and more fun to play.

Figure 2: Using a filter with a mode 1 only (OMNI) voice unit.



This page of musical notation is for guitar and consists of ten staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, triplets, and dynamic markings. Key features include:

- Staff 1:** Starts with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a section marked 'A' with a 3/4 time signature.
- Staff 2:** Continues the melodic line with slurs and accents.
- Staff 3:** Features a triplet of eighth notes and a section with a 3/4 time signature.
- Staff 4:** Includes a triplet of eighth notes and a section with a 3/4 time signature.
- Staff 5:** Continues the melodic line with slurs and accents.
- Staff 6:** Features a triplet of eighth notes and a section with a 3/4 time signature.
- Staff 7:** Includes a triplet of eighth notes and a section with a 3/4 time signature.
- Staff 8:** Features a triplet of eighth notes and a section with a 3/4 time signature.
- Staff 9:** Includes a triplet of eighth notes and a section with a 3/4 time signature.
- Staff 10:** Starts with a section marked '(solo)' in 5/4 time, followed by a section marked 'B' in 3/4 time.

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sound in live situations. In the studio, my approach with sound technicians is different. If I am hired as a studio player, I pretty much leave the sound of the drums up to the producers.

SB: Even if you don't like the result?

JG: Pretty much, because they're the ones paying for the date, and they know what they want. I've found that most producers will be open enough to listen if I have some suggestions, but I generally leave it up to them.

SB: Can you tell us how you got started in the studio?

JG: I lived in Raritan, New Jersey, in the early '70s, and I started hanging out at Venture Studio in Somerville. One thing is getting to know people. It's a whole other thing to prove what you can do. I spent hours and hours there, until finally I got my chance to play. Actually, they started using me more for vocals in the beginning, but I got to be around and hear people like Steve Gadd and other heavies, and they were a great influence on my drumming. In 1975, I signed with Capitol records and had a single out that didn't go anywhere. As the producers got to know me, they began to use me. Then I became staff drummer at that studio in 1977, and for four years, I got the chance to know major artists. I did about 99% of the projects that came in. Then I signed with RCA and started working with Helen Schneider in '78. She toured all over the United States and Europe. With her gig, I did a lot of traveling and TV shows, too.

SB: So this situation with Glad is your first Christian band experience?

JG: This is the first Christian band that I've actually been in and touring with, but I've done other Christian album projects.

SB: How did you get into Glad? Did they just hear about you and call, or did you audition?

JG: That's a very interesting story. I sent them a tape of my playing, because my pastor was trying to put a Christian album together and he wanted to use Glad, but he also wanted to use me for the project. About a week later, their drummer called me and said he really liked my playing. We talked for quite a while and got to know each other over the phone. About a year and a half later, the guys called and asked me to join them. At the time, they were having auditions, and a lot of drummers sent tapes. Most of the people really didn't have any recording experience, so they didn't have a quality recording of their playing, and they would tend to have a tape of themselves just playing solos. That type of playing doesn't really show what a player can do. It shows chops, which is good to have, but it really doesn't show how you can play with a band. They were looking for someone who had a lot of studio experience and who could sing. Since Art Nobel left Glad to pursue a studio career in Nashville, it left the door open for

me to become a part of the band.

SB: Just what did you put on the tape that would make them remember you after 18 months?

JG: Well the tape was mainly different album cuts that I had done. It concentrated on team playing and grooving with the other musicians rather than on my chops. I didn't send them a tape of just me playing by myself.

SB: Glad invests quite a lot of time each year touring. Has it been difficult this last year getting used to the road?

JG: If I were married, it would be a lot tougher, but being single helps. Glad is not like other bands that go out for three months at a time. We go out on the road for about 80 to 100 dates a year, but they're spread throughout the year. We just came back from a solid four weeks, and that was tough. That's about as long as we're ever away in one shot. We own a Silver Eagle bus; it's our home on the road. I think attitude is real important on the road. I really enjoy playing with a Christian band as opposed to a secular band, because there's a real strong bond between us. The environment is really clean: no drugs, no alcohol or destructive things. We have a message—the Gospel of Jesus Christ—and that makes it a joy. The rigors of the road don't seem to hit you that hard. There are differences of opinion, yes, but we deal with those things differently than the way they used to be dealt with in other musical situations. The fact that we all do have different backgrounds is really neat. Everybody contributes something different. Also, we pray together backstage. The spirit of unity is really evident, so to answer your question, no, it hasn't been too tough getting used to the road.

SB: You've been playing drums for a long time. Can you describe how your playing has changed over the past ten or 15 years?

JG: Well, it's matured a lot. When I was younger, I wanted to show off my chops. The studio made me see that I no longer have to blow people away to impress them. I am strictly into groove these days. Solidly laying it down is what impresses me the most in other drummers. It's what I strive for and work at. Being a singer also helps me to know when to lay back and when to add extras. I've seen how insensitive some drummers can be to the singer, and that's what I never want to do.

SB: Who would you say has influenced you the most over the years? Are there any players that you particularly respect or admire?

JG: Oh, definitely. Mainly, I have to say Steve Gadd. Watching him play at Venture for those years in the '70s really taught me a lot. Actually, quite a few New York session players have influenced me. Then, in the past five years, I've been listening to the L.A. players more. People like Jeff Porcaro really have a lot to offer. Also, I listen to Peter Erskine and a few other jazz play-

ers.

SB: How about your peers in the Contemporary Christian band circuit?

JG: Well, I've already mentioned Art Noble, the drummer who used to be with Glad. He's got big shoes to fill. I admired his playing long before I ever thought of playing with Glad. He's a great soloist. Also, I'm really into Keith Edwards' playing. I never met him, but when I first heard him play, I was awed. He's the drummer in the Amy Grant touring band.

SB: You started playing the drums when you were ten years old. Did you take lessons?

JG: No, I taught myself to play. I started by tapping on everything in the house until I got a blue sparkle Slingerland set 20 years ago. I still have that kit as a matter of fact. When I got the kit, I began playing with records. The only time I took any lessons was when I started in the studio. I needed to know how to read, so I took about ten lessons.

SB: Do you spend much time practicing when you're not on the road?

JG: I don't like to practice, but I do love to play. So I play out as much as possible, and I basically just don't practice. In fact, I find that I need the break between sessions and concerts. My playing is a little better if I've had a short break.

SB: I'm sensing that, although you have a lot of dedication to your instrument, you don't appear to be totally engrossed with the whole music scene.

JG: You picked up on something that's totally true. I *really* love to play, but I never wanted my life to be entirely taken up with drums. I wanted to have more of a normal life and still have music be a large part. I don't believe that one thing, like music for instance, can bring total satisfaction. I just want to be happy with life and maintain a good balance. I love life, I love the Lord, and I just want to be treated as a normal person, not someone special because I play drums.

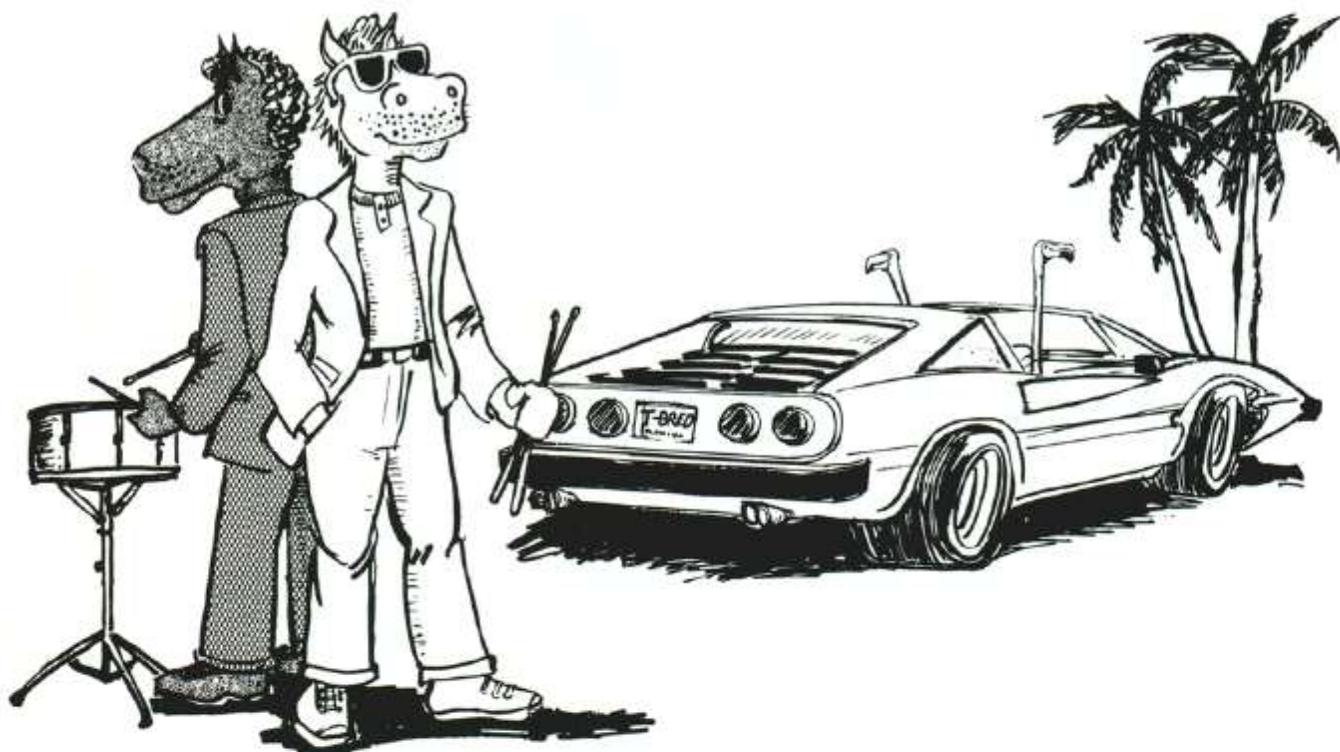
SB: You had a great career going before you got together with other Christian musicians. Why would you put yourself in a position that requires so much more of you? Is it the challenge?

JG: It's the motivation. The reason that Glad and other Christian bands play is because we have a real positive message that we want people to hear, and it's the good news of Jesus Christ. We present the Gospel at our concerts, and we allow the people to respond to that message. We have people who come to the Lord for the first time ever at our concerts. So, you see, it's much more than music.

SB: What I hear you saying is that you're ministers.

JG: Yes, we're musicians, and we're ministers of the Gospel. My personal motivation is that I want to use my talent for God, and I truly believe that it's His will that I'm here right now in this position with Glad.

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The band is well respected in the Christian community, and I'm really excited to be a part of this particular music ministry. I feel really blessed to be a part of it. I've grown a lot in my own faith, and I appreciate the lack of self-orientation in Christian music. When I started playing with Glad, I had to refocus my motives. No longer was it that important that people noticed *me*. Sure, I still like it when people appreciate my playing, but now I'm just a part of the band. I'm a team member, and we're all out there to call attention to Jesus.

It's really amazing to go on stage now, totally relaxed, *praying* beforehand with the guys, and having a deeper reason for playing. It's just really tremendous. Even on a lousy night, if I'm tired or run down and I don't think I've played well, people will come up to me and say how blessed they were by what we had to say. It makes me realize that it doesn't really matter how good I play. I mean, sure, I want to be the best that I can; we have a commitment to excellence within the band that we try to uphold. But if one of us doesn't play great one night, well, it doesn't blow us away, because we're doing our best, and there's a more important aspect to the concert than simply good music.

Noble continued from page 28

16 x 16 floor tom, and a 16x22 bass drum. I've been using the power toms for about two years now, because I really like the

tone of a deeper shell; the drums groan. My cymbals come from a German company called Meinl. I use the Profile line with 16" and 18" *Volcanic Rock* crashes, an 18" *Rock Velvet* crash, a 20" *Rock Velvet* ride, 14" *Rock Velvet* hi-hats, and I also use a 17" Wuhan Chinese cymbal. As for heads, I use Remo *Emperor* tops and *Diplomat* bottoms. On the snare, I use a coated *Ambassador*, and on the kick drum, I use a *Pinstripe*.

SB: How did you become familiar with Meinl cymbals?

AN: Well, a friend of mine works at a drum store in Washington, D.C. I went in there and he said, "Art, you have to check these cymbals out," so I tried them out and really loved them. They have a really unusual sound. I like to try different things; I don't like to do the typical thing. They're just as well made as any other cymbal. The company has been around for years and years, but the cymbals have only been available in the U.S. for about two years, and that's how long I've been using them.

SB: What about electronics? Are you using any at all?

AN: Yeah, I have a Pearl *DRX1* set. When I'm out with David, we have a lot of extra keyboards, some vocals, and some percussion sequenced, so they run a headphone mix with a click for me.

SB: How do you deal with the click? Is it a problem or a challenge?

AN: I like it. It was a little difficult getting

used to in the beginning, but it doesn't bother me at all now. When you first play with a click, it can be very distracting or very difficult, but it's just a matter of making the click something not to be scared of. If you think of the click as being a part of what you're doing, rather than, "I have to catch up to the click," or "The click is moving so I've got to stay with it," then you can work with it real easily.-

SB: You mentioned that you use Pearl's electronic kit. What made you choose Pearl?

AN: It's different. Once again, I just enjoy being different, because tons of people have the Simmons. I can get a lot of really neat sounds out of it that aren't like everybody else's. To me, that's a little advantage, and if I work at it, I can get the Simmons sounds out of it, too. I'm sold on it.

SB: How much do you use the set in concert?

AN: Well, for David's tour, I had only four of the pads set up. They were right next to my acoustic set, and I used them mainly for filler rather than for the main thrust of what I was doing.

SB: You sound like your heart is in the acoustic set.

AN: There's nothing like playing a real acoustic set; I don't care what electronics present to me. It's my personal feeling that there's nothing like playing an acoustic drum. I think electronics will always be around, but things will go back to a raw

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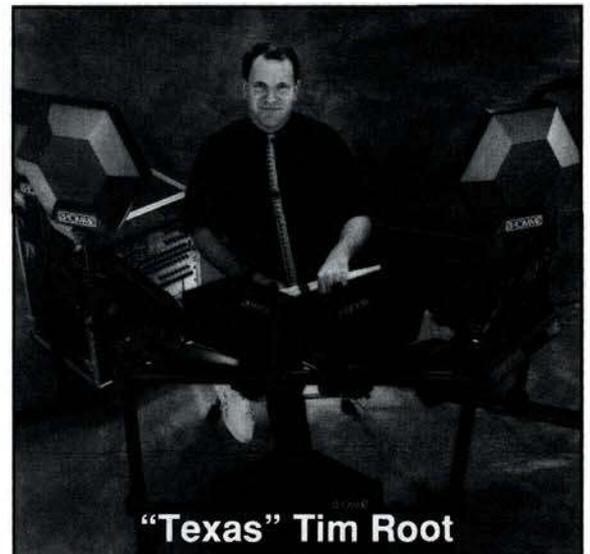
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acoustic sound. People are going to get sick of hearing all the synthesizers and the electronic stuff. Music has to get to a point where it moves in another direction; otherwise it will go stale. Drumming will eventually get more basic again.

SB: When did you first get interested in Contemporary Christian Music?

AN: In 1976, the year after I graduated high school, I went to this Christian Artist Camp in the Rockies, and I met the drummers from The Latinos and The Imperials. At the time, I really didn't know anything about Christian music. Although I grew up in a Christian home, I can't say I was really a committed Christian—not like I am now. I was playing in a practice room, and these guys heard me. They *both* talked to me about the possibility of joining either of the bands. Anyway, I wasn't ready to do that just then, so I went back to college that fall. I didn't know if either of them would ever call or not. I was studying Administrative Justice, but I was still real active playing in the big band at the school, and I was also playing with another band five nights a week, which was a Manhattan Transfer type band. A year later, The Latinos called me up to join them, so I left home and went on the road. I was with them for about a year and a half.

SB: What kind of music did The Latinos play?

AN: They were like an R&B, Latin, Christian band. We went to Mexico quite a bit. We played in Brooklyn and Queens in New York, the barrios of L.A., and things like that. Then I decided to go back to college at San Jose State. I majored in business but was again very active in the music department. Besides the club dates, weddings, and big band dates, I was also teaching set. I still wasn't real sure what I was going to do after graduation. I thought I'd probably go to L.A. for a year, and if the music thing didn't happen, then I would go into business in some part of the music field. Basically, I just prayed for direction. That same night, Glad called me.

SB: You must have had some contact with the members of Glad before that!

AN: They got my name from a company called Splendor Productions from years before when I worked with the Latinos. Their drummer had called down there in search of a drummer, and they got my number and called me up that night. So I sent them a tape, and they hired me. They'd never seen me or anything.

SB: Then you stayed with them for about five years.

AN: Yes.

SB: What's on the agenda for you in the next couple of years?

AN: Well, since I've only lived in Nashville for a year, it's hard to say what I'll be doing down the road. Right now, I'm just kind of getting to know Nashville better. The only thing I can say is that I just take one month at a time. I look in my book,

and if I don't have enough work coming up, I go out and start hustling up some work. Yet, I have some life goals, too. Someday I'd like to be in a major secular band. There are a lot of reasons. Financially, there is much more security, and I'd like to do it for the notoriety. I want to get into doing clinics someday. I have a real inner drive to be a clinician. And because of the situations that you're put into in a secular band, I feel that I can be a help to people's lives, because I know the Lord. There are a lot of messed up people in the world, who are searching and need direction. I feel that I would really be able to be an influence.

SB: Are you concerned that people might suspect that you were just using Christianity to get where you wanted to go in the music field?

AN: People can say what they want. You know, a lot of people put God in a box and say that He can only act this way or that way. They think that, because you call yourself a Christian, your career can only go in one direction. I don't feel that, because God opened the opportunity for me to play with the David Meece band, Glad, or the Benson Company, I am limited to doing just those things. I'm going to be a Christian and live the life I live anywhere, in any musical situation, no matter

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what anyone might think. The only thing that matters to me is what God thinks!

Thibodeaux continued from page 29

know, man, we just got finished praying, and we told the Lord that, if we didn't hear from you by the end of the week, we were going to go out looking for a drummer." I just knew that I was meant to be in the band, so I said yes. So in '79, we started playing together again at little churches throughout the country. Then we went to Oxford, England, and played there. At that point, CBS Priority Label signed us, and we released our first album called *David And The Giants*.

SB: What did the band do for a drummer during the time you were not with them?

KT: Tommy Aldridge played with them for a while, and also Bobby Tarella.

SB: I've got to get back to that concert I saw you guys perform. There was a sizzle type sound—brassy and electric—coming out of your snare drum. How were you doing it?

KT: Well, much of it boils down to the way you tune the drums and the placement of the mic's. Also, it's the way you tear into them. And then, of course, your effects play an important part.

SB: Can you tell me something about the effects?

KT: Most of it has to do with our sound

engineer, Terry Theerrell. He's *really* good. He seems to be able to get the sound that I like. Other soundmen try to get the sound that *they* like. We use a compressor on the snare, and Terry fools with the settings sometimes right in the middle of what I'm doing. That's probably what you were hearing. He helps give color and those nice effects by playing around with the sound right in the middle of a fill.

SB: How do you get the sounds in the studio? Do you have any special technique?

KT: Well, on this latest album, *Magnificat*, we used some sampling. We sampled a Noble & Cooley snare drum and put it into a Prophet keyboard. David [Huff, lead guitar player] and I helped each other with getting certain sounds. We brought the snare out into a very large, very quiet wooded area; the acoustics were amazing out there. We miked the sound we got and then sampled it for the album. Another plus about *Magnificat* is that the whole record was cut without me, and then I came in and laid down the drum parts. It was great, because I could play to all the music instead of to a rhythm track.

SB: *Magnificat* is your ninth album with David And The Giants?

KT: Yes. The band put together several custom albums, then we recorded on the CBS Priority label, and now we're with Word/Myrrh.

SB: You must get tired of being asked

about your adventuresome childhood career with Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. Where did you go musically after that?

KT: People do ask me about it often, but I don't really mind. It was a lot of fun. Desi, Jr., and I have stayed friends, and we still keep in touch. I still see Lucy from time to time. After those years, I did some other acting spots on shows like *Hazel*; I also appeared on *The Dinah Shore Show*, on *Truth Or Consequences* with Bob Barker, and on quite a few other television shows with Desi, Jr. We had a Dixieland band when I was about 12 years old. Throughout the whole time, I kept drumming. I always felt that I was a drummer, not an actor.

SB: As you got older, what drummers did you listen to?

KT: Well, the first big drummer was Ringo and then Carmine Appice. Later on, I was really impressed with Clive Bunker from Jethro Tull and then John Bonham. There's also Alan White, Bill Bruford, and Billy Cobham. Really, I get something out of every drummer I hear.

SB: Your live concert is very entertaining. Does your band focus more on the ministry aspect of CCM, or the entertainment for Christian audiences?

KT: Well, it's a combination of both. We try to get the audience's attention the best way we can with the best show and the best musicianship, and then refocus that atten-

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tion on Jesus and the way that God can change their lives. We're not entertainers who happen to be Christians; rather, we are Christians who happen to be entertainers. Nothing takes a backseat to the Lord.

In the next issue of MD, we'll talk to CCM drummers Kirk Allen, Keith Edwards, and Louie Weaver.



Reader's Platform continued from page 4

SCHOOL MUSIC PROBLEMS

This letter is in response to the plight of musicians in the school systems. More and more schools are going into debt. As a result, certain programs are being cut. Unfortunately, the music program is often one of the first to go.

As a drummer at the high school level, I have noticed the population of music classes dropping dramatically. Although this presents a certain benefit by weeding out the students who really have no dedication, some very gifted students have also had to quit because of financial problems. Consequently, even at the beginning level, potential musicians are being turned off of, or turned away from, music.

I realize that academic subjects are important. But if trends continue as they are at present, musicians—and musical careers—might become as extinct as the dinosaurs.

Jonathan Hicks
Denver CO

THANKS FROM STEVE

I would like to thank the readers of this magazine for the honor they bestowed on me in the Readers Poll. It meant so much to me this year, because I wasn't sure how the public was going to react after I left a television show that gave me a lot of exposure. But I had to do what I had to do, and I'm very grateful that I was able to hold people's interest.

I've been working very hard on some interesting projects that I hope everyone will be pleased with. So keep your eyes and ears open! In the meantime, I'd like to thank everyone again from the bottom of my heart.

Steve Jordan
New York NY

RESPONSE TO LEBLOCK

Editor's note: In the August 1987 Readers' Platform department, James Leblock wrote a letter criticizing Neil Peart's "Pieces Of Eight" Sound Supplement in the May '87 MD. As he himself predicted, reader rebuttal to his criticism was quick and substantial. Here are some representative letters.

I am writing in response to James Leblock's letter "critiquing" Neil Peart's "Pieces Of Eight." The reason for the many articles featuring Neil in *Modern Drummer* is obvious to me, seeing that he is a very accomplished and inspiring drummer/percussionist. Understandably, many readers are interested in his ideas and technique. In the article, he was trying to convey how useful he found electronics can be in percussion soloing, not simply presenting a testimony for the KAT unit. Neil was also depicting the long process involved in carefully selecting drums for "personal taste," not just because of what someone else plays or who offers the best endorsement deal.

As far as the *Supplement* itself goes, it was never termed a "drum solo." It is a solo in the sense that it was performed by a single person. But it really was a musical piece done using total percussion. Many musical pieces today are produced using drum machines, overdubbing, and many other technical tricks to help perfect the final recording. "Pieces Of Eight," as a professional recording, is no exception, and being a professional recording, it carries a copyright.

Mr. Leblock, we *MD* readers don't "blindly accept everything that is thrown at us," i.e., a great many of us didn't blindly accept your negative view of Neil's work. I do, however, agree with you on one thing: Neil Peart is a very creative and talented performer. I would like to thank both Neil and *MD* for a job well done.

Bill Reeves
Coos Bay OR

I feel I must respond to Mr. James Leblock in the August *Readers' Platform*. Mr. Leblock, this is not "hate mail" towards you, but I would like to point out a few things. Mr. Peart—along with many other drummers of all styles—has given me the inspiration to search within myself to be the best drummer that I can possibly be. Mr. Peart's *Sound Supplement* is not a mere drum solo, but a piece of music played on percussive instruments that are available to today's modern drummer. And if you knew anything about today's music business, you would know that any piece of original music can be copyrighted, regardless of what instruments it is played on. I also don't believe that the readers of *Modern Drummer* are "blindly led" (as you put it) to "anything that is thrown at them." I, for one, eagerly await each *Sound Supplement* for more inspiration in my drumming. Yes, Mr. Leblock, let's all go practice—not just our drumming, but our attitudes as well! We should all be grateful to the many musicians of all instruments and styles who give us their music from their hearts!

Dennis O'Neill
Hollywood CA

CORRECTION FROM SOPH

I wish to correct a mistake in Ray Brinker's interview [*MD*, August '87]. My drumset teacher at North Texas State was Tommy Gwin, not Henry Okstel. Thanks for setting the record straight.

Ed Soph
North Haven CT

ARTISTS AND ENDORSEMENTS

For years I've been witnessing an imbalance in the area of drums, drum companies, and drummers. I keep reading about drummers who have rooms full of drums receiving still more from their sponsoring companies—while the prices for us "nobodies" increase annually. Drummers who grace *MD*'s cover are often shown in several pictures (as well as ads) playing brand X drums, only to appear in ads several issues later selling brand Y drums. And this is after brand X has laid several sets on those drummers—many times custom-made. I used to think that endorsements were part of success, but now I'm not so sure.

Of course, what I'm talking about is the abuses; I realize that it's not all the way I've described. On the other hand, Tony Williams said (in his interview in the June '84 *MD*) that loyalty and consistency always meant something to him. Why don't more drummers talk about that stuff?

One last thing: I just saw a drum corps competition involving 12 American corps. *One* entrant used all American-made drums. It makes me sad.

Bob Kachline
Wilkes-Barre PA

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by Kenny Aronoff

Ringo Starr

The Middle Period



Photo by Rick Makin

MUSIC KEY



"What will they do next?" That was the big question the Beatles had everyone asking. From December 1965 to November 1967, the Beatles released four very significant, but very different, albums that reshaped the direction of popular music, and set new artistic standards. During these few magical years, it seemed that anything was possible.

Rubber Soul (Dec. 1965), *Revolver* (Aug. 1966), *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (June 1967), and *Magical Mystery Tour* (Nov. 1967): Each of these albums was stylistically unique. *Rubber Soul* was basically a folk-rock album with Bob Dylan influences both musically and lyrically. *Revolver* demonstrated four musicians at the peak of their creative powers with each member experimenting in his own individual way. *Sgt. Pepper* was, and still is, a brilliant studio album. No one had used the studio as creatively as the Beatles had at this point. *Magical Mystery Tour* was a heavily orchestrated album like *Sgt. Pepper*, and it was an extension of the psychedelic style that occurred in 1967.

The Beatles also released some incredible singles in between album releases, once again demonstrating new changes in their style, sound, and musical concept. "Rain"/"Paperback Writer" was released between *Rubber Soul* and *Revolver*. "Penny Lane"/"Strawberry Fields Forever" was released between *Revolver* and *Sgt. Pepper*. "All You Need Is Love"/"Baby You're A Rich Man," and "Hello Goodbye"/"I Am The Walrus" were released between *Sgt. Pepper* and *Magical Mystery Tour*. Finally to end this period, the Beatles released "Lady Madonna"/"The Inner Light" after *Magical Mystery Tour*.

Capitol Records, U.S.A. released a fifth Beatles album called *Yesterday And Today* in June 1966, but it was a compilation album that had songs from the British albums *Revolver*, *Help*, and *Rubber Soul*, and two songs from a single with "Day Tripper" and "We Can Work It Out" on it.

In this middle period, the Beatles redefined and reinvented pop music. Rock music became an art form—something to listen to and something capable of making a serious statement. An album became a viable art form and not just a collection of songs. *Sgt. Pepper* was a perfect example of how the entire album made a statement and each song was a small part of this statement. You almost have to listen to the entire album from beginning to end to fully appreciate and understand *Sgt. Pepper*. In fact, the Beatles chose not to release a single from this album.

Ringo went through as many changes as the Beatles music did during this period. He had to adapt to all the different styles and musical transitions that they went through from album to album. On *Rubber Soul*, Ringo's splashy ride and hi-hat sound from the early period occurred less often, and percussion parts, especially tambourine and maracas, began to dominate. All the Beatles got involved with the percussion parts. For example, on "Think For Yourself," Ringo used maracas and tambourine with a basic drumbeat in the verses. (A) In the choruses, he blended the ride cymbal with the percussion parts, but the percussion parts still dominated. (The tambourine is written on the top line, top staff, and the maraca part is written on the second line, top staff.) (B)

(A) Verses

(B) Choruses

In songs like "The Word" and "Wait," the maracas and tambourine were a big part of the basic beat. The parts changed in each section, giving the songs more dynamics and musical effects.

"The Word"

Verse

Chorus (with two maraca parts, written on the second and third lines of the top staff)

"Wait"

First half of Verse (tambourine on top staff, cymbal bell on bottom)

Second half of Verse

Chorus

The Beatles experimented a lot in the studio. In the song "I'm Looking Through You," Ringo played a basic drumbeat, but instead of playing his hi-hat, he or someone else overdubbed a hi-hat type part by slapping out a beat on his legs. (This part is notated with diamond-shaped noteheads in the second staff.) It had a unique sound and rhythmic effect. There was also a tambourine part that popped in and out throughout the song.

Another example of how the Beatles experimented with percussion was demonstrated in "You Won't See Me." Ringo overdubbed another hi-hat part (written on the top staff), which had the effect of a percussion instrument.

Verse and Chorus

Bridge

Ringo began to develop his fills more on *Rubber Soul*. They became more intricate and bigger, but still always seemed appropriate for the song. Here are some examples.

"Drive My Car"

An opening fill Ringo played became a signature to this song.

This is the two-measure fill that appears before each chorus. He changed the second measure of the fill each time he played it.

"Think For Yourself"

This example implies six against four.

"Rain"/"Paperback Writer" was released after *Rubber Soul*, Ringo really broke into another style on "Rain." He played with more authority and aggression. The drums themselves were recorded louder. Ringo played real free and experimented a lot, which was different from his early period style. It's one of his best recorded performances.

On *Revolver*, the Beatles' individual styles were peaking, but still served the purpose of a band and the songs. While Lennon got into abstract lyrics and his acid rock guitar style, McCartney expanded and refined his pop writing craft, and Harrison got very involved with authentic Indian music and Indian instruments. Ringo, meanwhile, had the challenge of adapting to everyone's style. He always played what was called for. If he had been a rigid drummer set in his ways, the Beatles would have been in trouble. He played the songwriter's version of the song, not his, like an ego-less drummer.

Listen to *Revolver*, and keep in mind how diverse and different each song is. Here are some examples.

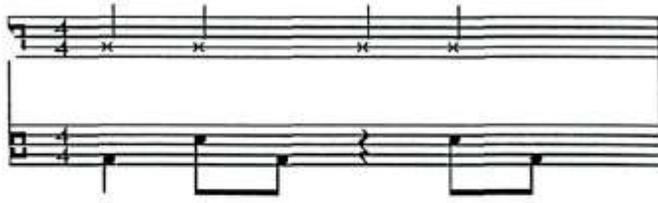
"Taxman"

Intro and Verse beat

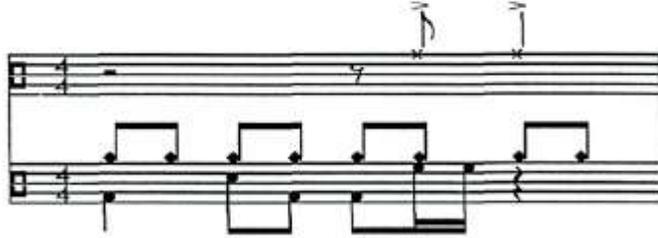
Fills (all on snare—they became a theme)

The following beats immediately identify the song when you hear them, especially "Tomorrow Never Knows." They are signature beats—hook lines to the song.

"Doctor Robert" (maraca part written on second line, top staff)

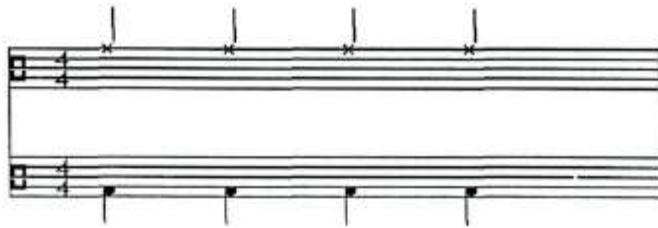


"Tomorrow Never Knows" (tambourine part written on top line, top staff)

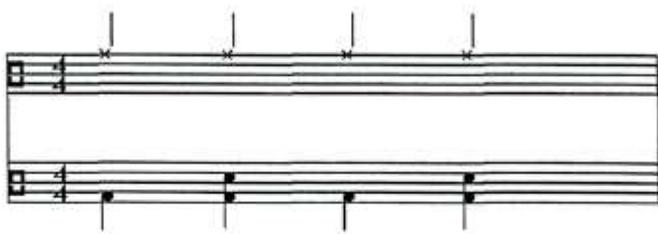


"Yellow Submarine"

Intro and Verse



Chorus

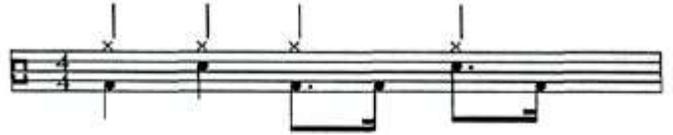


"Good Day Sunshine" (floor tom, snare drum, and crash cymbal written on top staff, snare drum and hi-hat/tambourine written on bottom staff)

Chorus and Intro



Verse



This is an example of how the Beatles expanded and really tried different ideas on *Revolver*. Compare this beat to "I Want To Hold Your Hand."

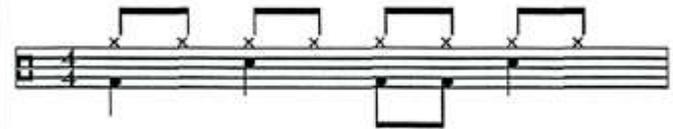
"She Said She Said" has so many incredible parts. You have to listen to the record. It's filled with wild fills, odd-time signatures, intense beat, and a double-time feel at the end. It's definitely an example of one of Ringo's most creative moments.

"Strawberry Fields Forever" and "Penny Lane" once again introduced a change for the Beatles. These songs focused on heavy orchestration, utilizing strings, brass, and percussion. Ringo's parts became very basic and supportive in this new style.

Sgt. Pepper was a unique album for its time and still is considered one of the greatest albums ever recorded. On *Revolver*, the Beatles split apart as individuals, and you could hear the individual personalities, while on *Sgt. Pepper*, they unified and focused on one idea—one concept. The album became a song in itself.

Ringo's playing on *Sgt. Pepper* was simple and basic. He played like a percussionist in an orchestra, accentuating and highlighting the important sections of each song. The drums took on a new role now. They didn't dominate or drive the music like they had in the past. All the instrument parts became simplified, but were carefully composed and became small pieces of a large puzzle. Ringo's drum sound improved significantly on this album. The Beatles made use of the studio more, and this affected the sound of every instrument.

The next two singles after *Sgt. Pepper* were on the *Magical Mystery Tour* album. "All You Need Is Love"/"Baby You're A Rich Man" was one release, while "Hello Goodbye"/"I Am The Walrus" was the other. These singles and the rest of *Magical Mystery Tour* were an extension of what the Beatles had already started on *Sgt. Pepper*. They continued to use heavy orchestration in their music, utilizing strings, brass, woodwinds, and percussion instruments. The Beatles continued to experiment in the studio, and used it to create different sounds and sound effects. They recorded backwards talking, telephones ringing, laughter, weird talking parts, sound effects, etc. They creatively introduced these effects in their arrangements. Ringo still played his role like a percussionist in an orchestra. The more complex the arrangements, the simpler and more basic Ringo played, but this is not to undermine or take anything away from his abilities, because once again, he served the music. For example, in "I Am The Walrus," he played this basic beat:



This beat kept the song tight and solid. There were a lot of instruments and effects added to this song. So Ringo's part was perfect. The arrangement was involved, utilizing cellos, horns, telephones, laughter, percussion, etc.

Ringo also played basic, but very solid and strong, on the song "Magical Mystery Tour." The song had four different musical sections, and Ringo bridged them together, so that it ended up being as smooth as glass. He always had a gift of being very musical with the Beatles music.

The Beatles finally released "Lady Madonna"/"The Inner Light" after *Magical Mystery Tour*. Once again, everything changed again. They left the psychedelic era, and this time, they returned to their roots with "Lady Madonna." It was basically a Fats Domino, old-style rock 'n' roll song. This is an indication of what was next. They had pushed their experimenting to the limit in this period, and it was time to look back to their roots.



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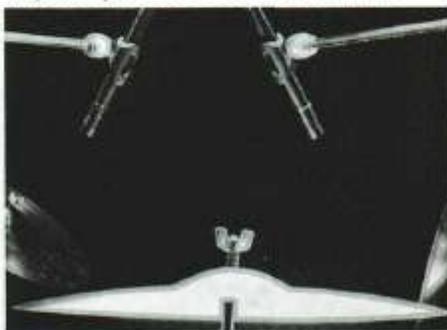
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by Peter Erskine

Your Drum Setup



Photo by Rick Markin

While I was a student at Indiana University, Mstislav Rostropovich came to the campus and gave a cello recital that was magnificent. Every note that he played exuded so much passion, warmth, and humanity (not to mention good intonation). But the best and most memorable part of the concert for me was at the very beginning, when he strode onto the stage. Following his accompanist, Rostropovich walked briskly across the large stage with his cello, acknowledging the audience's applause. Without missing a beat, as he reached the seat from which he would perform, he had hardly stopped walking and plopped himself down onto the chair when he immediately began to play . . . brilliantly. The point being, it was obvious that he was *one* with his instrument. There was no unnecessary motion or maneuvering on his part to get adjusted to his instrument or comfortable with the fact that he was about to play. The cello was a part of *him*, and he was a part of *it*. Both parts made the whole.

Do we regard the drumset and ourselves in the same manner? The best way to establish rapport with something or someone is to spend time with that object or person. The more time the better. And whether it be friend or instrument (some people's instruments *are* their best friends), you want to feel as natural and comfortable as possible. You want to feel that you can just "be yourself." Applying that idea specifically to the drumset, let's look at two factors: your physical and your musical relationship with the drums.

Physical Relationship

Thought: The drums are one instrument. Equation: Drumset = you. By this, I mean that the sounds of music that come from your kit are, in the final analysis, not the sounds of a hi-hat, a bass drum, a ride cymbal, a snare drum, and goodness knows how many tom-toms. The sound is *you*. It's your touch, your time, and your idea. My idea is that the drumset is like your body. Your right arm has one function, your nose has a function, your ears have a function, and so on. But you are one human being, and you convey ideas or physical activity as one person. It's the same with the drumset. I don't think that you should approach it as a multiple-per-

cussion setup; it's one instrument. It is an integrated amalgamation of components. (I told you I went to college.) There *are* different components to it, just as there are different notes on a piano and pedals on a piano. You have to learn how to use them all together to present one idea. I'm aware of the premise of having a lead voice, which is usually the ride cymbal. I don't intend, though, to isolate it from the rest of the kit. It's important how everything works together. The drumset is, indeed, one instrument, and that's why balance is so important on the kit.

Make sure that the setup is comfortable for you. You should not have to reach too far to strike any portion of your playing area. This is important! If your seat is so high that your feet do not reach the pedals comfortably, or your cymbals are so high or far away that you must make an effort to play them, then your setup is *wrong for you*.

Relaxation is the key to doing anything truly well, especially when it involves physical motion and activity. If your setup invites fatigue or strain, how are you going to play some really good music for any length of time? So the drums and cymbals should be positioned in front of you so that you can comfortably reach every part of the kit. (I sit rather low; I find it helps me to play the pedals with more control and strength as my legs are not too long.) I think of my drum setup as a sort of cockpit: Everything is right in front of me.

Avoid drastic angles. In general, you should always avoid exaggerations—in your setup, your motion, or playing style. What I am mainly referring to here is the importance of keeping the tom-toms and cymbals relatively flat. I have, in the past, made the mistake of playing my cymbals or tom-toms at too acute an angle. Not only did this make striking them more difficult (especially with any degree of consistency, as I found myself glancing off of that instrument), but also the sound suffered. The flatter a drum or cymbal is, the easier it is to hit and get a good sound from—*period*. (I recognize that the stick-to-cymbal attitude is a unique part of certain stylistic drumming styles, a la the early '70s Al Mouzon/Eric Gravatt high-intensity ride-cymbal playing where the cymbal was positioned very high and almost vertical. Like I

said, I once played that way. As I've gotten older, I've discovered it's easier, and it sounds better, to play the other way. And it can still get intense—even more so, in fact.)

It's important to remember: *Your setup has to allow you to play in a relaxed manner!*

1. Shoulders down, arms by your sides.
2. Appropriate heights all the way around.
3. Don't fight your equipment. *Make sure it is in good working condition!*

If you play an instrument, you have to maintain it. That's a priority. It's a privilege to have a good instrument to play on. Don't treat an instrument poorly—and that means, besides not leaving your drums out in the rain, that you should keep your drums in tune, change your drumheads when needed, and give an occasional good dose of preventive maintenance to your kit. Make sure that all of your hardware functions properly and that it doesn't rattle.

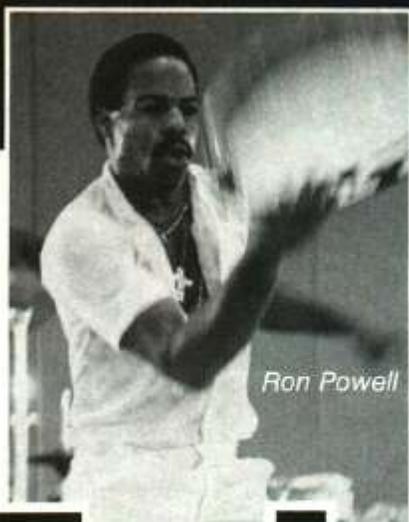
Musical Relationship

I'm a terrible one for analogies, so I ask your indulgence and, perhaps, forgiveness if I go on to say that *playing the drums should be as natural as sitting down and eating a cheeseburger!* Whether you eat with your elbows on or off the table, you still just wrap your hands around the burger and take a bite. It's as simple as that. And that's how it should be when you sit down to play the drums. In other words, *it should not be a big deal*. Assuming that you spend a good portion of your time at the kit, and further, assuming that you spend a good deal of that time *playing time*, then all you should have to do is to draw on that experience, give yourself an upbeat, and boom—away you go! I will discuss touch, phrasing, and such ideas more in a future issue, but for now, let me just say that, being a musician and thinking about music as much as you probably do, you should be prepared to play any beat and any tempo (within reason) on the drums. If this is what we do, then let's do it!

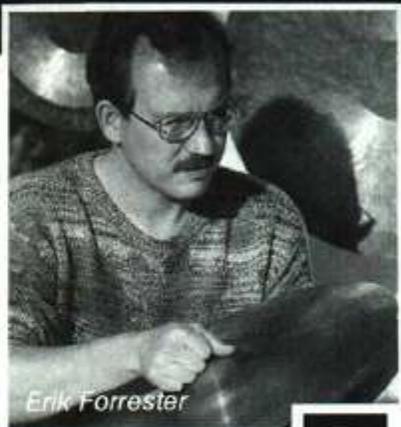
And, let's strive to be as natural and well acquainted with our instrument as Mr. Rostropovich. Were it as easily done as said! Good luck. See you in the next issue.



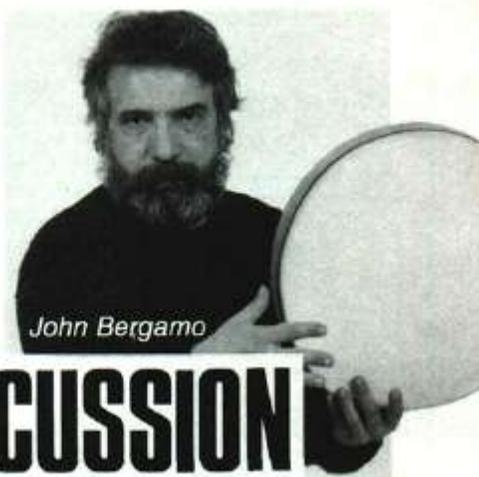
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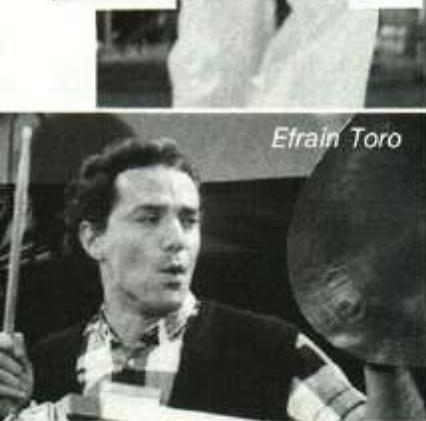


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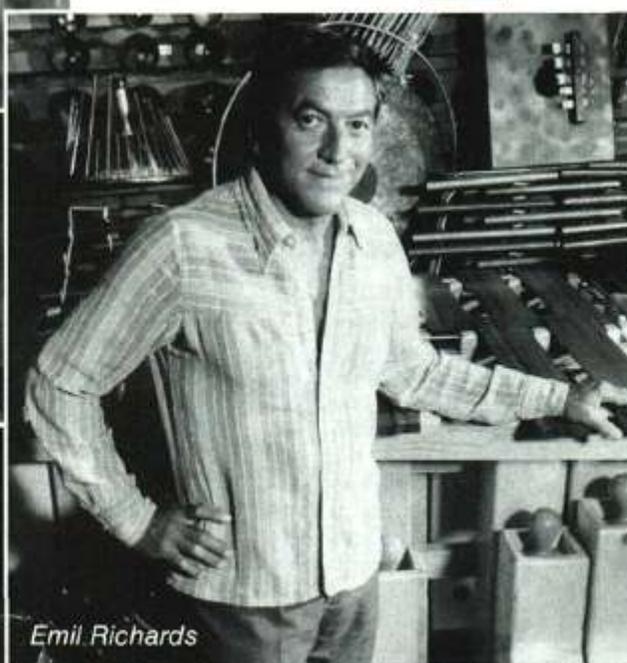


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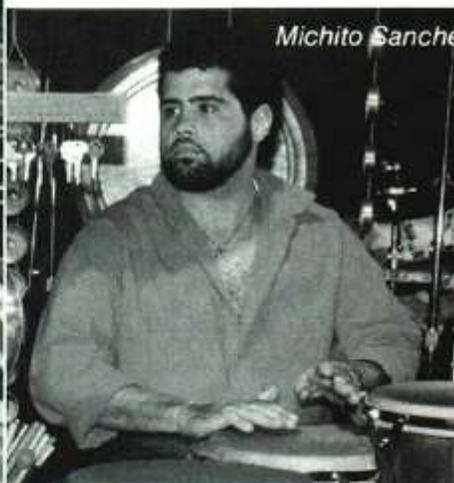
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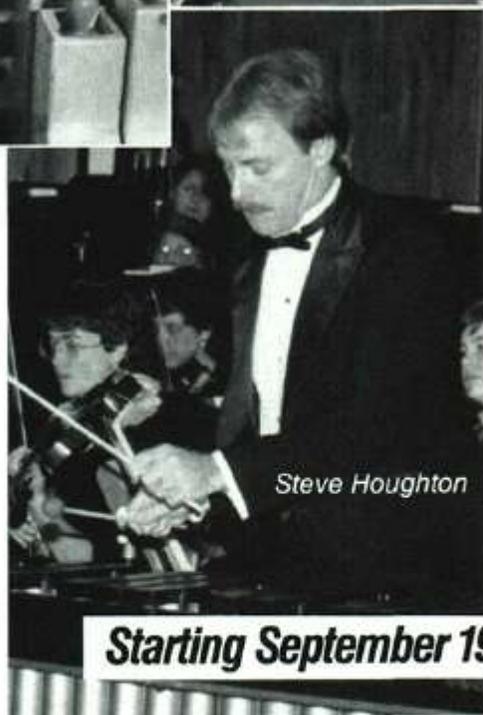
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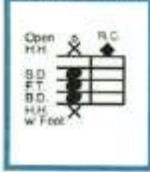
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Latin Rhythms On Drumset

MUSIC KEY



The examples in this article are meant to demonstrate the importance of traditional Latin rhythms in modern drumset playing where Latin "grooves" are required. The drumset player who incorporates a fundamental understanding of the traditional Latin forms will be better prepared to enter the realm of Latin "fusion" with some degree of authenticity and

confidence. Of course, this is a wide-open field with endless possibilities, being that every Latin American country has its typical music and rhythms. If you could study all of them thoroughly, that would be ideal. However, most of us don't have the time and/or opportunities to do so.

I strongly suggest starting with Cuban and Brazilian music, because these two countries have made the greatest contributions to Latin music, especially in terms of rhythm. This is still no easy task, because there are dozens of Cuban and Brazilian rhythms and instruments of great importance in this respect. Therefore, the articles that I wrote for *Modern Percussionist*, which dealt mostly with Cuban and Brazilian music, can be valuable for drumset players. Get the traditional instruments and learn on them, if you can. Use your imagination to adapt and combine the traditional rhythms from any instrument into your drumset playing.

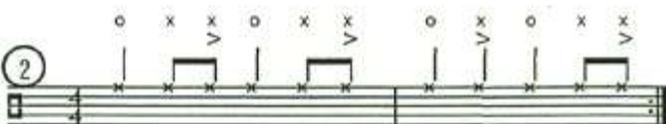
This can be done by dissecting the traditional rhythms and applying part(s) of their structure or accent pattern to various components of the drumset. As a general rule, always consider the relationship of the Clave to the parts you are adapting and combining. The Clave is your common denominator, which anchors and balances the overall rhythm. There will be times, however, when you will need or prefer to make an exception to this rule.

Exercises 1 through 4 are typical examples of traditional Cuban rhythms, which we will use as a basis to form several drumset adaptations. (These exercises do not correspond to the drumset music key, which appears at the beginning of this article.) Exercise 1 is a common palitos (sticks) rhythm from the musical form known as Rumba. This rhythm is also played traditionally with spoons and is used extensively with the Cuban drums known as timbales. When played on the sides of the timbales, the rhythm is often called cascara.



Exercise 2 is a standard rhythm often played on a handbell (hand-held cowbell). In traditional Cuban music and in modern salsa, this rhythm is frequently played by the bongo player who stops playing bongos at the appropriate moment and picks up the cowbell. Thus, the name bongo bell is often used for this part.

o = low tone
x = high tone



Exercise 3 is an extremely important fundamental in Afro-Latin music. This rhythm is common in Africa, where it is interpreted on a wide variety of percussive instruments. It is also found through-

out Latin America, where it is used not only in the percussive context, but also in providing a strong foundation for bass lines and melodies as well. In Cuba, this rhythm is often played on the bombo, which is the bass drum used traditionally in the Conga de Comparsa and Mozambique rhythms. In Brazil, this rhythm can be heard in the "Samba de Roda," and in the music that accompanies the unique and beautiful Afro-Brazilian martial art known as Capoeira. In both of these styles, it is usually clapped with the hands.



Exercise 4 is the most common basic rhythm for the conga drum in Latin dance music. It is Afro-Cuban in origin and is generally referred to as "Tumbao."

H = Heel (palm)
T = Touch or Tap (fingers)
S = Slap
O = Open Tone



The following patterns are Cuban-based rhythms for the drumset derived from the four previous basic rhythms. As you will see, they can be applied in endless combinations and variations. Naturally, the "groove factor" must be very solid with these rhythms, but the nature of this style of drumming calls for it to have a certain looseness. This can be achieved by incorporating subtle variations and accents (on the snare drum in particular) that lend a relaxed flow to an otherwise structured polyrhythm. African and African-derived drumming is largely based on this concept.

In Exercise 5, the palitos rhythm (taken from Exercise 1) is interpreted on the cymbal with the right hand. The left hand plays most of the accents of the handbell pattern (from Exercise 2) divided between the snare and the tom. The bass drum plays the bombo pattern (Exercise 3), while the half-note pulse of the handbell pattern (the "1" and the "3" of each measure) is interpreted with the foot on the hi-hat.



In Exercise 6, the palitos rhythm (Exercise 1) is interpreted on the closed hi-hat with the right hand, opening only the third note of the pattern as indicated. The left-hand part once again is divided between the snare and tom, and is derived from the basic tumbao pattern for the conga drum (Exercise 4). The bass drum pattern is again based on the bombo pattern (Exercise 3), leaving out the last note in each measure.



Exercise 7 has the half-note pulse of the handbell part (Exercise 2) interpreted on the cymbal with the right hand. The right hand also plays the last quarter note in the first measure on the tom, which is derived from the tumbao pattern (Exercise 4). The left hand plays a rhythm on closed hi-hat that is derived from the palitos rhythm (Exercise 1). The last note of the pattern is played on open hi-hat. The bass drum pattern is again based on the bombo rhythm (Exercise 3), while the first note of each measure is marked on the hi-hat with the foot. (The left-hand hi-hat part is written on the top space.)

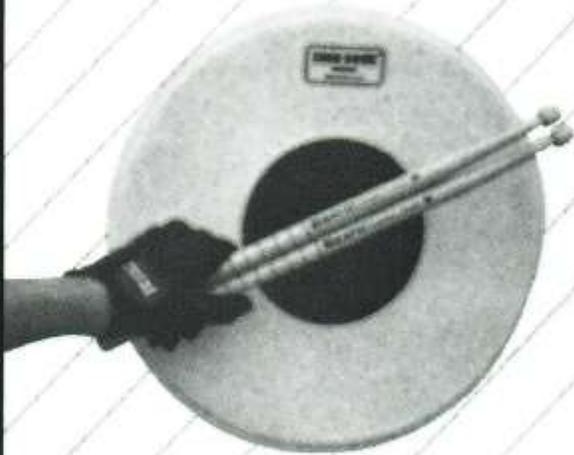


In Exercise 8, the rhythm played on the hi-hat is also adapted from the palitos rhythm (Exercise 1). The hi-hat is closed with the exception being the second note of the pattern, which is open. The left-hand part is divided between the tom and a single rim click on the snare drum. The click is taken from the handbell accent pattern (Exercise 2), while the tom pattern is derived from both the Tumbao of Exercise 4 and a common quinto (lead drum) part of the Afro-Cuban Rumba.



I've written all of these examples in "3-2" Clave. Study them closely to make sure you know why they are considered 3-2. Of course, you must learn them in "2-3" Clave as well, by simply reversing the sequence of the bars. The resultant 16 total exercises should get you started (and/or further inspire you) in your understanding of the vast world of Latin drumset playing. Good luck! 🥁

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thing in the sense that it's from the horse's mouth. That's all we want to do.

SA: How much classroom time does the average student have in a week?

Grove: Depending on the program, the students will have anywhere from 16 to 24 contact hours a week. We block those so that they're four to six hours a day. The average student is there four days out of seven.

SA: Then, I take it, they have their practice time.

Grove: Yes, but that's not contact hours. That's over and above that. I would say the average student pulls a 40-hour week—half of it in class, half of it varying. Students get musicianship classes, their major, and then their hands on. That's their playing time. So, they'll get anywhere from four to eight hours, depending on what program and what level they're at. We have one instrumental program that is like a performance program. They have five ensembles a week and they're doing 20 different styles, getting a repertoire in each style, and they're doing showcases.

In other words, students go through the percussion program for a year. This second year has them playing the kind of stuff you play to make a living, whether it's a bar mitzvah or sweetening a tape, playing with a click track or playing contemporary music or Dixieland. They have to learn all those styles and learn how to do it.

To succeed in this business, you've got to be a self-starter, and you've got to be motivated. You've got to be on. We practice being on at school. It's not like you can coast through. You have to bring in those qualities of concentration and aggressiveness. You must take charge and be responsible.

Ferguson: People don't come to this school just because it's the thing to do. They have to work, and the kind of students we get are damn serious about what they're doing.

Donald: First of all, they're in smaller classes, generally speaking, especially when they get to the higher levels. So the pressure's hard from the instructor. The students who aren't serious find out pretty fast how serious they aren't. They have to work that problem out.

Grove: To some people we say, "We can accept you, but you have to go in this level." People will stay at the school for four years. So depending on where they are when they walk in, if the desire's there and there's some basic talent, then it's a question of going through and evolving through the different levels.

Ferguson: I have one fellow in a class who has a Ph.D. in music. He's taught all over the world, he's won composition prizes all over the world, and he's here because he figures he doesn't know that much about film composing. It's astonishing, because he's *not* a kid. He's had plenty of experience.

Higher education as a lump sum in this country is really a joke. There isn't any. We're trying to address the fact that there should be, and we're pretty serious about it. If students come to me and don't know the ABC's, they haven't got a chance. They have to leave. Go learn the basics first, and then come back and see me.

Donald: The difference between our percussion department and some other schools is that our program is amidst all this activity rather than being a thing by itself. Part of the school has a core of composition and arranging, plus the other areas. I think that that's important for any young musician, and certainly for drummers. They'll be involved in this whole musical environment, which is, to some extent, traditionally academic like being in college but also has all this input from being here in L.A.

Ferguson: It is like education in ancient Greece, where you sat at the feet of the professionals and learned from them. Then, you had an opportunity to deal with that knowledge. Well, that's what we're doing.

Grove: That kicks into another thing. Students come here and spend a year or two or three, and while they're working through these levels, they're also in a very unique situation to network. We have hundreds of people at school, and they're all hustling this town one way or the other. They're

getting songs placed or putting groups together or showcasing or whatever. That is a very healthy environment. Drummers don't hire drummers, but arrangers and songwriters do. It becomes a very healthy thing, which means that everybody's auditioning all the time. [laughs]

SA: That, in itself, is an invaluable experience and learning tool.

Donald: You're not learning it in a vacuum. You're learning it wants and all. As working teachers, I think that, not only do we owe the students the benefit of our academic background and expertise, but we also owe them our knowledge of how we've dealt with the business and how we've utilized our natural gifts or acquired skills. I think that's very important, and I think that a lot of places, by dint of location, are somewhat removed from what's going on.

SA: The business has become much more complicated over the years.

Ferguson: There's so much more information today, and it needs to be addressed. There are so many different styles and techniques that have to be developed.

Years ago, Red Nichols said something funny to me. He said, "Open a Musicians' Union book, and there's a list of piano players. You don't know what anybody can do. You call a guy, and he comes out and says, 'Well, I can't fake.' So, you're in a lot of trouble." [laughs] In a way, we're addressing that fact. Musicians have to be well rounded, if they're going to call themselves musicians today.

Grove: People say, "Hey, listen, it's a terrible business." It is a terrible business if you're not prepared.

SA: I think too many people put themselves into one narrow category and just hope that the right opportunity comes along.

Grove: That's true. That first year is almost always a foundation-type thing. Then, that second year, they triple what they can accomplish. It's very nice to see how people come here, and maybe they've been bass players or drummers. Then, they go through the instrumental performance program. They're around all that, so they decide, "Hey, I want to get into some writing." They've got the foundation to do it. Now, they've got another whole area of work, which they couldn't touch before. That's the hyphenate that we were talking about earlier.

Maybe their first love is still the drums. Fine, but somewhere along the line, there may be an opportunity to use that information. It isn't that everyone who takes a writing program sees himself or herself as the next Hank Mancini. But even if you put your own group together, somebody has to pull that whole thing together in a professional way.

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be in the same room with you, you won't work. Students have to learn how to give and take, and realize that the point is to get the music out, and not be petty and childish about things. It's the professional attitude. We sort of oversee that. If they are out of line, we have a little chat with them and point it out to them so they can see it.

Consequently, we get a group of people who are all going in the same direction. We really don't have the petty little things that get in the way of music.

Donald: We've all come through the business in our careers and dealt with the various solutions, which we're still doing as professional musicians. We've dealt with the problems that are indicative of the '70s, say in my case, as much as the '80s. I have 18-year-olds who are going to face some other problems, but at least they'll know what I did about the stuff I was facing. They can take that knowledge and apply or not apply it to the new situations. I think there's an attitude of practicality and openness. We realize that things are changing and that no one can predict what is going to happen in 20 years. But as long as we're actively involved, we can pass on that attitude of, "Yeah, we're dealing with change."

Grove: Whether it's this sound or that sound or this beat or that beat, it's still music. If they get the fundamentals, they can adjust to change.

Ferguson: There are two kinds of change. One is evolutionary, and the other is revolutionary. We're dealing with evolutionary change. If you understand what happened in the past and the way that people dealt with things, you'll have a better information basis to make decisions. But that's an evolutionary idea. If you want to become a revolutionary and say, "I'm going to be the first person who doesn't understand how to read music in the business," okay, maybe, but the chances are probably not.

Grove: You know, I think it should be said, too, that we really love music. We're not just trying to turn out a group of mercenaries. We're trying to turn out a group of people who really care about music.

Donald: It's sad when you see people who

really care about music get run over in the business real fast. If they only had a little more practical knowledge before they went into it. . . . You'd better hang on to your integrity and your love of it, and deal with the world. Otherwise, you're better off not being in music.

Ferguson: You've never heard of some of the finest musicians in the world, and neither has anybody else. They're all living here, but they can't deal with the fact that they need to get their talent to the marketplace. That's really what we try to address.

It's unbelievable how this thing we call a music business is so complicated and full of contradictions. It's so frustrating at times. It took us years and years to really understand some of that stuff, and today, younger people don't have that much time. You fall on your face twice in this town, and you might as well move away. You cannot afford to earn while you learn anymore. You used to make mistake after mistake, and it was okay. I don't think you can do that now.

Donald: Competition is greater. The other thing, too, is that you're still learning at any age. It's an ongoing process, and that's something I always try to make clear to my students.

Grove: We realize that the students have all these high aspirations, and we were the same way at one point. There's a lot of self-fooling that goes on in people's minds about where they are in relationship to what they want to do. They have to come to the understanding that they don't know what they don't know. You have to separate the emotional illusion from the reality that nobody's calling you. That's sort of an invisible area, but you have to deal with it.

Ferguson: The level of expertise today is astonishing to me. Kids 20 years old are doing things that, 20 years ago, there was no way anybody did—never mind 30 years ago. But it's going so fast that there are some young kids who are doing astonishing things, technically. Not that they have any maturity or understanding, but technically, they can do things that nobody else could do when they were that age.

Now the next question is: What do they do with the technical? It's a lot like Buddy Rich, who, in his whole career, never learned to read music. Yet, it really didn't matter.

I used to write for him. I wrote a 12-minute work for him one time, and he had a drummer who could read come in and play it. We ran it through twice—12 minutes of complicated things—and then Buddy sat down and played the hell out of it. Now, you can't say to everybody, "Okay, you have to do what Buddy Rich did." Other people can't. Buddy was an absolute phenomenon. You can't teach that. So you have to say, "You have to learn to read, because you're not Buddy Rich."

SA: Your catalog says that you have a job-placement service. Tell me about it.

Grove: Well, we can't guarantee jobs for anybody, obviously. It's a free-lance business. But we'll get a call, say, from Disneyland or from some group. They'll say, "We need this. Do you have anybody?" We'll look through our graduates, and we know them pretty well. We'll say, "Alright, here are three people who can handle this." Then they will interview, so they're on their own, now. When the Queen Mary opened, they had open auditions, and 100 people showed up. Our graduates took every job.

SA: I imagine that you have to contend with the problem of students looking to you as role models?

Donald: Yeah. Not that I think that I'm any greater than anybody else, but I think that I show I still have a lot of enthusiasm for music, even though I've been through the mill and had my disappointments. I'm realistic to the point where some people call me cynical, but I still love it, and I'm still hanging in there and caring about it. I'd like to have my students imitate the enthusiasm that I still have despite it all.

SA: It's encouraging to them to see that you're not burned out.

Donald: If I was, I wouldn't be doing it. Because you're practical about things and realistic doesn't mean that you're cynical or bitter.

Grove: What it does, though, is show the students that it really all depends on them.

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You take responsibility for yourself.

Donald: Exactly. Certain students, just because of their emotional age, can relate to that better than others. But when I taught privately with kids who were in their teens, I think then it was terribly important to be a role model. I know that my teacher, Alan Dawson, was a big role model for me. I started when I was 17. If it hadn't been for him, I don't think I would have played drums. I worked harder for him. There was a real love that went on, not that you can have that in a classroom with 20 kids. But to impart that enthusiasm, I think, is the first thing you do.

Grove: Well, it's the same as expecting the students to have responsibility. You have a responsibility, and when you walk into a class, it's like a performance. You can set the tone for it any way you want. If you walk in and say, "Well, what do you want to do today?" you just dropped the ball.

SA: On that subject, your teaching method is unique to this school. Tell me about it.

Grove: As briefly as possible, we're dealing with contemporary music, which is essentially ear music. That means your ear has to understand the conceptualization of it. That starts from jazz and goes all the way up to where, if you don't understand how it works, you're in trouble. What I've done over the years is develop an approach to how to teach music. Take a dry subject like theory. I want to make it alive and make people hear better.

As far as I know, nobody else has put it together quite like that. We start with those things that are consistent in all music. We're talking about every piece of music that has ever been written, and every one that will be written. So, we learn the girders and the pipes that hold it together. Then we learn everything in relationship to it, rather than trying to go around the surface of the earth and walk over every square foot.

Most people learn by what I call bumping into things. They go to school for six months here, they take a lesson there, they read a book here, they jam with friends, and they listen to records. But it's not organized, and they're picking up little things. Twenty years later, they put it together.

So, we're starting with the essence of music, or ear music, that says, if you can't hear it, it's not valid. Because of that approach, the school is structured so everybody has to take those classes no matter what that person's discipline is. It's like a tree trunk. Then you go to guitar class and apply that to guitar, or you go to keyboard class and apply it to keyboards, and so on. It works like a charm.

People come to me and say they learned more in two hours than they did in a year at such-and-such, because suddenly they see. They can learn at a much faster rate. The more I do this, I find that one of the major things we do is show people what they can

do. Students come here with doubts about whether they can come up to snuff. From a psychological standpoint, you have to understand the intimidation they go through. So I would say that one of the major things is to let them know that they can go against the problem, work their way through it, and absorb it. In that sense, their musical personalities evolve. That's partly by having an approach like this. It really shows them in a programmed way, "Yes, you can do it." Then, it gets to the point where they can actually begin to accomplish things, and then they feel very good.

SA: Tell me about your new facility, which opens soon.

Grove: That's going to enable us to do everything we want to do, get up to the size we want to be, and stop.

Ferguson: It's really exciting. Jeff Porcaro has a state-of-the-art recording studio. He's moving, and he has to get rid of it. So, we're buying it for the school. It really is top notch.

Donald: Having that kind of facility available is the kind of thing that is crucial for anybody who wants to be involved in music. For drummers, certainly, having that kind of stuff is an important aid in knowing what's going on.

Ferguson: That makes us totally unique, I think, among the schools like us. There's simply no facility that offers a state-of-the-art recording studio that will handle a large orchestra—45 to 50 people—to a projection and everything else.

SA: The new school sounds like a pretty big place.

Grove: It is almost 40,000 square feet. We'll have 20 classrooms, and within that, there'll be three studios, three more playing rooms, and then regular classrooms. There'll be a library, student lounge, study hall, practice rooms, rehearsal rooms, administration, auditorium—all those good things. Students could come there and spend a lot of hours, even when they're not in class, in libraries and studying and practicing.

Ferguson: We also have facilities for professionals to use. For instance, the National Academy of Jazz is going to meet there in the board room. Bob Florence or Louie Bellson or whoever will be able to rehearse in the new studio.

Grove: Then it becomes a field trip for our students.

Ferguson: Exactly. It's sort of the hub around which we can mix professionals and students, and they can all have an experience that is terrific.

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continued on page 109

The Natural Drummer

The dictionary defines *natural* as "Present in or produced by nature; not artificial or man-made. Resulting from inherent nature; not acquired." The dictionary also defines *develop* as "To expand or realize the potentialities of; bring gradually to a fuller, greater, or better state. To grow; to expand."

At a clinic a few years ago, I asked the audience, "How many of you have taken or now take drum lessons of some kind?" A show of hands indicated that about half the drummers present had taken or were taking lessons. I then asked the drummers who had not taken lessons, "Is there any special reason why you have not taken lessons?" One young person said he wanted to take lessons, but he didn't have the money. He hoped to take lessons in the future. Another young person said his par-

ents didn't approve of his drumming, and they refused to pay for drum lessons.

One young man said that he had no intentions of taking lessons. His reasoning was that, if he "did it all on his own, he felt he would develop a more original style."

At another clinic, some years earlier, a young person said that a friend of his was a great *natural* drummer. I asked him, "How do you define a *natural* drummer?" He replied, "He can't read music." My question for him was, "If your friend began to take lessons and learned how to read music, would he then become an *unnatural* drummer?" Of course not. He would just have gained a new skill.

Occasionally (even in *Modern Drummer* interviews), we hear comments from well-known drummers such as: "I found a pair of sticks in the attic of our house, and two weeks later, I played my first big concert"; "I am completely self-taught"; "My friends and I were at a concert, and the drummer became ill. So I decided to play the drums at that moment, and I have been great ever since." I will grant you that these comments are exaggerations to make a point. However, the exaggerations are not that great.

It makes no difference to me if such personalities want to polish their egos. I couldn't care less about how they arrived at such irresponsible and immature comments. However, I care very much that some young drummers may read such nonsense and take it seriously. Believing such self-serving statements could seriously limit and mislead talented young drummers before they really get started.

It cannot be denied that some drummers have more natural, God-given talent than others. It also cannot be denied that good musical training has helped very talented drummers develop their natural talents to their fullest. The catch is that we don't know how much talent we have until we try to develop it.

The young drummer who had no intention of taking lessons told me that he "learned by listening to records." What is so original about that? Everyone, whether he or she studies or not, learns by listening to records.

We all learn from the great drummers of every era. The late, great Buddy Rich inspired drummers of all styles for over

four decades. All of us, to one degree or another, are influenced by such great players. They, in turn—Buddy included—had players that they admired and who influenced them. In a way, we all learn from each other. It is like an unbroken chain from one era to the next.

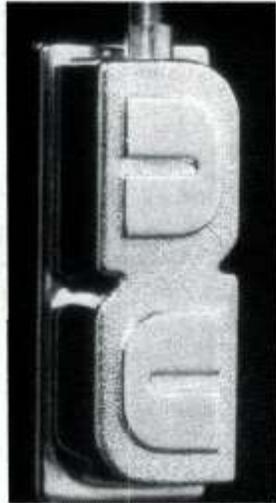
I am a great believer in learning. Buddy Rich was learning, improving, and developing right up to the very end. His playing got better and better. If you have a real talent—a God-given natural gift—by all means develop it. Open your mind to improving. Learn all you can, in any way you can. There are many opportunities for learning.

A friend of mine has attempted to play the drums for years! He has taken lessons from every big name drum teacher who would find time for him. Unfortunately, he will never be a great drummer. He just doesn't have the natural gifts required. What is great about him as a person is that he realizes this. He has fun, even though drumming is a hobby for him. His main income comes from the insurance business. His attitude is: "I may not be great, but think how bad I would be if I hadn't taken all those lessons. Besides, the knowledge I picked up helps me to appreciate and enjoy the really great drummers." You have to love someone with such a realistic view of himself and others. He really respects and appreciates talent.

For me, a gift or natural talent is also a responsibility. It should be developed, expanded, and enhanced. It should be given every chance to grow to its fullest. Remember, undeveloped talent results in the same thing as no talent. Talent is a springboard—a jumping-off point. It must be cultivated and worked at. Above all, it must be respected. Treat your talent as you would an honored guest in your home, because in a way, it is just that. If you don't treat your guest with respect, the guest will leave. As the saying goes, "Use it or lose it." I would suggest to you, "Develop it or lose it."

Don't believe some of the self-serving comments that make it all sound too easy—too automatic. Drumming is a very competitive and tough business. A great many of us would like to do it. Learn all you can while you can. You are only young once!

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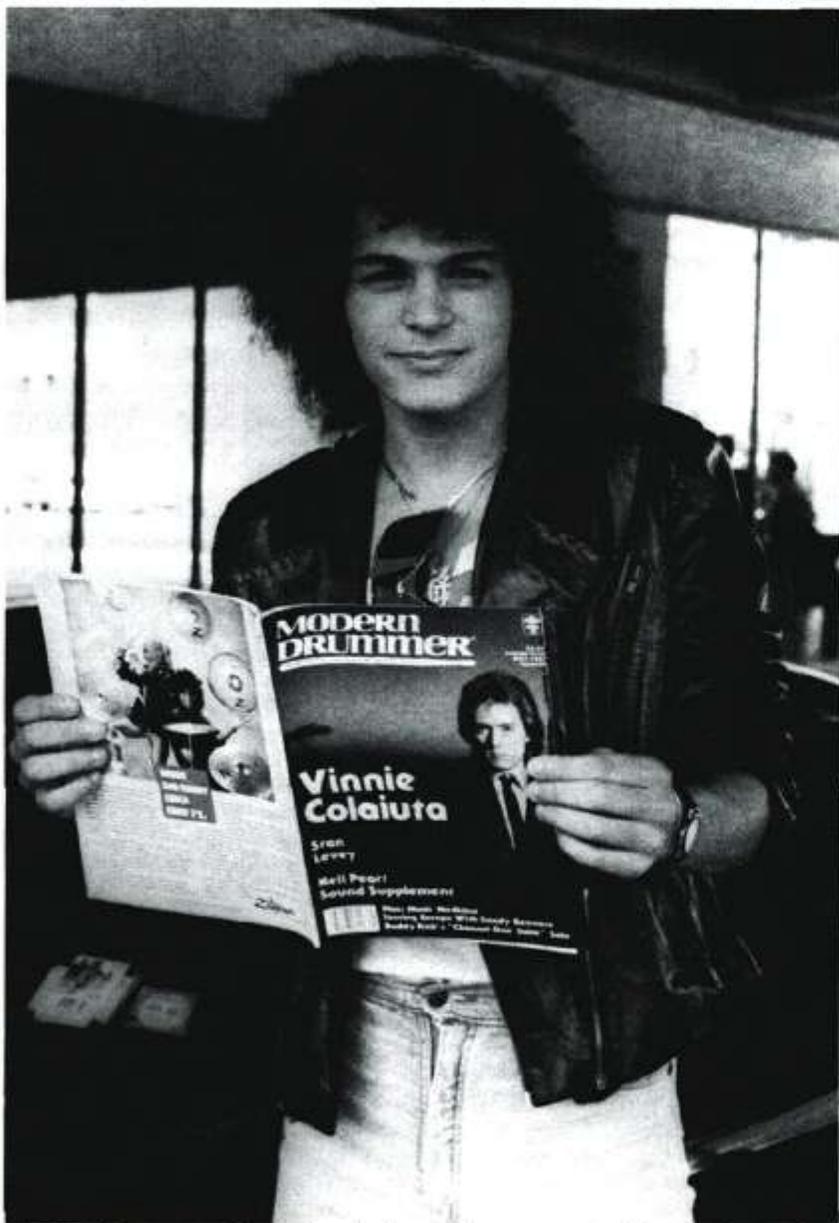


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Hecklers And Hasslers

An unfortunate—and seemingly unavoidable—occupational hazard of performing in public is the occurrence of heckling or interference with your performance by members of the audience. How you handle such interference can often be a strong indication of your professionalism. The longer you're in the business, the better you should become at fielding jibes or comments from the crowd, or at handling more serious interference problems—if for no other reason than repeated experience.

Hecklers

Before we talk about how to deal with hecklers and hasslers, let's define a few terms. I define a "heckler" as someone who verbally interferes with your performance in any way. This could be someone who simply makes a lot of noise—shouting, whistling, singing bits of songs—in conflict with what you're doing. Please understand, I've nothing against an audience member "getting into" what my band is doing, and wanting to participate in some way. Singing along, clapping, showing appreciation verbally—all of these things are wonderful, as long as they remain within reasonable limits. But we've all experienced the unwanted "support" of the over-enthusiastic (and generally over-lubricated) patron who continually shouts at the top of his or her lungs, whistles at glass-shattering frequencies and volume, and generally becomes a nuisance. There's nothing malicious in the person's intent, but he or she is aggravating nonetheless.

Then there is the "Irrepressible Requester." This is the person who constantly shouts out a request for a tune you've already said (politely) that you don't play. Sometimes this person takes the patronizing approach: "Hey man, you guys are good. You can play it. Sure you can! You know, it goes ... da da de dummm C'mon, you can play it." No amount of calm reasoning can convince this person that you aren't going to be able to fake the tune, and so the request is continually thrown at you.

Other times, the requester becomes insulted and belligerent when you don't perform his or her favorite tune. My pet peeve in this area is the patron who comes up to you on a break and initiates a dialogue that goes something like: "Do you play (tune title)?" "No, I'm sorry. We don't." "Well, how about (other tune title)?" "No, I'm afraid not." "Man, you

guys don't play s—t!" This dialogue usually takes place after the band has been playing three sets of music to which the patron has been energetically dancing.

Finally, there is the "Classic Heckler." This is the person who—for reasons unknown and indeterminable—has decided it's "pick on the band" night. He or she will sit at a table and verbally berate the band for its choice of material, its wardrobe, the quality of its jokes, or any other element of the performance. The Classic Heckler may be drunk or sober (although is most often at least partially drunk), male or female, alone or with a party or date. (Most often, it seems, the Classic Heckler is a member of a small group, trying to "show off" for his or her companions.)

Hasslers

Hasslers are people who *physically* interfere with a band's performance in some way. Due to the potential for damage to equipment or injury to performers, they represent a greater problem than do hecklers. From my own experience, here's a list of hasslers with which you may be at least partially familiar:

1. "*The Aspiring Musician/Singer.*" This is the person who grabs a mic' to "help the band sing," or tries to play one of the instruments uninvited.
2. "*The Litterbug.*" This is the person who decides that an amp, keyboard, floor tom, or (in the case of a friend of mine who was *playing* at the time) the lower bar of a marimba is just the perfect place to deposit his or her half-empty beer bottle.
3. "*The Dynamic Dancer.*" Invariably, in a small club where there is no stage and the band must share the dance floor with the crowd, someone just *has* to do an imitation of James Brown—and requires more floor space than is available to do it. This person generally winds up bumping into the band, knocking mic' stands into the teeth of vocalists, tipping over guitars on stands, toppling cymbal stands, and the like. (And let me not forget the aspiring "go-go" dancers—male or female—who want to jump up with a band *on* a stage to demonstrate their moves for the benefit of an "adoring crowd"—who usually couldn't care less.)
4. "*The Great Communicator.*" This is a variation of the "Irrepressible Requester." This person deems it absolutely imperative that he or she communicate a request to the guitar player—on

stage and in the middle of that player's solo.

5. "*The Commando.*" This is the worst of all possible hasslers: the individual who invades the stage for the purpose of fighting with one or more members of the band. I've played in clubs for over 20 years, and have been fortunate enough to have been in that situation only twice. But both instances were frightening and involved injured people and damaged equipment. In some cases, a fight that has nothing whatever to do with the band can "spill over" onto the stage or performing area, putting the band and the equipment at risk. (Witness the band playing behind chicken wire in *The Blues Brothers.*)

Dealing With Hecklers

When dealing with hecklers, you have several options. Which ones you choose to employ will generally depend on how great a problem the heckling is. As long as the heckling remains verbal—and assuming that it doesn't really disrupt the performance to the point that the rest of your audience is alienated—it's often best to ignore a heckler. There's no point in giving hecklers encouragement by paying attention to them. If a heckler gets no response from you, he or she may get bored and cease the heckling (or may leave, which you might consider even better).

If the verbal abuse is, in fact, disruptive, you may be able to take a "fight fire with fire" approach. This simply means that you engage in a verbal sparring match with the individual in an attempt to "put him (or her) down" and "shut him (or her) up." Quite often, hecklers annoy your crowd as much as they annoy you. If the crowd is on your side and can see you get the best of your heckler, you can actually gain favor in their eyes at the heckler's expense. Sometimes a quick barb over the mic' will do it: "What a carnival we have here tonight folks: music *and* a clown!" Other times, you need to really stop the action and focus in on the offending party so that you draw the audience's attention away from the disruption of *your* performance and onto *your disruption* of the *heckler's* "performance." It might go something like this: "Ladies and gentlemen, we obviously have someone here tonight who enjoys playing games, so we're going to pause just a moment to play a little game with him." Then, to the heckler, you say, "How 'bout it sir? Want to play a little game? We'll play horse. That's where I

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play the front end, and you just be yourself!"

Assuming that the heckler is sober enough to realize when he or she is being insulted—and that the rest of the audience is in support—this course of action has worked well for my bands. Of course, if the person is too drunk to be aware of the insult, it won't do much good. (In that case, however, it might be time for management to evaluate the customer's condition and consider asking the patron to leave.)

Dealing with the "Irrepressible Requester" is usually a matter of negotiation. Your simplest solution, of course, would be to try to fake the person's request. If you can succeed—even moderately—you may be able to turn a heckler into a supporter. If you simply cannot play the requested tune—there have only been four or five hundred thousand songs recorded in the last 20 years, after all—then perhaps you could agree on an alternative from your repertoire—or even another "fake." As long as your format permits this (it's tough to do in a tightly rehearsed, segue-oriented show, for instance), it's to your advantage to try. You may gain points with the crowd for your effort, and you, will at least stand a good chance of silencing your heckler.

Dealing With Hasslers

When it comes to dealing with hasslers, I firmly believe in the old adage that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." The very first thing you should do when playing in a club for the first time is meet with the management and discuss their entertainment policies. This includes breaks, drink prices, sound levels, and all the other things you'll need to know, of course. But be *sure* to include a discussion of the club's policy regarding interference with the band. I've played in some clubs where there *was* no policy—and no sympathy. The management's attitude was, "It goes with the territory." I've also enjoyed the other extreme: In Waikiki, I worked in a club where the band had complete autonomy. If we didn't like how a customer was behaving, we had only to snap our fingers for a bouncer, and the offender would be ejected—no questions asked. In most

clubs, the policy lies somewhere in between. Performers are expected to be able to field verbal abuse and to tolerate a certain amount of "over-exuberance" on the part of the crowd, but are not expected to suffer physical injury or damage to their equipment.

The Territorial Imperative

A great deal often depends on stage setup. There is what I like to call the "barrier syndrome." When you're on a stage, clearly separated from the audience by a railing or some other architectural feature—or perhaps only by the different floor levels—an audience generally stays in its "territory" and allows the band to enjoy its own. Most physical interference problems occur in smaller weekend-only clubs that do not have a full-time entertainment section as part of their layout. In these cases, the band must share floor space with the audience, and there is no clear delineation of "territory."

Surprisingly, it doesn't take much to establish your "territory" in these situations. Creating a "border" is often more a matter of psychology than the use of a physical barrier. I know one band that takes a set of stanchions and a white rope—similar to those used to guide lines of theatergoers to box office windows—to every gig where there is no stage. They set up the stanchions and stretch the rope around their playing area, creating a visible "line of demarkation" between themselves and their audience. The rope certainly would not physically *prevent* anyone from crossing the line, but it does *deter* people psychologically, simply by serving to define whose area is whose.

Personal Action

Assuming that you have the club's support when it comes to physical interference, you have the option to inform the offenders that they risk ejection if they don't stop bothering you. I believe that this warning should be given politely a first time, and very clearly and firmly if a second offense occurs. Three strikes and they're out.

If, however, there isn't time to discuss the matter—if someone is in the process of grabbing your cymbals or banging on your



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rack toms, for instance—then the appropriate action is up to you. If you know that you have a good relationship with management, and that they will support you, you have every right to defend yourself and your equipment. Just let your actions be guided by reason and cool judgment. For example, I recently played a club where an obviously drunk patron wandered up to the band (there was no stage), stood for a moment "getting into" the music, and then decided to help me play by reaching over to play bongo-style on my rack toms. I knew that the patron meant no harm, and that his fingers could certainly not damage my drums. Consequently, I merely smiled, and then gave him a "no-no" sign with my finger, as you would to a misbehaving infant. He apparently got the message and went away without doing further harm.

However, on another occasion, a patron who was obviously *not* drunk, but was trying to show off for his date, thought it cute to lean over from the dance floor to pinch my crash cymbals while looking at me with a "Do something about it; I dare you!" look on his face. I simply demonstrated what happens when someone's fingers make contact with a cymbal that is being soundly crashed with the butt end of a drumstick. He went away with his hand bones tingling up to the wrist and his date saying, "It serves you right."

Let me make it very clear that I am not advocating physical abuse or violence toward your customers. This could conceivably lead to lawsuits or to the return of that violence directed toward you. However, I do believe that there is a point beyond which no performer should be expected to tolerate rude or disruptive behavior, and certainly not physical interference with his or her person or equipment. Your best defense is clear communication with your band members, with management, and with your audience. Be friendly, be patient, be tolerant—but be prepared to deal with any eventuality. 🚫

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Drum Market continued from page 103

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Pearl MLX/BLX Pro Series Drumkits

by Bob Saydowski, Jr.

The newest line of Pearl drumkits is called the *Pro Series*. Two different shell types are available: maple (*MLX*) and birch (*BLX*). Since my last Pearl kit review (Jan. '85), some features have changed, including the introduction of double-ended high-tension lugs with backing gaskets on all the *Pro Series* drums. Because both the *MLX* and *BLX* kits have practically the same components, this review will focus on the *MLX* drumkit, with details on the *BLX* where needed. Components of the *MLX-22D-5* kit are: 16x22 bass drum, 10x12 and 11x13 tom-toms, 16 x 16 floor tom, and a 6 1/2x14 brass-shell *Free Floating* snare drum.

Bass Drum

The 16x22 bass drum has ten double-ended stretch lugs with T-handle rods, except for the bottom lugs on both sides, where key rods are used instead. Both hoops are maple ply and are lacquer colored to match the drum's finish. The spurs are externally mounted (nothing passes through the drum), and have a telescoping inner leg that has a threaded rubber tip. A spike point can be exposed for maximum "digging-in." The spurs have preset forward setup angles, which helps them hold the drum securely in place, and they fold neatly against the shell when packing up.

Fitted onto the audience side is a *Black Beat* head, with a large white Pearl logo. The batter side has a *Pinstripe*. Both the maple and birch bass drums had a lot of power. The *MLX* was warmer sounding, while the *BLX* had a bit more "edge" to it. Both produce a clear tone with good volume. For today's playing, of course, some dampening is in order.

Mounting System

Pearl has modified its bass drum and tom-tom brackets to now include nylon bushings. The edges of the brackets have been rounded off for a sleeker look, as well. The basics remain the same. The bass drum plate is mounted near the front of the shell and has two holes to accept the separate tom arms. These receptacles are notched to accept a memory lock, and they use an indirect clamping method to close in

on and secure the holder arms. Another change is that the square-headed key screw on one side of the clamp has been replaced by a hinge. The *TH-95* arms pass through the bass drum and mate with another hinged clamp bracket on the tom-tom. Angle adjustment is done via a key screw atop each arm, which frees a concealed ring mechanism, allowing a total angle range of 204 degrees. Memory rings are fitted on both arm ends, and once everything is set, the holder and drums will not move about. It's very easy to set heights, angles, and spreads, and I'm still convinced that the Pearl holder is one of the best on the market.

Tom-Toms

The 10 x 12 and 11 x 13 toms have six double-ended lugs each. The 16 x 16 floor tom has eight lug casings plus three legs. (I'm still petitioning for Pearl to fit spike points on its floor tom legs!) All the drums are fitted with Pearl's 2.3mm *Super Hoops*, which are stronger than regular pressed hoops, and approach the sound of die-casts. They're constructed of rolled steel and definitely seem to give more projection and clarity. There are no internal mufflers (almost everyone has done away with them these days), and nylon rod washers are being used to eliminate the metal-to-metal contact of hoop and rod collar.

Pinstripe batter heads and clear *Ambassador* bottoms are fitted on all the toms. The maple-shelled toms have the expected round, warm sound, while I found that the birch drums were a little sharper and more articulate. Both performed well in the volume department.

Snare Drum

The *MLX* kit comes with a 6 1/2 x 14 brass-shell *Free Floating* snare, while the *BLX* kit has a steel-shelled one. The concept behind the *Free Floating* snare is that the shell itself has no hardware mounted directly, which would constrict its resonance. Also, shells can be interchanged without affecting the tension of the snare wires, or detuning/removing the bottom head. This is accomplished by the use of a

double-rim assembly at the bottom head. The snare side rods feed through the *Super Hoop* (which has a large extended snare gate), and into the second cast steel rim. This rim also holds the ten vertical struts, which accept the batter side rods for tensioning. Rather than being attached to the shell as on normal snare drums, the strainer assembly is also secured to this second rim.

The shell sits between the batter *Super Hoop* and the bottom second rim, devoid of all vibration-restricting attachments. Pearl has brass, copper, maple, and steel shell cylinders for the *Free Floating* snare drums, enabling four different tonal possibilities by merely removing the top head and hoop, lifting out the shell, replacing it with another, and retuning the batter head. This system is quite ingenious, and gives a full natural resonance to the drum.

The strainer uses a center-throw release and has fine-tune knobs at both the throw-off and butt ends. The snare wires extend a bit past the head and are attached via plastic strips, which pass over a secondary bridge before meeting the main body of the strainer. Adjustment is quite simple, and every single snare wire lays completely flat and is evenly tensioned. The strainer has very smooth, efficient action and allows you maximum control over the final sound.

(I am a bit confused as to why Pearl promotes the benefits of the *Free Floating* design for the snare drum, but then proceeds to bolt long, one-piece stretch lugs to the other drums. This must surely have a negative effect on the shells' sound potential. I wonder if Pearl has considered trying the *Free Floating* concept on tom-toms.)

Hardware

The *P-880* bass drum pedal has a split footboard, removable toe stop, and a chain/sprocket drive. A single expansion spring stretches downward along the right side of the frame. Tension is adjusted at the bottom. A slotted piece off the side of the pedal allows positioning of the spring, which also facilitates beater stroke length adjustment. The pedal has sprung spurs at

its base, and clamps to the bass drum hoop using a plate and T-screw. The *P-880* has smooth, effortless action and feels very natural.

The *H-900* hi-hat also has a split foot-board, toe stop, and chain linkage, and stands on a single-braced tripod base. Two externally housed springs serve for tension. Easy adjustment is done at the top of each spring-housing tube. Each leg of the stand has a reversible tip, enabling the use of either rubber feet or spike points to arrest any forward skating. The height tube contains a memory lock and, of course, has the usual tilter adjust screw for the bottom cymbal. The *H-900* is very quiet, never binds, and works easily.

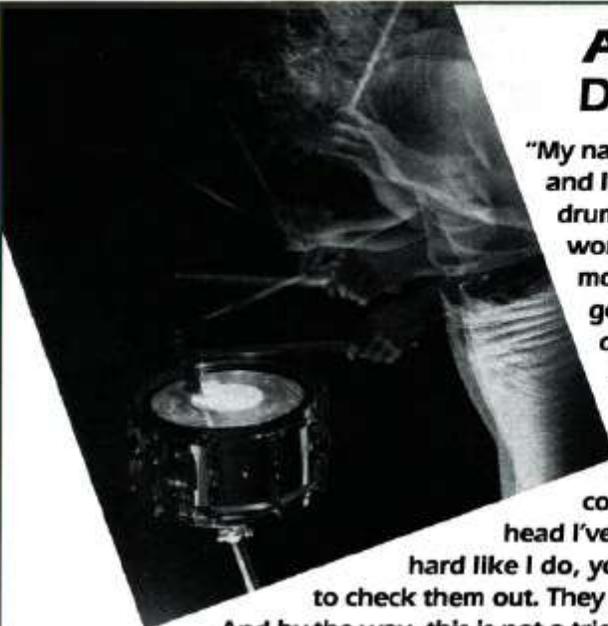
Both the *C-800W* straight cymbal stand and *B-800W* boom stand have double-braced tripod bases and two adjustable height tiers. (Each tier has a black nylon bushing inside.) They both have a concealed-ring tilter mechanism, which makes for smooth setting of any desirable cymbal angle. Both stands are quite sturdy, even when extended to their maximum.

The *S-900W* snare stand also has a double-braced tripod base, and uses the common basket method of holding the drum. The basket is mounted on a swivel, which is offset from the body of the stand. This allows for a wide variety of angles in a full radius, while the base remains in one spot. Like the other hardware pieces, the *S-900W* has good stability.

Cosmetics

The "L" in the *MLX* and *BLX* catalog numbers designates a high-gloss lacquer finish. The *MLX* series has six finishes available—four solid stains (black, red, grey, and white) and two exposed-grain (maple and Sequoia Red). The *BLX* kits come in three solid stains as well as the Sequoia Red grain. All these finishes are on the exterior only, as the insides of the drums are sprayed with a clear lacquer. (Four plastic coverings are available in maple-shelled kits only.) I saw the Artic White solid-stain, and the Sequoia Red exposed grain, and both finishes look marvelous. By the way, the toms all have double logo badges, and every drum has its own individual serial number.

Something to be aware of, merely for the sake of accuracy, is that Pearl has relocated all production to Taiwan. This is no cause for alarm, as the company's standards are equal to (if not greater than) what they were in Japan. In fact, I'm told Pearl is using a 41-stage plating process for the chroming of all hardware. These kits are still the pro quality Pearl has been known for, with no compromises. In fact, if the logo badges didn't state the country of origin, I'd never know it. The *MLX-22D-5* kit retails at \$2,580; the *BLX-22D-5* retails at \$1,980.

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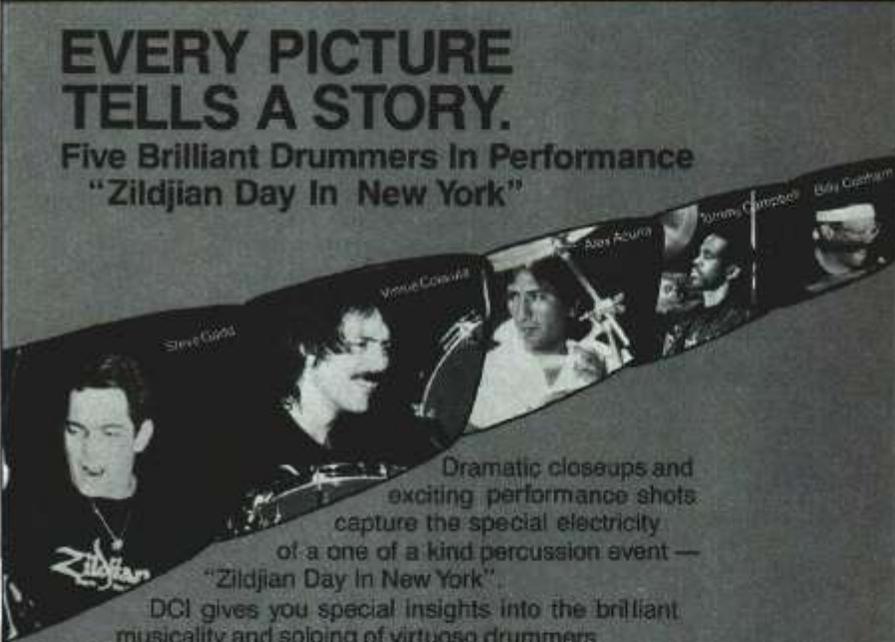
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It's funny how things can change. It wasn't that many years ago that drummers worked very hard to make every note perfect. They practiced with metronomes to ensure that every 16th was in exactly the right place, and they spent hours with books like *Stick Control and Accents And Rebounds* trying to get to the point where

every note was played with exactly the same dynamic level.

Then drum machines came along that could put every note in exactly the right place with exactly the same dynamic—and they sounded terrible. Drummers suddenly realized that a certain amount of variation in rhythmic placement and dynamics was

Korg Drum

what gave feel to the music. So now we have drum-machine designers trying to find ways to give the machines more dynamic and rhythmic flexibility, so that they will sound more like human drummers.

The rhythmic problem has been dealt with for a while now. Even though the machines could correct (or quantize) the rhythms to the nearest 8th, 16th, or whatever, you could usually turn that function off so that the machine would play back whatever you recorded into it in real time, and the rhythms could be as sloppy as you wanted them. And ever since Roger Linn's *LM-1*, most machines have had some sort of "swing" function that would displace notes at various degrees, which was supposed to approximate a human feel.

But as far as dynamics were concerned, most machines only gave you two options. You would get one volume when you pushed the button, and by holding down an accent button, the sound would be a little louder. Some machines had two accent buttons, giving you up to three variations. But what was really needed were velocity-sensitive buttons that could respond to a wide range of dynamics. Synthesizer players have had velocity-sensitive keyboards for years, so it was just a matter of time before drum machines got them.

And that brings us to the Korg *DDD-1* Dynamic Digital Drums. Not only are the 14 Instrument Keys themselves velocity sensitive, but dynamics can be further adjusted after a pattern has been recorded. In addition, through MIDI, you have the option of entering the sounds with MIDI drumpads instead of the Instrument Keys, and as long as the pads are velocity sensitive, you will have the same dynamic possibilities.

But before we get into MIDIing the *DDD-1* into other equipment, let's see what the machine will do by itself. First of all, as you might expect, it will record patterns. The machine will hold 100 patterns in memory, and a pattern can be up to 99 measures long. Patterns can then be joined together into "songs." The machine will hold up to ten songs, and each song can have up to 255 patterns.

Patterns can be recorded in real time or

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in step time. Before entering the pattern, there are several functions that can be set: Time Signature, Number Of Bars, Resolution, Roll/Flam, and Tempo. The first two are pretty obvious, but let's look at Resolution, Roll/Flam, and Tempo a little more closely. Resolution is simply the auto-correct or quantize function. You can set the *DDD-1* to correct to the nearest quarter, quarter-note triplet, 8th, 8th-note triplet, 16th, 16th-note triplet, 32nd, or 32nd-note triplet. You can also set it to "high," which is actually 96th notes. That will cover most applications, but it does have limitations. Suppose you wanted quintuplet 8th notes (five notes). Using high resolution and step-time recording, each quarter note would be broken up into 24 steps. You could enter a note on steps 1, 6, 11, 16, and 21, and that would be pretty close, but the last note would be a 96th short. Now that might not sound like much, but I programmed just such a pattern and invited several drummers to listen to it. It sounded uneven to all of them. Granted, I'm not familiar with any drum machine that will resolve to less than a 96th note. But the point is, if you have been considering buying a drum machine in order to program divisions like fives, sevens, and thirteens so that you can hear what they sound like, forget it. If the subdivision will not evenly fit into quarters, 8ths, 16ths, 32nds, 96ths, or quarter, 8th, 16th, or 32nd triplets, then you will only be able to approximate it on the average drum machine. As Jimmy Bralower once told me, "Real time" on a drum machine is an illusion. The only thing that really gives you 'real time' is a tape recorder."

Getting back to the functions of the *DDD-1*, the next setting is Roll/Flam. This works in conjunction with two buttons on the lower left of the machine marked, respectively, Roll and Flam. You can hold down the Roll button along with one of the Instrument Keys, and you will get a roll effect in quarters, quarter triplets, 8ths, etc., up to 32nd triplets, depending on where you set it in the Roll/Flam function. Keep in mind, however, that even if you have the roll set for 32nd notes, if Resolution is set lower than that, then the roll will only be recorded at the Resolution speed.

The Flam function is similar. There are ten settings that adjust how far the two notes are spaced apart. With the smaller values, you don't necessarily hear a flam, but rather the instrument just sounds "fatter," which can be quite useful—especially with snare drum voices.

The Tempo function is pretty obvious; you can set the metronome marking from 40 to 250. However, this tempo is not memorized as part of the pattern. You can set the tempo to, say, 120 and record a pattern. But unless you change the tempo to something else, every pattern in the machine will then be set for 120. Of course, the positive side of this is that you are not locked into a certain tempo once it is set. And this applies to patterns only. There is

another Tempo control in the Song section, and those tempos are retained as part of the songs.

While I'm on the subject of tempo, there is a button on the right of the machine marked Tap Tempo. Striking this button twice will automatically set a tempo, based on the time between strikes. That way, if you have an idea of how fast something should go, but you don't know what the metronome marking is, you can simply tap two quarter notes on the Tap Tempo button, and the machine will set itself to your tempo. That could be a very useful button.

There are a couple of other functions in the Pattern section that are useful. One is the Seq Parameter control. This lets you alter the pitch, decay, and output

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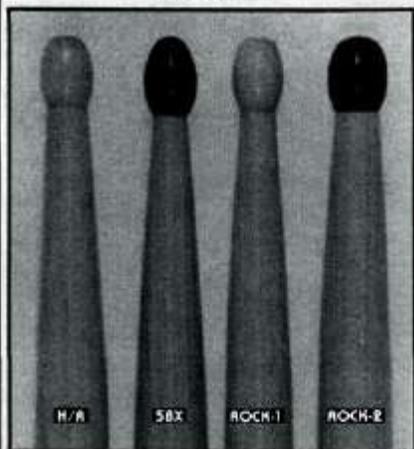
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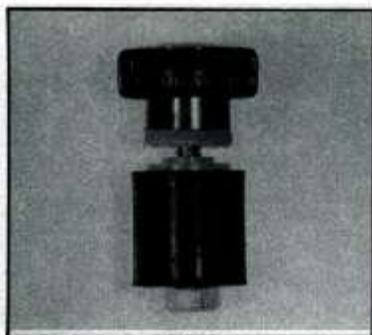
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(dynamic) level of the sounds after they have been recorded. This is one of the most useful functions of the *DDD-1*. The parameters can be adjusted either with the increment/decrement keys on the right of the unit or with the data slider on the unit's left. When adjusting the dynamics in particular, the data slider is very handy. It takes a little getting used to, but once you get the feel of it, you can really fine tune your dynamics. This and the velocity-sensitive Instrument Keys are really what make the *DDD-1* special.

Next is an Erase control, which allows you to remove something from a pattern. You can either remove an entire instrument or a single note. (Not all machines have that flexibility.) There is also a Clear function, and this can be used to erase an entire pattern at once.

After a pattern has been recorded, you can set the Swing function. This will delay the second half of the beat slightly. There are ten steps, from 50% (which is no swing, as the beat is divided exactly in half) to 88% (which changes two 8th notes into a double-dotted 8th followed by a 32nd). There are only two other percentages that will give you standard divisions: 67% will give you the first and third notes of an 8th-note triplet, and 75% will give you a dotted-8th/16th pattern. The other percentages will give you rhythms that are in between these values, supposedly to approximate human imperfection and improve the feel. As mentioned before, ever since the *LM-1*, most machines have had this function, but I've personally never found much use for it. If I want the triplet or dotted-8th/16th feel, then that's what I'll program to begin with. As for those in-between values, they've always sounded a little weird to me.

Next, there's a Copy function, which lets you copy a pattern into a different pattern number. This can be pretty useful. Let's say that you have a basic pattern that you want to use, but you also want some slight variations of that pattern. With this function you can copy the original pattern as many times as you want, and then edit each variation without losing the original. In many cases, this will be a lot easier than having to completely reprogram each variation from the beginning.

Next, there is an Append function that lets you tie patterns together. This can help with the Song function. For example, you might have a four-bar sequence that repeats. You can use the Append function to tie the four bars together into one pattern, and then you can build a song by tying those patterns together.

While the *DDD-1* is pretty good at linking patterns together, it is not so good at reducing them. Suppose, for example, that you create a two-bar pattern, but then you decide that you only want one bar of it. You can delete the second bar and keep the first by going back to the Number Of Bars

function and setting it for one bar. But there is no way to delete the first bar and keep the second. Similarly, in a three-bar pattern, you could delete the third bar or the second and third bar, but you could not delete just the first bar. You also could not delete just the second bar while keeping the first and third. Another limitation is that you can't change a time signature once a pattern has been recorded. For example, you could not copy a 4/4 pattern and then add a beat to make it a 5/4 bar, nor could you delete a beat from your 4/4 pattern to convert the bar to 3/4. Granted, not everyone would need to do these things. Of course, you could always start at the beginning and program a beat into the machine with whatever time signature or number of bars you need to begin with. But I have talked to a number of professional users who wish that drum machine designers would add pattern-editing capabilities such as these to the products, and not worry so much about adding exotic sounds that are fun to play with but that don't have a lot of practical value.

One final adjustment you can make to a pattern or a song is to give it a name. You can have up to eight characters, including capital and small letters, numbers, and various symbols. When I first started putting patterns into the *DDD-1*, I made a list to tell me what pattern corresponded to what pattern number. After I lost the list, I wished that I had used the naming function on the machine.

Moving to the Song functions, most of them are easily understood. Song Select simply calls up the number (or name) of the song you want. The Create setting lets you link patterns together into songs. The Repeat function is a quick way to repeat a phrase over and over. Tempo Change allows you to have different tempos within the same song. The Insert function allows you to insert a pattern, repeat, or tempo change anywhere in the song. The Delete setting allows you to remove a pattern, repeat, or tempo change anywhere in the song. (Korg should apply the Insert and Delete functions to the Pattern editing. That would help.) The Tempo control lets you set the metronome marking between 40 and 250, and as mentioned before, Song tempo is retained in memory (unlike Pattern tempo). The Clear function lets you erase an entire song at once.

Next we get into the Inst Setting controls, which work in conjunction with the 14 Instrument Keys. Starting at the bottom of the grid column on the front of the machine, the Inst Assign function lets you select which sound each Instrument Key will produce. There are 18 internal voices in the *DDD-1*, which can be assigned to any of the 14 Instrument Keys. Each key is marked with an instrument name, but you don't *have* to assign sounds according to those labels. For example, there are two bass drum voices in the machine's internal

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memory. You might want to assign one of them to the key that is marked Bass Drum. But if you decided that you had no use for, say, a cabasa sound, you might choose to assign the other bass drum voice to the Cabasa key.

In addition to the internal voices, you can also purchase ROM cards with additional sounds. The *DDD-1* will hold up to four ROMs at a time. Some of the cards available are Gate Percussion (gated bongos [2], woodblock, cowbell, and frying pan), Gate Reverb 2 (three bass drums and three snare drums), Cymbal 1 (16" medium crash and 18" rock crash), E-Drums 1 (electronic drums: two bass drums, two snare drums, hi and mid toms), and Latin 1 (four conga sounds, two guiros, and two cuicas). In addition, there is an optional sampling board available for the *DDD-1*, and those sounds can also be assigned to the Instrument Keys.

Another facet of the Inst Assign function is the ability to set the Assign Mode to Mono, Poly, or Exclusive. And what does that mean? Well, the *DDD-1* can output up to 12 sounds simultaneously. But because some of the sounds are longer than others, they sometimes need to be controlled in different ways. For example, think of an acoustic ride cymbal. When you strike the cymbal, it rings for a certain amount of time. While it is still ringing, you can strike it again, and the sound will be sort of "layered." One of the problems with early drum machines was that, whenever you struck a key twice in a row, the second strike would cut off the first sound. That made something like a ride cymbal sound very unnatural. But with the *DDD-1*, you can put your ride cymbal in Poly mode and get a more realistic effect, because each strike of the key will decay to its full extent, even if the key is struck again before the first sound has ended. If, however, you *want* the previous sound to be cut off when you restrike the key, then you can use Mono mode. I found this to be useful with a guiro sound from one of the ROM cards. Striking the key once gave me a long scraping sound. But obviously, with a real guiro, you could not make the sounds overlap the way a cymbal sound would. So in Mono mode, I could produce short scrapes by hitting the key repeatedly. The third mode, Exclusive, is used with instruments that should not sound at the same time, such as open and closed hi-hat. In other words, if you strike the open hi-hat first, you can then stop the sound by hitting the closed hi-hat, just like in real life.

The next control is Output Assign. This lets you do a couple of things. First, you can create a seven-point stereo pan in conjunction with the L and R output jacks on the back of the machine. Second, you can also assign sounds to the six Multi-Output jacks on the back. (More than one sound can be output through the same jack.) This

can be handy if you want to process some of the voices through effects devices.

The Output Level function gives you even further control over the dynamics by letting you set the maximum dynamic that each Instrument Key will produce. This can help you to "mix" the instrument balance. Total Decay lets you set the length of each sound, and Total Tune lets you adjust the pitch through a one-octave range.

The Touch Sens control lets you adjust the response of the Instrument Keys. There are ten levels all together, ranging from a fairly wide dynamic response to a fixed one, which gives you the same volume no matter how hard you strike the key.

The final control in this section is Setting Select. A "setting" is the voices that are assigned to the Instrument Keys, and the *DDD-1* will hold six different settings. One setting could consist of the instruments that are labeled on the keys. Another setting could be the same instruments but different voices, i.e., electronic-sounding bass drum, snare drum, etc., instead of acoustic-sounding voices. Another setting could be all percussion sounds. Yet another setting could be chromatically tuned cowbells. You'll need a few of the ROM cards, however, to have all of those options.

This is a useful function, and one that compensates somewhat for one of the quirks of the *DDD-1*. Basically, this machine records Instrument Key patterns rather than voice data. What that means is, when you record a pattern, the machine isn't remembering which sounds you used, but rather which Instrument Keys you pushed. If you then change the voice assignment (let's say you assign a cowbell voice to the bass drum key), you will get the same pattern with different voices (you'll have a cowbell playing the bass drum part). This affects the MIDI implementation as well. The MIDI numbers in the *DDD-1* are assigned to the Instrument Keys, not to the voices. So if you are controlling the *DDD-1* from an external source, you only have access to whatever sounds are assigned to the *DDD-1*'s Instrument Keys at a given time. The fact that you can have six different settings in the *DDD-1* helps to increase your options, but remember that you can only access one setting at a time.

Let's quickly look at an example of how this might affect someone. Let's say that you were using the *DDD-1* as a tone generator for an *Octapad*. If the voices themselves had MIDI numbers, then the *Octapad* could access whatever sound you wanted from the *DDD-1*, and the *DDD-1* itself could be offstage somewhere. But as it is, you'll need to keep the *DDD-1* nearby, so that you can change the Setting Select. But there's a positive side to this. If you were just dealing with the *Octapad*, you would have a maximum of 32 sounds—eight pads times four patch pre-

REPORTING FROM THE ROAD: PETE DEFREITAS ON GRANSTAR



Every so often a band emerges as a major musical force in the context of British New music. Perhaps, no other band of recent times has been able to lay claim to this achievement more than Echo and the Bunnymen. The driving force behind the Bunnymen—drummer Pete De Freitas. Pete's aggressive, intelligent style of drumming has played an important role in establishing the band's sound. Pete's drums? Another important part of the Bunnymen's sound—Tama Granstar!

We caught up with Pete at the Jones Beach Amphitheater to see how the tour was going.

- Tama: Pete, how's the tour so far?
- Pete: Fantastic! It's been a lot of fun this time 'round. After we finish up here in the States, it's back to Europe and then off to Australia and Japan early in '88.
- Tama: Any comments on your drums?
- Pete: Simply brilliant! The hardware is very easy to deal with and it looks rather good too. The drums themselves sound great . . . and they really stand up to the way I belt away at them every night. That's very important to me. Plus, the Gun Metal finish looks good.
- Tama: I notice you're using two snare drums.
- Pete: Right. The one (a Bell Brass) I'm using as a kind of timbale and the other (an Artwood) I'm using as my main snare. Sometimes I change them around, depending on my mood, but the Artwood, mostly, has been my main snare.
- Tama: Any ideas or suggestions for improvements?
- Pete: Hmmmm (long pause) . . . not really. I'm exceptionally pleased!



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sets. By adding the *DDD-I*'s six settings to each of the *Octapad*'s patch presets. . . . I haven't figured out all of the mathematical possibilities, but I've worked with the *Octapad/DDD-I* combination enough to know that there are a lot of options.

Moving to the System Settings, first there's a Metronome function. This enables the metronome to be heard during playback. (The metronome is automatically heard during recording.) You can plug a headphone or earplug into the Metronome Out jack in the back of the machine, and that will allow you to hear the metronome without it being transmitted through the regular output jacks. That's handy if you want to play along with the machine in live performance; you might need to hear the metronome, but you won't necessarily want the audience to hear it.

Next is the Trigger Assign. When set to Trigger In, the Instrument Keys can be triggered by external devices. I plugged in a Drum Workshop *EP-1* pedal, and set it to trigger the *DDD-I* bass drum sound. It worked quite well, and I was able to get dynamics by striking the pedal with different amounts of force. By selecting Trigger Out, the *DDD-I* can be used to trigger other devices.

The Clock function has three settings. With Internal, the *DDD-I* uses its own clock, and this is what you use if you're using the *DDD-I* as a master unit for other MIDI units. When the clock is set to MIDI, the *DDD-I* operates from another unit's clock. I MIDIed the *DDD-I* to a Yamaha *RX-5* drum machine, and used the *RX-5* as the controller. I was able to combine patterns from both machines, and they were in perfect sync, using the tempos set in the *RX-5*. If I had reversed the settings, I could have done the same thing using the *DDD-I* as the controller. The other clock setting is Tape, which allows the *DDD-I* to run from an external Tape Sync signal.

The MIDI Receive function lets you use the *DDD-I* as a sound source for MIDI instruments and controllers. First you set the machine to either receive or ignore external data. Next, you can turn the Omni mode off or on. If the Omni mode is off, you can then specify which MIDI channels will receive data. Finally, you can set the Note Numbers to determine which Instrument Keys respond to incoming notes. Note Numbers can also be transmitted.

The MIDI Transmit function has two settings: First is the Note Data On/Off, which simply controls whether or not the *DDD-I* will output note data, and second is the Channel Setting, which sets the MIDI channels that data will be output from.

Finally, there is a Sampling Set control. This works in conjunction with an optional Sampling Board and lets you sample sounds through the *DDD-I*. This was not included with the *DDD-I* that we received for review, so I can't tell you how

well it works.

The last section of controls deals with Data Transfer. Briefly, this lets you save memory on a RAM card or tape. You can also transfer data between the *DDD-I* and other MIDI devices or computers.

That should give you a pretty good idea of what the *DDD-I* can do. As for how easily it does it, I'd say that the machine is quite user-friendly, and the owner's manual is fairly easy to understand. Within a matter of minutes after taking the *DDD-I* out of the box, I was entering patterns into it. I found the grid design on the *DDD-I*'s surface to be clear and logical, and the LED readout screen was very good about letting me know what was going on at any given time. There are also a few safeguards in the form of messages that ask you if you're sure you want to do something before the machine will erase data. And between the data slider on the left and the number keys on the right, you often have two different ways to do the same thing, depending on your preference. Personally, I found that the data slider could save a lot of time.

The only thing I haven't discussed is the quality of the *DDD-I*'s internal sounds. The best I can say is that they're adequate. I've heard better, but I've heard a lot worse, too. Of course, I didn't have the Sampling Board, so that could make a big difference. Also, with MIDI, you're not restricted to the *DDD-I* sounds anyway. (I'm told that the *DDD-I* is a popular machine to use in conjunction with an E-mu sampler.) Of course, sound is very subjective. You might love the *DDD-I*'s sounds, or you might hate them. So if you're curious, check the sounds out yourself at your nearest dealer. One thing I will say, however, concerns the ROM cards. I found a great difference in the quality of those sounds, so I would definitely encourage you to check each one out before buying it.

To sum up, the hip things about the *DDD-I* are the velocity-sensitive Instrument Keys, which give you great control over dynamics, and the various voice editing functions. Beyond that, the *DDD-I* pretty much does the same things that a lot of other drum machines do these days. The machine is easy to use, but the sounds are merely average.

The *DDD-I* has a list price of \$995.00. Individual ROM cards list for \$69.95 each, which is pretty expensive for those cards that only have two sounds, but isn't bad for some of the others that have from six to eight sounds. The Sampling Board lists for \$229.95, and a RAM card lists for \$99.95.



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SABIAN SUPPLIES MILLER BAND NETWORK

Sabian recently announced its involvement as official supplier of cymbals for the 1987 Miller Genuine Draft Band Network. According to Roy Edmunds, Sabian's Director of Sales, this year's program of 21 bands deemed as "talent deserving wider recognition" will be playing their own brands of country and rock at over 4,000 performances in North America and Europe. Miller has mounted a massive media campaign in support of the featured bands, as well as providing on-location

promotion in the form of banners, posters, table tents, and fliers. Sabian's participation is acknowledged in all of this promotion material. The bands will be featured on a major label compilation planned for release in the near future. The band roster includes: Delbert McClinton, Dynatonnes, Faywether, The Heartfixers, Kool Ray, Little Saints, Lonnie Brooks, Maines Brothers Band, Toby Redd, and Zachary Richard and the Zydeco French Boys.

LUDWIG EXPANDS, ADDS CLINICIAN FACILITY

Ludwig Industries recently completed the addition of a 40,000 square foot distribution center to its production complex in Monroe, North Carolina. Commenting on the expansion, Selmer Executive Vice President Pete Ryan stated, "With this latest addition, the total production and warehouse space committed to percussion products exceeds a quarter of a million square feet. We're operating in a series of interconnected, single-story facilities that offer maximum operating efficiency. The added space permits us to consolidate shipping, and improve delivery and service. Obviously, we've made a major investment for the future."

Ludwig Artist Relations Manager, Bill Ludwig III, added, "I'm especially pleased. With the expansion, we're able to designate an area as our single 'clinic center.' Because we're close to the stockroom,

production departments, engineering, and, of course, shipping, we're in an ideal spot to serve our endorser and clinician needs. One of the real advantages, of course, is our personnel. Steve Cotton, who heads up the clinic department in Monroe, is a drummer. It's really great having someone with Steve's knowledge and commitment working with our artists. An added benefit of the new department is that we have more than ample room to set up new equipment for test sessions with endorsers and other artists. Input from the field is vital to us as we develop new products and features." Individuals who wish further information about Ludwig's educational clinic program are encouraged to contact the company. The address is Ludwig Industries, Inc., A Selmer Company, P.O. Box 310, Elkhart IN 46515-0310.

JEFF HAMILTON CLINIC

L.A.-based jazz drummer Jeff Hamilton recently appeared at a drum clinic jointly sponsored by St. Francis Xavier University (in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada) and the Gretsch Drum Company. Jeff's performance background reads like a "Who's Who" of the jazz world: Woody Herman, L.A. 4, Ray Brown, Monty Alexander, Bill Holman, Count Basie, Bud Shank, and Ella Fitzgerald.

The clinic at St. Francis Xavier—the preeminent jazz

school in Canada—was part of an intensive five-week performance summer session. Jeff's fluid brushwork and powerful swinging style had the entire audience applauding for an encore at the concluding concert. All the participants in the clinic/concert (including Terry O'Mahoney, a student of Jeff's and current teacher at St. Francis Xavier) appreciated Jeff's warmth and personality during his visit.

E-MU SYSTEMS HOSTS TONY WILLIAMS

E-mu Systems recently announced its association with Tony Williams, renowned jazz drummer. E-mu, a sponsor of the San Francisco Music Fair this past May, hosted a performance by Williams, accompanied by Herbie Hancock. In his performance, Tony triggered the SP-12 Sampling Per-

cussion System and the *Emax Rack* Digital Sampler using his electronic percussion pads. This was the first public performance combining Tony's famous style with digital sampling technology. The SP-12 and *Emax Rack* are manufactured by E-mu Systems in Scotts Valley, California.

PATRICK JOINS GRETSCH/SLINGERLAND



David A. Patrick, known to the music business as "Big Dave," has taken on the responsibility for marketing and sales of Gretsch and Slingerland drums, as announced by Fred Gretsch, President of Fred Gretsch Enterprises, the parent company. This is a newly created position in the company "to take full advantage of Dave's years of sales and manufacturing, experience in the drum business," said Fred Gretsch.

"Gretsch and Slingerland have always been well-recognized names to drum people, and I look forward to this opportunity as a special challenge to ensure the continued

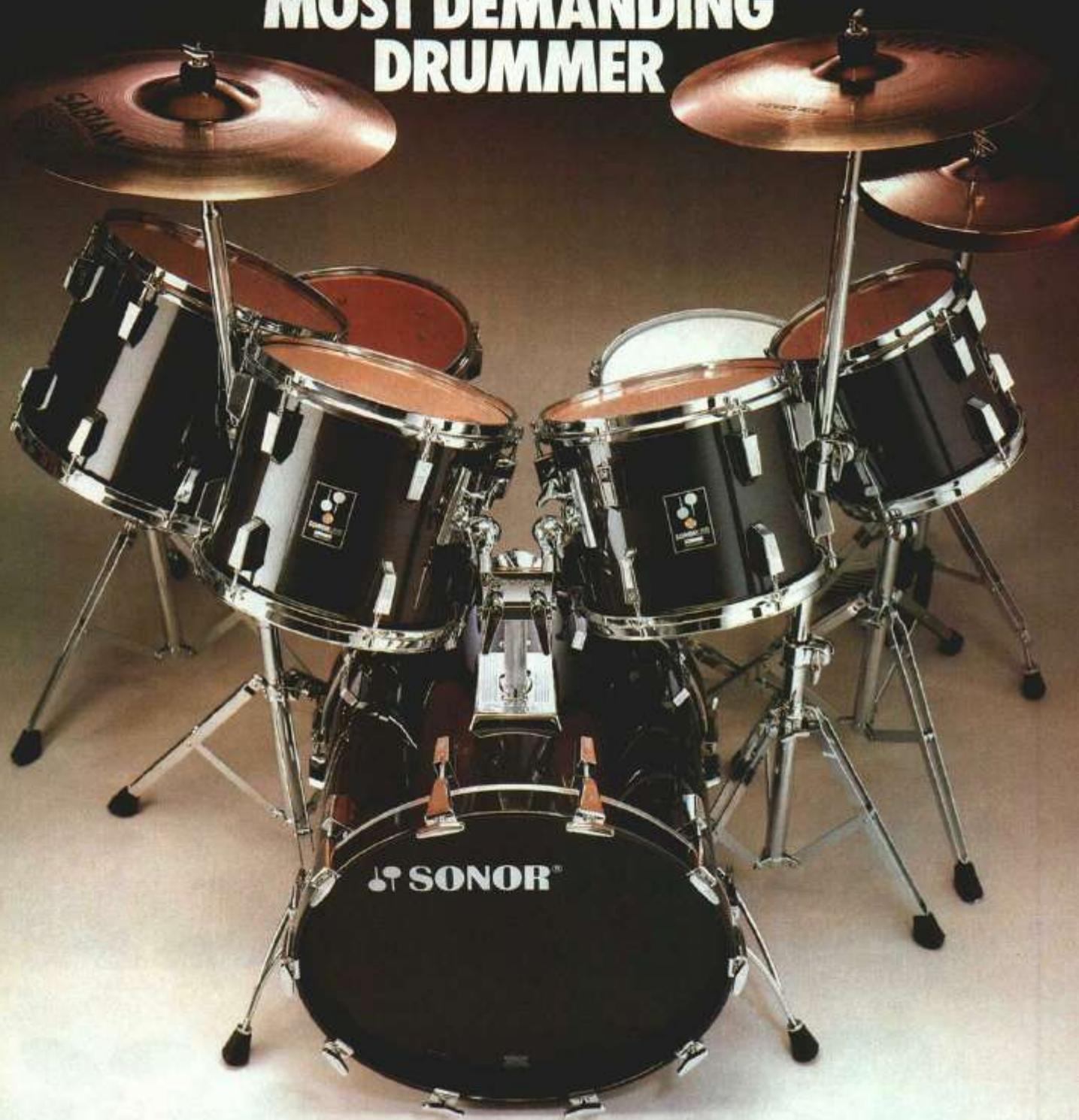
success of both," stated Dave Patrick. Dave was most recently with the CB-700 drum company where he became Manager of Percussion. Prior to that, he was with the Strings & Things retail music store in Memphis for 11 years. He has published percussion product reviews and sales and marketing tips for music magazines, and has been a drum customizer/designer for such rock acts as Foreigner, Billy Squier, Earth, Wind & Fire, and others. Dave and his family now reside in the historic coastal town of Beaufort, South Carolina, close to the Ridgeland, South Carolina Gretsch plant and offices.

ENDORSEMENT NEWS

New Zildjian artist endorsers include **Rikki Rockett**, of Poison, **Manu Katche**, of Peter Gabriel's band, **Alan Childs**, formerly with Julian Lennon and now touring with David Bowie, **Jack Gavin**, of the Charlie Daniels Band, and **Dennis Chambers**, currently John Scofield's drummer. Additionally, Zildjian's new Z-MAC hand cymbal series is being used by the **Garfield Cadets** drum & bugle corps . . . **Tommy Lee** is now using

the Dynacord *ADD-One* Electronic Drum System . . . Recently added to Pro-Mark's list of artists are Asleep At The Wheel's **David Sanger**, **Jerry Angel** (currently touring with Dwight Yoakam after just completing a Brian Setzer album), **Ron Hurst** (formerly with Spiral Staircase and The Grass Roots, and currently on tour with John Kay & Steppenwolf), and Nashville studio drummer **Harry Wilkinson**.

SONORLITE A WIDE SOUND SPECTRUM FOR THE MOST DEMANDING DRUMMER



Sonorlite is the name of a drum series designed for the most discriminating drummer looking for extremely high sound quality coupled with versatility in musical application.

Sonorlite drums are constructed using the finest quality scandinavian birch.

Snare Drum and bass drum shells are 12-ply and measure only 7 mm, while tom tom and floor tom shells are 9-ply and measure 6 mm.

Sonorlite drums sound distinctively brilliant yet warm and powerful. Check them out at your authorized Sonor dealer!

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MARK CRANEY BENEFIT

On Sunday, July 19, some of the top drummers in the world gathered together to present a concert/clinic in support of Mark Craney. The benefit performance was held at the Guitar Center in Hollywood, California. The object was to raise money to help Mark obtain the

kidney transplant he needs to overcome the effects of diabetes.

Drummers appearing at the benefit included (in alphabetical order): Carmine Appice, Vinny Appice, Gregg Bissonette, Terry Bozzio, Vinnie Colaiuta, Mike Fischer, Myron

Grombacher, Ricky Lawson, Rudy Richman, and Steve Smith. Support—in the form of door and raffle prizes—was also offered by the Cana-Sonic, Dean Markley, Drum Workshop, Gretsch, J. D. Calato, Paiste, Pearl, Premier, Remo, Sabian, Sonor, Tama, Vic

Firth, Yamaha, and Zildjian companies.

Drummers wishing to join in the effort to help Mark Craney may do so by contributing to the Mark Craney Fund. Contributions may be sent to the fund c/o Haber Corporation, 16255 Ventura Blvd., Suite 401, EncinoCA 91436.



Mark Craney (seated), surrounded by participants and well-wishers.



(l. to r.): Ralph Humphrey, Ian Wallace, Zildjian's Mike Morse, benefit co-organizer Gregg Bissonette, and Casey Scheuerell.



Myron Grombacher, drummer and co-organizer of the benefit, signing autographs for attendees.



(l. to r.) Vinny and Carmine Appice



Terry Bozzio



Vinnie Colaiuta



Steve Smith



Ricky Lawson

POWER MADE AFFORDABLE. *Power Road Series.*
Yamaha sound and quality priced lower than ever before. Designed by drummers to bring the sounds you've imagined to life. Lean, flexible and tough enough to respond to your most intense playing. Made with the craftsmanship and attention to detail to give you a head start on the road to realizing your musical dreams.



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HIGHLIGHTS OF

SUMMER NAMM '87

The key word for the Summer NAMM show in Chicago this year seemed to be "focused." The last couple of years saw manufacturers experimenting with a variety of new products and ideas, due in part to a certain confusion about what consumers were looking for—especially in the electronics area. But this summer's show didn't seem to have as many new "gimmicky" items. Rather, most manufacturers seemed to be putting their energies into more "traditional" values of basic drumset, hardware, and cymbal design. Also, several manufacturers have decided that it is not necessary to come up with something new for the summer NAMM show as well as the winter one, and so they were featuring items that were first introduced at the Anaheim show in January. In fact, a number of companies are complaining about the cost involved in attending two NAMM shows each year and are urging the NAMM committee to drop one of them. A couple of manufacturers, such as Calato and Noble & Cooley, decided not to display at this summer's show.

If there's one thing that might be interesting to keep an eye on over the next few months, it's the drumhead market. I'm reminded of what happened with cymbals a few years ago. At one time, Zildjian dominated the cymbal market, with Paiste being the only other company that had much of a share. Then, it suddenly seemed that everybody was going into the cymbal business. Some people predicted that Zildjian would be wiped out by all of the smaller companies, while others predicted that the smaller companies wouldn't last more than a few months. But neither of those things happened. Almost everyone stayed in business, with the result that drummers now have a lot of cymbals to choose from. Zildjian has remained very strong, but the company doesn't control the market to the same degree that it once did.

With drumheads, Remo has dominated the market the way Zildjian once dominated cymbals. But suddenly there is some new competition. Evans, who has quietly held a small corner of the market for several years, has come up with an innovative new hoop design that received a lot of attention at the show. Compo drumheads were first seen at last summer's show, and this summer they were back as part of the Kaman display, which gives them major American distribution. And Aquarian introduced a new line of heads this summer. As one manufacturer explained it to me, "Now that Remo seems to be putting so much emphasis on drumsets, the time might be right for some other people to get into the drumhead business." If history repeats itself, we may find the drumhead market shifting somewhat and being spread a little more equally among several manufacturers.



AKAI - The ADR - 15
Sampling Digital Drums/
MIDI Sequencer, de-
signed by Roger Linn.



ALESIS—The HR-16 high sample rate 16-bit drum machine was receiving a lot of attention.



BALTER—Mike Balter poses with his popular line of sticks and mallets.



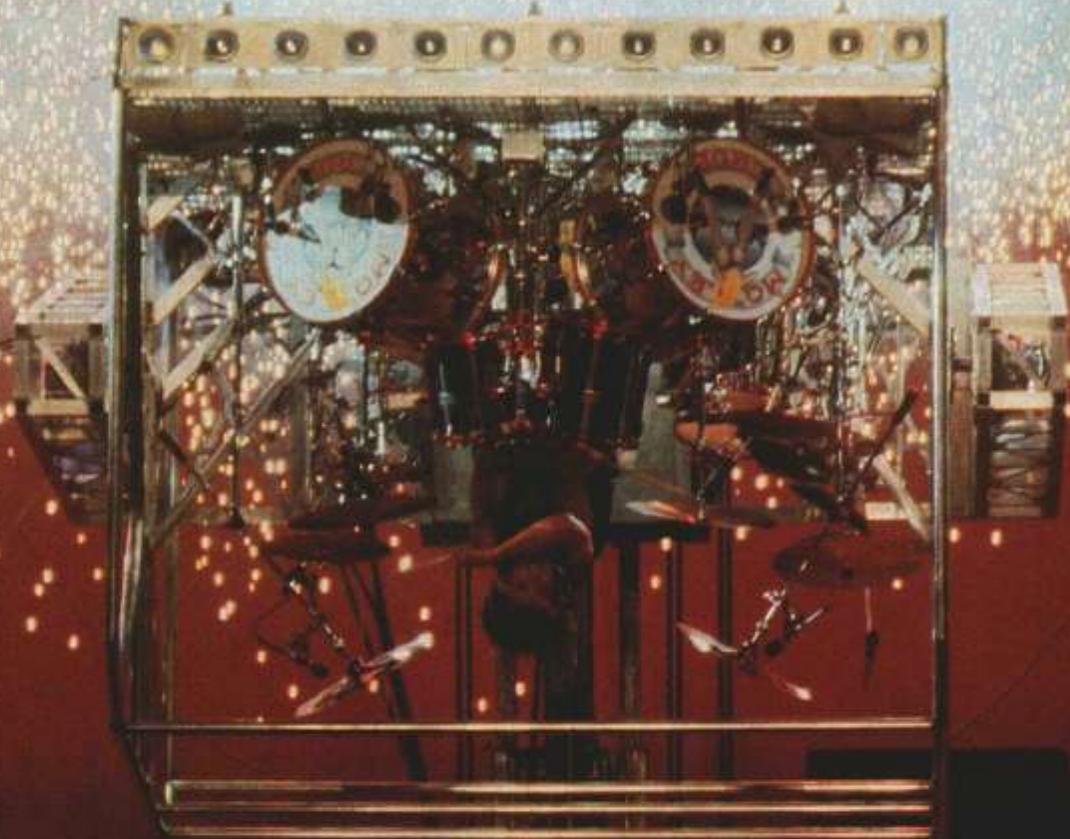
AQUARIAN—Roy Burns with his company's new line of drumheads.

BOMB BASS—An inflatable plastic pillow for bass drum muffling.



BEATO—Beato bags, Beato cymbals, Beato gloves, and Beato sticks.

IN CHICAGO



Tommy Lee And Pearl

Totally Incredible

Anyway You Look At It

When you build professional quality drums you expect the pros to put them through a tough road test. And when Tommy Lee takes his Pearl kit high above Motley Crues' stage, does 360's forward, backward and then plays totally upside down during the most outrageous drum solo ever, you know for sure they'll hold up to standard gigs and rehearsals, and sound great night after night. So whether you tour, do studio work or just play in the garage on weekends, sound the best you can with Pearl Drums.

SUMMER NAMM '87



CARROLL SOUND—the traditional display of exotic percussion from around the world.



CASIO—The DZ MIDI drum system.



CORDER—New tom mounts have replaced the old Fibes-design holders.



D&F—A combination cymbal and stick bag.



Tico Torres signing autographs at the Pearl booth.



DCI MUSIC VIDEO—A Zildjian Day video and an instructional video by Steve Smith were new at this show.



DEAN MARKLEY—A wide assortment of drumsticks was displayed.



DRUM VIEW—Michael Jaymen was collecting material for his video drum magazine.



EVANS—Bob Beals displaying heads with a new computer-designed rim.



GON BOPS—The new Mariano model congas.



DRUM WORKSHOP—D.W. drums and pedals, Dynacord electronic drums, and the Collarlock support system.



E-MU—The SP-1200 Sampling Percussion unit.

Zildjian introduces the first miking system exclusively for cymbals.

Let us amplify.



Now your audience can hear every cymbal sound you hear on stage. The new Zildjian ZMC-1 System is here.

The ZMC-1 gives you complete control over the sound and amplification of your cymbals.

And allows the natural sonic quality of Zildjian cymbals to cut through a mountain of electronics.

The world of acoustic cymbals. The world of electronic music. Only Zildjian could bring the two together.

A complete miking system.

The ZMC-1 System includes a powered mixer and

six electret cymbal mics. All feature a totally new patented design for optimum miking of cymbal sounds. In addition, this unique design allows each ZMC-1 mic to be clipped directly to the stand under each cymbal. So bleed from your drums will be greatly reduced compared to conventional overhead miking.

What's more, the ZMC-1 mixer supplies power to the mics and acts as a submixer for the PA system or recording console. You have control over volume and panning for each of six separate channels, with individual EQ control for the Hi Hat channel. There are also master level and EQ controls for the left and right channels, plus two effects loops.

You're in control of your music.

Not only does the ZMC-1 isolate and amplify the sound of each cymbal in your set-up, it lets you shape that sound to fit your music.

Make your 8" Splash sound as loud as your 22" China Boy, but still preserve its quick, "splashy" sound.

Or use the effects loops to add delay, reverb and flanging on individual cymbals. Flange your ride cymbal at the same time you put a slapback echo on your Hi Hats. Even change effects, balance and volume from song to song.

We listened to the drummers' drummers.

As we developed the ZMC-1, we talked to leading drummers like Vinnie Colaiuta, Gregg Bissonette, Dave Weckl and Stan Lynch. We



Vinnie Colaiuta

asked them what they really needed in a cymbal miking system. Then we road-tested the ZMC-1 around the world.

A product of a partnership.

The ZMC-1 is the result of extensive research by the Zildjian Sound Lab and Barcus-Berry. It reflects Zildjian's experience in creating sounds and cymbals. And Barcus Berry's advanced knowledge of electronics. It is a one-of-a-kind miking system that could only have been developed by such a joint effort.

For further amplification.

If you'd like more information about the revolutionary ZMC-1 miking system, write: The Avedis Zildjian Company, Dept. CM, 22 Longwater Drive, Norwell, Massachusetts 02061.

Finally, there's a miking system that opens up a new world of possibilities for expressing the sonic richness of acoustic cymbals.

Zildjian®
The only serious choice



SUMMER NAMM 187



ECONOMY-PRICED KITS—For the budget minded, kits were available by Adam, Century, Drumcraft, Juggs, Maxtone, Super, Thunder, and Titan.



VIC FIRTH—Kelly Firth, Jonathan Mover, and Tracy Firth.



GRETSCH/SLINGERLAND—A few years ago, who would have thought that Gretsch and Slingerland drums would be sitting side by side in the same booth?



FORAT—The F16 is a 16-bit digital sampler.



GUNDRUM—Al Oliveira with these new hand-held MIDI controllers.



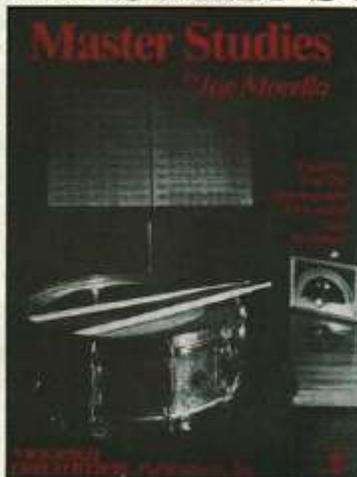
JUPITER—A new line of marching percussion from Musicrafts, ItI, in Austin, Texas.



KAHLER—The Human Clock was on display.

THE MD LIBRARY

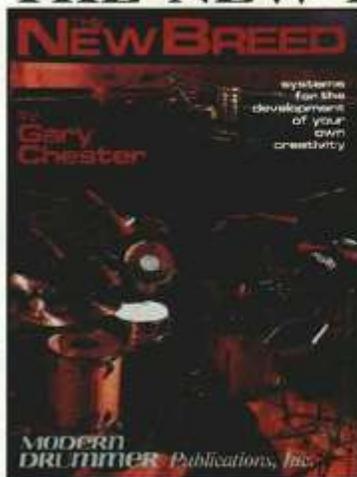
MASTER STUDIES



by **Joe Morello**
 The book on hand development and drumstick control. **Master Studies** focuses on these important aspects of drumming technique:

- accent studies
- buzz-roll exercises
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- flam patterns
- dynamic development
- endurance studies
- ...and much more!

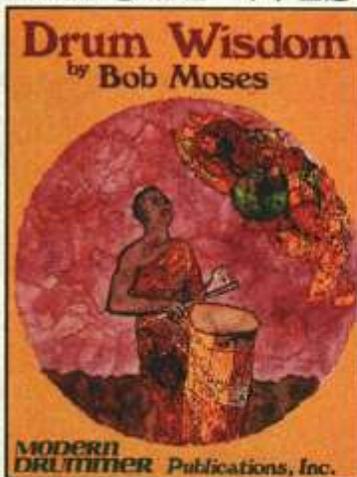
THE NEW BREED



by **Gary Chester**
 This is not just another drum book, but rather a system that will help you to develop the skills needed to master today's studio requirements. Through working with this book, you'll improve your:

- Reading
- Coordination
- Right- and left-hand lead
- Awareness of the click
- Concentration

DRUM WISDOM



by **Bob Moses**
 Here is a clear presentation of the unique and refreshing concepts of one of the most exceptional drummers of our time. You'll read about:

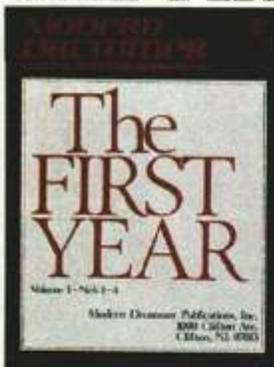
- thinking musically
- internal hearing
- playing off of melodies and vamps
- the 8/8 concept
- resolution points
- drumming and movement
- the non-independent style
- ...and much, much more.

THE BEST OF MD



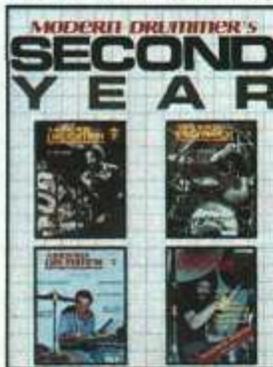
Here are more than 75 of the most informative and helpful articles from our ten most popular *Modern Drummer* columns, written by some of our most popular authors! The very best of MD in a jam-packed, 124-page book that's overflowing with invaluable drumming information. Information you'll want to refer to again and again. Information you won't find anywhere else!

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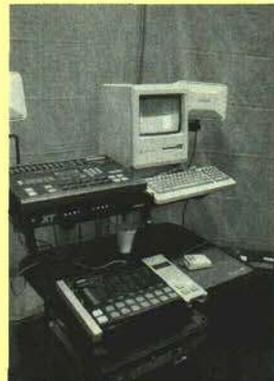
SUMMER NAMM '87



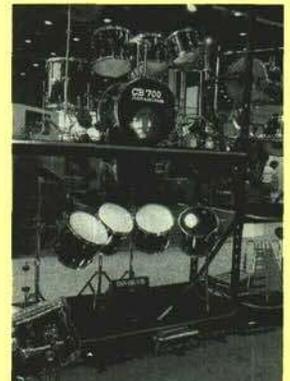
HAL LEONARD—New books by Carl Palmer and Ed Mann were part of Hal Leonard's percussion-book display.



IMPACT—In addition to the open-shell fiberglass drums pictured here, the company also had new double-headed drums and a line of cases.



INTELLIGENT MUSIC—UpBeat is a program for the Macintosh computer that controls drum machines.



KAMAN—CB-700 drums and percussion and Compo drumheads.

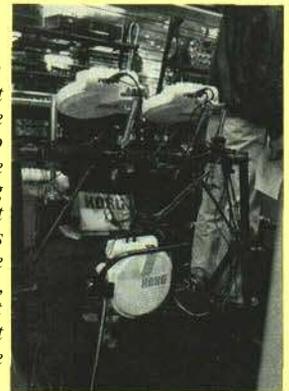


Danny Gottlieb and Joel Rosenblatt.



KAWAI—The R-100 Digital Drum Machine.

KORG—Sometimes products appear at NAMM shows that are never put into production. That is the case with the Korg electronic drumset that was shown at this year's show. Three weeks after the show, we were informed that the product was not going to be manufactured.



LP—The Valje line of wood congas is now being manufactured by LP.



LUDWIG—A. J. Pero was performing at the Ludwig booth, as were Danny Gottlieb and Dave Samuels.



MAY E/A—Randy May with his popular internal miking system.



MEINL—New cymbal bags were part of the Meinl display.



OUTFRONT—Camber and Avanti cymbals.

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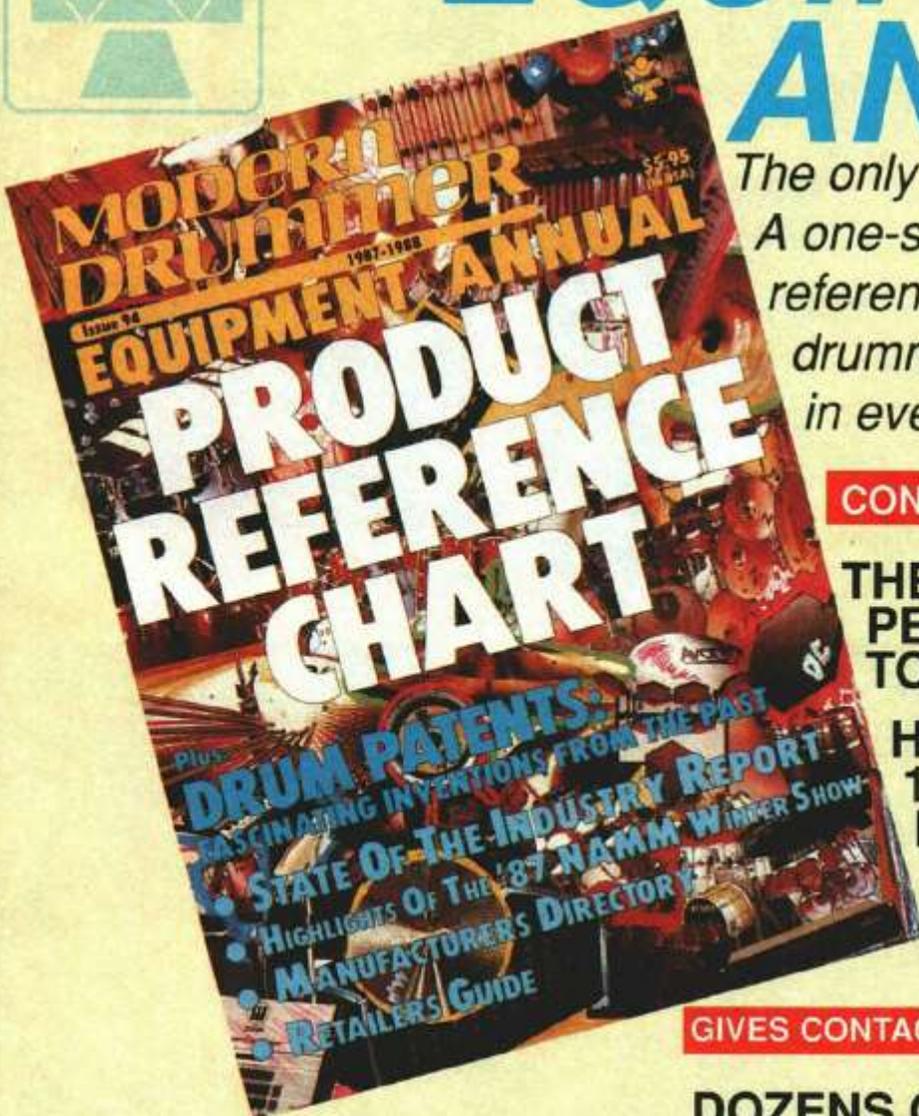
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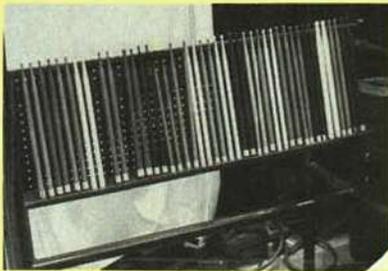
PAISTE—Sound-Edge hi-hats have been added to the 400 and 200 series.



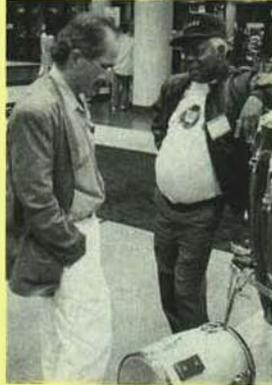
PALMTREE—The Airtrigger is a new electronic trigger from the company that makes Airdrums.



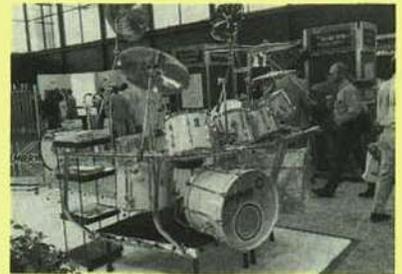
PEARL—Dave Lena demonstrating Pearl's Syncussion-X.



POLYBEAT—Multi-colored drumsticks.



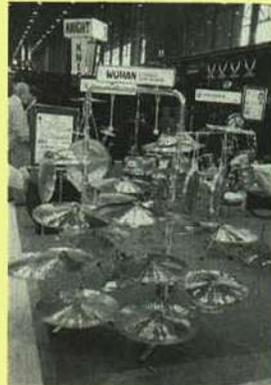
LP's Martin Cohen with Santana's Armando Peraza.



PREMIER—A custom drum riser/rack system was displayed.



PRO-MARK—The new Phil Collins model drumstick was on display.



PAUL REAL—Wuhan cymbals and the SD 140 Sampling Digital Drum Machine were prominent in this booth.



REMO—A Perry Bozzio setup indicated Remo's increasing involvement with drumkits.

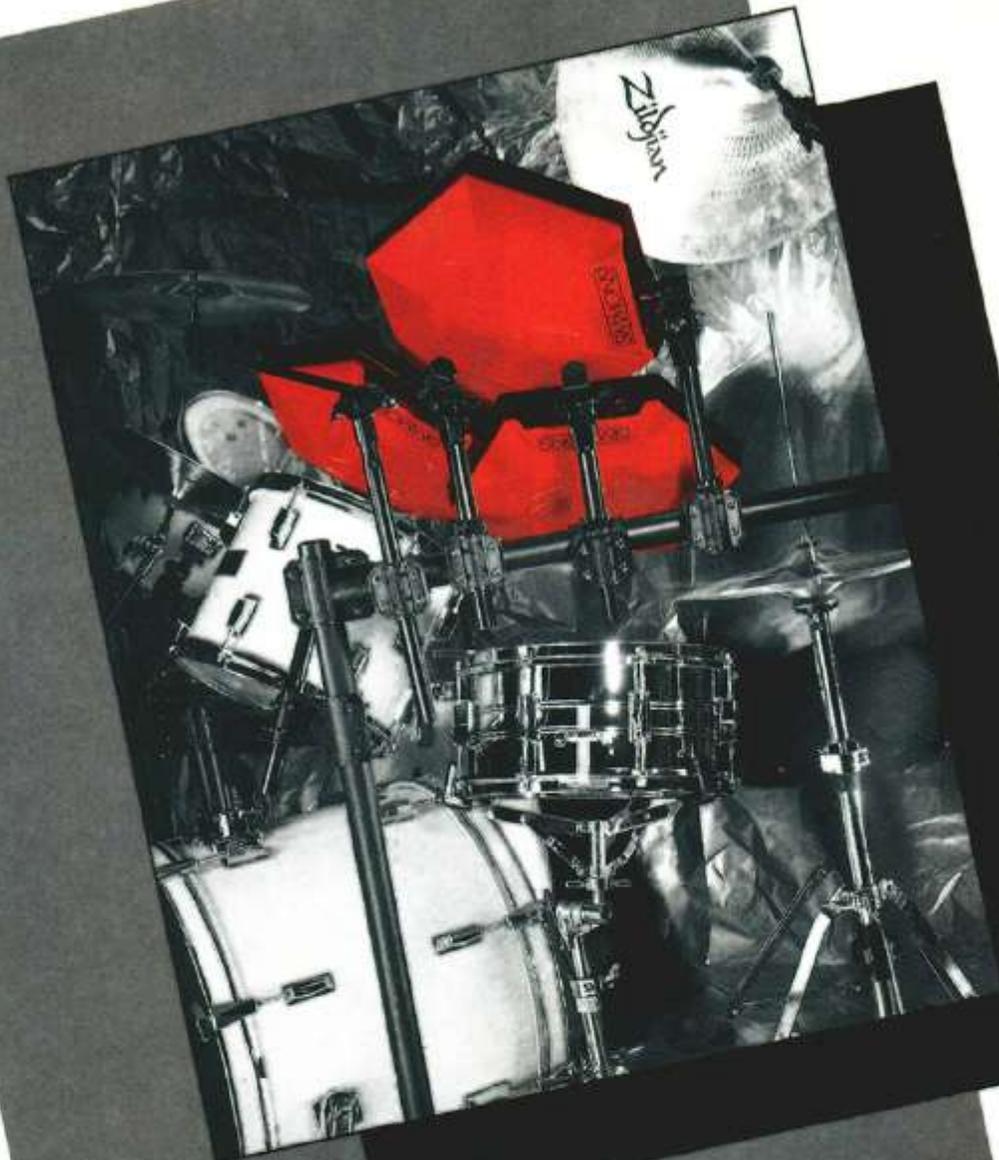


ROGERS—The new owners of Rogers are promising to restore these drums to their former glory.



SIMMONS—Ed Mann and Tim Root were demonstrating the Silicon Mallet and the SDX.





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SUMMER NAMM '87



ROLAND—Electronic drumpads and the Octapad were part of the Roland display.



ROSS—Economically priced key-board percussion instruments.



SABIAN—Bob Zildjian with Sabian's new Hi-Bell Sound Control cymbals.



SONOR—A one-piece cast bronze-shell snare drum that weighs 46 pounds and lists for \$1,900.



David Garibaldi performed with the group Wishful Thinking at the Yamaha exhibit.



TTE—A product called Drum Holz fits around the cutout on a drumhead and gives it more projection, while eliminating the need for padding.



TAMA—Kenny Aronoff was demonstrating the completely redesigned Tama lines, as were Billy Cobham and Dom Famularo.



STAR LICKS—New videos by Randy Castillo and Chet McCracken.



TECHTONICS—The Beatmaster drum triggers were featured.



WAM-RODS—Transparent drumsticks in a variety of colors.



YAMAHA—Highlights of the Yamaha exhibits included the D-8, a new lower-cost electronic drumset, and the new Deagan chimes.



ZILDJIAN—Dave Weckl stayed busy demoing the new Zildjian cymbal-miking system.

THE RE-INVENTED TOM HOLDER

Tama's new double tom holder represents such a radical departure from anything made before, it requires a closer look. Here's why:

THE ONE TOUCH TOM TOM BRACKET gives you tom tom height adjustments quickly and effortlessly. No special tools are needed, only the touch of a finger.

ONE TOUCH OMNIBLOCK LEVER. Pull this lever up, find your desired position, and simply push it down. You're locked in!

TAMA'S PATENTED OMNIBALL gives 360 degree placement for your tom toms. This glass filled nylon ball isolates your tom tom vibrations from your bass drum and vice versa. Tama's exclusive horizontal vertical gripping system keeps everything in one place.

RETROFIT MAIN SHAFT AND BASS DRUM PLATE. The round main shaft lets you have that final height position adjustment. This shaft also fits into the base section of all Titan cymbal stands. The bass drum plate has the same vice type grip found in all Tama hardware. Because of Tama's use of high density alloys, the base mount has less surface area with twice the strength.

THE HEXAGONAL L-ARM allows flat surface to surface gripping. This vice effect insures exact positioning every-time.

INDEPENDENT TOM TOM HEIGHT. Each hexagonal Omniball rod can be positioned independently, allowing for individual height adjustment. The hexagonal shaft provides vice type gripping.

TAMA

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Profiles in Percussion

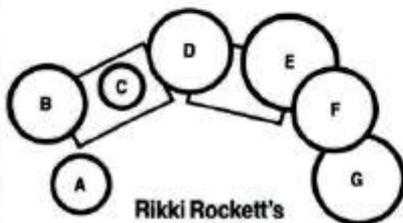
Rikki Rockett



Rikki Rockett is the driving force behind new metal sensation "Poison." "I didn't get this gig because I fit the image... I helped start the damn thing," says Rikki. "I help write, help do business, take part in designing the clothes and promote my butt off!"

Rikki describes the nucleus of Poison's attitude as an "Entertainment or Death" theory. "It's like a Broadway musical at an ice hockey level!!" he says.

Since he first started playing, Rikki has been sold on Zildjian cymbals. "I bought my first set of Zildjians from my brother-in-law and my life has never been the same!! I've dragged my current set-up all around the country for over a year on tour, and they're still as sweet as ever."



Rikki Rockett's cymbal set-up.

- A. 14" Z. Dyno Beat Hi Hats
- B. 17" A. Rock Crash Platinum
- C. 12" A. Splash Platinum
- D. 18" Z. Power Crash
- E. 20" Z. Heavy Power Ride
- F. 18" A. Rock Crash Platinum
- G. 19" K. China Boy Brilliant

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next month in
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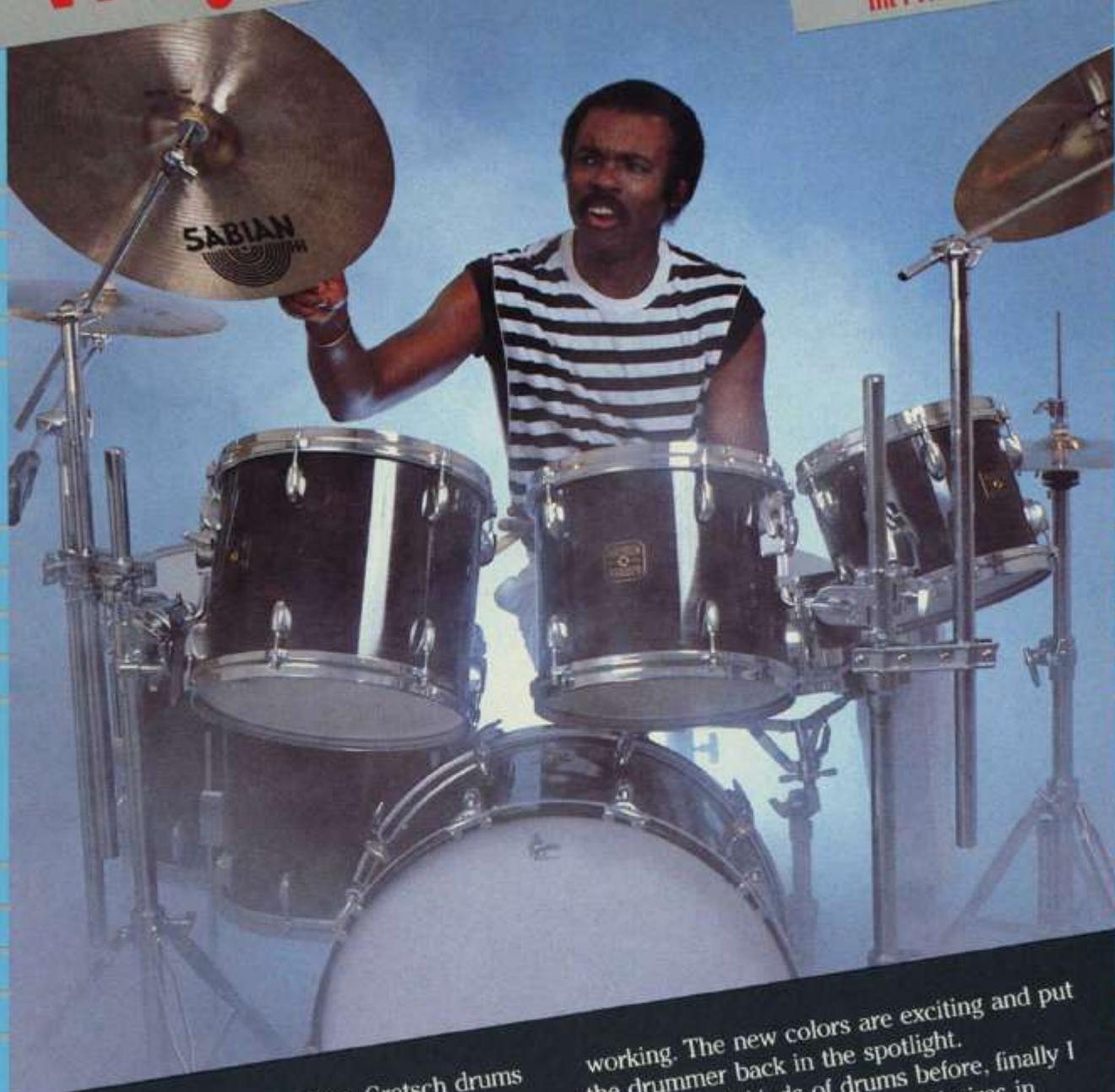
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Why do I play Gretsch?

Harvey Mason
Int'l Recording Artist



"The great sound I get from Gretsch drums is so adaptable to all live and recording needs. They are by far the best recording drums I have ever used. The clarity of sound and projection is unequalled to any I've seen or heard.

While I know Gretsch shells have always been the finest sounding, the natural wood stain finish is a whole other dimension to instrument wood-

working. The new colors are exciting and put the drummer back in the spotlight. I've tried all kinds of drums before, finally I have something that fills all my desires in sound, appearance and hardware specifications. Gretsch, ... what else is there."



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GREGG AND RANDY CATCH SOME Z'S.

When Zildjian introduced the Z Series, we woke up the rock world—with new sounds, new music and a new way of thinking about cymbals.

We use sophisticated computer hammering techniques to shape our special cast alloy into a heavier, louder line of cymbals. Z's give rock music's hottest drummers the explosive volume potential, quick response and powerful projection they demand.

It's no wonder heavy hitters like Randy Castillo of Ozzy Osbourne and Gregg Bissonette of the David Lee Roth Band play Zildjian Z's.

"They're so powerful. So loud. They really cut. The Z Power Crash—I call it the beast. It's wonderful," says Randy Castillo.

"Z's are great for hard rock music—big rock," adds Bissonette. "I like the way they cut through a wall of amps. With the Z Ride you can have your stick off the bell and it will still sound real piercing, real definitive. And they're loud. You can feel the sound. Z's make you shake."

Z Series cymbals are hammered in carefully designed patterns to produce a variety of specific sound characteristics. And they're highly buffed for a dazzling visual effect. But what

drummer Randy Castillo likes best about the Z's is that they're made for hard-hitting rock'n roll.

"I used to go through cymbals like chewing gum. The style and volume of music I play with Ozzy demands something that takes

a lot of punishment. But it's got to have the sound. The Z does both. It has everything I want in a cymbal. It looks great. It sounds great. And it takes a beating."

Gregg Bissonette has played Zildjian cymbals for as long as he remembers. So when we introduced the Z Series, he didn't hesitate to try them. "For me, it's always been Zildjians and nothing else. I've checked out the others, but nothing comes close. You won't break a Z. It's very heavy duty, but it's also very musical, with a lot of warmth and texture. I think you'll love Z's."

Castillo agrees, "They're the best. It's a simple fact of life. Z's open up the door to new sounds."

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