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July '95

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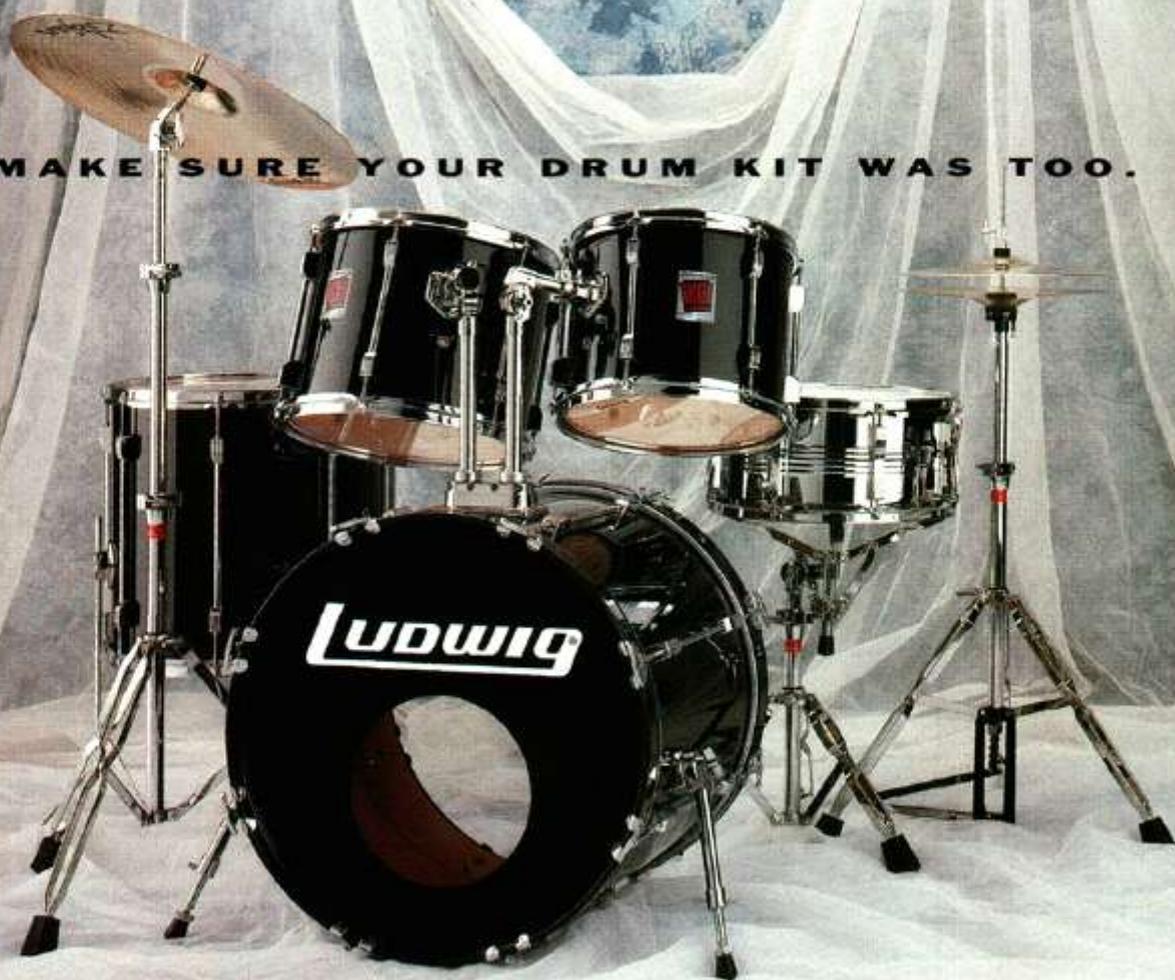
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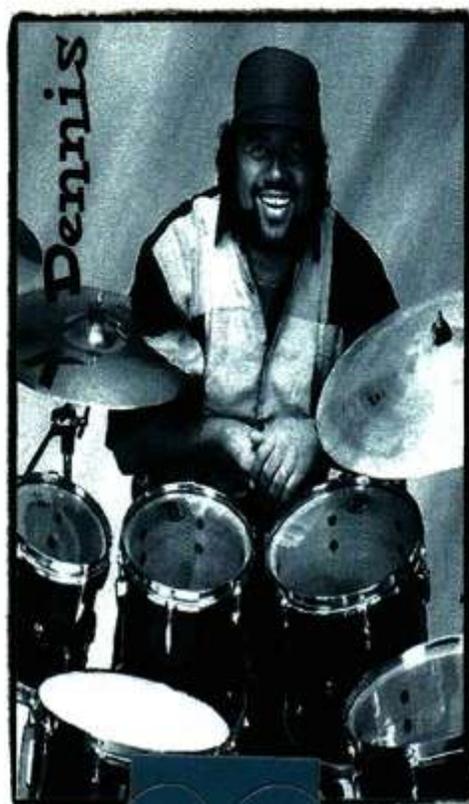
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The L.A. studio game is competitive enough to make any ladder-climbing musician hang onto his gig for dear life. Ace drummer Denny Fongheiser can't bear to play it safe, though—in both his musical and career choices.

• *Robyn Flans*

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GREG HUTCHINSON, YORON ISRAEL, AND CLARENCE PENN

It certainly isn't the '50s anymore, but you'd never know it from the way these cats are burnin' the bop. Scratch the surface, though, and you'll find that today's hottest jazz drummers are very much in the moment, keeping the old school fresh by seriously delving into the new.

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The New MD Buyer's Guide



I'm pleased to announce the release of the 1995/96 *MD Buyer's Guide*. We publish the *Guide* every other year, and we believe it's the most comprehensive reference source on drum and percussion gear in print.

Under the direction of *MD* managing editor Rick Van Horn, a massive amount of information is researched and compiled months in advance from catalogs, price lists, and direct from the manufacturers. All of that data is carefully checked and rechecked by *MD* editorial staffers to ensure the accuracy of every product listing. The art department is then faced with the task of designing the *Guide*, which needs to be functional and easy to use, as well as graphically appealing. My congratulations to everyone on the *MD* editorial and art department staff who do such an outstanding job on an incredibly time-consuming, complex project.

As usual, the new *Buyer's Guide* includes those drum and percussion products we feel are of the greatest interest to *MD's* core readership. Once again you'll find listings, detailed specifications, and prices on all brands and models of drumkits, snare drums, cymbals, hardware,

sticks and brushes, drumheads, electronic kits and drum machines, mic's, practice sets, ethnic percussion, and tons of other accessory items. Ideally, the *Guide* should aid you in your comparative shopping among various manufacturers' product lines—and hopefully help you make purchasing decisions that are right for your individual needs.

Along with the thousands of items listed, you'll also find a State Of The Industry Report for an up-to-date analysis of our ever-changing industry, as well as a complete Manufacturers Directory so you can write for further information on items of interest. Or you can simply circle the numbers on the handy Reader Service Card, drop it in the mail, and receive catalogs or brochures direct from the manufacturer—without having to write or call.

My thanks to all the key people in our industry who help to make the *Guide* a reality. We rely heavily on the cooperation of many people in compiling the information included in the *Guide*, and we certainly appreciate their assistance. Most of all, we're hopeful you'll find the 1995/96 edition of the *MD Buyer's Guide* a useful reference source throughout the year. Information on obtaining your copy can be found elsewhere in this issue.

RB

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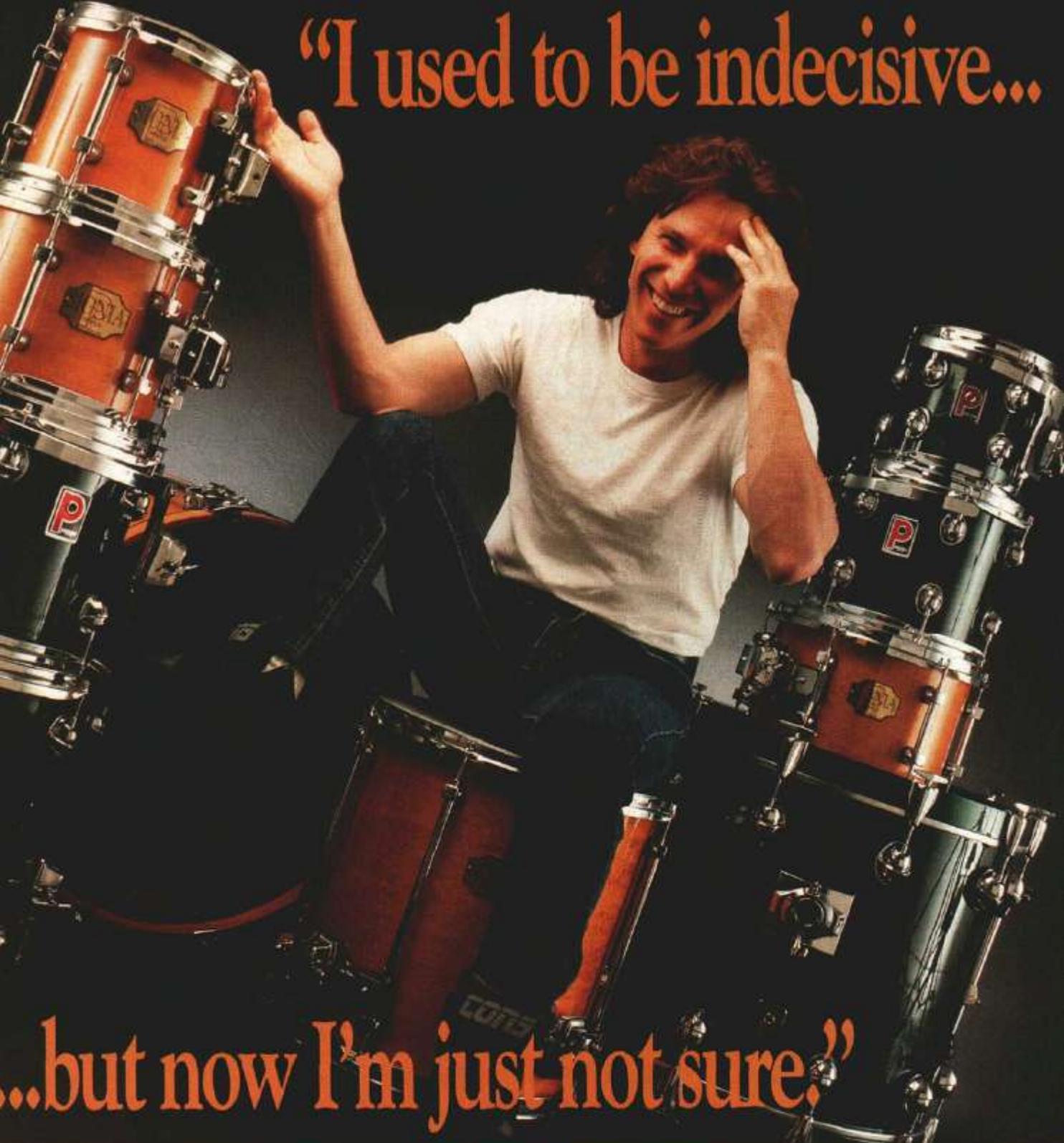
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A man with long dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt and dark jeans, is sitting on a Premier drum kit. He has a pained or indecisive expression, with his right hand on his forehead and his left hand raised towards a snare drum. The drum kit consists of a bass drum, a snare drum, and two toms, with a Premier logo on the snare and toms. The background is dark.

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Be sure to check out Rod on the new Dick's Dream release "Full Circle."

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PAUL BOSTAPH

I'd like to thank you for a superb article on Paul Bostaph [April '95 *MD*]. I've been a big fan of Paul ever since the Forbidden years. His drumming has been a big influence on my different playing techniques and teachings.

Alex Rodriguez
Winter Haven, FL

GARY MALLABER

Thank you so much for the long-overdue article on Gary Mallaber [April '95 *MD*]. I've been enjoying Gary's drumming since I was eleven years old listening to Steve Miller records. His grooves always made every song feel good; he has a special talent for playing the right thing at the right time. I can't imagine another drummer playing "Take The Money And Run" or "Swingtown."

It was also interesting to learn about the pang cymbal Gary used. I love that cymbal sound, and I hope to find a cymbal with that much character some day. Thank you, Gary, for your long-time influence on me, and thanks to Robyn Flans for another excellently written article.

John Medler
Waukesha, WI

SHAWN PELTON

I really enjoyed the *Up & Coming* article on Shawn Pelton in your April '95 issue. It's great to see someone who has worked so hard on his craft get the recognition he deserves. I first saw Mr. Pelton several years ago playing in a local club in Bloomington, Indiana. After briefly meeting him and having had conversations with his colleagues and former school mates, I can say that this guy is truly dedicated. I believe that we will all be seeing and hearing more from this talent in the future.

Greg Tuley
Evansville, IN

READERS POLL '95

While filling out my ballot for MD's 1995 Readers Poll, I was quite surprised to find that two drummers—both of whom have been an inspiration to thousands of drummers, including myself—had *not* been voted into the Readers Poll Hall of Fame. I'm referring to Ringo Starr and Charlie Watts. I believe that both have made a large impact on drumming—an impact you can see today just by opening up the March '95 *MD* and looking at the Ludwig "Vintage Fab-4-Piece" drumkit ad. Quoting that ad: "Experience the feeling of 1964...the excitement, the hysteria...when music changed forever." Drumming was never the same, either. Ringo and Charlie moved the drumkit to center stage and made drumming popular to many people, world-wide. Granted, neither is as technically gifted as some drum stars who came before and after, but you cannot overlook their place in drumming history. Thirty years after the fact their presence is still felt—with the popularity of Ringo-style drumkits and the fact that Charlie is still powering the Stones on Grammy-winning albums and sold-out world tours. Not enough can be said about the longevity and musical success that these two drummers have achieved. So I feel it is long overdue for the drumming community to elect Ringo Starr and Charlie Watts to the *MD* Readers Poll Hall of Fame.

Bradley Winicki
Muskegon, MI

WHERE ARE THE BIG BAND DRUMMERS?

I recently bought the *Burning For Buddy* CD featured in your February edition. Needless to say, I think it's great. However, the tracks by Joe Morello and Ed Shaughnessy led me to wonder why other notable big band drummers have, up to now, not been invited to play in the various Buddy Rich memorials or tributes. I'm referring to drummers who came up through the bands of Basie, Herman, and Kenton, such as Jeff Hamilton, Harold Jones, Peter Erskine, Joe LaBarbara, Ed Soph, Butch Miles, Gregg Field, Dennis

Mackrel, and others too numerous to mention.

I realize that the Rich tribute ventures have to be commercially viable, but these guys are already famous for being the best in the business at doing the very thing that is being promoted. A program including the above-listed gentlemen really *would* be a tribute to the world's greatest big band drummer—as well as perhaps being an eye-opener for the younger element. (How about it, Cathy?)

I hasten to add that this is not in any way meant to denigrate the other players on the *Burning...* album. My shelves are full of previous examples of their outstanding talent.

Ron Bottomley
Horbury, Wakefield, England

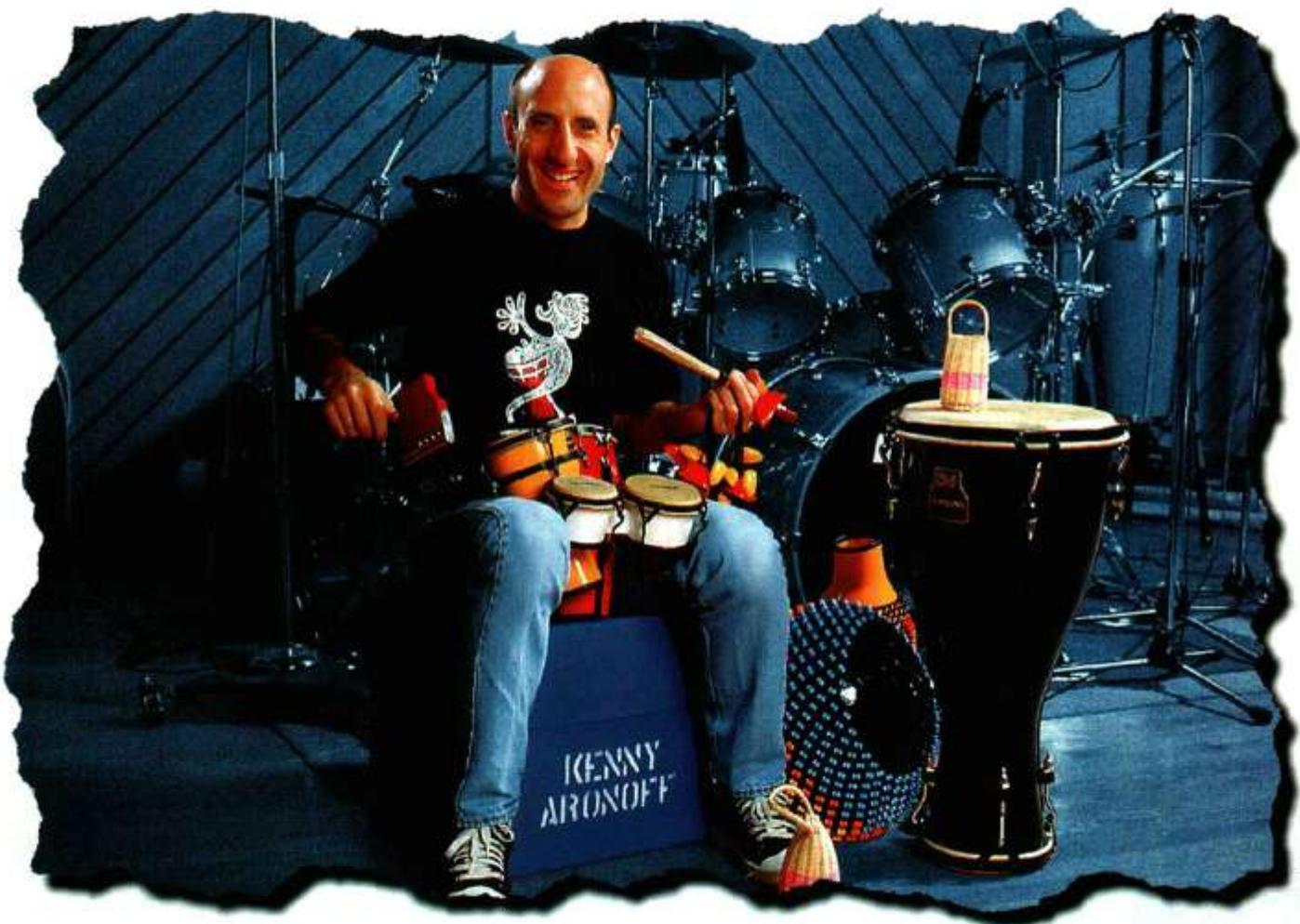
WHAT ABOUT DRUM CORPS?

I've been a subscriber for four years now, and although I thoroughly enjoy the magazine, I do have one complaint. I play various styles of music, but the one I enjoy most is drum corps. Unfortunately, you have only covered drum corps once a year over the past four years. The coverage I refer to is the results of the annual Drum Corps International championships. You always mention the scores of the top twelve corps and their drum lines, the music they performed, and what brands of percussion instruments they played. But nothing is ever said of the style, technique, or physical stamina it takes to play in this highly competitive field.

Anyone who thinks that drum corps is just a bunch of people standing on a football field playing music is sadly mistaken. It takes an abundance of both physical and mental energy to march and play. Just imagine strapping on a fifty-pound drum and marching at sub-light speeds. Recent tests demonstrated that the heart rate of a multi-tom player during a competitive routine reaches the same level as that of a marathon runner at mid-race!

I think I speak for most drum corps drummers when I say that we are tired of being ignored. I'm not asking for an entire issue, but an article or two from time to

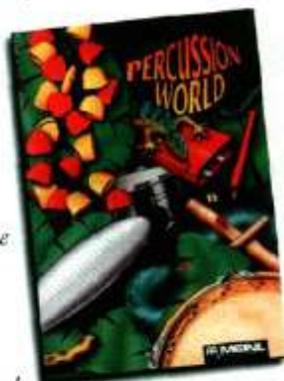
DIDN'T WE JUST SAY SO?



Kenny Aronoff - talk about a studio drummer! This guy's been in the business since the eighties! Want names? He's recorded for John Mellencamp, Bob Dylan, John Bon Jovi, Elton John, Bob Seger, Meat Loaf, Chris Isaak, and many, many more. And he's toured with most of them, too. Kenny was also voted best Pop/Rock drummer by the readers of "Modern Drummer" magazine four times in a row. On top of it all, Kenny teaches at the University of Indiana where he passes his craft on to future pro's. Of course, a live wire like Kenny needs reliable equipment. Luckily for him, he can get anything he wants. Anything at all. But experience tells him to go for the best. Kenny chooses Meinl Percussion for his bag of tricks. You know what? So should you!



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time would be appreciated. Being a teacher of this style of drumming, I believe that such articles would be educational to students like mine as well as to other corps drummers—and, in fact, to drummers of all styles. Remember, we are *all* percussionists.

Dave Colapietro
Piscataway, NJ

IN PRAISE OF ELECTRONICS

I'm tired of purists who put down electronic percussion. They think that electronic drums are nothing like acoustic drums, and that they have few (if any) redeeming qualities about them. Perhaps these die-hard acoustic players feel somehow threatened by technology—or maybe it's just their pride in their beautifully crafted sets. I myself have an old set of Ludwigs at home that I could never put a price on. They sound wonderful, and they're perfectly suited for many appli-

cations. However, I can't see myself lugging them into a studio. Studios often have cramped quarters to begin with, and studio time is expensive. With an acoustic kit you could easily use up a \$50 hour just setting up, tuning, and placing microphones. *Then* the engineer must process the sound to realistically reproduce (and complement) the sonic qualities of the acoustic shells. On the other hand, with my electronic system I can fit a sufficient number of pads into a gym bag, and I can simply run two lines direct from my sound module to the board—a ten-minute procedure.

There are pros and cons to both acoustic and electronic drums, and they are different in many respects. But to negate one is to negate the other as well, for they ultimately serve the same purpose: to serve the music. There are many types of music, and we drummers should feel lucky that we have such a wide range of rhythmic tools from which to choose. The cynics are right:

Electronic drums *are* nothing like acoustic drums. But they should also say that acoustic drums are nothing like *electronic* drums, either. Love them both, for they are as brothers.

Todd Pinekenstein
Danville, VA



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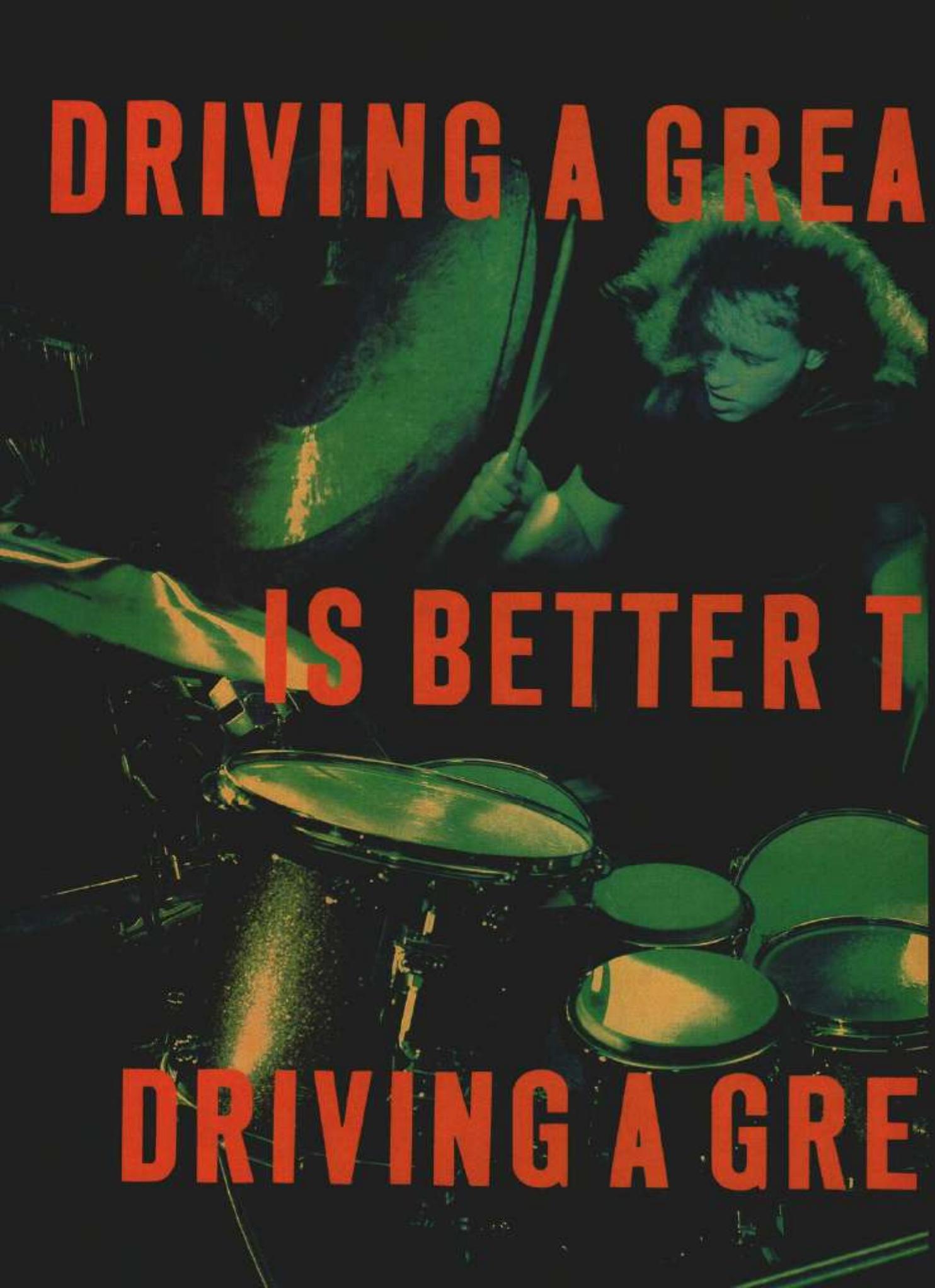
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A photograph of a drummer playing a drum set. The scene is lit with dramatic, low-key lighting, featuring a mix of blue and red tones. The drummer is in the upper right, focused on playing. The drum set includes a large bass drum, a snare, and several toms. The overall mood is energetic and intense.

DRIVING A GREAT

IS BETTER THAN

DRIVING A GREAT

T SONG

HAN

AT CAR.

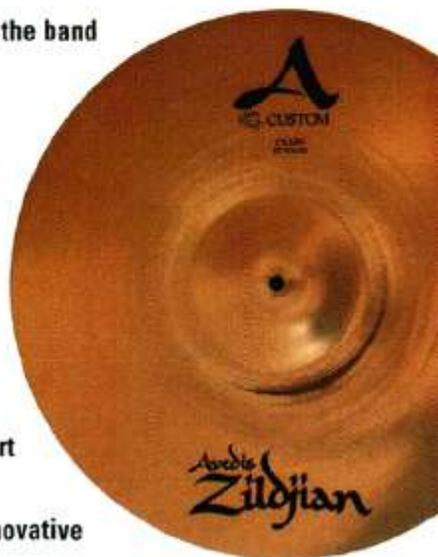
SOME PEOPLE GROW UP dreaming of powerful automobiles. Stephen Perkins grew up dreaming of a different sort of power: The kind generated by a gutsy song, and the band that's pushing it.

Today, Stephen is the engine that moves *Porno for Pyros*. And a vital part of his unique and innovative

sound is his Zildjian cymbal set-up. Not surprisingly, he is partial to A Customs.

They provide him with the broad palette of colors he likes to work from. And he appreciates Zildjian's legendary quality, durability and warranty. (Translation: he can play whatever he feels.)

Besides, with music, as with cars, you get what you pay for. But as Stephen will tell you, the right song can take you places no car ever could.



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Roy Haynes

"The beat goes on," says Roy Haynes when congratulated on the occasion of his 70th birthday in March. "I feel good. I don't play a lot these days; I take long breaks and the guys who play with me go in different directions and do their own thing. But that has worked for me, because every time we get back together, it's always fresh."

Haynes sounds particularly fresh on his new Dreyfus album, *Te-Vou!*, which features guitarist Pat Metheny. "I caught Pat at the Kool Jazz Festival when he had his first trio with Jaco Pastorius," Roy recalls, "and I really dug the music. In the meantime, Pat used to come to hear my band in Boston when he was at Berklee. We finally got together and I played on his record *Question And Answer* (Geffen, 1990). As they say, the rest is history. I was glad it worked out for him to play guitar on this record, and I know he is very excited about the way it came out."

Haynes' drumming on *Te-Vou!* is as hip as ever, as the musicians explore a variety of tempos and feels. Roy also incorporates timpani into one of his drum solos, an effect he used in the past on his Hip Ensemble albums. The album features tunes by Metheny, Chick Corea, Donald Harrison, Charlie Haden, Ornette Coleman, and Thelonious Monk—all of whom Haynes has worked with during his career. "I've played with everybody from Louie Armstrong to Pat Metheny," Haynes boasts. "That's pretty damn good, if I may say."

At the International Association of Jazz Educators convention in January, Haynes was presented with an American Jazz Masters Fellowship Award, given by the



National Endowment for the Arts to honor "jazz legends who have made a significant contribution to the art form in the African-American tradition." The award included a \$20,000 prize. "I also got a framed letter from Bill Clinton," Haynes says. "That really knocked me out!"

• Rick Mattingly

Harry Stinson

If there were ever a drummer in need of a running shoe endorsement, it would have to be Nashville-based Harry Stinson. First off there's the new TNN show *At The Ryman*, where Harry's working as the musical director and house drummer. Then there's his new record company, Dead Reckoning Records—not to mention the countless drumming and background singing gigs he's being invited to play on. Come to think about it, maybe Harry could use something in, say, a cross trainer instead.

"I've always done a lot of different things," Stinson says, "and people have always told me to slow down and do one thing well." That's advice Harry has yet to heed. "It's finally getting to the point where I think I can do all of these things well, and that makes me happy."

While Stinson cut his teeth playing behind Dottie West in the early '70s, it was his first road gig with the band America that got him hooked into the traveling drummer lifestyle. It turns out that in the middle of America's 1974 tour, their drummer put his hand through a hotel door. Harry got a phone call asking him to meet the band in Muscle Shoals. He showed up for sound check, they put him behind a kit, and he learned the set that afternoon. During that night's show the drummer shined a flashlight on his notes, and the bass player stood by his kit yelling out, "half-time"... "full time." Welcome to rock 'n' roll, Harry.

It was that trial by fire that proved to Stinson he could make it. During a ten-year stint in Los Angeles, he played with some of the biggest names in the music world, including acts as varied as Etta James and Peter Frampton. Then in 1985 he decided it was time to return to his hometown of Nashville. "I came back home for a visit," Harry explains, "and I realized the scene was happening again." So he packed up his bags and immediately caught on with Steve Earle and an up-and-coming Lyle Lovett.

Over the past nine years Stinson has played and sung, he says, on "about a million different songs." He has scored number-one singles as a producer, drummer, and back-up singer—but the songwriting credit has still eluded him. "That's the one I want most," he says.

As if the TV show and his new record label aren't enough to keep him busy (Dead Reckoning will be releasing four albums this year, two of which are by label co-founders Kieran Kane and Kevin Welch), Harry plans to launch a European tour next month. In between the Stax Volt type of shows he, Kieran, and Kevin are planning to perform, they'll be firming up a European distribution deal for the label.

Cross trainers, definitely cross trainers.

• David John Farinella

Patty Schemel

Patty Schemel admits it wasn't always easy for her in the studio while recording Hole's debut record, *Live Through This*. "Doing the basic tracks was difficult," she confesses. "I had played the songs a thousand times, but when you're recording you *know* you're recording, and sometimes you freak out in the middle of it."

Nonetheless the CD was critically acclaimed as one of 1994's best. "I've always had good meter, which is one of my strong points, so that wasn't a problem. I just felt the pressure," Schemel explains. "[Bassist] Kristen Pfaff and I came up with

the analogy that there was a house being built and we were the ground floor, the foundation. There are different layers to build the rest of it, but it started with us, and we were really tight together."

According to Schemel, she and leader Courtney Love think alike. "A couple of times Courtney came up with a little bridge part in the middle of a song, but she wasn't able to communicate in drum talk. She can't say, 'Do a paradiddle here,' so she'll explain it like, 'Can you do sort of a Pretenders beat here, throw in a Helmet stop, and then do a Ministry kind of thing?'

and I'll totally understand what she is saying. Luckily we both have the same new wave/punk background."

For Schemel, Hole is an ideal situation. While being a woman has been more of an asset than a hindrance to her, she says being a woman in a band is generally treated as a novelty. "When it's been all guys and just me, it was a novelty—'Oh, they got a chick drummer.' When it's all girls, it's a novelty too. But in Hole, it's not a novelty, which is where I want to be."

• Robyn Flans

Henree DeBaum

Henree DeBaum describes Lee Rocker's Big Blue as "American roots music." "We draw heavily from the blues," DeBaum explains. "Of course with Lee being with the Stray Cats all those years, he could never fully shake rockabilly, but he claims that his roots go back further than that, back to the blues—as do mine. So we're heavily based in the blues, with the energy of rockabilly."

Having written five of the tracks on their debut album, DeBaum says he has some favorites: "I really like 'Darlin' Darlene.' I play virtually no cymbals, so it's pretty much a heavy-beat, hard-driving rock 'n' blues thing. I loved 'Shame Shame Shame' too, which of course I didn't write, but I love it mostly because we played with [Elvis guitarist] Scotty Moore on that one. That also came together really quick. Most of the record ended up being early takes.

"We basically cut it live," DeBaum explains. "I like the fact that you can really hear the drums. Greg Archilla is a great engineer, and he was able to get a natural sound without it sounding over-produced. I play a 28" bass drum both in and out of the studio, and it didn't scare him to death; he was able to get a real big sound out of it.

"My drum scares everybody everywhere I go," DeBaum admits. "I have an oversized set and I play them wide open. The bass is a great old '65 Ludwig orchestra drum that I put legs on. It's real woody and real big. I've covered the set in leopard-skin fabric to match the stuffed leopard head that the bass drum wears." DeBaum is currently back in Memphis recording the band's second offering.

• Robyn Flans

News...

Adam Nussbaum recently played dates with Toots Thielemans, Tiger Okoshi, the Cologne Radio Big Band, Joe Lovano, and John Scofield. He is currently on tour with John Abercrombie.

Percussionist **Luis Conte** has a new album called *The Road* (on Weberworks Records), which also features **Orestes Vilato**, **Walfredo Reyes, Jr.**, and **Carlos Vega**, with a cameo appearance by actor **Andy Garcia** on shekere.

Speaking of **Walfredo**

Reyes, Jr., he has been working with Robbie Robertson.

David Silliman on tour with Al DiMeola.

Walter "Clyde" Orange is on the double-disc anthology *The Best Of The Commodores*. He is still touring with the band.

Earl Hudson is back with a reunited Bad Brains on their new album, *God Of Love*.

Terry Bozzio, **Tony Thompson**, **Steve Ferrone**, and original drummer **Roger Taylor** on Duran Duran's

Thank You.

Mike Bordin is on the new offering from Faith No More, *King For A Day... Fool For A Lifetime*.

Russell Batiste is on tour with the Meters, now known as the Funky Meters. Former Meters drummer **Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste** is on an anthology called *Funkify Your Life: The Meters Anthology*.

Harold Summey, Jr. is currently touring with the Sonny Rollins sextet.

Muggs Cain is on the new

release by his brother, Jonathan Cain, *Back To The Innocence*.

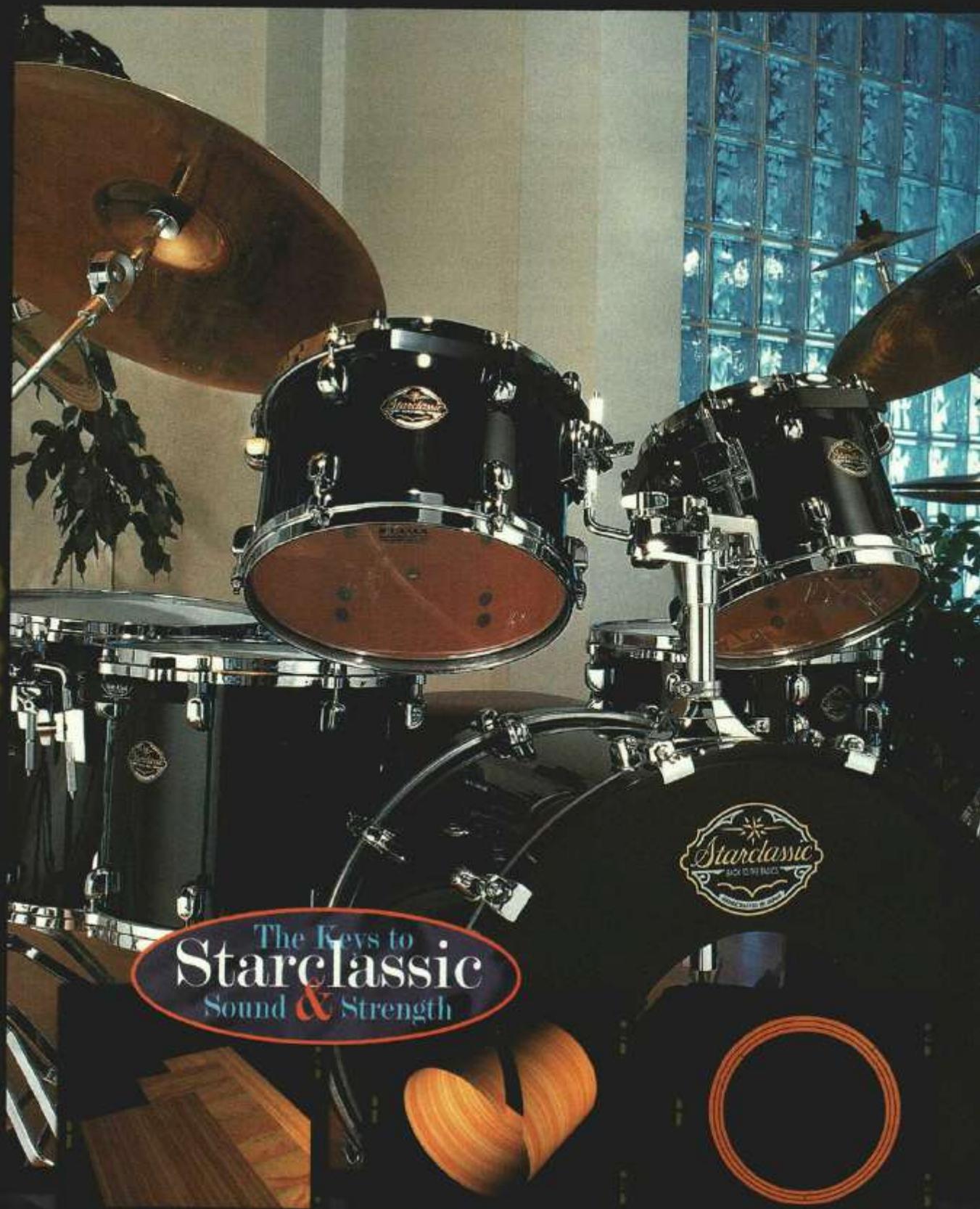
Tom Brechtlein was recently in the studio recording a new album with Robben Ford & the Blue Line. He's also been working on a new series of educational videos for DCI.

John Blackwell is currently on tour with Cameo.

Ringo Starr participated in *For The Love Of Harry (Everybody Sings Nilsson)*, an album to benefit the Coalition To Stop Gun Violence.



"Every once in a while, some young ca



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...Modern Drummer Magazine on
Rodney Holmes

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Mike Portnoy

Q I recently purchased Dream Theater's *Awake* CD, and I congratulate you on another incredible drumming performance. Ever since I read your interview in *MD* and heard *Images And Words* I've been a fan. You are a relative "newcomer," but you've been a big inspiration and influence on me. I'd like to know what your current setup is, since you mentioned in *MD*'s "Metal Drummers Round Table" that you had recently doubled the size of your kit. Was it the ever-expanding music of Dream Theater that possessed you to expand, or the growth and maturation of your own playing? You seem to be humble and soft-spoken, but your playing is absolutely mind-blowing. Do you find that drumming changes your personality, or is it an outlet for you? I know that Neil Peart was a big influence on you (as he is for so many); who were some of your other influences? And finally, can you recommend any books or exercises that could help my left hand and foot get up to par with my right?

Kris Fleming
Eastchester, NY

A Thank you very much for the kind words. I've included a diagram of my latest setup. It was used in the studio to record *Awake* and is currently on tour with me (giving my drum tech Jose nightly headaches!). The basic reason for expanding the setup was to give myself as many options as possible in creating my parts in the eclectic world of Dream Theater. (We're one of the few bands these days that subscribe to the theory that "more is

more.") And yes, every drum and cymbal is used on *Awake*.

Remaining humble and modest is something I always try to keep in mind. (However, I don't think I've ever been described as "soft-spoken" before.) I actually have a personality that is always trying to steal attention, and I think that it probably comes through in my playing.

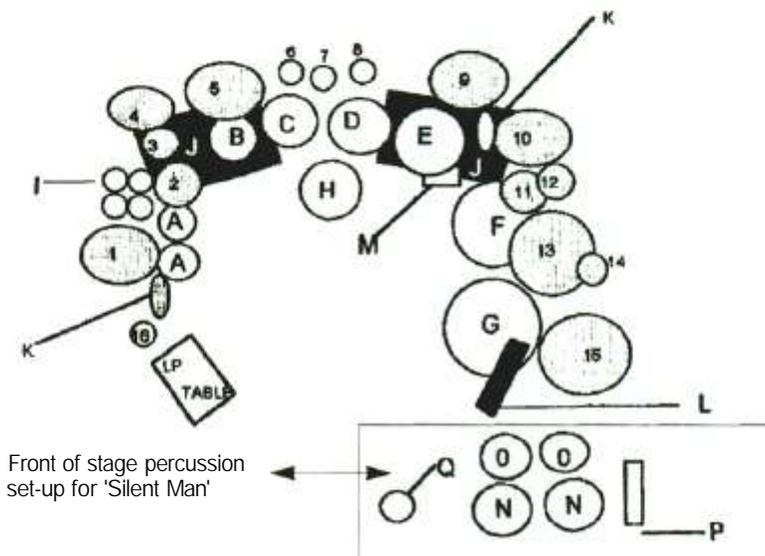
My influences cover the whole spectrum of music. Some early ones for me were classic rock drummers like Keith Moon and John Bonham, along with more progressive drummers like Terry Bozzio, Vinnie Colaiuta, and Simon Phillips. Frank Zappa's music probably had the biggest influence of all, and was what introduced me to odd time signatures, polyrhythms, and diverse styles. These days I listen to everything from Jellyfish to the Beastie Boys to Machine Head. It's very important to keep an open mind about what you listen to and what you play.

Finally (do you still think I'm soft-spoken?), my suggestion for developing your left hand and foot would be to practice patterns that you normally would play with your right side and do them with your left. Use your left kick as the primary one and try hi-hat or ride patterns with your left hand. This should help develop your independence and also enable you to play more ambidextrously. (You'll notice that I use a "mirror image" setup with my cymbals so that everything is accessible from both sides of the kit.) Use a metronome and slowly work the tempos up. Thanks again for your questions!

DREAM THEATER—MIKE PORTNOY

DRUM TECHNICIAN: JOSE "HO" BARAQUIO

DRUM SETUP FOR "WAKING UP THE WORLD" TOUR 1994/1995



Front of stage percussion set-up for 'Silent Man'

Drumset: Mapex

- A. 9 1/4 "10" LP Timbalitos
- B. 8x8 tom
- C. 8x10 tom
- D. 8x12 tom
- E. 10x14 tom
- F. 16x16 floor tom
- G. 16x18 floor tom
- H. 5-1/2x14 snare drum
- I. four 6" "Octoban-style" drums of various lengths
- J. 16x24 bass drum
- K. two mounted LP tambourines
- L. LP double-row chimes
- M. LP Ridge Rider cowbell
- LP Table: single row chimes, bell tree, woodblock set, tri-bell set, a-go-go bell set, triangle, Vibra-Slap 2

Front Of Stage Percussion: LP

- N. Junior Congas
- O. Bongos
- P. various shakers
- Q. hand-held tambourine

Hardware: Mapex stands, DW Accelerator pedals and hi-hats

Sticks: Hot Sticks

Heads: Remo Pinstripes for tom and bass drum batters, Diplomats on tom bottoms, Ebony front bass drum heads (with miking holes), CS Coated as the snare batter with an Ambassador snare-side head, and clear Ambassadors on the "Octoban-style" drums

- 1. 18" AA Chinese
- 2. 14" AAX Stage Hats
- 3. 12" AAX splash
- 4. 16" AA medium crash
- 5. 18" AA medium thin crash
- 6. 8" AAX splash
- 7. 6" CD disc
- 8. 10" AAX splash
- 9. 18" AA medium crash
- 10. 17" HH medium thin crash
- 11. 13" AA Rock Hats
- 12. 12" AA Mini-Hats
- 13. 22" HH Rock ride
- 14. 12" AA Mini-Chinese
- 15. 20" HH thin Chinese
- 16. 10" B8 Pro splash

Cymbals: Sabian

- 1. 18" AA Chinese
- 2. 14" AAX Stage Hats
- 3. 12" AAX splash
- 4. 16" AA medium crash
- 5. 18" AA medium thin crash
- 6. 8" AAX splash
- 7. 6" CD disc
- 8. 10" AAX splash
- 9. 18" AA medium crash
- 10. 17" HH medium thin crash
- 11. 13" AA Rock Hats
- 12. 12" AA Mini-Hats
- 13. 22" HH Rock ride
- 14. 12" AA Mini-Chinese
- 15. 20" HH thin Chinese
- 16. 10" B8 Pro splash



Stan Lynch

Q I have thoroughly enjoyed your fine, "rock steady" drumming over the years, and I would very much like to know what you've been using for drumheads on your bass drum, snare, and toms. Also, what are your plans for the future now that you've left Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers?

Mike Dmytriw
Euclid, OH



The bass drum had a white coated *Emperor*. The snare was fitted with a CS Black Dot top with a clear *Diplomat* snare-side head. I later changed the toms to white coated *Ambassadors* on both the tops and bottoms, and the snare to a white coated *Ambassador* as well. This worked out for live playing *and* recording.

As for life after the Heartbreakers: I took a little time out to "smell the roses," but most recently I've been writing and/or producing with Don Henley, the Eagles, the Mavericks, Danny Kortchmar, and Leonard Cohen. I look forward to playing the drums again, when the time is right. (No pun intended.)

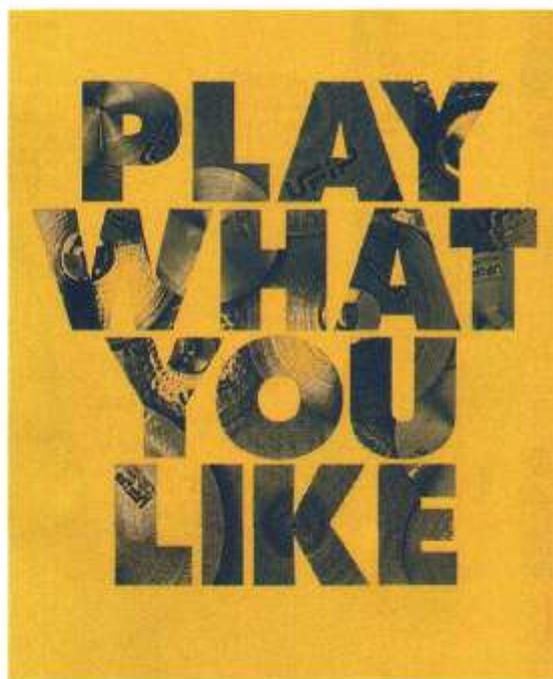


A Thanks for the compliments; I'm pleased to know that you've enjoyed my drumming. During the recording of *Damn The Torpedoes* I used Remo *Pinstripes* on the tops of the toms and white coated *Ambassadors* on the bottoms.

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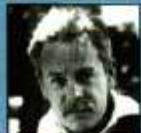
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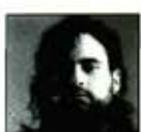
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Iowa City
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Snare Drum Sound

Q I have some questions concerning my snare drum sound. I have a set of Sonor *Force 1000* drums, and I am generally very pleased with their sound quality. However, I can't get the sound I desire from my snare drum. When drummers like Dennis Chambers, Simon Phillips, or Jonathan Mover are playing the snare and giving the note full value, I hear less of the snare strainer and more of the tone of the drum. When they play softly, I hear more strainer and less tone. This response is what I am *not* getting from my snare drum. Is it my choice of heads, the way I tune the drum or tension the strainer, or the strainer itself? Or is my snare drum just bad? If so, who should I contact to work on my drum?

Robert Plutchak
Menominee, MI

A Snare-drum tuning is a very personal matter, and it involves a large number of variables. Certainly before you have any work done on your snare drum you should do a great deal of experimenting with drumhead selection, muffling techniques, snare-tension adjustment, head tensioning, and perhaps even the selection of the type of snare wires (12-, 20-, or 42-strand, wire or cable, etc.). Remember too that the size of the drum makes a great deal of difference to the "strainer-vs.-drum tone" ratio you describe. It may very well be that the drum you hear on a recording providing exceptional snare response at a low dynamic level might be a fairly shallow one—perhaps even a piccolo—while your *Force 1000* snare is 6-1/2" deep. A drum of that depth is not as likely to produce snare response at low impact levels. (This situation, however, is one that can be improved on by the use of a larger set of snares.)

Remember too that the material a drumshell is made of affects its reflectivity—which, in turn, affects snare response. *Force 1000* shells are made of poplar wood. The snare drums you heard played by Mssrs. Chambers, Phillips, and Mover were most likely made of birch or maple, both of which are harder and more reflect-

ive than poplar. You need to remember that each drum has its own optimum tuning characteristics, and you should do whatever you can to maximize those of your drum rather than trying to duplicate those of other drums to which it bears little or no resemblance.

Drum Coverings

Q How much does the covering on a drum affect its resonance—particularly with respect to a thin-shelled vintage drum? Also, is it feasible to consider refinishing a set of Rogers covered drums manufactured over twenty years ago (1972)? Would there be a great risk of damaging the shell when removing the covering?

Steve Murphy
Mount Pearl, Newfoundland, Canada

A The effect of a covering on the resonance of a shell is a matter of opinion—and has been subject to a great deal of debate over the years. However, it is safe to say that if you are considering a drum that already *has* a covered finish, to remove that finish and replace it with a new covering should not make an appreciable change in the drum's resonance. Stripping the covering from the shell and then leaving the shell un-covered could, in some cases, create some additional resonance. It might also lower the pitch of the drum slightly, by virtue of reducing the drum's overall mass. (Again, these effects are likely to be subtle and discernible only to scientific instruments or an *exceptionally* keen ear.)

It's impossible to say whether any given shell might be damaged when its covering is removed, owing to the unpredictable nature of the bonding process between the surface of the wood shell and the glue adhering the covering to it. We can say that many professional drum craftsmen perform this operation frequently. The key is to use the appropriate chemical (such as acetone) or physical process (such as a heat gun) to dissolve or soften the glue so that the covering can be removed without ripping away any of the wood beneath it. It's always best to start at a small corner of the lap seam

and see how easily the covering peels away. If there appears to be any difficulty, stop and seek professional assistance. For further reference, check out Doug Smith's "Removing Drum Coverings" article in the June '82 *MD*.

Leedy Holes And History

Q I have a four-piece Leedy kit that I purchased in 1968. The drums were made in October of 1964, according to the stamps on the insides of the shells. The snare and bass drums have vent holes, but the rack and floor toms do not. What is the significance, if any, of the lack of vent holes in the toms? Also, I understand that there is a book out on the history of Leedy drums. How may I obtain a copy?

Paul Peterson III
Richland, NJ

A Both Leedy and Gretsch made drumsets during the '60s with toms that were not vented. This was a design choice that gave the drums a tighter, "bouncier" sound than drums with vent holes. Obviously, if air could not escape from inside the shell, there was more resistance to stick impact on the drumhead. Jazz players tended to love this sound; it lost popularity in the later '60s and early '70s when drummers sought a flatter, punchier sound from their toms.

Rob Cook's *History Of The Leedy Drum Company* is published by Centerstream Publishing (P.O. Box 5450, Fullerton, CA 92365) and is distributed by Hal Leonard Publishing (P.O. Box 13819, Milwaukee, WI 53213). It should be available anywhere that music history books are sold, and in some larger drumshops.

Premier Project One Snare Drum

Q I recently acquired an 8x14 Premier snare drum with the name *Project One* written on a plate just below the badge. The shell has a hole on the outside, lined with a rubber gasket. It also has an inner liner similar to that of Premier's *Resonator* series drums. The serial number is 000785, and the drum has a natural lac-



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Anthrax

CHARLIE BENANTE's current 2002 Setup: 13" Medium Hi-Hat, 14" Sound Edge Hi-Hat, 16" Rude Crash/Ride, 18" Power Crash, 20" Rude Ride/Crash, 17" Rude Crash/Ride, 14" Rude Crash/Ride, 12" Rude Splash, 18" Novo China, 20" China
also included: 8" Signature Bell, 18" Signature Full Crash, 19" Signature Dry Ride

NICK MASON's current 2002 Setup:

14" Crash (2), 15" Crash, 16" Crash, 17" Crash, 18" Crash (2), 19" Crash, 20" Crash, 13" Heavy Hi-Hat, 20" Ride



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quered finish. I'd like to know the history of this drum: When was it produced? How many were made? What is the composition of the shell? What was the original price? Any help would be appreciated.

Matt Jennings
Indianapolis, IN

A Roger Horrobin of Premier Percussion Ltd. in England sent us the following information: "The 2009 *Project One* snare drum was introduced around 1983 and discontinued around 1990. The principle was simple, really. You can cut a hole in a front bass drum head or in a bottom tom-tom head (or remove the head entirely) to place a microphone inside the drum. But you can't do that with a snare drum. So the 2009 had an inner liner, which, in turn, created a cavity between itself and the outer shell. The outer shell, therefore, could have a hole in it, and the inner shell (being the 'ideal,' with no fittings attached) could freely resonate even more than normal. The problem was that so much air came out of the hole,

and the SPLs (sound pressure levels) were so high, that the hole turned out not to be a good place to put a microphone. This was despite the concept having been developed/inspired by a top studio drummer in collaboration with recording engineers and also having been fully tested at birth."

The *Project One* drum was available in both 6-1/2x14 and 8x14 sizes. It featured a combination of birch and beech plies, and was available in several finishes. It also featured a special *Floating Snare Buzz Control*—a device that looked very similar to familiar external tone controls for batter heads but was attached below the snare wires to muffle them against sympathetic buzz. The rubber grommet around the sound hole was simply to give the hole a finished appearance and to protect both the shell and the microphone against possible collisions. The 8x14 *Project One* was priced between \$470 (upon its introduction) and \$520 (by the time it was discontinued).



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New From Pearl



Pearl's *Masters Custom* series has been augmented by the addition of optional 24K gold-plated drum hardware. In addition, three new lacquer finishes (canary yellow, natural, and purple mist) have been added to the series, making a total of twelve see-through and high-gloss finishes available for the *Masters Custom Gold* and standard *Masters Custom* series.



Pearl has also introduced several new snare drum models. The 6-1/2x14 *MH-5314D* features four plies of American mahogany and 5mm glue rings, and is said to offer a sound "reminiscent of classic snare drums of the past." The exterior ply features a distinctive "ball" grain and is finished with several layers of clear lacquer. The standard version (with chromed hardware) lists for \$555 and includes *Masters Series* double-row lugs, die-cast hoops, and a new *SR-015* "vertical-pull" strainer. The *MH-5314DG* gold-plated version is priced at \$635.

The Pearl family of brass snare drums has now been expanded by the addition of 3x14 (*B-5214P*) and 5x14 (*B5114*) models, each with a suggested retail price of \$415. New to the Free Floating System is a 3-1/2x14 model (*SL-8114P*) with a black lacquer-finished steel shell, priced at \$290. Finally, a 3x13 black lacquer-finished steel-shell drum (*SL-513P*) is offered for those seeking a pro-quality piccolo snare at an affordable price (\$190).

In the marching arena, Pearl has introduced two light-weight and compact drums designed for junior-high and high-school marching programs. The 11x13 *FFX-103G* Free-Floating

Marching Snare Drum is priced at \$620. Also available is the 14x15 *PBD-216N* marching bass drum, constructed of 6-ply maple shells and featuring 2"-wide maple hoops, case-hardened tension bolts, oversized claws, aircraft aluminum lugs, and six air vents for superb tone and projection. It's priced at \$625. Also new are a variety of improved snare drum carriers. **Pearl Corp., 549 Metroplex Dr., Nashville, TN 37211.**

Rhythm Tech Alpha Series Oak Bongos

Rhythm Tech has added *Alpha Series* oak bongos to its line of professional percussion instruments and accessories. The bongos feature tapered natural-oak shells for a balanced range of highs and lows, low-profile, rounded, ultra-heavy rims for playing comfort, and thin yet durable rawhide heads. The drums come with steel bottom rims for added strength and stability for the tuning lugs, and are available only in natural oak finish. **Rhythm Tech, 29 Beechwood Ave., New Rochelle, NY 10801, (800) 726-2279.**

Martin Maple Drums



Martin Maple Drums USA preserves the American "family drum business" tradition as a father-and-son team construct, finish, assemble, and inspect every drum that carries their family name. The drums begin as Keller 8-ply maple shells (with other ply configurations available on request). A machine-cut 45° inner bearing edge is cut halfway through the shell, then the outer edge is hand-rounded. This creates a sharp bearing edge that has good clearance between the drum's head and the shell and that promotes attack. The standard snare bed receives a 1/8"-deep cut, with other configurations available.

Lockwood transparent stains are used to tint the snares so that the beauty and sound of the maple shells will not be affected. Colors include mystic black, indigo blue, emerald green, light walnut, navy blue, rosewood, moss green, fruitwood, lemon yellow, brilliant red, and dark wine/red cherry. All standard shells are tinted golden oak on the inside, with a thin coat of clear lacquer applied. The outer shells receive multiple coats of hand-sanded high-gloss lacquer. The final coat is hand-sanded, machine-com-

pounded and polished, and hand-waxed.

Standard sizes are 5x14 and 6x14, in ten-lug versions fitted with Evans *Genera Dry* batter heads. All lugs are foam-lined and separated from the shell by isolation pads. The drums are claimed by the manufacturer to produce a controlled, dry, meaty sound that is very "vintage" oriented. Both sizes are priced at \$360, and may be purchased through **S.A.E. Drum Shop, 2059 E. Pass Rd., Gulfport, MS 39501, (601) 897-1035**. Dealer inquiries should be directed to **Martin Maple Drums USA, 775 Holly Hill Dr., Biloxi, MS 39532, (601) 388-1054**.

Afro Percussion Introductions



Afro Percussion now offers *Elite* bongos and congas. These top-of-the-line instruments feature Afro's exclusive die-cast *Contour Crown* hoops for extended playing ease, high-gloss lacquer finishes in see-through natural, green, or black, and hard-

ware finished in 24K gold. Congas feature a combination universal conga stand mounting bracket and carrying handle (attached for transport but easily removed for stand mounting), and are available in 11", 11-1/2", and 12-1/2" sizes. Bongos feature 7" and 9" diameters for greater distinction between high and low sounds.

Afro has also introduced *Orestes Vilato* model timbales, which feature five tuning lugs instead of the customary six in order to increase the playing surface of the shell and improve the sound of the cascara. Also, instead of traditional L-brackets, the *Vilato* timbales feature conga-style tuning brackets for improved tuning and controlled shell resonance. They are available in 14" and 15" brass and stainless-steel sets, and come equipped with a heavy-duty stand.

Also new from Afro are both wood and fiberwood djembes, the *Salida* series of student congas, timbales, and cowbells, and the *APS-37* cowbell holder, which combines the Pearl *CH-70* cymbal holder with a 3/8"-diameter L-arm. It's available at \$39.90. Afro percussion instruments are distributed by **Pearl Corp., 549 Metroplex Dr., Nashville, TN 37211**.

DW Expands American Classic Snare Drum Line



Drum Workshop has added 4x12, 4x13, 4x15, and 5x15 models to its line of *American Classic* solid maple-shell snare drums, bringing the total number of sizes available to nine. The drums feature one-piece maple shells custom-crafted by Johnny Craviotto for DW. All *American Classic* models carry a suggested list price of \$995.

DW has also announced that Rhythm Tech *iT* (*index Tension*) tuning lugs are now standard equipment on the batter side of all *American Classic* and *Edge* (brass/maple) drums, and are available as a factory installed option on *Collector's Series* (10-ply maple) and *Vintage* (brass) snare drums. **Drum Workshop, Inc., 101 Bernoulli Circle, Oxnard, CA 93030, tel: (805) 485-6999, fax: (805) 485-1334**.

Custom Drumhead Artwork



Loud Wild & Proud offers customized drumhead art to drummers who want to leave a visual impression on their audiences. Available in a variety of colors, designs may be airbrushed or done with computer-generated vinyl lettering. LW&P's staff can accommodate virtually any concept, and can work with the customer to generate the final design. A white or black drumhead must be supplied by the customer;

prices vary depending on logo or design chosen. **Loud Wild & Proud, 2402 Edgebrook Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15226, (800) 484-7619, extension DRUM**.

UFIP Cymbals Re-Enter U.S. Market



UFIP cymbals (made by the *Unioni Fabricanti Italiani Piatti*, the Union of Italian Cymbal Makers) is again actively promoting their lines of hi-hats, rides, crashes, splashes, Chinas, and special effects cymbals to meet the demands

of today's diverse drumming styles. The line includes the *Class* series (general-purpose), the *Natural* series (darker and warmer), the *Rough* series (loud and penetrating), and the limited-edition *Experience* series (in a choice of "muscular" *Bionic* or controlled *Brilliant* models). Each UFIP cymbal is made by one of a small handful of cymbalsmiths who personally listens to the cymbal at each stage of its development from casting to shipping—in order to let the cymbal reveal its own sonic identity.

UFIP cymbals are distributed in the U.S. by **Drum Workshop, Inc., 101 Bernoulli Circle, Oxnard, CA 93030, tel: (805) 485-6999, fax: (805) 485-1334.**

Carolina Popstickle

The Carolina Stick Company has created what they deem an "absolute first in design in an absolutely different timbale stick." The Popstickle is a timbale stick with a wooden ball tip and a grip added to the shaft. It also comes in nylon. It can be used on the drumkit and/or cowbells and percussion toys. **Carolina Stick Company, 5002 Idaho Ave., Nashville, TN 37209, tel: (615) 386-0144, fax: (615) 386-0244.**

Sabian Expands B8 and DeJohnette Series, Adds Thunder Sheets



Sabian has expanded its entry-level B8 line with three new drumset cymbals and four sizes of band cymbals. The drumkit models include a 10" splash, a 14" crash, and an 18" Chinese. These particular models are designed to add colors heretofore

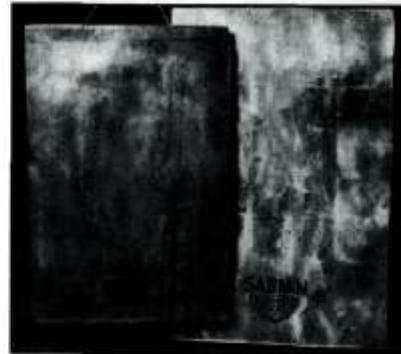
unavailable to the palettes of drummers shopping in the "budget"

range. The new band cymbals are medium-heavy in weight and high-pitched in sound and are paired to deliver the cutting response and volume that are necessary for outdoor performances. Sizes available include 14", 16", 18", and 20". All B8 cymbals are precision formed from the same uni-rolled bronze used in Sabian's more expensive B8 Pro and PRO series cymbals.



Several new models have also been added to the *Jack DeJohnette Encore Series*. New 13", 16", and 17" crashes are said to be more explosive and impactful than the ultra-dry and metallic sounds of Jack's original *Signature* series, while being quick to respond with fast, dry punches that are long on impact and short on sustain. Also new is a 21" *Encore* ride, said to offer a "dark, arid tonal range, definite stick response, and a controlled degree of spread."

Finally, Sabian has introduced *Thunder Sheets*—large, rectangular percussion pieces rolled from pure Sabian bronze. They deliver very deep, dark, sonorous sounds when struck with a mallet, or brash, metallic, abrasive sounds when played with a drumstick



or scraped with a brush. At 18x26 and 20x30, the two available models are suitably compact to fit into both drum and percussion setups. For ease of placement, *Thunder Sheets* can be suspended from a gong stand or a boom-arm cymbal stand. **Sabian Ltd., Meductic, NB, Canada EOH 1L0, tel: (506) 272-2019, fax: (506) 272-2081.**

Yamaha Marching Percussion

Yamaha has introduced the 13" *Sforzando (MS-9213)* marching snare drum. The drum includes a 6-ply, all-birch shell for a focused sound and crisp attack. A high-strength die-cast aluminum suspension ring and batter hoop accommodate a *Kevlar* head, yet the drum weighs only 14.7 pounds. Ten aluminum tubular lugs and stabilizer *Power Posts* provide extra durability. Other features include ten independently tunable *Fibre Tech* snares, horizontal and two-point vertical snare assembly adjustments, and 6mm tension rods with double steel washers.

Other changes to the Yamaha marching percussion lineup include a newly designed 14" *SFZ* snare strainer with a smooth



throw-off mechanism and ten *Fibre Tech* snares, *Field-Corps* tenor drums with new tonal projection cuts and a steel reinforcement inlay ring for high-tension capability, and improved clawhooks on *Field-Corps* bass drums. All *SFZ* and *Field-Corps*

are available in white, silky silver, black forest stain, and red forest stain (by special order). In addition, the *Power-Lite* series of lightweight marching drums has been totally redesigned for 1995, with new shell configurations and several features "borrowed" from the *Field-Corps* line. **Yamaha Corporation of America, Band & Orchestral Division, P.O. Box 899, Grand Rapids, MI 49512-0899, (616) 940-4900.**

LP Percussion Items And Videos

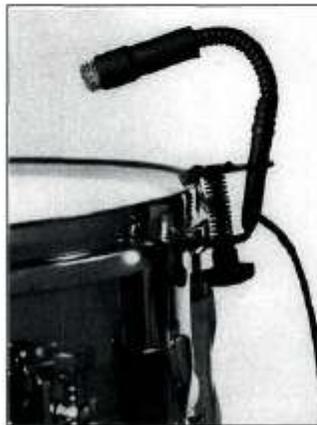


LP Music Group has created several new percussion instruments applicable either to drumset or percussion performance. They include *Jam Bells* (which combine features of agogo bells and cowbells and are available in high and low

itches), and *Whole-Tone Bar Chimes* (seventy-two bars, whole-tone scale intervals) and *Lu Bar Chimes* (ninety bars, tuned to the traditional Chinese scale). The chimes feature aluminum bars, Kevlar strings, and support bars of Siam oak.

Also new from LP are two videos. The first is *Community Drumming For Health And Happiness With Jim Greiner*, which is an informative glimpse into the drum circle. Set in a Santa Cruz, California meadow, Greiner presents the basics of community drumming in a relaxed, down-to-earth environment that people from all walks of life can understand and enjoy. On a more professional level, *The Studio Percussionist: Volume 1 Featuring Luis Conte* provides the viewer with a first-hand look at the art of studio recording, from laying down basic rhythm tracks to overdubbing. The focus here is on the playing of congas, bongos, djembes, tambourines, shekeres, and other miscellaneous instruments in a studio situation. **LP Music Group, 160 Belmont Ave., Garfield, NJ 07026-2394, tel: (201) 478-6903, fax: (201) 772-3568.**

K&K Snare And Tom Mic's

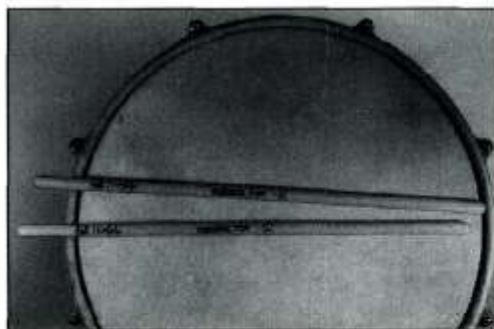


K&K Pickup Systems has introduced two miniature electret condenser microphones designed to clip onto the rims of toms and snare drums for compact placement while providing accurate reproduction. The *CSM 4* snare mic' features a hyper-unidirectional pattern to promote isolation. The electronics for this mic' were adjusted to fit the frequencies of a snare drum. In addition, the mid frequency range is user-adjustable to adapt

to any specific snare sound. The mic' is powered either by phantom power from the sound board or by a DC power supply available from K&K. The unit has a DC input and a DC output, so that another K&K mic' can be fed by the same power source. The mic' capsule is mounted on a 2-1/2"-long extra-firm gooseneck; shock-absorbing material is fitted inside the mic's head to avoid mechanical transmission of rim shots to the microphone. The mic' comes in a protective vinyl bag, and is priced at \$178.

K&K also offers the *CTM 3* tom-tom mic'. Similar in construction and features to the *CSM 4*, this mic' features a soft cardioid pattern, and its electronics are tailored for the frequency range of tom-toms—including a pre-set highpass filter to decrease low bass frequencies that are often the cause of feedback in drum mic's. The *CTM 3* is priced at \$158. **K&K Pickup Systems, 150 Delta St., San Francisco, CA 94134, tel: (415) 467-8412, fax: (415) 468-2268.**

Regal Tip Pete Escovedo Timbale Sticks



Regal Tip now offers a timbale stick designed by legendary Latin-jazz percussionist Pete Escovedo.

Manufactured from high-quality hickory, the sticks measure

15/32" in diameter and 15-1/2" in length—approximately 1/2" shorter than Regal Tip's standard line of timbale sticks. **Regal Tip, 4501 Hyde Park Blvd., Niagara Falls, NY 14305, tel: (800) 358-4590, fax: (716) 285-2710.**



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Pearl

The best reason to play drums.

Pearl Export Drumkit

by Rick Van Horn

Here's a fresh look at an industry standard.

Okay, I know what you're thinking. "Why is *Modern Drummer* doing a product review on a drumkit that's been on the market for years, and is probably the world's best-selling entry-level kit?" Well, it's like this. The last time we looked at an *Export* kit was back in August of 1989. The series has undergone a number of improvements since then. Besides, we regularly get inquiries about the quality of *Export* kits—especially from young drummers (or their parents) and from weekend semi-pros. So we figured it was time to take another look, to see just what makes the *Export* so successful.

Construction

Export drums feature 8-ply, 7.5mm-thick mahogany/lamin composite shells with no reinforcing rings. Our test kit was the *EX 22D-60DW* model, which featured a 16x22 bass drum, 10x10, 10x12, 12x14, and 14x16 suspended toms, and a 6-1/2x14 metal-shell snare drum. The toms and the snare drum were fitted with standard triple-flanged steel hoops. The bass drum also featured steel hoops—painted black and equipped with an inlay strip that matched the shell covering.

The toms and the bass drum featured a lug design that Pearl introduced a few years ago. The design employs separate lugs top and bottom (which is a fairly inexpensive way to go), but adds a metal strip fitted between the lugs to simulate the "long-lug" appearance of more expensive drums. The idea is simple, effec-



tive, and quite attractive—especially if you're partial to the long-lug look. The toms and the bass drum were fitted with Pearl's familiar *BT-3* and *BB-3* protrusion-style tom-mounting brackets (respectively).

The construction quality of the drums themselves left little to be desired (considering their price range). The interiors were not coated, but rather featured a nicely sanded wood veneer. The interior scarf-joint seam wasn't sanded smooth, but that's a bit much to ask for in an entry-level kit. Likewise the bearing edges were not sanded—although they were relatively smooth from their initial machining and appeared consistent from drum to drum.

Mahogany shells are quite light as compared to shells of birch or maple, which makes *Export* drums fairly easy to handle. That's a plus for a young (read: small) drummer, or for anyone who frequently has to load and set up a kit single-handedly. (I took the kit out on several one-night gigs, and I really appreciated this particular feature.)

The metal snare drum that was included on our test kit featured a smooth chromed-steel shell, eight center-mounted lugs, and a simple, functional strainer. The bearing edges and snare beds are created by rolling the edges of the shell over. I actually saw this operation being performed when I visited Pearl's factory in Taiwan last year. It's done on a computer-controlled machine, with a surprisingly high level of accuracy and consistency.

I have only two criticisms of this drum's construction quality. The first is that the actual edges of the metal shell (not the bearing edges) are not smoothed in any way. (I grant you that these edges are *inside* the shell, and you'd probably only touch them occasionally—when changing a head or maintaining the drum. But I touched them deliberately and found several spots rough enough to cut my finger.) The second is that while the snare strainer seems sturdy enough, the butt plate on the other end of the snares seems pretty flimsy, and is so small and flat that it's difficult to maneuver the plastic tape that holds the snares into or out of it. A slightly beefier butt plate that stands out a bit more from the shell would be a definite improvement here, and should not add significantly to the cost of the drum.

Appearance

Export drums are available in ten different covered finishes. Our test kit featured a new finish for 1995 called champagne frost. I must admit that when I first took the drums out of their boxes, I wasn't knocked out by the finish. It seemed to be an extremely pale translucent greenish-white (very close to the actual appearance of champagne, to tell the truth). But when I used the kit on my gigs, I was impressed by the way it picked up the stage lights. It held the colors and projected a visual character that was quite different from the way a typical gloss-white kit would do. I actually received quite a few compliments on how nice the drums looked—and I had to agree with them. It's nice to have a kit with a covered finish that looks this good, for several reasons. First, a covered finish is less expensive than a lacquered one. Second, it's more durable (which means you don't have to be quite so worried

about the drums as you schlep them in and out of your car or van). And third, if you do damage the finish—or just want to change your mind about the look of your kit—it's not too difficult to replace the covering with a new one. (That last feature is especially true of Pearl coverings, since Pearl does not glue the covering to the entire surface of the shell. Their coverings are secured with double-stick tape, and are quite easy to remove.)

Sound

Of course, it doesn't matter how well-constructed, lightweight, or attractive a drumkit is if it doesn't measure up in the sound department. So I'm glad to report that I was pleasantly surprised at the sound quality of the *Export* kit—with one significant reservation.

Pearl shipped us the kit equipped with their own brand of drumheads. The toms and bass drums featured *Ring Control* batter heads—clear one-ply heads with an outer ring of white coating material sprayed on. The tom bottoms featured similar heads that were completely clear. These heads proved problematic.

A mahogany-shell drumkit is not going to have the warmth and richness of drums made of maple or birch. In fact, the shell tends to promote brighter, sharper tones. As a result, the drums themselves create a snappy sound with lots of attack but not a whole lot of low end. The Pearl heads took this one step farther, projecting an undeniably "plastic" sound that no amount of tuning could modify. This is the classic "low-end drum" sound that many drummers complain about when discussing kits of this nature. What they don't realize is that most of the problem is in the heads, not in the drums.

In an effort to balance out the high-end bias of the drums, I swapped the Pearl tom batters for heads that I knew would project a lower fundamental pitch and a rounder tone: clear Remo *Emperors*. Not only did this switch achieve the effect I was looking for, it also gave the toms a wanner, richer, and (dare I say it?) more expensive sound. I was able to take the kit out on a professional gig and be more than satisfied with the sound and response of the toms.

The *Ring Control* batter head didn't bother me on the bass drum, because that drum's size helped it to produce more low end than the other drums could, and I like a good deal of attack from a bass drum anyway. But just for the sake of consistency I also tried it with an *Emperor* batter. The sound got thicker and a bit deeper, as I expected. I'd say that head choice here would be more a matter of personal taste, whereas on the toms I just couldn't get what I thought was a decent sound at all without changing the heads.

I realize that a drumkit's price includes the cost of the original drumheads, and I know that Pearl's intention with the *Export* is to keep it as affordable as possible. But considering the attention that has been given to other aspects of the kit, head selection seems a poor place to cut corners. Not only couldn't I get a decent drum sound with the Pearl RC heads, I couldn't get them evenly tuned to themselves, either. And considering that the vast majority of *Export* buyers are liable to be young drummers—who will proba-

bly be rock-oriented—it would seem logical to fit the bass drum and toms with heavier-duty heads anyway.

Having said all that, I can't complain at all about the head on the snare drum (which was a single-ply, white-coated Pearl WA model). In fact, I was quite impressed with the sound of the snare drum in general. It was unquestionably that of a metal-shell snare, with lots of ring. But I experimented with various forms of muffling and was able to get quite a respectable sound: crisp, cutting, and surprisingly responsive for a 6 1/2"-deep drum. Also unusual for an "inexpensive" metal drum of this size was its dynamic range: I played it with everything from brushes to the butt ends of 5Bs and it sounded fine.

Hardware

Probably the best thing about the *Export* kit is that it doesn't skimp *at all* in the hardware department. Our kit was supplied with two tom arms (for the bass-drum-mounted toms), a double-tom stand (for the suspended "floor" toms), a snare stand, a cymbal boom, a straight cymbal stand, and a hi-hat—all from Pearl's excellent 850 series. This is totally professional equipment that features single-braced tripods to help keep weight (and cost) down. The snare stand has a height range from quite low to fairly high, the hi-hat offers smooth, quiet response, and the cymbal tilters are Pearl's infinitely adjustable models. Unfortunately the tom arms feature ratchet tilters—which don't allow for infinite positioning adjustments—but I suppose Pearl has to keep *some* goodies for their more expensive lines. Otherwise the stands are all state-of-the-art and will last most players for years.

The pedal included with the kit is Pearl's 780 model, which is light, simple, straight-forward—and surprisingly playable. It's a chain-drive unit with a sizable footboard, so it should be fairly durable against the impact of enthusiastic stompers. I found it to have excellent action and quick response. My only criticism is that

the chain connection and the footboard hinge are both fairly loose, which makes the pedal a little noisy if nothing else is going on. This might prove annoying during solo practice, but it's not the kind of problem that would ever be noticed in any band situation other than an acoustic jazz trio.

Just for fun Pearl sent us the double-pedal version of the 780, the 792. (It's not a regular component of the *Export* kit, but since many drummers are getting into double-bass playing early in their development, Pearl wanted us to know it was available to those shopping in the *Export's* price range.) It utilizes a linkage system identical to that used on Pearl's more expensive twin-pedal systems; otherwise it had the same features and playing characteristics—both positive and negative—as the 780. It carries a list price of \$308.

Conclusions

I think it's important to mention that an "entry-level" kit is not necessarily a "budget" kit. There are many drumsets available that are priced lower than the *Export*—including one from Pearl called *Forum*. But such kits are designed exclusively for beginners, and are in no way intended to be used in a performance situation. "Entry-level" kits are intended for drummers who are entering into the musical field in a serious manner—but are still concerned with affordability. The 1995 edition of the Pearl *Export* kit suits that intention to a "T." It offers quality construction, professional-level hardware, attractive looks, and considerably better than average sound (given a little attention in the drumhead department). In light of the suggested retail price for our test kit—\$1,699—I'd have to add "value" to that list of attributes. [Just for your reference, a "traditional" five-piece kit configuration lists for \$1,190.] It's easy to understand why the *Export* has been such a popular kit for so many years.

Stay Cool Instrument Covers

by Rick Van Horn

We're heading into the summer months—the season for outdoor gigs. And whether those gigs are stadium shows or backyard pool parties, they all have one thing in common: the hot summer sun.

Nashville drummer Wesley Pryor knows all about what the summer sun can do to a set of drums. For the past several years Wes has spent a good part of the summer months doing grandstand shows with country acts like Baillie & the Boys. On one particularly hot afternoon Wes set his drums up, performed a sound check with the band, and then went for an early dinner prior to the first show. By the time he got back an hour later, the finish on his drums had buckled from the heat it had absorbed. The kit required total re-covering, at a cost of several hundred dollars.

Wes decided then and there that this would not happen to him again, and began looking for something on the market that would afford his drums protection from the sun while set up in outdoor



situations. He found that there wasn't anything available—so he came up with his own device: the *Stay Cool Instrument Cover*.

The cover employs a "space-age" reflective material bonded to a stiff and heavy woven backing. The woven nature of the fabric makes it extremely puncture- and tear-resistant, and the reflective material is rated by its manufacturer to withstand heat up to 300° Fahrenheit.

I was eager to test the *Stay Cool* cover, because I play a substantial number of outdoor functions myself (patio gigs, frat parties, and the like.) Unfortunately, Wes sent us a sample cover in the dead of New Jersey's winter. Undaunted, I found a means to evaluate the cover's heat-resistance anyway. I took it into our photo studio, and propped it up against a chair in front of every hot photo lamp we had. I put a thermometer on the chair behind the cover, and left for an hour. When I returned, the reflective surface of the cover was too hot to touch with my bare hand (indicating a temperature that would certainly damage a drum covering). But the thermometer on the other side of the cover read only 78°—just ten degrees higher than the room temperature. I consider that pretty effective protection.

The *Stay Cool* covers are designed as flat sheets, rather than any sort of tent-like covering. They're equipped with elastic loops around their edges to help you hang the cover from cymbal stands in such a way to provide a shield between your drums and the sun. The stiffness of the fabric backing also helps the cover support itself; it doesn't just collapse like a piece of cloth. Due to this stiffness the cover should be rolled up when not in use, rather than folded, because repeated folding can cause cracking in the reflective material.

I heartily recommend *Stay Cool Instrument Covers* to any drummers who play under the sun (or under extremely hot stage lighting, for that matter). A variety of sizes are available, including a 50"x60" version for a single-bass kit priced at \$58 (including shipping) and a 48"x84" version for a double-bass kit priced at \$68. Custom sizes are also available. When you compare the cost of a *Stay Cool Cover* to that of re-covering an entire drumkit, the *Cover* is extremely cheap insurance! For more information, contact Stay Cool Instrument Covers, 810 Bellevue Rd. #207, Nashville, TN 37221, (615) 646-3245.

Easton AHEAD 5A And 7A Drumsticks

by Rick Van Horn

When Easton first introduced their aluminum drumsticks, they targeted the rock market with 5B and larger models. I tested several, and I really appreciated some of the characteristics of these unique sticks. But I couldn't use them consistently, because they were too big for my normal gigs. (I tend to use sticks in the 5A range.) So I was very pleased when Easton's stick designer, Rick Grossman, told me that he was working on models intended specifically for smaller hands and/or lighter playing. Well, Rick came through—with both 5A and 7A models.

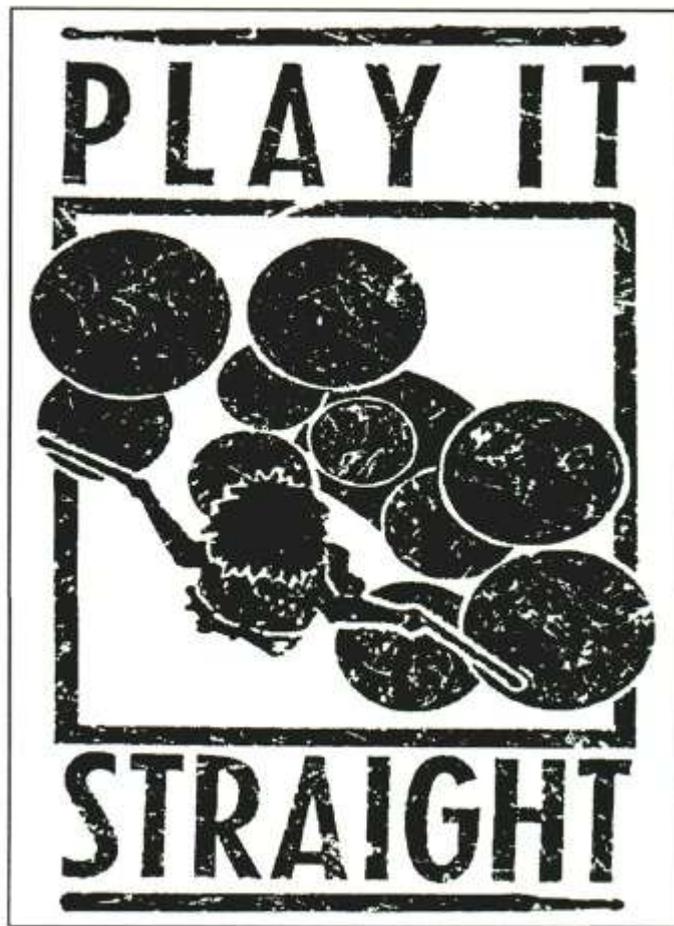
The 7A model is 15-11/16" long and .540" in diameter, and features a medium taper. The 5A is 16" long and .540" in diameter, and features a medium taper as well. Each model is just a tad heavier than an average hickory stick of the same size.

Ironically, after begging Rick Grossman for a 5A model, I

found that I actually preferred the 7A. With the same grip diameter between them, I found that the additional 5/16" of length on the 5A made the stick just a bit front-heavy for my taste. (Admittedly, this is a *very* subjective evaluation; many players prefer a little more weight up front on a stick to add impact power. Such players might find that characteristic even more desirable when the stick is not big and heavy overall.) On the other hand, the 7A, with its shorter length, seemed better balanced—especially for lighter playing and improved cymbal response.

Although the sand-blasted aluminum grips of the sticks posed no slipping problem for me, I wanted to see how wrapping the grips with Easton's excellent grip tape would affect the balance factor. (Rick Grossman swears by the grip tape, and recommends its use on every Easton model.) The additional weight and mass of the tape on the grip end definitely made the 5As more comfortable to play (again, to my *personal* taste). After I wrapped the





7As they became the quickest-bouncing non-wood sticks I've ever played—which took a little time to adjust to. Between the tape-adjusted balance and the reflexive characteristics of the aluminum shafts, the sticks fairly *flew* off the snare drum.

Easton offers two types of tips for these stick models. The standard tip is an acorn shape; a new ball tip is available as an option. I played the sticks with both tips and found that the ball tip added a bit of definition and "pointedness" to the stick impact—an effect that was especially notable on a ride cymbal and on smaller rack toms. The acorn tip produced a broader, more traditional response from drums and cymbals.

Easton aluminum sticks are not promoted as being unbreakable. They are, however, extremely durable—probably several times more so than comparably sized wood sticks. The playing area of the aluminum shaft is covered by a replaceable polyurethane sleeve—a system that prolongs the life of the basic sticks even more. My point in mentioning this is that for those who play at lower impact levels and who normally use fairly small sticks, a pair of Easton 5As or 7As might very well last for *years*. This makes their initial price of \$29.95 quite a reasonable investment—especially considering that this price includes a pair of replacement sleeves! If Easton AHEAD sticks aren't in your local drumshop, contact Big Bang Distribution, 9420 Reseda Blvd., #350, Northridge, CA 91324.



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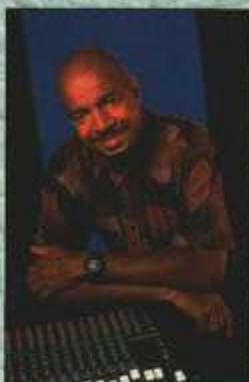
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Other Friends of Mackie include: Dave Abbruzzese (ex-Pearl Jam), Omar Hakim, Gregg Field, Bashiri Johnson (Whitney Houston, Madonna), Blas Elias (Slaughter), and Will Calhoun (Living Colour).

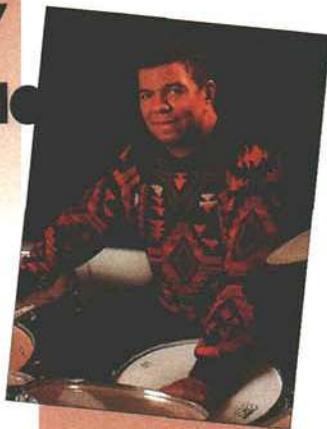
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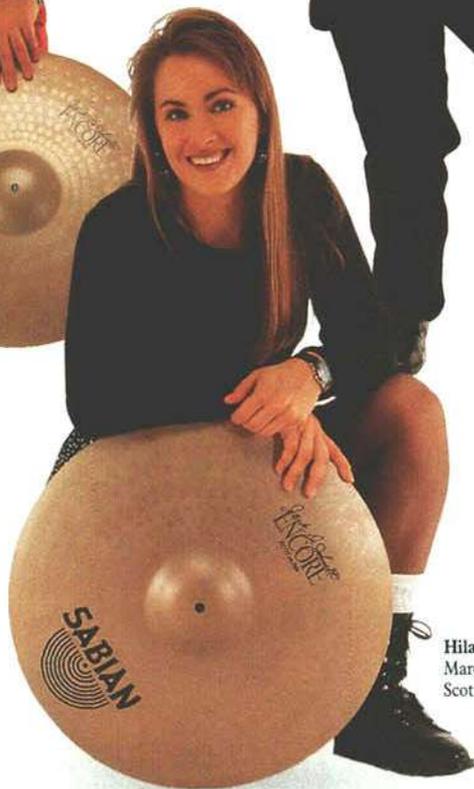
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Photos: Ebel Roberts (DeJohnette); James A. Brown (Abbruzzese, Jones, Watts)

Mystique Sound Solutions Drum Triggers

by Rob Fedson

With these triggers, what you don't see is what you get.

Ever wonder how big-name drummers like J.R. Robinson get that great "triggered" live sound but have these beautiful, sparse-looking setups? Well, some of them are using a new acoustic drum trigger system from Mystique Sound Solutions. These triggers actually go *inside* your drums to make the most visually appealing trigger setup around. This type of trigger design has sonic benefits as well as a completely "no hassle" approach to set-up and break-down.

Description

The concept behind the Mystique triggers is reminiscent of the May EA internal miking system. However, this is strictly a trigger-

ing system, not a sound-reinforcement tool. The triggers themselves come in four different designs for different applications. The J3000 snare trigger and the J5000 tom trigger (\$59.95 each) are essentially the same unit, with the only difference being a longer side bracket on the J5000 to accommodate a deeper drumshell. The triggers mount on the existing lug screws on the side of the shell and slide to be in the correct position about 1/8" to 1/4" below the batter head. This design means that nothing touches the head, so the drum sound is literally unaffected by the trigger. Inside mounting has the additional benefit of making this system a one-time-only purchase. As the Mystique help line states: "Remember, if you can't hit it, you can't break it."

Mystique offers two choices in bass drum triggers. The 77000 (\$59.95) mounts like the other models and has a long enough bracket to get close to the impact area of the beater. The 77000 (\$59.95) is an impact-pad-style trigger that provides very fast response. The pad should be placed where the beater hits the head and can be easily used with single or double pedals. This pad does mute the head somewhat, but it also offers a higher level of accu-



racy than the J7000. Overall, however, I preferred the 77000 because it didn't affect the sound of the bass drum in any way.

Installation

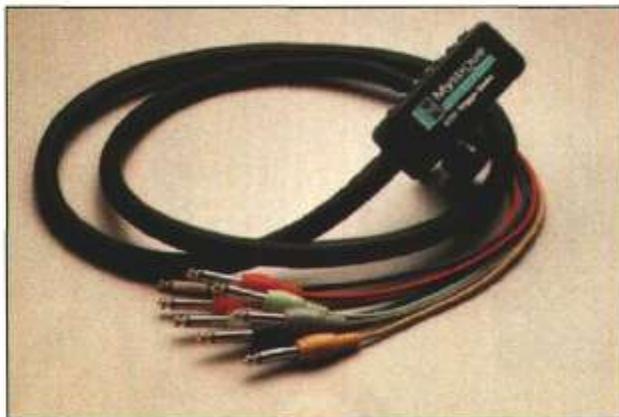
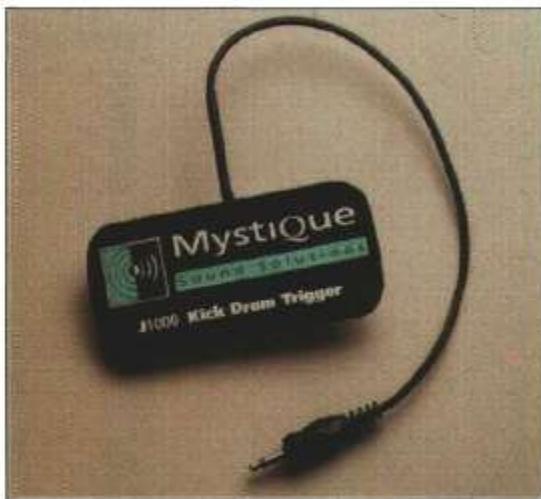
I found installing Mystique triggers to be very simple. First, you remove the bottom head of the snare or tom-tom (or the front head of a bass drum). Then you line up the trigger along a lug near the drum's existing sound hole.

I had no problem fitting Mystique triggers onto lug screws on both Gretsch and Yamaha drums. (The hardest part of installing these triggers is likely to be getting the lug screws off the first time, because they probably will never have been off before.)

The next step is to run the trigger's permanently attached cable out of the sound hole and secure it with a rubber grommet that is supplied for each cable. This worked without a hitch on my Yamaha kit, but my Gretsch drums did not have a sound hole or an old tom mount hole big enough to get the triggers' mini-pin connectors through to the outside world. I felt that this was a compatibility issue, not a flaw in the design of the triggers, because Mystique has used quality cable in their product and the molded connector would be more prone to damage if it were any smaller. For these circumstances, or for a more professional and permanent look, Mystique suggests drilling a 3/8" hole in the middle of the shell on the player's side and securing the cable with the grommet. If you're in a situation where you trigger all the time, this would make the whole system invisible to an audience.

Performance

Both the response time and relative isolation factors of the Mystique triggers were excellent. I used several different trigger brains and found no problems with devices from any manufactur-



(Top to bottom:) J5000 Tom Trigger, J1000 Bass Drum Trigger, J2000 Trigger Snake

er. For example, the default settings on the Yamaha *RM50* module caused absolutely no false triggering on even the hardest hits. The performance of the trigger brain is a bigger factor than the triggers themselves in this case.

Laying Cable

The last product in the Mystique line is the 72000 Trigger Snake (\$129.95). This nifty gadget has a small box that mounts on top of your bass drum with eight trigger inputs and a 9.9' single snake cable that runs to your trigger interface. (A 16-1/2' version, the *J2000X*, is also available, at \$169.95.) The centralized mounting position makes it easy to run the individual trigger cables in a cosmetically pleasing manner even on large setups. The black snake cable can run along the floor to the brain and remain nearly invisible. The snake has numbered and color-coordinated 1/4" plugs for fast setup. I found the snake, like all of the Mystique products, to be made of quality materials that neither looked nor felt flimsy.

Conclusions

Mystique has created a little magic in the drum world by offering the best-looking drum trigger system you never saw. Solid performance and reasonable prices make this system a real winner. No hassles for setup and packing, great looks, great sound, no alteration of the real drum sound, and long performance life are just a few of the ways that this invisible

system should make drummers and sound techs happy. Even if you only use triggers occasionally, you can leave the Mystique triggers permanently installed and never know they are there. Mystique even offers a twenty-four-hour automated setup-assistance help line. (Now, if I could just find a booking agent with the same qualities.) Mystique Sound Solutions Inc., 345 Atwater, St. Paul, MN 55117, tel: (612) 488-1560, fax: (612) 488-1589.



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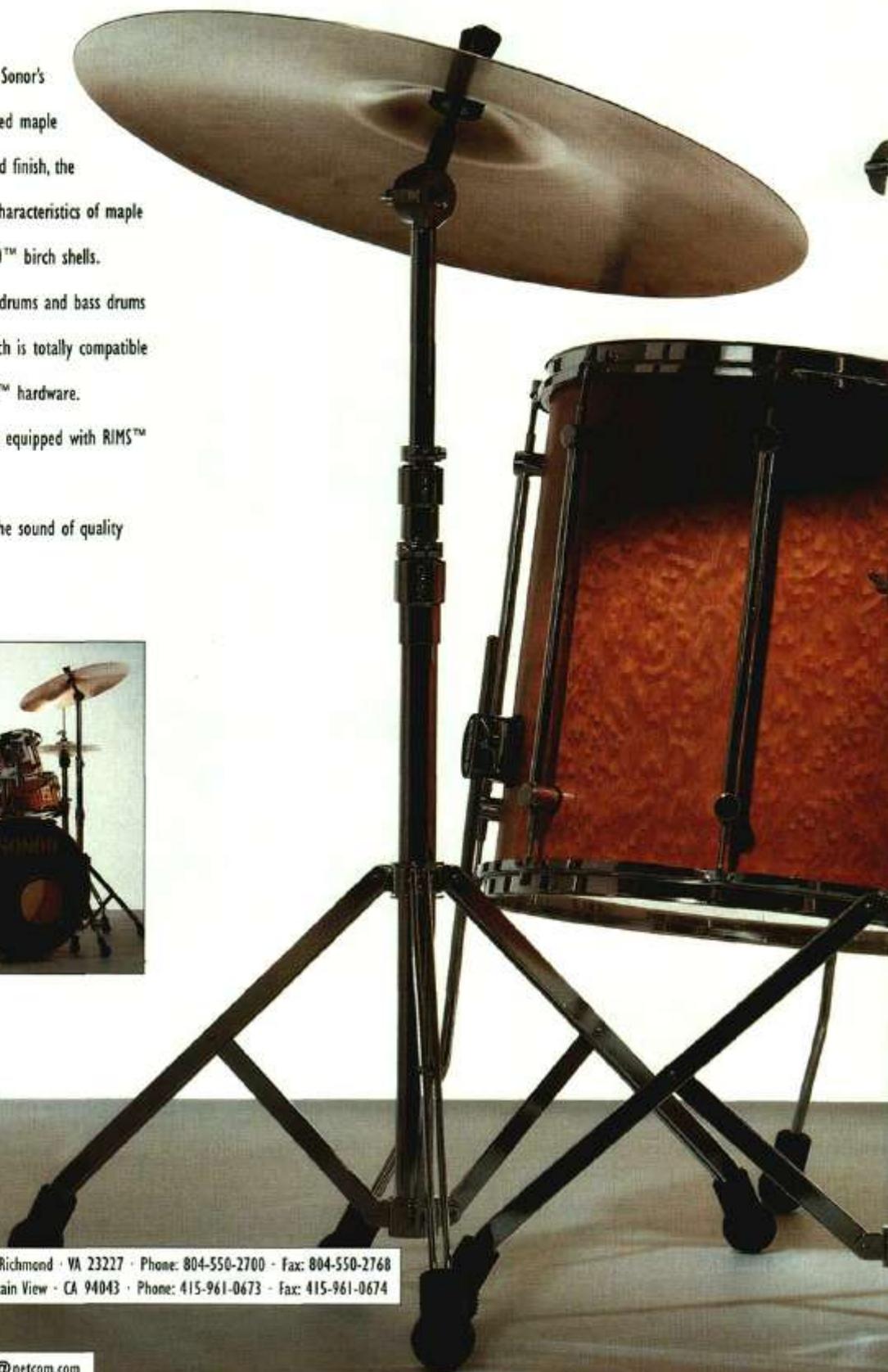
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Denny Fongheiser

What happens when one of L.A.'s busiest session players decides to go on the road? He takes a chance, that's what.

By the fall of 1993, Denny Fongheiser had amassed an impressive list of recording credits with such artists as Tracy Chapman, Counting Crows, Roger Waters, Boy Meets Girl, Seal, Trevor Rabin, Bruce Springsteen, Alannah Myles, Brian Setzer, Juliana Hatfield, Michelle Shocked, Stevie Nicks, Kim Carnes, Peter Dinklage, Joshua Kadison, and Belinda Carlisle. Yet that's when he decided, in order to get reacquainted with the excitement that first made him play the drums, to leave town to play live.

First he accepted an ongoing gig with Heart, with whom he's been able to juggle his studio work and record their new live offering, *The Road Home*. Then he took a two-and-a-half-month stint with Diamanda Galas and John Paul Jones, sticking his neck out to stretch his capabilities and play in a total performance-art situation.

Fongheiser has always taken chances. In 1981 he arrived in L.A. having had the typical experiences of school jazz band and early private lessons. The members of St. Regis, the band he moved from northern California with, lived together in a house provided by a manager, and when they played the famed L.A. club the Troubadour, it was packed. The band was offered a record deal that night. The next week, when the band played an empty Madame Wong's, their deal was

rescinded. Then when their manager bailed, Denny—for the first time in his life—had to get a day job. The next six months brought several different jobs—at an answering service, as a busboy, as a delivery boy who didn't know his way around L.A.... Two things kept him going: his faith in himself, and the loving (and sometimes financial) support of his family.

Denny took another risk early in his career by passing on a chance to join a Top-40 band, because he was afraid he'd become too

comfortable on the gig and not go

after what he really wanted. When he finally quit the day jobs, Denny checked out every drumming opportunity, setting up and tearing down his drums three times a day to play with unsigned bands working in L.A. Between that and subbing on gigs, Denny made a multitude of contacts, which eventually paid off when a recommendation brought him to producer Don Gehman's attention. It's been a slow and steady building process for Fongheiser ever since.

Most recently, Denny ventured into a new arena by producing (and playing on) Monica Behan's debut record. By holing himself up in a house/studio in Santa Ynez, he literally lived and breathed the project for seven weeks, during which time he once again missed several recording opportunities. Fongheiser knows, though, that his value as a studio musician will continue only as long as he remains artistic and creative, two qualities his work has consistently been known for.

Taking Musical Risks And Winning

By Robyn Flans



Photo by Angela Giglia-F

RF: Could you choose a few tracks you've recorded that you feel are representative of who you are, tell us why they are representative, and detail what you did on them?

DF: That's hard because when I listen to records I've played on, I'm usually very critical. But there was one on the first Tracy Chapman record called "She's Got Her Ticket," which had a reggae vibe. I like the sound of it and I remember having a great time doing it. As far as being representative of how I enjoy playing, the attitude is on the backside of the beat, which has an R&B feel to it. Everything is wide, from the opening fills on. I enjoy playing a lot of different ways, but my most natural, favorite way is leaving a lot of space between the notes.

It was fun to do all the things we did around her vocal. There are a lot of hits on the last 16th of 4, instead of hitting the downbeat, and sometimes it would just be a flam on the snare on 1 instead of a bass drum. We turned the groove around a little bit.

There's a song on Monica Behan's record called "Lullaby," which has no bass on it. It's Fender Rhodes and guitar, sounds pretty dirty, and was tracked with those two instruments and the vocal. Then I overdubbed drums. I chose to make it somewhat loose and slippery. It's a 6/8-feel ballad, and I like playing ballads a lot.



Photo by Aldo Mauro

Denny's Basic Setup

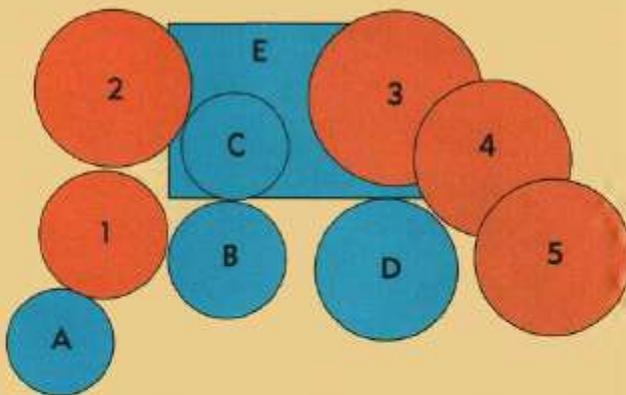
Drumset: Drum Workshop
(will use various sizes in the following configuration)

- A. 4 x 12 snare (by PureCussion)
- B. 6 1/2 x 14 brass snare
- C. 10 x 12 tom
- D. 14 x 16 tom
- E. 18 x 24 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 15" *New Beat* hi-hats
- 2. 18" A (or A *Custom*) medium-thin crash with rivets
- 3. 22" A ping ride
- 4. 18" K medium-thin crash
- 5. 18" *Oriental* China

Hardware: Tama *Lever Glide* hi-hat, Tama *Iron Cobra* bass drum pedal with various beaters, Collarlock/DW cymbal stands and mounts



Heads: Remo coated *Ambassador* on snare (or coated C.S.), coated or clear *Ambassadors* on to, batters with clear *Ambassadors* underneath, clear or coated *Ambassador* on bass drum

Sticks: Zildjian 6A wood tip, Pro-Mark *Hot Hods*

Percussion: Remo 16" djembe, Taos hand drums, various Rhythm Tech products

There's enough space to really make something feel good, and you can really use a lot of dynamics.

On this song, I took a real loose approach. The drums are a little like the old Stevie Wonder tracks, where some of the fills are more unusual than you would expect. The sound is similar, too—real dry. We did it in the bedroom with no EQ. Instead of EQ'ing it, we just moved the mic's from the drums to add either bottom- or top-end. I even put tissue and tape on the toms and snare drum, and I padded up the bass drum to get that older, drier sound. The bass drum, snare drum, and hi-hat are on the left side of the speakers and the tom fills are on the right side, and when the fills come in it's really interesting. There are a lot of different triplet-feel fills. It really seemed to fit the lyrics and

her approach.

Another feel that is very "me" is "Hakuna Matata," from *The Lion King*. They wanted a cross between some of the Paul Simon/South African-feel stuff and a New Orleans feel. Of course, it was supposed to feel "up," as if one didn't have any worries. I chose to use brushes on it, because with brushes you can dance around a lot and they don't stick out and get in the way. It would have been too overpowering with sticks. I like that track a lot.

I think the important thing on that track was really picking the spots where the fills happened and where the accents picked up and went away. I would come down in dynamics when a percussion part would come in and give it its spot, and then I would come back up in other sections. Since the percussion part was finished before I added my part, I used dynamics to make it seem as if we were a section recording it together.

RF: How complete was the track when you entered the picture?

DF: It was complete except for the bass and drums. The thing that was difficult was the timing. The director ended up recording all the actors singing in New York with no click and just a piano, so the time was all over the place. So then, with the computer, we had to try to find out where everything was moving. The click still wasn't where it needed to be, so I turned it off and just played to the track. When there was rhythm stuff happening, it was a lot easier, but sometimes there were some open spots where it was just the drums doing the rhythm. I tried to listen to the melody and follow where they were going.

RF: Did you see the clip?

DF: Yes, they showed us the scene, so I watched it three or four times and we talked about where we needed things to get

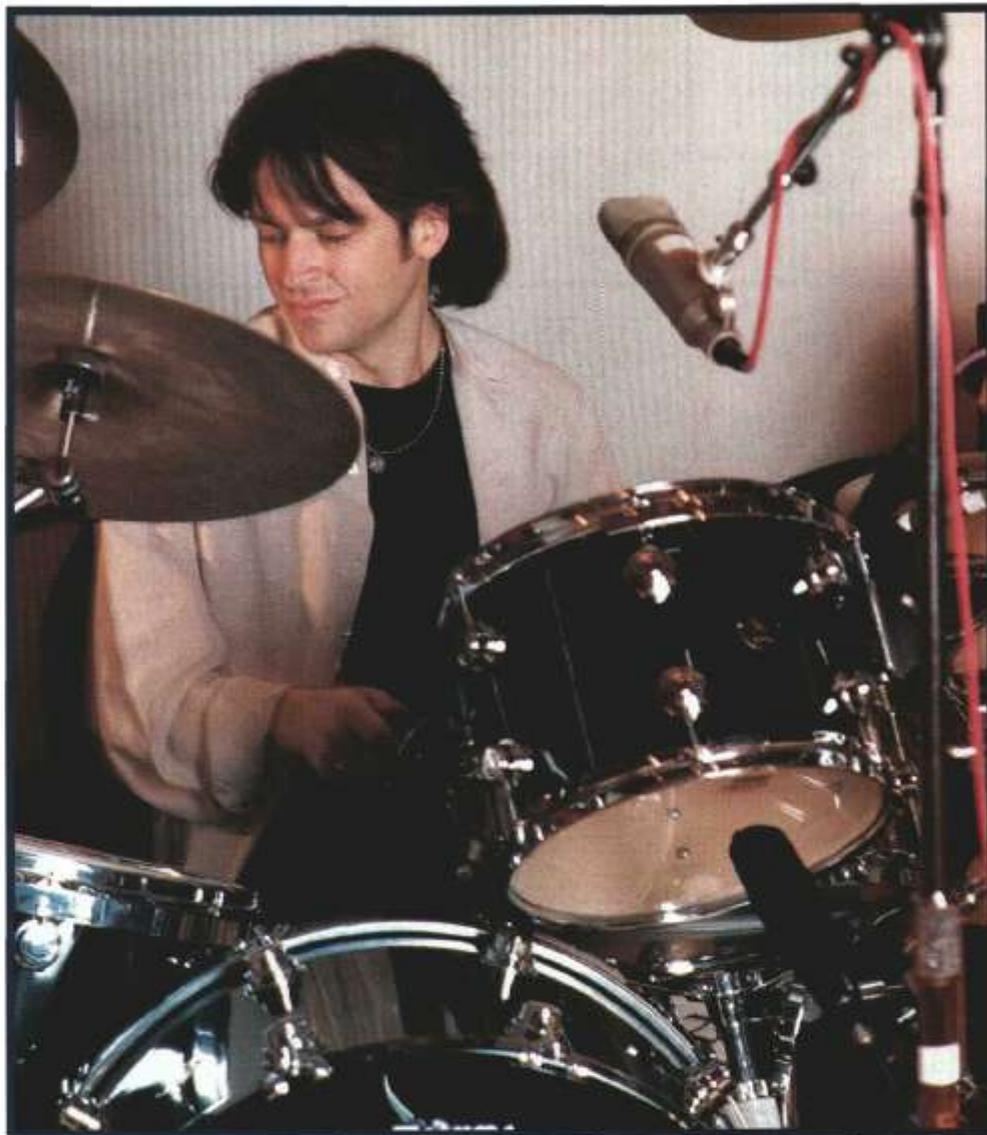


Photo by Aldo Mauro

Denny's Listeners' Guide

Here are the albums Denny lists as the ones most representative of his drumming...

Artist	Album Title
Alannah Miles	Rocking Horse
Peter Frampton	Peter Frampton
Tracy Chapman	Tracy Chapman
Heart	The Road Home
Monica Behan	Only Moments
Counting Crows	August And Everything After
Jacko Pierce	Bringing On The Weather
Roger Waters	Amused To Death
Joshua Kadison	Painted Desert Serenade

...and here are the ones he listens to most for inspiration.

Artist	Album Title	Drummer
Led Zeppelin	IV	John Bonham
Tower Of Power	East Bay Grease	David Garibaldi
Sly & the Family Stone	Fresh	Andy Newmark
Little Village	Little Village	Jim Keltner
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Toto	Toto	Jeff Porcaro

bigger, where we needed the dynamics to be. Once we figured that out, Neil Stubenhaus and I went out and played it. At that point it went very quickly. The whole thing probably took about two hours.

RF: The track really sounds like those characters are walking in that sort of arrogant gait.

DF: That's where the New Orleans thing comes in; it kind of

gives it that cocky feel, with the African intent.

RF: Can you talk about some of the different roles you have to play as a top session drummer?

DF: Sometimes you're just there to be the groove, without a lot of dynamic change. Another role involves really playing with the vocal dynamically, emotionally, and feel-wise. Examples of my really playing with the artist and moving the song would be

Studio Drumset Placement:

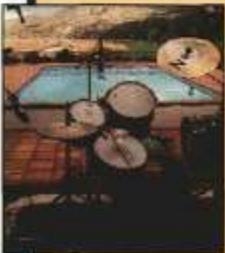
Experimentation Is The Key

Every room has its own acoustics. The way a room "sounds" is really designated by the angles of the walls and the ceiling. As you move a drumkit around a room, you'll be surprised at how different it will sound at various places. One end of the room might have more low-end. Another might have a little more top-end.

It's definitely worth your time to experiment by setting up your kit in different places to see what sounds best. It's all individual preference, but it's important to know that drum placement is a variable in the recorded sound of your drums. Personally, I like to set up in the part of any room that has the most low-end so I can get a lot of bottom out of the bass drum. You can always get more high-end from a far mic' or overheads, but additional low-end is more difficult to achieve.

I've done enough work in L.A. to where I've gotten to know the angles of most of the rooms. When I go to Capitol, Studio B, there's a drum riser in the far-left corner as you're facing the tracking room from the control room. That's where the drums react the best. At Rumbo, Studio B, facing the tracking room from the control room, the best spot is straight back. But keep in mind that your drums will sound differently than mine, and even the same drum in a different studio may sound completely different. A bass drum that works great at one studio may not react well in another.

I recently produced and played on an album by a new artist, Monica Behan, and I was fortunate to be able to really experiment with drum placement. We recorded in a house/studio in Santa Ynez, and the following photos show some of the placement options we tried.



In this situation we tried the drums outside in the backyard, and the sound was very dead. I was adding drums to an existing track, and they sounded interesting by themselves, but we couldn't get the drums to fill up the track the way we needed it. We ended up not using this drum track, but it was a fun experiment.

The following setup was actually in a bedroom, which ended up giving us a bigger sound than the big room without our having to use any room mic's. We didn't have to use a lot of EQ either. When we wanted a little more of a dry, close sound, this room reacted the best. There wasn't a lot of sound reflection—which was good because if a room is real live, it's hard to get a close sound unless you baffle off the drums.

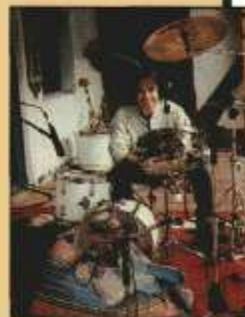
The photo shows the specific setup, which we used on a song called "Lullaby," and we were going for a very dry sound with just hi-hat, kick, snare, and two toms. I had the older Stevie Wonder drum sound in mind, and I put a lot of padding in the bass drum and on the snare and toms. We used no EQ. We changed the drum sound by moving the mic's backwards and forwards to get more bottom and top end.



This setup was used on a song called "She." This is actually the living room, and it had a big, live sound—very high ceilings and all glass on one wall helped. We had a drum riser in the corner, and luckily it was very solid. A lot of times when you have a drum riser, you'll lose a lot of bottom end. If it isn't a solid floor, the bass drum doesn't react well, and all of your low-end goes through the floor.



This placement was for the song "Refuge," which was tracked outside in a courtyard. It added a "rubber" feel to the sound of the drums. On this particular song, we tracked with a little 16" bass drum and a 13" floor tom. We close-miked the drums and at one point we had a room mic'. This little breeze-way was about forty feet long, and it had a ceiling and was open on the left. At the end was a window for the kitchen, and to the right of that was a door that went into a pantry. We put a microphone at the window, and we miked the pantry, too! It sounded great.



This kind of process takes a lot of time, especially for the engineer and the assistant. John Ingoldsby and Efren Herrera, who were incredible. One time we tried something in the guest house, and Efren had to run snakes [cables] and get everything up there—then we found out it didn't sound that good. The process was definitely time-consuming, but it was worth it because we were able to give each song its own personality.

• Denny Fonghelsner

tracks I cut with Tracy Chapman, Shawn Colvin, and the new Heart record, *The Road Home*.

I get called a lot to fix tracks that are moving around a little bit too much. That's also very challenging. Sometimes you have to replace what's there, and that can be very difficult because everybody originally played to a track that wasn't feeling right, so they're moving with it. You have to move with them but make it feel like it's *not* moving.

Sometimes I'll get called to do that with percussion—shakers, tambourine, etc. If the track is pulling back in a section, you can stay more on the beat and play with it and it won't feel like it's moving back so much. Or if it rushes, you can pull back a little with a shaker or tambourine. It's really helped me to understand how you can make something feel a certain way.

I went over to England for the first Seal record, and they had already used three or four drummers there. They played me a lot of the stuff and said, "On the things you don't like, why don't you play something." On some of it, I liked what the drummer did. I understood what he felt about the feel, so I just redid the hi-hat part.

RF: What about a challenging session?

DF: It's nice to be challenged by a suggestion to approach something in a way that I haven't before, such as not using any cymbals, only using toms, or using four snare drums. That's my favorite way of working—coming up with something unusual. I also enjoy arranging tracks. On the record I just produced for Monica Behan, I used three different drumkits. At one point I laid down something on the verse of a song with one sound and then in the B section and the choruses I used a totally different sound. I love to stack percussion, too.

Sound also contributes to dynamics. Things don't have to get louder or softer, they can just change the way they're sounding.

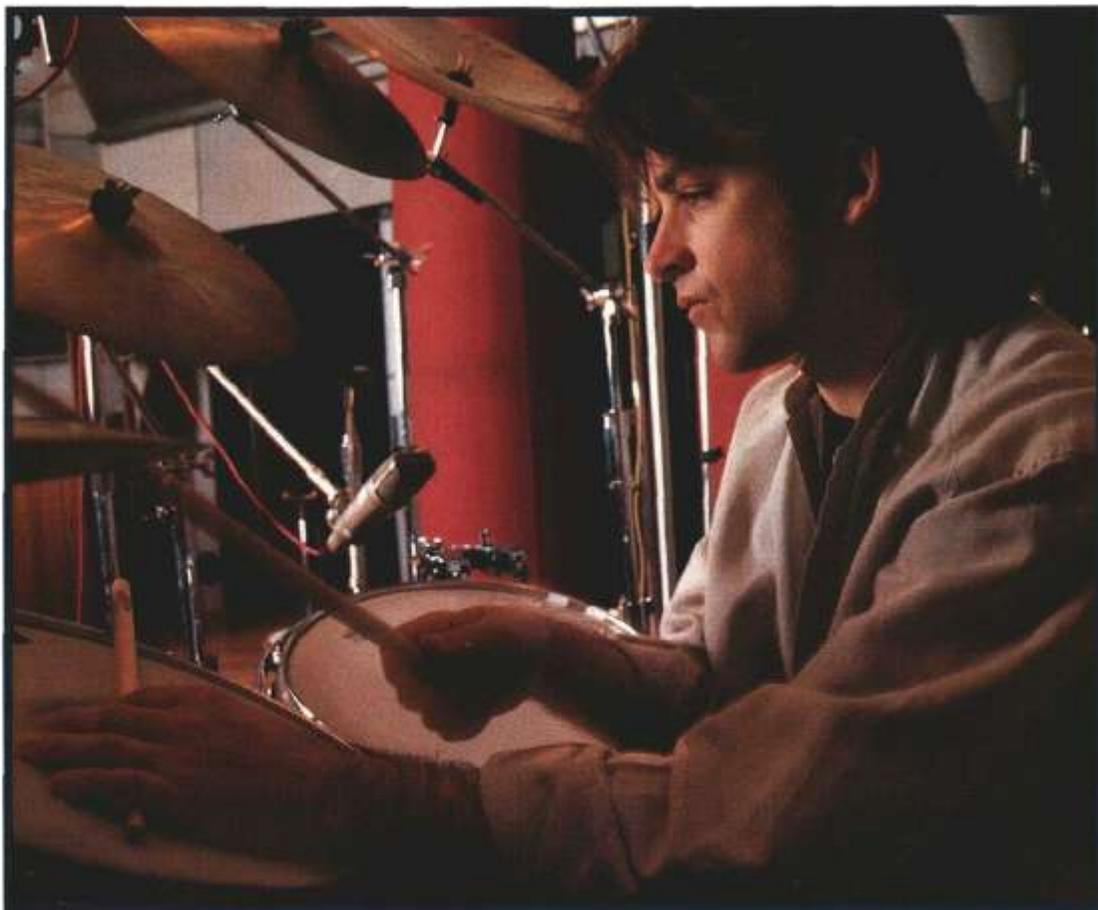


Photo by Aldo Mauro

"When someone asks me to play in the style of another drummer, like a Moon or a Ringo, I'll picture how that drummer moved. Then my body movement goes in that direction."

There is one song on Monica's record called "She," where the beginning is this little 16" bass drum from an unbelievable kit my dad had bought me on my thirtieth birthday. I hit it with a mallet on the beginning of Counting Crows' "Mr. Jones," and I used it as the main bass drum on the new Heart record. It has almost the sound of a Roland 808 drum machine, but it's *bigger*. It sounds like the biggest bass drum in the world.

Monica's song "She" starts out with that drum and a brush on a top hi-hat and a brush on a little 10" snare drum. Then another kit comes in later—with a bigger padded bass drum—on the opposite beats from the original bass drum, to lift the second verse so it keeps your interest. I'm playing sticks on that, and it's a little different groove than the original one. After the B section it goes into the bridge and the whole drum sound changes to a big ambient sound.

I actually had an experience where I had to do just the opposite of what you'd think was right. It was for a record called

Jacko Pierce that T-Bone Burnette produced. He pretty much just let me do what I wanted because he knows how I play. But on this one particular song he said, "I want you to play using no dynamics on anything. Hit the hi-hat at the same velocity every time." It was strange and a bit challenging, but it turned out really cool for that song.

RF: What's been your worst drum experience?

DF: This was quite a few years ago, but I got a phone call from a producer who wanted me to overdub. The band was sort of a techno band, but he said he wanted to take a U2 approach with the drums. I recommended an engineer and he told me not to bring any electronics. When I got there, he had brought his own engineer, who wasn't quite working for me. The band was there, and he played me the song. I got a sound up, but the U2 feel just didn't fit the band or the song at all. They got such a big sound on the drums that it made the track sound like it was slowing down—it just didn't work. It was *never* going to feel right. I could see that the band wasn't liking it, either.

The producer had asked me to please go along with him, even if they didn't like it. I can't do that. I'm there to make the artist happy; it's their life and their work of art. Of course, I want to please the producer, too, but it has to be right for the artist. I feel they're trusting me with a big part of their life and I need to take on that responsibility. I always try to find out what kind of record the artist is trying to make, what the music is about, and how he or she wants to approach it.

At one point the band stopped me in the hallway and asked if I liked what was going on. I had to be honest with them, so I said I

didn't think it was working. I tried to work with the producer, but I finally said to him, "Sorry, this is not working." I redid the sounds and tightened it up and finally got something that worked a little better for the song. The band thanked me a lot for being honest and trying to make it right. But it was really frustrating. To me, even if I love what goes down in a session, if I feel the artist isn't satisfied, I'm going to feel horrible. To me, that's a complete failure on a session.

RF: This brings us to bad producers vs. good producers.

DF: That's where I've been really lucky. I really respect most of the producers I've worked with. I've learned so much from producers like Don Gehman, David Kershenbaum, Arif Mardin, Don Dixon, John Paul Jones, Bill Wray, Derek Nakamoto, and Joe Chiccarelli.

To me, a great producer is someone who makes a record for the artist, who really understands and respects the artist and likes what they're doing. He's supposed to use his expertise and experience in the studio to get their vision to come out of those speakers. I learned that from Don Gehman, who I did the Brian Setzer record with, which was one of the first records of that level I did. He was into the artist. After Brian Setzer, we went in to do a band called Cock Robin, and it was a completely different kind of record, but he respected the artist and did the right record for them.

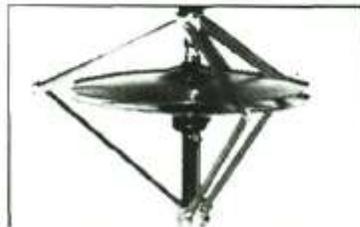
A good producer is also someone who is good at casting, knowing who is going to be the right person for a lot of reasons—their sound, their feel. Great players can approach things in a lot of different ways, so casting is very important, as well as personality in casting—who is the right person this artist is going to feel good

Denny Fongheiser
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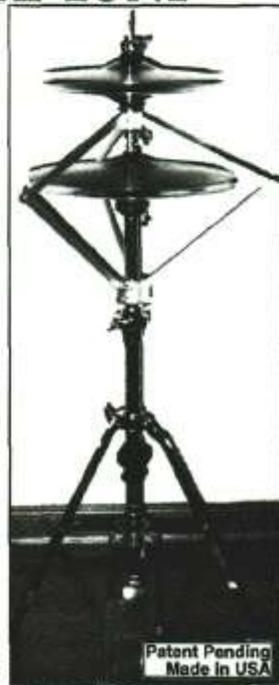


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around and be comfortable with.

A good producer should also be someone who understands the combination of sound, part, and feel. You can play a part and, even at the same tempo, it can feel so many different ways by the way you use dynamics or how you space the notes—how wide of a swing you have going, how straight it is. You can play the kick and snare one way, but the hi-hat alone can make the groove feel so many different ways. And like I was saying earlier, certain sounds make the track appear to be slow or fast. If it's a real bright sound, it might pick up the track. Even if you're playing it at exactly the same tempo with the same feel, it will feel totally different when the sound changes.

RF: Are you always the right person for something?

DF: I have been in situations where I didn't feel that what they were asking me to do was something I felt would come out naturally for me. I remember being asked once to be more Keith Moon-like. On this particular session they wanted a lot of playing, a lot of filling up, and not really a groove happening—those things Moon did so well. That's not something that comes natural to me, so I tried it a couple of times and said, "It's not going to work. I can give you something I think you're looking for, but it's going to be a slightly different approach." It ended up working out.

When someone asks me to play in the style of another drummer, like a Moon or a Ringo, I'll picture how that drummer moved. Then *my* body movement goes in that direction.

With the Ringo vibe, I think about swinging the stick back and forth on the hi-hat. That helps me get his feel. When I first started playing the older fusion stuff, I would picture how someone like Billy Cobham would approach things. You never quite get it; you're not the same person and it still has your approach. But at least it does have that flavor.

RF: Very often one of the definitions of a bad producer is one who makes musicians do a zillion takes. I have the impression that you don't mind doing a lot of takes.

DF: There are times when it can be negative, but if you pace it, it can be okay. I think what you have to know is that if something isn't happening in the first four or five takes, there's something wrong. I

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will come in and listen to a track after I've played through it a couple of times. Then I get a much better idea of what it needs. When things feel good, everyone has the same reaction. If you are having to do it a lot of times, there is a problem and you have to make adjustments. Sometimes it's, "This isn't grooving as well as it should. Let's add a little bottom on the bass drum." Sometimes it's a simple sound change. A lot of times when I don't have enough bottom end, I'll put a couple of other bass drums or low drums right in front of my bass drum, and the mic' picks up the low-

end that is coming out of there.

As for miking the bass drum, I'll usually use a Sennheiser 427 for the attack and a Neuman 47FET, which is a tube mic', right outside the hole on the front bass drum head. That picks up the air and more of the low-end. The low-end really starts happening when it leaves the bass drum. Sometimes I'll take another bass drum with no padding and place it two feet in front of the main bass drum. Then I'll place a blanket over the two drums with a microphone positioned in that space, capturing the rumble from the other bass, or I'll put one mic'

on each side of the bass drum.

On one song off the Behan record, we had a bass drum on the left side, and on the right side there was a Taos Indian hand drum with a real low-end sound. I draped a blanket on top of the two drums and recorded it, and that gave us the bottom-end we needed. So if you're really having to do something a lot of times, you have to figure out what the problem is. It has to be either the sound, the part, or the feel.

RF: Don't you get stiff after the twentieth take?

DF: At times, yes, but I think that sometimes you get better. Sometimes something just happens to make it click. A lot of times it isn't even something you can put your finger on. Once you have the overall picture, the sound is working, and the vibe is there, then it's just a matter of getting that special take. It's not something that can be forced.

On the Joshua Kadison record, there was a song called "Painted Desert Serenade" that we recorded as we were learning it. We went back out to redo it, but it never happened as well as the original. The reason that happens sometimes is because

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everyone in the room is focusing on the same thing, and you're all breathing and moving together. We were listening to the song, the vocal, and the melody, but we weren't thinking about what we were playing. Everyone had the same focus. Once you start thinking about what you're doing, your focus changes and it's never going to feel the same.

That happened on the Williams Brothers record, too, with David Kershenbaum producing. We learned "It's A Wonderful Life" while they were getting sounds and we said, "Let's just do a run-through," which they recorded. And that was the take. A whole new bridge section happened while we were doing it, too. When that happens, it feels so good.

On Monica's record, some of the tracks happened that way. We tracked each song differently so each would have its own personality. One song was tracked with me just playing djembe, with a piano and vocal. Then we put everything on top of that, and that one was a second take. We went for takes that felt good all the way down. There was another song called "This Time" that we did late at night. It was a

track with bass, drums, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, Wurlitzer, and vocal, and we ended up playing it a total of four times. Then we listened to it, went back out, and did it two more times.

Usually it's the end of the song when everything is feeling great—the first part is the hardest. So what happens sometimes is that once we finish a run-through and we've had a chance for the song to settle, they keep the tape rolling and we immediately track it again. That way the track feels consistent and good all the way through.

But the sign of a bad producer is when you do a track like that and it feels great, and then he says, "Good, now let's replace the bass, let's replace the guitar...." It might get tighter, but it will never feel the same.

RF: On several occasions recently drummers have said to me that drummers make good producers.

DF: When I first began to put feelers out to let people know I was interested in producing, a few A&R people said the same thing. As a drummer, you *have* to listen because you're guiding everybody. The

most important thing is to listen to the song and know what it's about. If it's a dark song, you may need to play more "dark," more bottom-end kind of stuff—bass drum and toms and maybe not a lot of bright cymbals. Drummers think of things texturally to express the mood of a song. Again, a good producer gets into the song, and he's 100% right in the middle of it. To be a good drummer you have to have that same attitude.

Because of the frequency range you have between the bass drum, the snare drum, the hi-hat, and the cymbals, you're taking up a good percentage of the sound on that tape. The bass will be down below with the bass drum, the guitar will be up around where your snare drum is, and the keyboard will be around there as well. Frequency-wise, the vocals are between your cymbals and your hi-hat. Since drums take up the widest frequency range, your mood has to be right because everything else is going to weave around you.

One of Monica's songs, "This Time," is lyrically an extremely emotional song, so we were careful with the sounds we chose. Everything was pretty raw-sounding and

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—John Baldwin, Percussion Notes
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natural. We did a mix on it and thought it might be a single, so at first we glossed it up a little bit and EQ'd things a little differently with some reverb. We made it sound a little smoother, but after four bars of the song, we felt no interest. It didn't draw us in. We went back to the rough mix that didn't have all that stuff, and our interest was there the whole time. A producer has to watch that in the mix, and then when it's time to master it, he has to make sure that stage doesn't mess with the feel of the song.

RF: Can you get stale doing the number of sessions you do?

DF: Yes. During the first record I did with Don Gehman, he said, "As you get busier, be careful not to burn out. Take breaks." It really is important. I'll notice it when I buy the records I've played on, and I'll hear a song or two that I played the same thing on—then I know I need to take a break.

To me, a lot of it is about living. If I have a week off, I won't even pick up a pair of sticks. From living life and listening to others and having conversations, when I sit down to play, I end up playing different from when I left off.

RF: So you say "no" at times when people call?

DF: As a musician, you have a lot of involuntary breaks, but I will pick and choose. If the projects are very different from one another, it doesn't matter how busy I am. If I'm doing a folk record and then the next week I'm doing an alternative record and then I'm doing a heavier rock or pop record, it's a lot easier to not get stale. If I do two or three records in a row of the same kind of music, I start not enjoying it and really craving something else.

RF: Didn't you lose a lot of work while producing Monica Behan?

DF: Yes, but sometimes you have to take those chances, like when I chose to go on tour with Heart after not touring for five years. I missed doing some records, but I think it was worth what I got out of it.

RF: What *did* you get out of it?

DF: I found a love for playing live again, and I realized the importance of it. I remember being at Oceanway one day, and Jim [Keltner] was there. He asked me if I had been playing live and I said I hadn't. He said, "Don't let it go. It's something that really sparks you and gives you a dif-

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ferent energy." That hit me, and a few months later, when I got the call from Heart, it seemed to be the right thing. They didn't want me to cop the exact sound and feel that they previously had. They wanted a combination of a lot of percussion and drums. We went out and did two sets, "An Evening With..." sort of thing, where the first set was acoustic. I hadn't ever really played percussion in a live setting; I had learned to play percussion in the studio, really.

I ended up putting together a percussion set with a kick drum, a hi-hat with a tambourine so I could have a backbeat and some dynamic changes, and a Remo djembe. You basically have a full kit with a djembe. When you hit the center, you have a bottom end like a kick drum; when you slap it, it's like a snare; and all the inside stuff is the percussion and toms. I also got a couple of riveted cymbals, so I could hit them with my hands and they would sustain. I had some wind chimes, too, for endings of songs when I wanted something to sustain a little more.

The second set with Heart was the electric set, which was full kit. It was a great experience and I was playing great songs

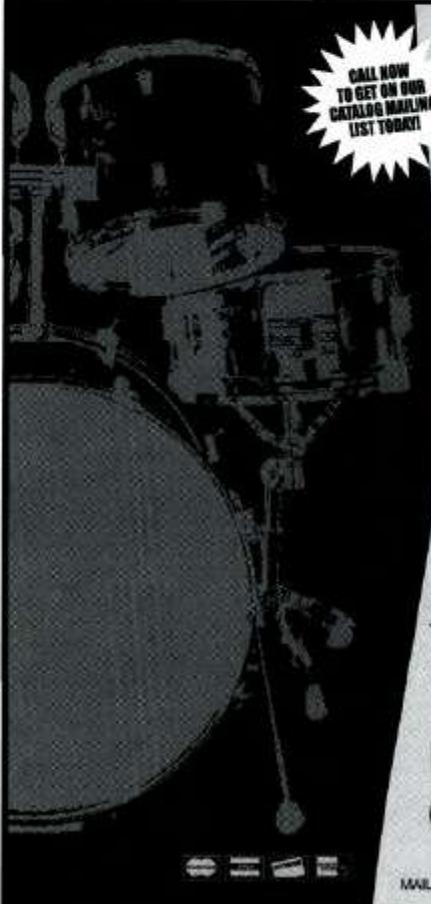
with great singers. I ended up having one of the best times of my life. On tour I use headphones because I don't want the monitors bleeding into the drum mic's. And having those voices in my headphones is amazing. It's so much fun that every night we just start yelling on stage.

RF: How do you feel about how far you've gone, and what are your future plans?

DF: I feel very lucky to have had the opportunity to work with the artists, producers, and musicians I've worked with. Anyone in this business at any level should feel very lucky. I feel it's very important to go for what you believe and try your best to create your own destiny. That takes incredible support from family, friends, and co-workers.

My future plans are to keep moving forward. Playing drums will always be my first love and main focus. I'm especially happy to have been able to branch out and play in the situations I've been involved with in the past couple of years. Producing and writing is something I will also be pursuing. I'll *always* be looking for new and different situations to be involved with.





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Jazz Up & Comers

Greg Hutchinson, Yoron Israel, and Clarence Penn:

A trio to swing by

by Ken Micallef

With the advent of CD reissues, historic music videos, and corporate interest in preserving and promoting jazz, America's "classical" music is stronger than ever. And though there may not yet be a national jazz circuit for working players to make a living on, high-profile, much-ballyhooed artists such as Harry Connick, Jr. and Joshua Redman have turned into magazine cover boys, rivaling Chet Baker for sheer commercial presence.

All of this, in turn, has created a ground swell of interest in a new generation of musicians. Outstanding young jazzers such as Roy Hargrove, Christian McBride, Cyrus Chestnut, James Carter, Jacky Terrasson, Tim Warfield, Stephen Scott, Geoff Keezer, David Sanchez, and Don Braden are all part of an ongoing renaissance in jazz. After years of critics complaining about the lack of originality (and personality) among younger musicians who were often forced to record as leaders before their talent was mature, today's fresh-faced upstarts are putting a unique spin on the past while making the future their own.

The drummers in this rebirth have also grown up with a wealth of information at their fingertips. Assimilating everything from Parliament Funkadelic and Hendrix to Miles Davis and John Coltrane, these stick wielders can fly and float on swing as easily as they funk-out on fatback. Greg Hutchinson, Yoron Israel, and Clarence Penn are as intimately acquainted and fascinated with Dennis Chambers as they are Philly Joe Jones. And though their bread and butter comes from straight-ahead work, each of them is pursuing R&B work almost as voraciously.

There are a number of drummers coming to greater attention on the jazz scene, including Troy Davis, Brian Blade, Billy Drummond, and Joey Baron, to name but a few. Here we focus on three who are among the busiest, and the baddest.

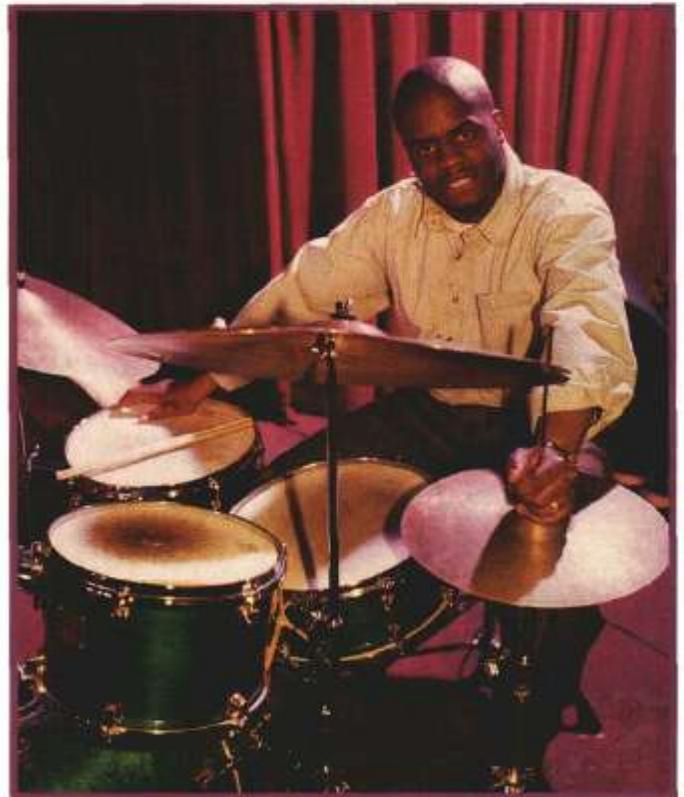
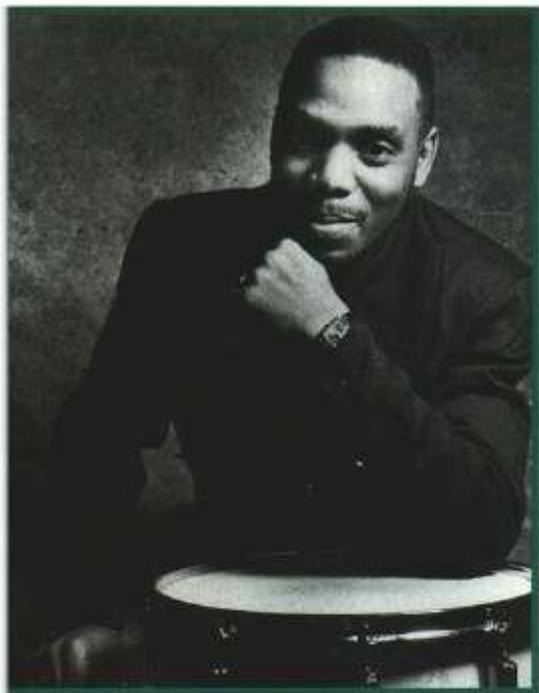


Photo by Ebet Roberts

"I try to incorporate everything into my drumming. Even if I'm playing jazz I'll incorporate the funk element. I think it all has a connection."

—Greg Hutchinson



"During certain periods of my **development** I sounded a lot like **Philly Joe**, and at other times like **Tony**. Now I'm thinking about what I can add to the whole legacy."

—Yoron Israel

"People know I can play **funk** and straight-ahead, but a lot of guys want to typecast you. Some won't even consider you for a rock or **funk** gig after playing with Betty Carter."

—Clarence Penn



Photo by Daniela Federichi

Greg Hutchinson

Southpaw Greg Hutchinson grew up in Brooklyn listening to his mother's big record collection and his father's voluble percussion. After hours of hearing Sarah Vaughan, Sonny Rollins, Charlie Parker, and Dinah Washington, he'd climb up to his dad's percussion set and try to replicate what he'd heard. Eventually Greg became so good his father recruited him into a reggae band he led called the Triadics. From there Greg immersed himself in the funk of the '70s and in drum studies. Lessons with Marvin "Smitty" Smith and Kenny Washington opened Hutchinson's ears to the possibilities available to him. Quickly enough, he landed international tours with Red Rodney (who played with Charlie Parker) and Stephen Scott, which led to the "Big Kahuna" of jazz gigs: a two-year stint with legendary vocalist Betty Carter.

Now the twenty-four-year-old Hutchinson is a stunningly mature drummer, handling velocity with ease (check "Salt Peanuts" from *Joshua Redman*) while commanding a wonderful sense of dynamics ("Soppin The Biscuit" from Roy Hargrove's *Tenors Of Our Time*). And he has one of the fattest brush sounds anywhere. Grace, mixed with a swinging fire, is Greg's trademark.

Recently joining Ray Brown's band after a three-year tenure with trumpeter Roy Hargrove, Greg has also recorded and toured with Lou

Donaldson, Jimmy Heath, Wynton Marsalis, Joe Henderson, Eric Reed, Frank Wess, Johnny Griffin, and others.

KM: Your solo on Hargrove's "Shades Of Jay" sounds a bit like Elvin, but with the upbeat accents of a funk drummer.

GH: I try to incorporate everything into my drumming. Even if I'm playing jazz I'll incorporate the funk element. I think it all has a connection. If it feels right, I'll try to put it in there. I don't restrict myself.

KM: Is it fair to cite Philly Joe Jones or Roy Haynes as big influences?

GH: Yeah, and a lot of Blakey... that indestructible big beat and all that fiery stuff. If you're going to play you have to put some fire up under the cats. I don't see myself as a person who can just sit there and coast—that's like cocktail drumming. It's not in my personality. I like to get in there. Blakey and Elvin, Billy Higgins and Idris Muhammad... a bunch of cats have influenced me.

KM: Has any one drummer been particularly shocking to you?

GH: When I saw Elvin he was playing on an entirely different level from the '60s. He's so strong, when he shook my hand I

thought it would break. He's got a grip and I can see he's got that fire. A lot of cats get older and they lose it. I don't mean it as a put down, but the body tends to function differently. His thing is harder than it was before. His sound is huge.

KM: Your technique is so sharp and exacting. What did you concentrate on for technique?

GH: I've always considered myself to be mediocre-to-okay, technically. I never studied a lot of technique outside of the rudiments. A lot of cats will sit in a room for hours, but I never did that, partly because during my studying period I was never disciplined enough. From playing and trying to put on the drums what I was hearing in my head, I would almost "bully" the parts out. I'd force myself to figure out stickings just to get around. So I've come up with my own stickings for certain things. Now I really want to go

Hutchinson, Israel, and Penn:

back and get that whole thing down, actually go back and study some classical snare drum. That's what I missed. I studied with a great teacher, Justin DiCiocio, who taught Omar Hakim and Steve Jordan, but I wasn't studying hard enough then.

KM: And going with Betty Carter must've been another school.

GH: I was really into her music, so I never had a problem with that. After leaving her and going with Roy Hargrove, the intensity level was higher, so I had to go back in the shed. But just being out there playing helped me to develop a lot of different things, both technically and conceptually.

KM: Most drummers who've worked with Betty Carter cite her incredible grasp of tempos and dynamics, but it wasn't as difficult for you.

GH: I was ready for it. Playing with Roy was more open. It's very different playing with a vocalist than an instrumentalist. I had to switch vibes, I had to set it up.

KM: Not to mention the traditional empathy between the trumpet and the snare drum.

GH: You take Miles Davis with Philly Joe Jones or any of his drummers, and they've had that relationship. Whether it was Miles and Tony, or Miles and Jimmy Cobb or Jack. It's weird, the two just lock up. I don't know what it is. Roy and I are of the same vibe, I push him and he'll push me. That's what I find challenging, pushing each other. And we have a lot in common. With Betty, it's go her way, or just go away. [laughs]

KM: On the road with Roy, are you guys as likely to listen to Sonny Rollins as much as Public Enemy?

GH: Oh man, I listen to everything. It would be hard for me to cut that out totally, because that's my generation. Jazz is the music of

Hutch's Selected Discography...

Roy Hargrove: *Tenors Of Our Time, The Vibe* (Verve); *Of Kindred Souls* (RCA)

Frank Wess: *Make My Blues Turn Green* (Concord)

Joshua Redman: *Joshua Redman* (Warner Bros.)

Eric Reed: *The Swing And I* (MoJazz)

Joe Henderson: *Lush Life* (Verve)

Betty Carter: *Droppin' Things* (Verve)

Johnny Griffin: *Chicago, Paris, New York* (Verve)

...Influences...

Art Blakey: *Big Beat, Indestructible, Moanin, Etc.* (Blue Note)

Miles Davis: *Circle In The Round* with Philly Joe Jones; "Blues No. 2," with Jimmy Cobb, Tony Williams (Columbia)

Miles Davis: *Four And More* with Tony Williams (Columbia)

Parliament Funkadelic: *Knee Deep* with Dennis Chambers

Ralph Moore: *Round Trip* with Kenny Washington (Reservoir)

Chaka Khan: "Clouds" with Steve Ferrone

Vinnie Colaiuta: *Vinnie Colaiuta* (GRP)

John Coltrane: *Afro Blue Impressions* with Elvin Jones (Impulse/GRP)

Sonny Rollins: *East Broadway Rundown* with Elvin Jones (Impulse/GRP)

...and Kit

Drumset: Yamaha *Maple*

Custom in turquoise finish

A. 5 x 14 wood snare

B. 8 x 12 tom

C. 14 x 14 floor tom

D. 14 x 18 bass drum

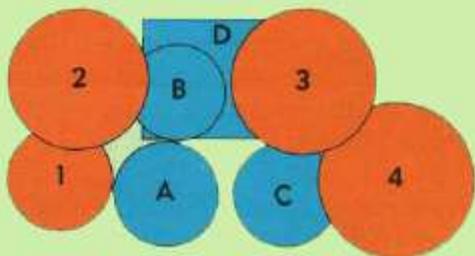
Cymbals: Zildjian

1. 14" K hi-hats (formerly owned by Philly Joe Jones)

2. 18" K (from the 1950s)

3. 20" K ride (also from the 1950s)

4. 22" China



Yoron's Selected Discography...

Rodney Kendrick: *Dance Dance World* (Verve)

Ronald Muldrow: *Diaspora* (Enja)

Ahmad Jamal: *Chicago Revisited* (Telarc)

Abbey Lincoln: *Devil's Got Your Tongue*

New York Stories: *New York Stories* (Blue Note)

Art Farmer: *Live At Sweet Basil* (Sweet Basil)

Billy Pierce: *Rio* (Muse)

Jay Hogard: *Little Tiger* (Muse)

...Influences...

Max Roach: *Drums Unlimited*; any Max Roach/Clifford Brown (Emarcy)

Miles Davis: *Milestones* with Philly Joe Jones (Columbia); *Seven Steps To Heaven, Live At The Plugged Nickel* with Tony Williams (Columbia)

Wynton Kelly: *At Midnight* with Philly Joe Jones (Veejay)

John Coltrane: *Ballads* with Elvin Jones (Impulse),

Live At Birdland (Cool N'Blue)

Ralph Peterson, Jr.: *V* (Blue Note)

Ahmad Jamal: *Live At The Pershing* with Vernel Fournier

A trio to swing by

the '50s that you heard all the time on the radio. A station like KISS FM [New York's most popular hip-hop/rap station] would've been playing jazz all the time back then. I wish my generation was listening to more jazz and realized where it all came from. Hopefully, that will change. But I'll listen to it all... Public Enemy, Zeppelin... you can learn from everybody.

KM: Is playing jazz entirely about replicating the past, or can you add something fresh to it?

GH: Definitely the latter. Explore it, study it, make it your own, then push it further. You have to swing and play in the idiom, but this is not the '50s. It's nice when people say I sound like Elvin or Philly Joe, but in the end I want to sound like me. You study it, and then hopefully you take it to another level.

KM: On Eric Reed's "The Gemini Suite" [from *The Swing And I*], you take a brush solo that starts with playing time, then you go to a three-over-two shuffle, and then some flashy stuff. In short solos like that, where the tempo is very quick, how do you construct your ideas in a limited amount of space?

GH: It depends on the vibe of the tune. Originally I was just going to play time, but half-way into it I decided to stretch out a little bit. On that tune I was trying to play some of the melody, but as we'd just rehearsed the tune the day before, I didn't pull it off. And I was trying to catch the hits. So at least the form of the tune was expressed in the solo.

Every time I record I think about what somebody once told me: "Whatever you play will be there forever." So man, I might want to put a little extra in there. I don't really sit down and chart it out—it happens as I'm playing. And sometimes it doesn't happen. Sometimes I try to make it happen and it doesn't happen! There

have been records in retrospect that I wish I would've played differently on.

KM: How did you get your brush playing together?

GH: Mostly from K.W.—Kenny Washington.

KM: Do you move the brushes in a forwards or backwards direction?

GH: I'm all backwards. At faster tempos I keep the right hand playing the swing pattern on the right-hand side of the drum, always trying to play the ride cymbal pattern. If you don't keep that up it will kick your butt. I used to play forward but the sound for me now is so much bigger—a tremendous difference. It's awkward at first but a big difference in sound.

KM: Do you keep your left hand palm-up or palm-down for

Perm's Discography...

Steps Ahead: *Vibe* (NYC Records)

Stephen Scott: *Renaissance* (Verve)

Cyrus Chestnut: *Revelation, The Dark Before The Dawn* (Atlantic)

Laird Johnson: *Quiet Flame* (Venus)

Joshua Redman: *Joshua Redman* (Warner Bros.)

Javon Jackson: *When The Time Is Right* (Blue Note)

Tim Warfield: (Crisp Cross)

...Influences...

Miles Davis: *Miles Smiles* with Tony Williams (Columbia)

Red Garland: *Live At The Prelude* with Specs Wright (Prestige)

Thelonious Monk: *Live At Newport* with Frankie Dunlop (CBS)

John Coltrane: *Coltrane* with Elvin Jones (Impulse)

Barry Harris: *Live At The Jazz Workshop* with Louis Hayes (Riverside)
Sphere: Four In One with Ben Riley (Polygram)

Weather Report: *Domino Theory* with Omar Hakim (Columbia)

John Scofield: *Loud Jazz* with Dennis Chambers (Gramavision)

...and Kit

Drumset: Slingerland Artist Custom series in red wine finish

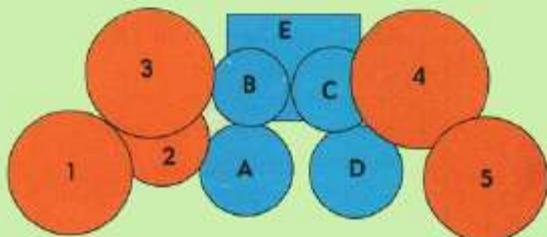
- A. 5-1/2 x 14 snare
- B. 8 x 10 tom
- C. 9 x 12 tom
- D. 14 x 14 floor tom
- E. 14 x 18 bass drum

Sticks: Vic Firth SD 9 Driver and SD 10 Swinger models, Regal Tip wire brushes

Cymbals: Sabian

- 1. 18" HH Thin Chinese (with rivets)
- 2. 14" HH Light hi-hats
- 3. 20" HH medium ride
- 4. 22" HH Sound Control ride
- 5. 18" HH crash/ride

Hardware: Slingerland
Percussion: LP triangle, bell tree, Mambo bell, and Cha Cha bell



...and Kit

Drumset: Pearl Masters Series in custom blue finish

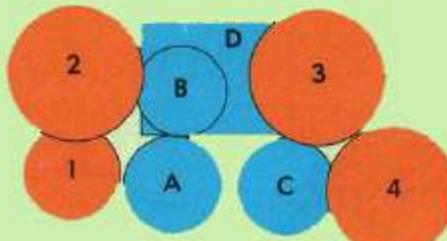
- A. 5 x 14 maple snare
- B. 8 x 12 tom
- C. 14 x 14 floor tom
- D. 14 x 20 bass drum

Heads: Aquarian Jack DeJohnette signature model on all drums

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 13" K hi-hats
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- 4. 18" A Custom crash

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Sticks: Zildjian 7A



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brushes?

GH Both. With palm up I can get a trill, but with palm down I can press harder and get a little bigger sound.

KM Are there any particular solos you're proud of?

GH On Roy Hargrove's live album, *The Vibe*, I soloed on "Gentle Wind." The feeling and the vibe was great. I just kept going. The ideas kept coming to me. And I really enjoyed working on the upcoming Johnny Griffin album. He's bad. There's also an album with Jay Wukai, a Japanese trombonist, and on it they kept giving up solos to me and bassist Rodney Whittaker.

KM You've played with young musicians like Roy and Stephen Scott as well as Johnny Griffin, Betty Carter, and Joe Henderson. What are the big differences between the generations?

GH You can't compare them. They're all bad cats. The young cats may want to experiment more, like playing over the bar line or different time signatures, but that's the only major difference.

KM What effect has playing with Roy had on you?

GH I always found myself playing rather hard. That's good sometimes, but not all the time. There have to be degrees. We didn't always play with dynamics, and that sucks for the audience. It felt like we were slamming them all the time. But it was always intense, which I liked. I was always on the edge of my seat—I had to be ready. We were coming from early bop to late Trane or late Miles, and we even did some funk, too.

KM And you'll be going out with bassist/leader Ray Brown now?

GH Yeah, Ray's going to change the format of the trio to adjust to me. He said, "I want you to play with the same fire." So I get to go back to school again. There's only so much you can learn from your peers.

KM You were the sole drummer on Joe Henderson's *Lush Life* album. That must have been a learning experience.

GH The rehearsals were killing—I think they were actually better than the record. Everyone always asks me about the duet we did on "Take The A Train." I was amazed listening to the stuff he played...incredible. That album did a lot for me in terms of my career.

KM Did Henderson give you any particu-



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lar instruction?

GH: On some tunes he wanted the music to float. He didn't want to hear the bass drum too loud. Al Foster plays with him a lot; it's that kind of vibe. I wasn't really into that then, but now I understand and enjoy it. That was one of the things he hipped me to. Then there are the old war stories he told—things he's done, people he's played with, what not to do. Older musicians can give you advice to help avoid the mistakes they've made.

Joe told me to be careful in dealing with people and to take care of my body. When you get older it all catches up to you. Betty said that too. More importantly I learned that business is business and playing is playing, and you have to deal with both of them.

KM: There's a funk side to your playing that most people don't know about.

GH: That's right. I grew up listening to Parliament, Millie Jackson, Sly & the Family Stone. I'm recording now with the keyboard player from Pieces Of A Dream. I'm hoping that'll be my "in" with people who don't know I can play that too.

I've been traveling for the past seven

years with no break, but I dig it. I've played the big halls with Roy Hargrove and the chitlin' circuit with Lou Donaldson. I think musicians should be more open, instead of thinking, "I'm a jazz drummer" or "I'm a funk drummer." Do it authentically and know the style—and don't give a damn what other people think when you play different styles. As long as I'm swinging, that's all that counts. The funk's gotta have that swing, that bounce—and the swing's gotta have a funk side to it also, that steady pulse. The bottom line is the groove.

Yoron Israel

During our interview Yoron Israel played one of his compositions on the grand piano set up in his New Jersey home. The bittersweet tune recalled Yoron's drumming, which is sharp and, at times, intricate, full of dense shadings and subtle inflections. With splashes of Debussy and Ravel and chord clusters of modern harmony, Yoron's writing recalls the R&B and gospel of his native Chicago as well as his immersion in New York's more adventurous strains of jazz.

Like a slowly building head of steam, the twenty-nine-year-old's star has been rising

among Manhattan musicians. Yoron has supported vocalists Abbey Lincoln and Tony Bennett, and has charted new terrain with pianist Rodney Kendrick and saxophonist Chico Freeman. His open attitude and sleek style have also garnered him work with Kenny Burrell, New York Stories, Art Farmer, Russell Malone, Vanessa Rubin, James Williams, Billy Pierce, Freddie Cole, and Sonny Rollins.

Quiet, but with a quick, mischievous laugh, Yoron is a serious drummer and composer, considering the future of jazz as well as its past.

KM: Are you feeling a sudden burst of recognition, or has it been a gradual process of more work coming your way?

YI: Coming from Chicago, where there is such a vast musical scene, I was working with [tenor saxophonist] Von Freeman and the Ken Gueno Quintet, R&B things with [singer] Otis Clay, and some symphonic things, all while I attended school. In Chicago you were expected to do it all.

KM: How does symphonic training influence your playing?

YI: I spent a lot of time learning the instrument, the touch and the technical aspects. It really helped me to understand the concept



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of sound in a deeper way. When I started undergraduate school I had already been playing drumset, so I didn't go to learn the drums, but rather symphonic percussion. But I spent serious drum study time on my own. One helps the other.

KM: What did you listen to as a child?

YI: Gospel, R&B, and then jazz. I began playing organ in church, then trumpet, then finally drums. And my dad's record collection had a lot of [guitarist] Wes Montgomery, [saxophonist] Houston Person, [organist] Jimmy Smith, and [singer] Etta Jones. And he was always playing guitar and harmonica around the house. Later, I played drums with my uncle's R&B band and then some jazz like [Herbie Hancock's] "Watermelon Man" in the junior high school band.

KM: What gig brought you to New York?

YI: A promoter in Chicago had brought in a lot of musicians, and often I'd be playing in the house rhythm section. So after that I had a good list of contacts. A specific one was guitarist Kenny Burrell. My friend, bassist Kenny Davis, and I had been planning to move to New York and get an apartment together, and Kenny Burrell told

me to call him when I got to town. Years later I found out that everybody says that but they don't necessarily mean it. But I took it to heart.

Kenny was playing a week at the Village Vanguard with Victor Lewis in September '88 when I came in. Victor was gracious enough to let me sit in a couple nights. That was the final step, and Kenny called me about a year later for actual work.

KM: How'd you make ends meet until more work came in?

YI: I also worked with Henry Threadgill and local gigs with singers and friends. And my degrees [bachelors in music from Roosevelt University in Chicago; masters in music from Rutgers] enabled me to teach as a substitute in the New York City school system. It was rough at first; the kids weren't as respectful as when I was young. But it got better, I loosened up.

I also got involved in the Blue Note after-hours jam sessions, which were going strong then. That was a very important meeting place. I was working in the house band with [trumpeter] Phillip Harper, [pianist] Rodney Kendrick, [drummers] Troy Davis and Winard Harper, [trum-

peter] Roy Hargrove, [pianist] Stephen Scott, [alto saxophonist] Justin Robinson, Greg Hutchinson was there—the list goes on and on. Players from the nearby clubs like Sweet Basil and the Village Vanguard would come down and check us out, and often you'd get work from that. Cassandra Wilson, Lou Donaldson, Abbey Lincoln, Houston Person—they all employed me after coming to the Blue Note sessions. That was a very focused scene.

KM: Coming from Chicago, did you have any preconceived misconceptions?

YI: Guys like Marvin "Smitty" Smith and Jeff Watts had forewarned me when they came through Chicago. They were gracious enough to fill me in on the whole New York experience. Smitty hipped me to dealing with cabs and moving the drums around from a storage space, though now I use a car for my gigs. And I used to come in during the school year and sit in with cats around town. Lewis Nash, Tony Reedus, Ronnie Burrage—they all turned me on to work.

KM: You've worked with a diverse bunch of artists, from Chico Freeman and George Adams to Rodney Kendrick and Henry

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Threadgill. And your style is dense and dark, like that music.

YI: My style is a little darker, and I try to think more openly in terms of bringing my varied experiences to a situation. But with bebop you can't help but hear Philly Joe and Roy Haynes.

At this point I'm thinking more in terms of what I can bring to a situation as opposed to reinventing the wheel, although that's very important. During certain periods of my development I sounded a lot like Philly Joe, and at other times like Tony. Now I'm thinking about what I can add to the whole legacy. What does Yoron Israel bring to the music in even the most typical type of situation.

KM: So do you find yourself playing less or more?

YI: I don't even think of it like that; I just try to be honest. In some cases it's less, in some cases more. When I played with Cyrus Chestnut, Chico Freeman, and James Williams, the music demanded a bit more. In James Williams' music he touches on a lot of aspects of gospel and R&B, which is what I come out of. How much you can bring to a situation is dependent on the par-

ticular music you're dealing with.

In my work with Ahmad Jamal, I really felt that was an incredible situation. I felt that on a consistent basis my personal contribution was happening. I had enough room there to explore. I spent two years with Ahmad Jamal, and they went by fast.

KM: Have you run into any bad musical situations in New York?

YI: You'd think that there are no bad situations here, but there are. When I came to New York I was committed to playing with artists and not getting caught up in the local scene. But every now and then I've played in local situations where maybe the piano player didn't know any tunes or the musicians were not on top of their instruments. As a jobbing musician you can run into that.

KM: Are there certain rules you apply to a recording session to prepare yourself?

YI: Well, if I'm familiar with the musicians it's much easier. I recently recorded with James Williams after a brief tour, and we knocked off ten tunes on the first day. Those situations are kind of rare. Otherwise I like to know the material as well as I can, maybe run over the changes

with a lead sheet on the piano.

I recently did a session with [guitarist] Atilla Zoller where the headphone mix was never right, so I just had to adjust. You have to be open and willing to make the thing work, maybe sacrifice a little to make it work.

KM: And you've worked with Tony Bennett....

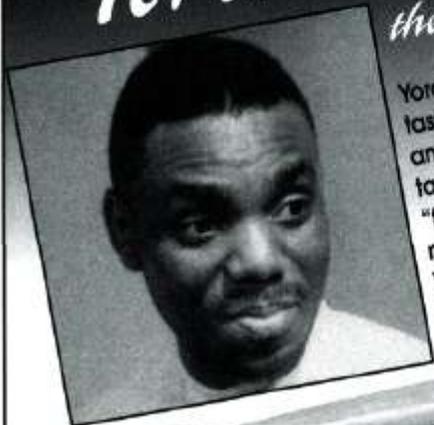
YI: That was a lot of fun. Tony is such a nice individual; it's not like playing with a star, he's just one of the guys. We did a West Coast tour that wound up in Seattle. His organization works on a different scale, from flights to bookings to hotels, though it was on a similar level with Sonny Rollins. And because of MTV there are cameras everywhere with Tony. He was loose and just wanted the music to feel good.

KM: How about Sonny Rollins?

YI: I did six months with Sonny in early 1991 subbing for Clayton Cameron. It was beneficial hearing that kind of intensity from him every time we played. After all these years and all he's accomplished, he's still inspired by music. I learned a lot. With electric bass and guitar and percussion, it took a lot of energy from me to push that

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kind of band and amplification. I had to push to be where I should be in the overall mix. And we touched on every style from Latin and calypso to swing and funk.

KM: You have your own group that you compose for?

YI: Yes, my quintet consists of vibraphone, guitar, bass, tenor/soprano saxophone, and drums. We do original material as well as personalized arrangements of modern standards by Rodney Kendrick, Jack DeJohnette ["Ebony"], Wayne Shorter ["Sweet Pea"], plus tunes by Cedar Walton ["Hindsight"] and Jymie Merritt ["Nommo"]. It grew out of my love for that vibraphone and guitar sound. It's a situation where my personality can be more easily expressed, where I can choose vehicles that do justice to my expression as a drummer and a composer—whether or not I'm soloing. [*Yoron's tunes have been covered by Kenny Burrell and the New York Stories.*]

KM: Are there upcoming releases you're particularly proud of?

YI: Chico Freeman and Freddie Cole on Fantasy, Ed Cherry on Telarc, James Williams on DIW, and my debut recording,

which we're now working on.

KM: Why do you think you're in such demand now?

YI: One important thing is that I try to keep a certain level of professionalism intact. I show up on time and I'm dressed correctly. And I try to keep open to all kinds of music. Duke Ellington's old adage about there being only two kinds of music, good and bad, is a philosophy I apply. I won't play from a selfish standpoint; I want to give the music what the composer or the artist envisioned. Of course I'm always interested, from a drummer's standpoint, in adding something that will make Yoron Israel sound distinctive from the next drummer—but only in a musical context. I want to give to the music first.

Clarence Penn

Clarence Penn may be the most striking example of a chameleon that the drumming community has ever seen. His lusty, ebullient, straight-ahead style is well documented on critically acclaimed recordings by pianists Cyrus Chestnut and Stephen Scott; his deep pocket infuses the slick sheen of Steps Ahead's *The Vibe*; and he's played big band with Slide

Hampton, hard funk with Stanley Clarke, and driving jazz/rock with Bob Berg.

On top of these achievements (reached at the age of twenty-six), Clarence holds a degree in classical percussion from Virginia Commonwealth University. Another alumnus of the Betty Carter school, Clarence was sparked to jazz when Wynton Marsalis came to hear his high school ensemble. The trumpeter recognized Clarence's innate talent, while admonishing him over "A Night In Tunisia," his solo spotlight. Shortly thereafter, Jeff Watts began recommending classic recordings to Clarence, which prepared him to study with Wynton's father, Ellis, at Virginia Commonwealth. From there, Clarence's engaging personality and quickly blossoming drumming garnered him work about as fast as he could graduate.

Amazing musicality and a willingness to take chances sets Clarence Penn apart as an important drummer not only for jazz, but for the musical world at large.

KM: Your career seems to have taken off.

CP: It started getting really busy for me after I left Betty Carter, around the time I joined Stanley Clarke's group. Then all these calls came in, all different types of

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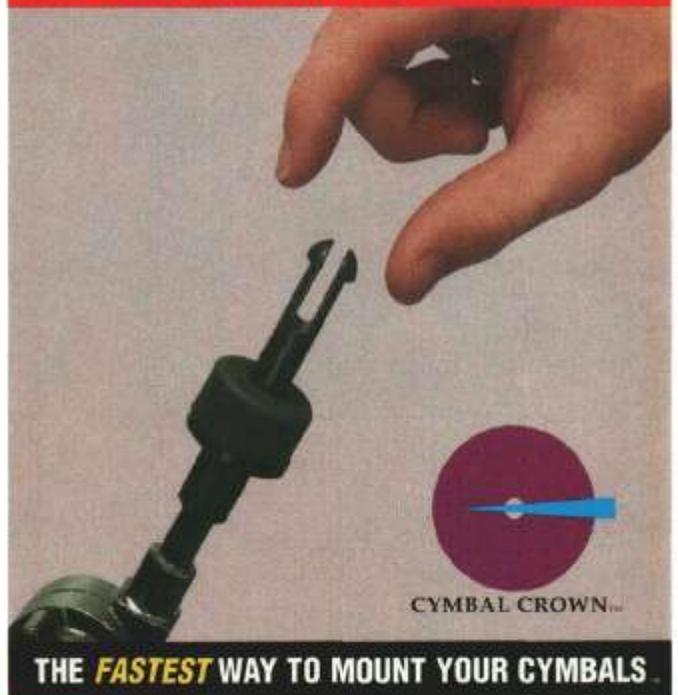
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music. Betty's is a certain style of music, but playing with Stanley opened people's minds to the fact that I can play other kinds of music besides straight-ahead. I toured with Bob Berg last summer, and that was awesome. All the drummers out of Betty's band [Winard Harper, Troy Davis, Greg Hutchinson, Kenny Washington] have done well.

KM: Is there less pigeonholing going on now?

CP: People know I can play funk and straight-ahead, but a lot of guys *want* to typecast you. Some won't even consider you for a rock or funk gig after playing with Betty Carter. There are a lot of cats who say they can do both but.... Greg can play both, so can Brian Blade, and Alvester Garnett with Abbey Lincoln. A lot of my peers play both because most colleges these days don't cater to straight-ahead. I studied classical percussion at Virginia Commonwealth University, but also jazz, and then I went to the University of Miami, which had very little straight-ahead.

Classical percussion was my first goal. I got a scholarship to Interlochen Arts Academy [where he won the *Downbeat*

1986 Outstanding Soloist award]. As I got older, I realized all the politics involved in that world. Playing jazz allowed me to play what was in my heart.

KM: Who was your major jazz influence?

CP: It depends on what time frame it was. Philly Joe on *Milestones* really inspired me initially. Philly Joe is addictive. His playing style is so strong that if you're not careful you'll find yourself trying to play like him in every musical situation no matter what. But music is ultimately about trying to find your own voice in the big scheme of things. Often in New York you can hear guys playing Philly Joe's actual licks when they trade fours. I'd rather hear them play themselves.

And I like Frankie Dunlop a lot. He's very melodic when he solos. He was very open and had a great touch. When I'm influenced by certain drummers I don't necessarily try to emulate what they did. What I try to get is the feeling that they brought to the music. I do that by listening to the music for what it is instead of listening to a record like it's a lesson. You have to listen to the entire band, not just the drummer. You'll understand why Elvin

plays a certain lick if you'll listen to Coltrane, too.

KM: When you're playing with older jazz musicians, what do they want to hear?

CP: I think what they want to hear is me—my concept and what I have to bring to the music, not what Ben Riley or Elvin would play. They don't want to hear a book of transcriptions. I understand their style, so I won't play a bunch of fives and sevens—all that modern stuff. I concentrate on swinging.

KM: As an up-and-coming player, are there certain rates you charge?

CP: There are union rates, which apply for studio work, but sometimes they'll pay you more. On the other hand, it's not worth my taking my drums out of my house for \$40 or \$50 a gig. There are rates you should charge when you go to Europe, but there is always somebody who wants to go—and take less—if they're not working.

KM: Is there enough work to go around with so many players living in New York? Or if you've been recommended, will you automatically be called again for the same gig?

CP: Not if you don't really sound correct

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or if you don't have the tools. That will cut down on the amount of calls you get. If a new guy comes to town and has his tools together, the word will get around. But it's not really a competition. That kind of energy would affect the music. If two guys want the same gig, then politics may enter into it—maybe somebody in the band knows one guy and not another. It's the luck of the draw sometimes. There's not enough work, but there is room for everybody.

KM: You played on the first Joshua Redman album.

CP: Yes. I originally did the entire album, but Joshua chucked everything but the trio stuff. I was still with Betty, so I couldn't re-record the quartet stuff with Joshua, so I recommended Greg Hutchinson. He did the record. Joshua wanted me to join the band, but I was still committed to Betty, so I told him to call Brian Blade, and he joined the band. Josh had no idea he was going to become so popular.

KM: How did your experience with Stanley Clarke differ from the jazz gigs?

CP: I'd never had to play that hard with anyone else, as far as volume and intensity—they were hard, loud grooves. I gave it a hundred twenty percent every night. And that helped me to get the gig with Steps Ahead. I had jammed with Rachel Z at Birdland, and she recommended me to Mike Mainieri. I did a tour with him after Betty Carter, plus gigs with Cyrus and Stephen Scott.

KM: Why is Betty Carter's gig the training

ground for so many young jazz drummers?

CP: Because she pulls out every sensitive part of a drummer. You have to play as quietly and as fast as you've ever played—at the same time. Fast tempos with brushes—I've never played that fast before. We'd be burning and she'd want me to double-time my drum solo. I'd say "What?" And I'm not talking about an open solo; I had to play the form.

KM: On Stephen Scott's *Renaissance* you play some very fast solos.

CP: Greg recommended me for that gig, and Stephen liked me from note one. I think leaders like me because I try to play the right things, but I try to put myself into it too. I want to bring something to this piece of paper. I want to play something that this guy might like and be as musical as possible.

KM: How do Cyrus Chestnut and Stephen Scott differ in what they want to hear?

CP: It's completely different. Both want to present a pile of music, but Cyrus's approach comes from under; it's this steady surge to the top. Stephen's stuff is a little more raw.

KM: It's incredible to hear you play swing so wonderfully, then turn around and play legitimate funk. Do you change thinking caps?

CP: Well, thanks. They are two different things, unless you're playing acid jazz, which has a swinging cymbal beat with funk underneath. With Stanley, that was a rock/funk gig. Straight-ahead requires more finesse and a lighter touch.

Conceptually, the technique required for jazz in a small club won't work for Stanley Clarke or Steps Ahead. It won't translate. With Stanley I'm playing double pedal, five toms, electric drums, bell trees—but it's still *me*.

KM: So how does a click track, which you must be comfortable with, affect your swing drumming?

CP: If anything, it helps. You do want it to stay in the pocket. Lewis Nash can be playing all this bad stuff, coming out of a solo, and his time is perfect. He sounds like a click track, but not in a derogatory sense. His timing is amazing.

KM: What does the near future hold for you?

CP: After touring with Slide Hampton [big band jazz], I come back and go to Europe for two weeks with Diana Krall [trio jazz with vocals]. With her I use cymbal bells, tambourine—it's really beautiful. You know, I want to be known as a good musician in every style, not just a good drummer.



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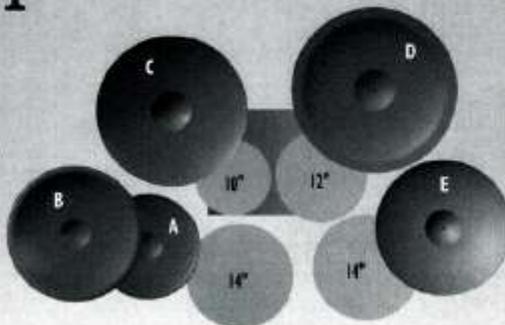


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DRUMHEADS ARE JUST THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG

When *MD* last visited Remo, Inc. (in 1986), the company was already established as the world's largest manufacturer of drumheads. At the same time, Remo was just beginning to branch out into the production of drumkits, and was dabbling in some areas of percussion. In the ensuing years the company has emerged as a leader in the field of drum and percussion innovation. Recent expansion into a second factory (dedicated to drum-making operations) has already proved insufficient; as we went to press for this story Remo had announced their intention to construct a new, 200,000-square foot facility in Valencia, California—twenty miles away from their present location in North Hollywood. Obviously there's a lot going on at Remo these days.

"There are more things happening here now than ever before," agrees Remo Belli, the company's founder and namesake. "Research and development, production, marketing, and all other

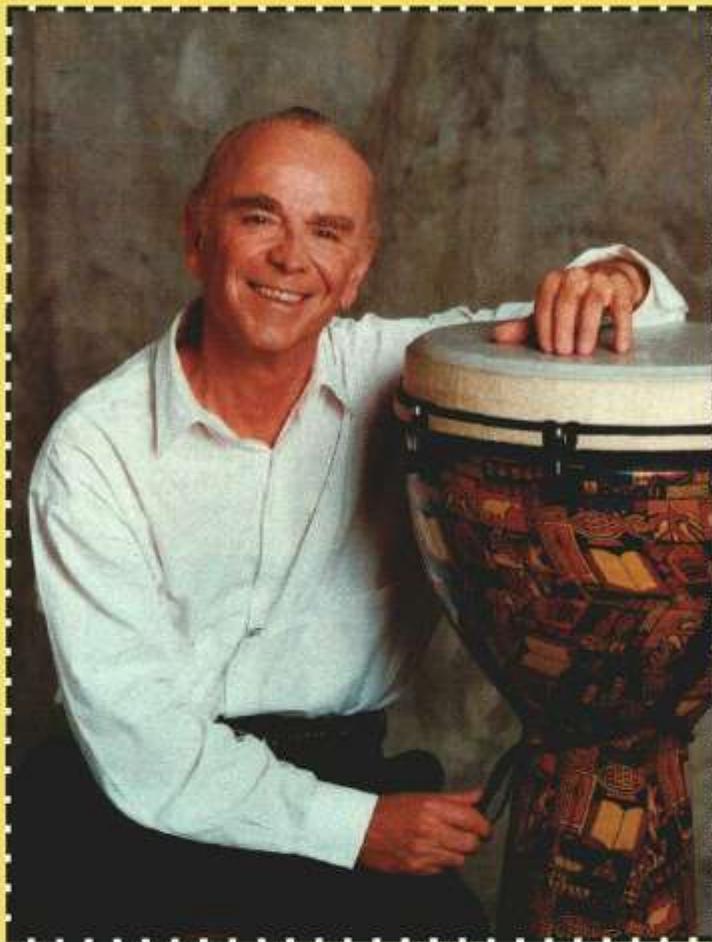
aspects of the business are considerably more coordinated than they've ever been before. It's virtually a different company."

It was almost a different company in a different place. Like many California manufacturers, over the past several years Remo has had difficulties maintaining operations under the state's strict labor and environmental regulations. "Most of the rest of the world has no idea what it's like doing business in California," says Remo, "with respect to the restrictions we've had to deal with while trying to put out a product. For example, we've used the same spray unit to apply the final coat to our heads for years. But in order to *keep* using it, two years ago we had to spend \$184,000 on a recovery system to prevent toxic chemicals from entering the atmosphere. We were challenged by costs of space, medical insurance, workman's comp, taxes, and all the laws regarding business. Fortunately, California was finally able

to reduce some of those costs recently. So we decided to continue here—even though we had one foot out the door toward San Antonio, Texas."

San Antonio's loss is Valencia's gain. Remo, Inc. is an expanding business dedicated to the development of products for drummers and percussionists of all ages, interest levels, and abilities. That dedication starts with Remo Belli, but is a quality carried through the company's entire production staff. "We have a team effort here like we've never had before," comments Remo, "in the sense of commitment towards the state of the art—what's out there and what we'd like to do. The majority of us involved in product development and marketing have drumming experience, so the excitement that's in the group is quite pervasive. We don't just come to work, earn some money, and go home. It's a lot more fun than that. Actually, my biggest problem as the leader of our production team is to keep things reined in realistically with-

BY RICK VAN HORN



Remo Belli and friend

out over-extending."

Remo, Inc.'s team approach has been responsible for product innovations that have literally changed drumming. "As I look back at the important occurrences that have taken place here," Remo comments, "the first was the original *Weather King* plastic drumhead—designed for drums with mechanical tuning systems. The second major development was the *PTS* system, which allowed drummers to put a head on a drum with no tuning devices and still get a playable sound. Today we have two developments that we feel will impact the drum world from here on in. One is *Acousticon R* and the other is *FiberSkyn 3*."

Acousticon R Drumshells

What exactly is *Acousticon R*, and what makes it so special? "Drums today are made from a wide variety of materials," says Remo. "Each of those materials has its own nuance, its own acoustic value. We're attempting to create an

entire line of drums—world drums and Western drums—made out of one basic material: *Acousticon R*. The process we use to make our shells today differs *completely* from what we had just a few years ago."

To make the *Acousticon R* material, wood chips are crushed in order to separate their fibers. The separated chips are put into a vat—in much the same way that pulp is used to make paper. Then the "pulp" is turned into huge rolls of sheet fiberwood. Those rolls are then mounted on a machine that winds the material very tightly to form seamless drumshells. Remo can make shells in any diameter from 8" to 40". Shell thickness is limited only by how long the machine keeps winding.

"We could very well make a drum out of the cylinder as it comes off of the winding machine," Remo says. "It would

sound okay. But in order to make drums that have the sound quality, durability, and other features we want,

we use a resin-impregnation system. With impregnation and heat we can bring a given shell to a hardness level that we feel is appropriate for the drum we're trying to make."

One advantage of the *Acousticon* material is that it can be worked *after* the initial cylinder is formed, in order to create different shapes. This, in turn, permits the manufacture of ashikos, djembes, and other ethnic-style drums. "All of these drums traditionally have sound values of their own, and normally they aren't made of the same materials," says Remo. "But our technology allows us to use only one material—while varying other production factors—in order to achieve an authentic sound for each instrument."

Achieving authentic sounds has been a major concern of Herbie May, Remo's R&D specialist in the area of drumshells.

It's a challenging job, because drum "experts" disagree on how large a role the shell plays in a drum's overall sound. "To me," says Herbie, "there are important differences when it comes to shell thickness and material. Some of them are subtle, and might come into play more when you're recording than playing live. In the past, we've dealt with people who've said, 'This is the way it sounds...can't you hear it?' More recently we've been trying to get scientific documentation on the performance of heads and shells. One of the things we've learned is that when you play a drum, you're transferring energy from the head to the shell. The tone you get from the shell will depend on how well it accepts that transfer of energy."

Herbie's tests also revealed some interesting facts regarding the pitches of shells. "I wanted to see how *Acousticon* shells related to traditional wood shells," he explains. "So I analyzed some recordings I made while just tapping on the shells themselves. I found out that our pitches are pretty close to those of traditional shells—whether thin or thick, and with and without hoops. In addition, the sustain, decay, and attack of *Acousticon* shells proved virtually indiscernible from that of wood shells. In fact, the only difference between our shells and wood is that we don't have the real high overtones that wood has—and I'm not sure if



These shells have undergone Remo's resin-impregnation process, which gives them strength, tonality, and resonance.



Snare drums receive their bearing edges and snare beds in a single operation performed on this machine.

that's good or bad. After all, every drum brand claims to have different acoustic characteristics than every other. We, too, want to have something different to offer from what's on the market, even though we are *fundamentally* similar."

Snare drums are a specialty with Herbie. One of his creations is a one-piece shell with its top and bottom reinforcing rings actually formed from the shell itself rather than attached to it. The shell starts out 1/2" thick, and the center section is routed out to less than 1/4". Herbie was also instrumental in the design of a machine that cuts the drums' bearing edges and snare beds—as one gradual contour—in a single operation.

In addition, Herbie has experimented extensively with shell hardness. "We're doing with epoxy what other companies are doing with different types of woods," he explains. "For exam-

ple, taking a shell that has gone through our epoxy impregnation process once and running it through a second time raises the pitch a minor third. That's like going from a maple shell to a rosewood shell. We can vary our production process in order to zoom in on exactly what we want. So now we have the capability of offering drums with thin or thick shells, with or without reinforcing hoops, and with varying degrees of hardness.

"And then there are the finish choices," Herbie adds, laughing. "One of our biggest problems with *Acousticon R* is its natural appearance—which looks pretty dull. We've introduced different colors and finishes to overcome this problem."

Herbie's research into finishes and coverings has focused on both cosmetic appearance and acoustic performance. He works with clear coats, dyes, stains, and covering materials, searching for exotic looks and optimum sound. As one result of this work, in January of this year Remo introduced drums with exterior veneers of real wood over the *Acousticon* material. Says Herbie, "We're not trying to trick anyone into thinking that the drums are all-plywood. We're just recognizing that many people like a nice wood-grain pattern, so we want to give it to them—along with a variety of other



Every Remo instrument—from the smallest tambourine to the largest bass drum—begins life on this machine, which turns sheets of fiberboard into drumshells.



Product specialist Herbie May is constantly experimenting with shell designs and finishes.

finishes. We can also offer a dyed version of the natural *Acousticon* shell—which has a 'grain' appearance all its own. The only thing we're doing acoustically when we add the wood veneer is raising the pitch of the shell slightly, due to the added mass."

Herbie leaves no stone unturned when it comes to the potentials for *Acousticon R* shells. He experiments with mounting systems, lug configurations, and every other aspect of drum design—personifying the Remo company's seriousness about being a contender in the drumset area.

FiberSkyn 3

FiberSkyn 3 is the other innovation that Remo Belli believes will have a significant impact on drumming. Although it might sound like a specific line of drumheads, *FiberSkyn 3* is actually a head-making process that can be applied universally to drumheads for any drum—from the most esoteric ethnic percussion instrument to the drums on a traditional kit. Remo is



Wood veneer coverings are now available on Remo drumkits for those who prefer a "traditional" look.



Remo's professional-quality world percussion instruments are the direct result of two new technologies: *Acousticon R* shells and *FiberSkyn 3* heads. Their eye-catching appearance is created by colorful fabric coverings.

promoting the warm, rich, "calf-like" nature of the heads by saying that "The sound in your future is a step back in time."

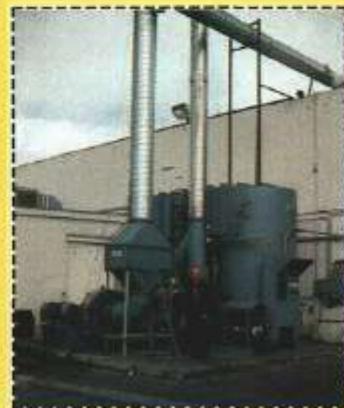
Remo's sales manager, Dick Markus, explains that the *FiberSkyn 3* process begins with a fabric made of poly-spun fibers. "Because of our technology," says Dick, "we can make it from paper-thin to as thick as our machines can laminate—which is what allows us to create authentic sounds and feels for virtually any drum. The finished heads are extremely durable, whether used for world percussion or on a drumset. We sent a batch of drumkit heads to P.I.T. for 'bash-testing.' When they came back they were dished out in the center—as any head would be. But they hadn't separated, bubbled, or in any way de-laminated—which admittedly was a problem we'd had with earlier *FiberSkyn 2* heads. We just re-tuned them and found them entirely usable. And what's interesting is that the same material being used for these Western-style drums is also being used for congas, bongos, and frame drums. When we make tars, they sound like they're covered in fish skin, which is traditional for them.

We can get that same timbre from *FiberSkyn 3*."

Taking advantage of this combination of durability and authentic sound, the



Remo hopes to attract children to the world of percussion with "toys" like the Lollipop Drum and a series of kids' timbales, bongos, congas, and Tubanos.



Remo Belli is dwarfed by the Roxidizer, a pollutant-recovery device used in the production of drumheads.

company has given a high priority to the manufacture of conga and bongo heads, with the intention of supplying them as original equipment heads to companies that make congas and bongos. Remo also sees an acoustic benefit for both drummers and percussionists from having heads made of the same material. "By and large," he says, "when you hear congas, bongos, and other similar instruments, you're hearing animal skins being played. But on drumsets you're hearing synthetic heads being played. There's a different timbre between the two materials. *FiberSkyn 3* technology is going to allow an acoustical blending that has not been possible before. When you have percussionists and drumset players performing together, the sounds are going to relate better."

Percussion players may appreciate a synthetic head that can simulate authentic animal-skin sound while offering greater durability and weather resistance. (As a matter of fact, several conga players at the rain-drenched Woodstock '94 told Remo that they only survived because of the *FiberSkyn 3* heads on their drums.) But will modern drumkit players—most of whom have never heard calf heads to begin with—appreciate the "traditional" sound of *FiberSkyn 3* drumkit heads? Conversely, will true calfskin aficionados accept a synthetic version? Dick Markus replies, "It's true that most contemporary drummers will have no idea of what calf heads sound like. But what we hope they'll find intriguing about this material is that it *doesn't* sound

like plastic. So they should perceive it simply as a *whole new sound*."

Artist relations manager Steve Ettleson adds, "I sent some *FiberSkyn 3* heads to Jeff Hamilton and Jake Hanna, both of whom are calf fanatics. Jeff was working with Ray Brown and Benny Green in Boston, and he put the heads on his drums and didn't tell them. Two nights later he asked them what they thought of the drum sound, and they said it was great. When Jeff said the heads were plastic, they couldn't believe it. Jake Hanna said they made his snare drum sound the best it ever had, and he put them on his toms, too. John Riley tried them at the Monterey Jazz Festival. He's now the drummer in the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra at the Village Vanguard every Monday night, and he has to deal with the calf heads that are on Mel's kit and that were such a part of Mel's sound. John wants our heads for that kit so it will sound the way Mel wanted it, but make his own life a lot easier."

Dick Markus adds, "Drummers who bought *Radio Kings*, *Black Beauties*, or Ludwig *Pioneers* for their 'vintage sound' should find them very interesting with these heads on them. A lot of people are disappointed when they buy a vintage drum and don't get the sound they expected—because they're using a modern plastic head. The drum wasn't designed for that. A *FiberSkyn 3* head should bring them back into the ballpark."

Making Drumheads Today

The development of *FiberSkyn 3* technology is also important to Remo because it reiterates the company's fundamental commitment to the drumhead. Says Dick Markus, "People have been perceiving us as focusing almost entirely on drums and percussion lately. This isn't the case at all. We don't take heads for granted. This year we introduced *FiberSkyn 3*. Two years ago it was *Powerstroke 3*, three years ago it was the *Legacy* line, and four years ago it was the *Kevlar Falams* head. We don't sit on our laurels."

Dick's comment may be an understatement. Other developments notwithstanding, production of "standard" drumkit-style heads alone averages 12,000 heads a day. Remo gives a quick breakdown of the forming process: "The aluminum hoops are made on a roll former. They come as a coil, and must be cut to the right size. Then they're put into tanks to remove the oil from the roll-forming process. The ends of the cut are then joined to form a solid circle with a channel in it. That channel will receive the resin that secures the drumhead film to the hoop. The resin attaches itself to the aluminum and forms rivets through holes in the perimeter of the drumhead film."

After the film has been glued into the hoop, each drumhead must be "cured." For the past several years this has been done in huge conveyor ovens, employing a process that took thirteen minutes. But recently Remo, Inc. helped to develop what are

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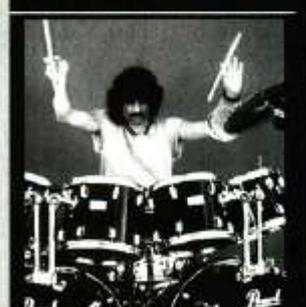
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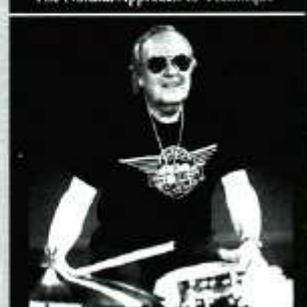
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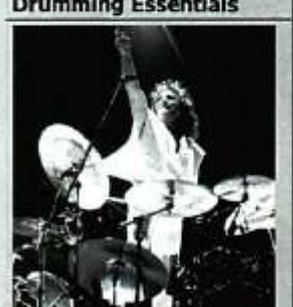
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called "metering rigs," which measure the resin and the catalyst, then heat the catalyst and pour the desired amount into each hoop. "With this quick-dispensing system," explains Remo, "we went from a thirteen-minute cycle to a forty-two-second cycle. And we no longer use heat. The system has allowed us to employ one new machine that will do the work of one of the old conveyor ovens in less than one-thirteenth the amount of time, and in one-tenth the amount of space. Eventually we'll replace all of the old machines with similar new ones. This is just an example of the development we're doing in all of our product areas. We've never reached a point of being satisfied that anything we do is 'the way it's gonna be.' We're making drumheads today that are far better than what we've ever made before."

World Percussion

Considering Remo's dedication to the drumhead, it's not surprising that a drumhead led to the company's foray into the manufacture of world percussion instruments. That head was the *Mondo* series, which was introduced in 1993 as an out-

growth of the *Legacy* series. It was originally intended to be a pre-tuned head attached permanently to various *Acousticon* shell designs in order to replicate traditional world percussion sounds. ("Mondo" is Italian for "world.")

Experiments with different shell configurations and head thicknesses led to the expansion of Remo's world percussion line (including versions of authentic instruments like djembes and ashikos) and the introduction of a totally original instrument (with a conga-like sound) called a *Tubano*. New *Mondo* heads were developed for those applications, and also to sell to people around the world having trouble getting natural hide heads for existing ethnic drums.

When the *FiberSkyn 3* technology was developed, the company immediately applied it to the "Mondo" concept—that is, the head on an *Acousticon* drum frame or as a retro-fit head for non-Western drums. Further development led to conga and bongo heads now being mounted on Remo's traditional aluminum hoop. "It's a head with a crown, like a traditional drumhead," says Dick Marcus. "We found that

that method works much better for congas and bongos."

While looking at a room full of various African, Japanese, and South American drums—all made in the Remo factory using *Acousticon R* shells and *FiberSkyn 3* heads—Remo Belli comments proudly, "We're now able to project ourselves into the feelings that are expressed on ethnic instruments in their traditional manner. A djun-djun, for example, traditionally gets a very muffled sound because it uses a head on which the hair hasn't been taken off. We've put a head on our version that makes it sound just like a native instrument. This is just scratching the surface—our cylinder-making, our laminating, and our drumhead possibilities are now unlimited. If you want a Japanese taiko drum that's 40" in diameter and five feet long—we can do it."

The colorful appearance and weather-proof nature of Remo percussion instruments make them especially appropriate for some very non-traditional applications. For example, according to product specialist Chris Hart, "They're using our djembes in the *Lion King* parade at Disney World. It's outdoors, and weather is a factor that must be taken into account." Marching percussion specialist Carol Carpenter adds, "There are also a couple of drum corps who are currently using large world percussion setups in their pits. It's becoming a much more prevalent aspect of the activity."

Remo Belli estimates that *Acousticon R* and *FiberSkyn 3* technology will allow Remo Inc. to introduce twenty-five to thirty new products a year over the next ten years—all in the area of world percussion. "It's really a recognition of the world-wide interest in percussion," he says. "This is a direction that has never been taken by any 'drum' company before. Traditionally, after the companies that made Western-style drums had their drumsets and marching drums, they went into making mallet instruments. They *acquired* their Latin instruments from somebody else who knew how to make them, using different materials. Ours is one of the first attempts at being authentic with new materials."

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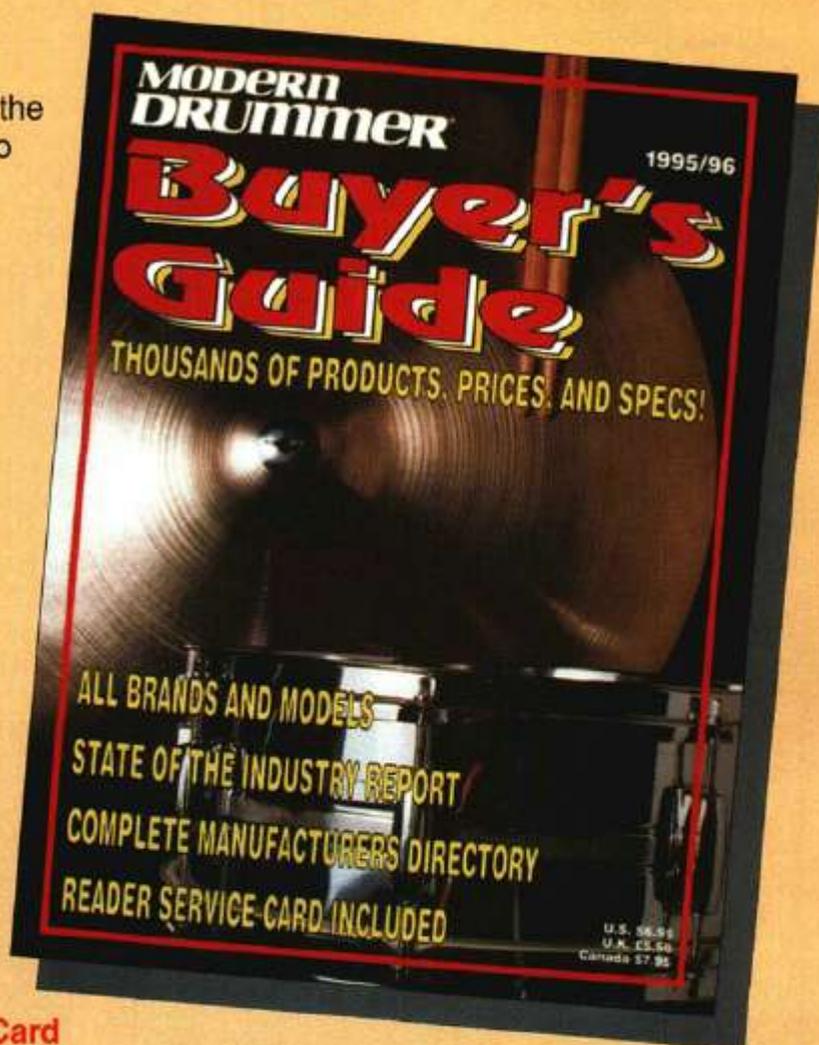
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Non-Traditional Aspects Of Drumming

One characteristic of Remo (the man and the company) that is significantly different from most of the rest of the percussion industry is a commitment to non-traditional aspects of drumming, including the burgeoning "drum circle" activity. "There is a significant social movement going on in the world," says Remo, "made up of drum groups who get together for the purpose of understanding their own rhythms and for the sheer enjoyment of expressing themselves in a rhythmic manner. This sort of activity has to do with an inner feeling of peace and an understanding of one another. People are beginning to use drumming as a community builder and recreational activity. It generates very interesting feelings among people who normally wouldn't hang out together. Drumming in this manner has nothing to do with whether or not you're educated or wealthy. You just hang out and play. It's a social movement that's not pushed or directed by any industry—it's just happening—and there's a *whole lot* of it going on. Fortunately it happens to involve a part of the drum business—once

you qualify what the 'drum business' is.

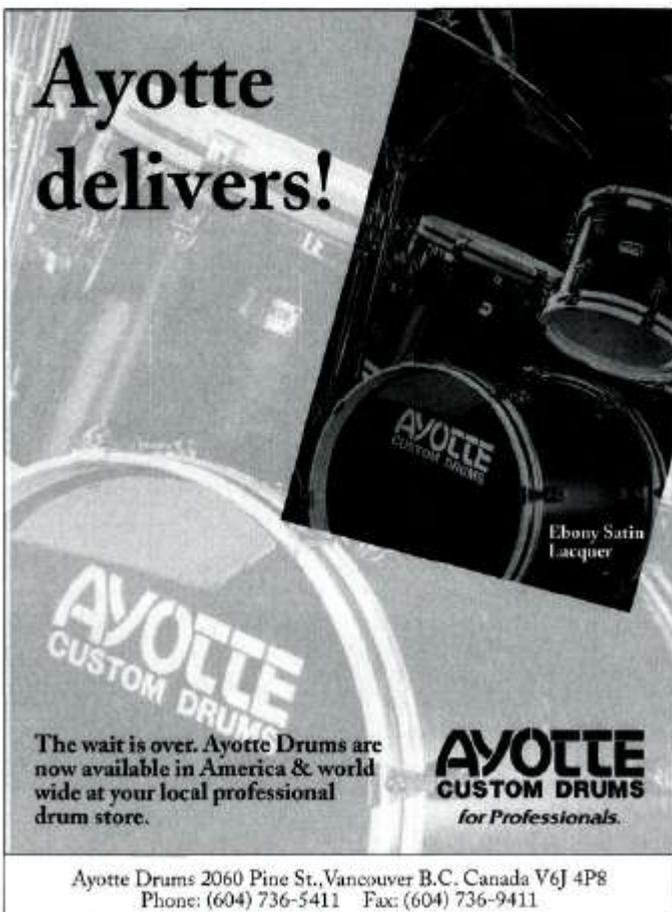
Remo, Inc. is also heavily involved with percussive aspects of music therapy. "The National Association of Music Therapists maintains that there is a relationship between rhythm and wellness," says Remo. "They've chosen rhythm—out of all the elements of music—because it's the easiest for anyone to assimilate. A group called Music in Medicine is ready to show what they've accomplished with music. We've conducted workshops through the Rhythm For Life organization that have to do with the well elderly, with the inner city, and with the incarcerated. And cities and school systems are starting to inquire into the possibility of drumming experiences for their recreational or educational programs—especially in places like Los Angeles, where school kids are incompatible because they don't even speak the same language."

But what does all this mean for a company ostensibly manufacturing products for the *music* industry? "It means one of the greatest opportunities *ever*," replies Remo, emphatically. "If musical instruments are perceived by the public to be health-giving, nothing will ever equal the demand for

them. Fortunately for our company, we now have materials and manufacturing options that will allow us to address that demand, along with a whole new philosophy regarding which way to go."

What About Drumsets?

Considering the intensity with which Remo Belli expresses his feelings about world percussion, drum circles, and music therapy, it might appear that he is significantly less interested in western-style drumsets. Yet the company's ongoing development of drum designs, shells, and finishes contradict that impression. What is Remo's actual appraisal of the drumset business today? "Not very good," he replies, frankly, "in the sense of making money. If you already have plenty of income from another source, then you can be in the drumset business. With some companies it's hardware; with us it's drumheads. A few companies who had foresight and courage and who invested wisely into the equipment necessary to do the job right are selling drumsets and earning some money doing it. But they can't do a heck of a lot of anything *else*, because it would



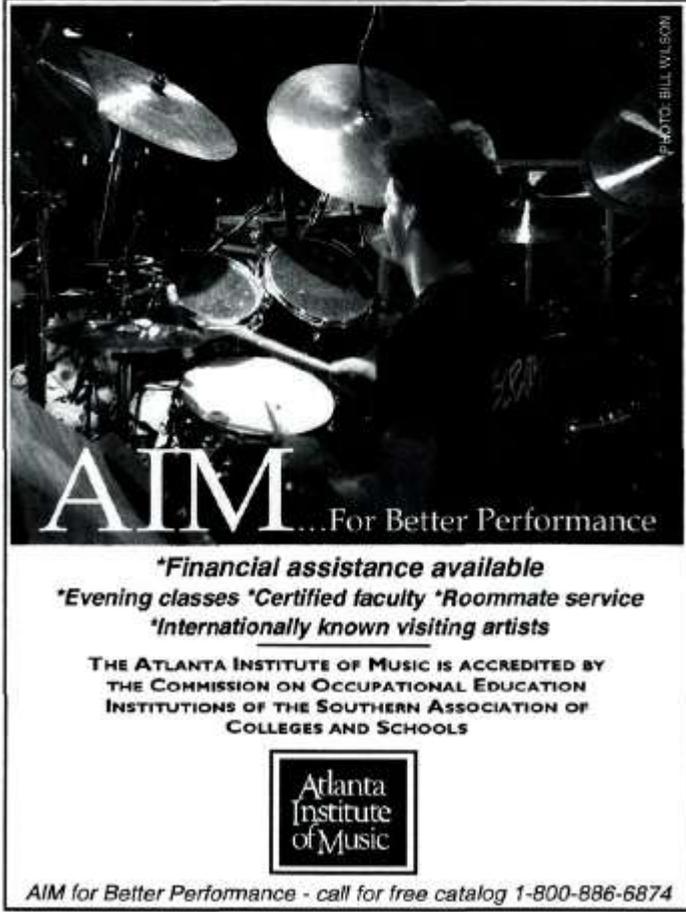
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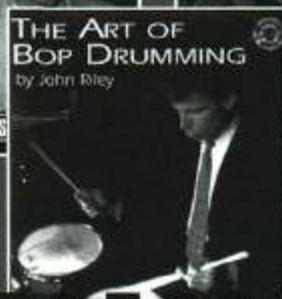
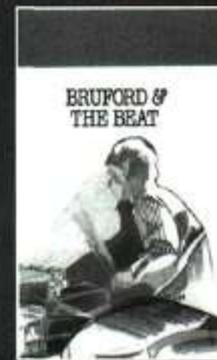
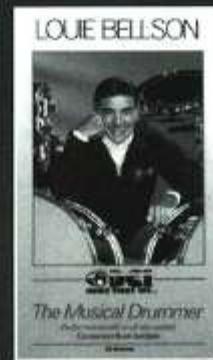
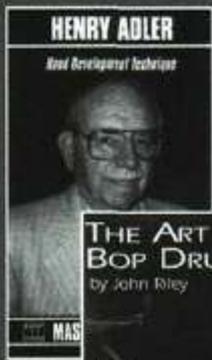
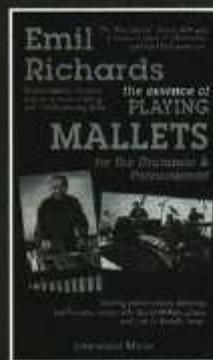
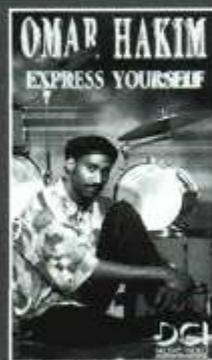
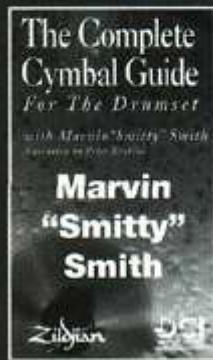
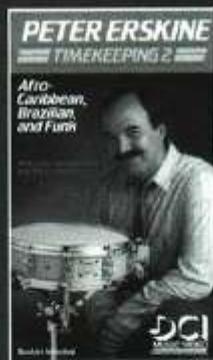
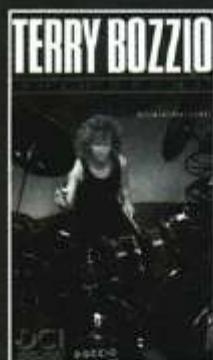
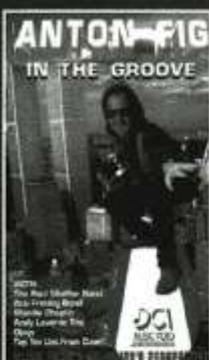
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require too much diversification in materials and machining.

"Fairly early into our drum production," Remo continues, "we realized that we couldn't compete against companies whose ability to get the product on the market at a price that the public was willing to pay far exceeded ours. So we changed our position. We are now able to take our time, make much better drumsets than we've ever made before, and sell them at a reasonable price. And we won't have to be so damned scared about selling them all in order to put food on the table."

When *MD* interviewed Remo in 1986, he said that "there will always be drummers out there." Does he still believe that today? "More so than ever," he replies. "There are probably more people active in drums now—depending on what you want to call a 'drum'—than there have ever been in the history of the world. In 1986 I said that our consumer base was two million active drummers in the country. Those were primarily drumset players. Today our consumer base is anybody who's alive—based on the fact that rhythm is an innate concept that everyone feels to one extent or another. A kid who plays with a *Lollipop Drum*

at the age of four might go on to a full-scale career on drums and/or percussion.

"I don't think we will ever lose the compulsive drummer—the person who feels an inescapable calling to play the drums. But unfortunately, I think we have lost the impulsive drummer—who is just attracted to drums for fun. The impulsive drummer can't afford to deal with a drumset in terms of time, space, or money. Even if you learn to play the damn thing, where are you going to play it? We still continue to have a shrinking profession in that sense. Those of us who are professional and/or compulsive drummers will always exist because we're the ones willing to pay the dues. But I believe that today, *impulsive* drummers will go into a New Age store and buy a frame drum, a tar, or a djembe—something that they can take home and jam on to their hearts' content. We're awakening a tremendous number of people out there, and it's ultimately going to impact on all of the industry—including drumsets. It'll just make things better. We are, for the first time in history, able to draw more people into *some* kind of drumming experience than ever before."



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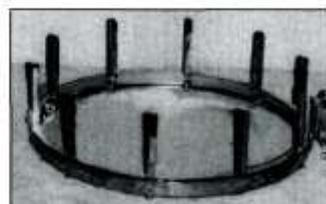
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MD 1995 READERS

HONOR ROLL

MD's Honor Roll consists of those drummers and percussionists whose talent, musical achievements, and lasting popularity placed them first in MD's Readers Poll in the categories indicated for five or more years. We will include these artists, along with those added in the future, in each year's Readers Poll Results as our way of honoring these very special performers. This year, MD is pleased to add **Louie Bellson** to the Honor Roll, in recognition of his fifth win in the Big Band category ('87 and '92-'95).

ALEX ACUNA
Latin/Brazilian Percussionist

AIRTO
Latin American and
Latin/Brazilian Percussionist

LOUIE BELLSON
Big Band Drummer

GARY BURTON
Mallet Percussionist

DENNIS CHAMBERS
Funk Drummer

ANTHONY J. CIRONE
Classical Percussionist

VINNIE COLAIUTA
Studio Drummer

PHIL COLLINS
Pop/Mainstream Rock Drummer

VIC FIRTH
Classical Percussionist

STEVE GADD
Ail-Around Drummer;
Studio Drummer

DAVID GARIBALDI
R&B/Funk Drummer

LARRIE LONDIN
Country Drummer

ROD MORGENSTEIN
Rock/Progressive Rock Drummer

NEIL PEART
Rock Drummer;
Multi-Percussionist

BUDDY RICH
Big Band Drummer

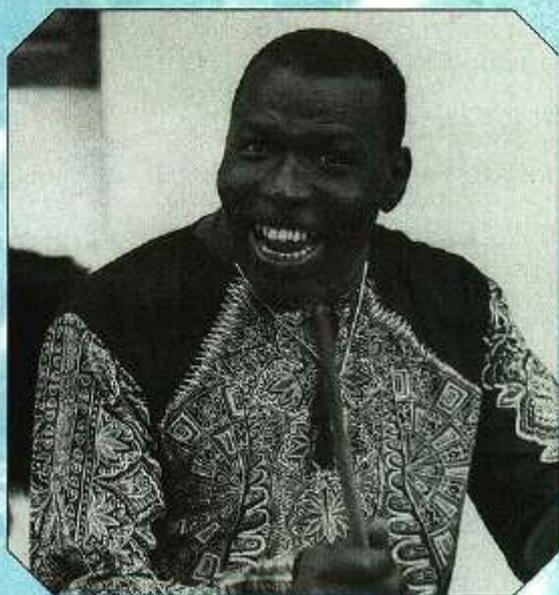
ED SHAUGHNESSY
Big Band Drummer

STEVE SMITH
All-Around Drummer

LARS ULRICH
Hard Rock Drummer

DAVE WECKL
Electric Jazz Drummer

TONY WILLIAMS
Jazz/Mainstream Jazz Drummer



HALL OF FAME 1995: ELVIN JONES

1994: Larrie Londin
1993: Jeff Porcaro
1992: Max Roach
1991: Art Blakey
1990: Bill Bruford
1989: Carl Palmer
1988: Joe Morello
1987: Billy Cobham

1986: Tony Williams
1985: Louie Bellson
1984: Steve Gadd
1983: Neil Peart
1982: Keith Moon
1981: John Bonham
1980: Buddy Rich
1979: Gene Krupa

POLL RESULTS



ALL-AROUND VINNIE COLAIUTA

2. Anton Fig
3. Simon Phillips
4. Kenny Aronoff
5. Dave Weckl



STUDIO JOHN "J.R." ROBINSON

2. Kenny Aronoff
3. Jim Keltner
4. Denny Fongheiser
5. Joe Porcaro



ELECTRIC JAZZ DENNIS CHAMBERS

2. Steve Smith
3. Bill Bruford
4. William Kennedy
5. Vinnie Colaiuta



MAINSTREAM JAZZ PETER ERSKINE

2. Dave Weckl
3. Marvin "Smitty" Smith
4. Jack DeJohnette
5. Clayton Cameron



BIG BAND LOUIE BELLSON

2. John Riley
3. Gregg Field
4. Dave Weckl
5. Marvin "Smitty" Smith



POP/MAINSTREAM ROCK KENNY ARONOFF

2. Vinnie Colaiuta
3. Manu Katche
4. Joey Kramer
5. Aaron Comess

In order to present the results of our Readers Poll, the votes were tabulated and the top five names in each category listed here. In the event a tie occurred at any position other than fifth place, all names in that position were presented and fifth place eliminated. When a tie occurred at fifth place, all winning names were presented.

READERS POLL SUBSCRIPTION GIVEAWAY

In appreciation for the participation of MD's readership in this year's poll, three ballots were drawn at random to determine the winners of free one-year subscriptions to *MD*. Those winners are David McKenzie (of Stone Mountain, Georgia), Angelo Crisci III (of Hillsboro, New Jersey), and Katrine Spang-Hanssen (of San Francisco, California). Congratulations from *ModernDrummer!*



**HARD ROCK
MATT CAMERON**

2. Vinnie Paul
3. Dave Abbruzzese
4. Alex Van Halen
5. Tommy Lee



**FUNK
CHAD SMITH**

2. Russ McKinnon
3. Phillip "Fish" Fisher /Steve Jordan
4. Omar Hakim



**COUNTRY
EDDIE BAYERS**

2. Brian Prout
3. Cactus Moser
4. Fred Young
5. Tommy Wells



**PERCUSSIONIST
TITO PUENTE**

2. Trilok Gurtu
3. Luis Conte
4. Sheila E.
5. Emil Richards



**UP & COMING
SCOTT MERCADO**
(Candlebox)

2. Chad Gracey (Live)
3. Paul Bostaph (Slayer)
4. Jay Lane (Sausage)



TRE COOL
(Green Day)



**PROGRESSIVE ROCK
MIKE PORTNOY**

2. Tim "Herb" Alexander
3. Scott Rockenfield
4. Terry Bozzio
5. William Calhoun/Matt Cameron

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- MIKE PORTNOY**—*Dream Theater. Awake*
2. Various Drummers—*Burning For Buddy*
 3. Vinnie Colaiuta—*Vinnie Colaiuta*
 4. Dave Weckl—*Hard Wired*
 5. Charlie Adams—*Yanni: Live At The Acropolis*



EDITORS' ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This award is given by the editors of *Modern Drummer* in recognition of outstanding contribution to the drum/percussion community by a performer, author, educator, manufacturer, etc. The persons so honored may be notable figures in drumming history or active participants on today's scene. The criteria for this award shall be the value of the contribution(s) made by the honorees, in terms of influence on subsequent musical styles, educational methods, or products. There will be no limit as to the number of honorees that may be designated each year.

For 1995, MD's editors are pleased to honor:

RINGO STARR



Was Ringo Starr a creative drummer who made a significant musical contribution to history's most important pop band—or merely an adequate player who was carried to fame on the shoulders of his "really" talented bandmates? This question has been debated (and is likely to continue being debated) ad nauseum. What is beyond question, however, is Ringo's impact on an entire generation of drummers who in fact *became* drummers as a direct result of seeing and hearing him

play in the early days of the Beatles. Literally hundreds of thousands of players—including some of the greatest drummers playing today—cite Ringo as their first motivating influence. It was perhaps Ringo's very simplicity (which his critics often decry) that gave him such widespread influence; young people could watch him play and think, "That looks like fun, and if he can do it, I can too."

Ringo's influence was not limited to drummers. All those Ringo wanna-bes needed drums and cymbals to make their dreams become reality. As a result, he can also be considered largely—and personally—responsible for the explosive expansion of the percussion manufacturing industry that began in the mid-1960s and lasted into the mid-'80s.

HENRY ADLER



Henry Adler can be considered a true "renaissance man" when it comes to the drumming business. He's been a professional player, a manufacturer, a retailer, and a wholesaler. But he is probably best known for his long and successful career as a teacher and publisher. The most famous of Henry's published works is *Buddy Rich's Modern Interpretation Of Snare Drum Rudiments*. Included in MD's Top 25 Drum Books over forty years after its release, this collaboration between a top-notch educator and a drumming legend

has become a classic. Other important works for which Henry is responsible include a seminal book on Latin drumming (with early Latin star Humberto Morales), the Phil Kraus mallet series, a timpani method from Alfred Friese, and both the Roy Burns and Sandy Feldstein elementary and intermediate drum method series. Notable drummers and percussion educators who studied personally with Henry include Louie Bellson, Roy Burns, Alvin Stoller, Sonny Igoe, Clyde Brooks, Al Lepak, and Jim Petercsak.

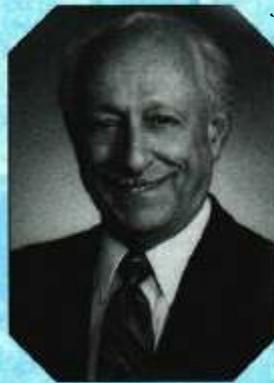
SIDNEY "BIG SID" CATLETT



Though Big Sid Catlett came out of the swing era, he is best remembered for a drumming style that had a marked influence on the bop drummers of the '40s. Sid bridged the gap between the two genres, and his recordings with Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker made him one of the few drummers to survive the transition from swing to bop. He was noted primarily for his conceptual innovations and his contribution to the rhythm section as a whole. He believed his primary

task was to integrate the rhythm section into the work of the entire group. His playing was firm, supportive, and extremely tasteful, with a great sense of form and structure. His solos were explorations of themes and variations exemplifying a keen sense of dynamics, humor, and surprise. His bass drum explosions echoed in the early work of the modernists, and his hi-hat style helped popularize that instrument as a primary timekeeping device. An inspired performer whose playing had a direct impact on the drumming of Max Roach, Art Blakey, Shelly Manne, Stan Levey, and Ed Shaughnessy, Big Sid Catlett is considered one of the most important drummers who ever lived.

JOE CALATO



Joe Calato is the creator of the nylon tip for drumsticks, and was one of the earliest independent drumstick manufacturers. His invention (which he christened the Regal Tip) eliminated one of the most nagging problems that drummers experienced with their sticks: chipped wooden tips. At the same time, the nylon tips offered crisp new sound possibilities from cymbals. These combined advantages set a standard that all other stick manufacturers have since followed.

Calato's Regal Tip sticks also helped to establish drumsticks as a separate product in their own right, independent from those made by drum companies who sold them as accessories. His success paved the way for other manufacturers and led to the wide variety of models and designs available from the highly specialized drumstick industry today.



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Crossovers: Part 1



by Rod Morgenstein



The crossover is a technique used in drum fills and solos that can add both aural and visual excitement to your drumming. The examples that follow present snare/tom combinations that work well in practical applications, as well as exercises to increase mobility

around the kit.

Example 1 consists of triplets between the snare and floor tom, with the left hand "crossing over" the right to hit the floor tom on the beats 2 and 4.

1

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

Example 2 is similar to example 1, but is played between the floor tom and rack tom. Once again, the left hand crosses over the right to hit the floor tom on 2 and 4.

2

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

Example 3 has the right hand crossing over the left to play the snare on the beats 1 and 3 while the left hand crosses *under* the right to play the snare on 2 and 4.

3

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

Example 4 is the same concept of the previous example using the floor tom and rack tom.

4

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

Example 5 consists of the snare, floor, and rack tom, with the left hand crossing over the right to hit the floor tom on beats 2 and 4.

5

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

Like example 5, example 6 uses three drums, but the right hand

crosses over to play the rack tom on beats 1 and 3.

6

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

Example 7 is a crossover based on example 1. However, rather than consisting of triplets, the pattern is now played as 16th notes, creating a completely different rhythmic feel.

7

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

Example 8 is based on the triplet pattern in example 3.

8

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

Follow the same process with examples 9 and 10. Example 9 is a left-hand crossover and example 10 is a right-hand crossover.

9

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

10

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

As always, approach these exercises slowly at first. Next time we'll go one step further. See you then.



More #1's than you can shake a stick at!

Vinnie Colaiuta

- #1 All Around
- #2 Pop/Mainstream Rock
- #3 Recorded Performance
- #4 Electric Jazz

Louie Bellson

- #1 Big Band

John "J.R." Robinson

- #1 Studio

Eddie Bayers Jr.

- #1 Country

Tré Cool

- #1 Up & Coming

Scott Mercado

- #1 Up & Coming

Trilok Gurtu

- #2 Percussionist

John Riley

- #2 Big Band

Luis Conté

- #3 Percussionist

Joey Kramer

- #4 Pop/Mainstream Rock

Denny Fongheiser

- #4 Studio

William Calhoun

- #5 Progressive Rock

Aaron Comess

- #5 Pop/Mainstream Rock



Zildjian
Drumsticks

Congratulations to all our Drumstick Artists who placed in this years Reader's Poll.

Advanced Studies For The Double-Stroke Roll



by Joe Morello

Transcribed by Marvin Burock

This exercise is an advanced technique for developing the double-stroke roll. It's based on the "Table Of Time" from my book *Master Studies*. In this case, however, you double each note. The following example should explain what I mean:

4/4

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

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

You should begin at a metronome marking of about 50 beats per minute (quarter note), playing each note with the wrist. The key here is to play the notes with an even spacing. Eventually, as your speed increases, you'll go into a natural rebound.

With practice, this exercise will help you develop tremendous control of the double-stroke roll and will allow you to play it in a variety of groupings. Your speed and endurance will benefit as well.

4/4

R L R L R L R L R L

R L R L R L R L R L

3 3 3 3

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

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

5 5 5 5

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

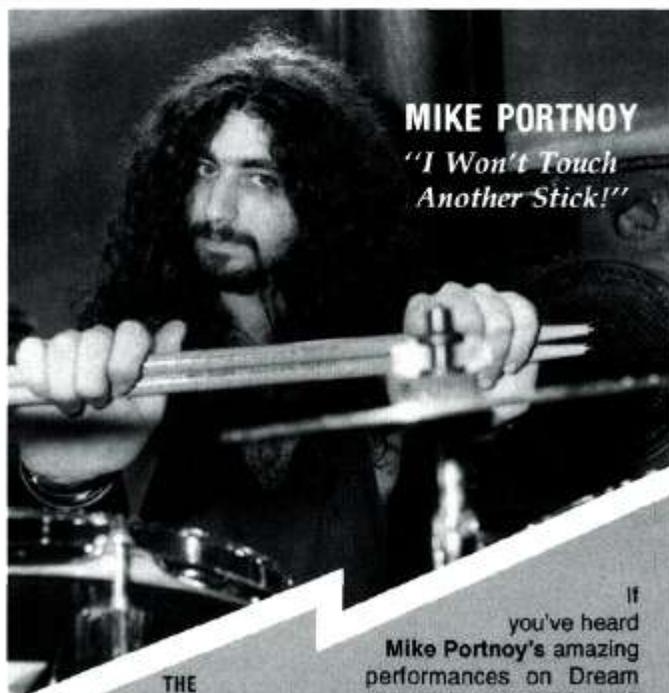
6 6 6 6

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

7 7 7 7

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

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



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Hot Sticks would like to congratulate Mike on winning the Progressive Rock drummer and Recorded Performance categories of the 1995 Modern Drummer Readers Poll—along with being one of the featured performers in this year's Festival Weekend. We are proud of his accomplishments and of his support and association with Hot Sticks!

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Congratulations to these four great artists named in the 1995 Modern Drummer Readers Poll ...from your friends at SONOR.



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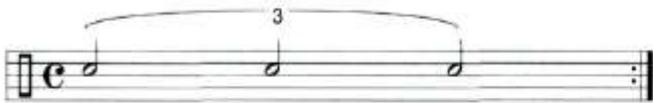
Developing The Left-Foot Clave: Part 2

by Gary Rosensweig



Last month we focused on using three limbs (right hand, left foot, and right foot) in conjunction with the left-foot clave. (It might be a good idea to go back and review that article before starting here.) Now let's add the left hand to what we've already learned.

Play the following left-hand patterns against any combination of right-hand, left-foot, and right-foot patterns from Part 1. Remember to strive for precision and balance. Sing all of the lines, reverse the claves, record yourself playing the exercises, and try some of your own left-hand ideas. Also, try different voicings around the drumset.



Another idea to work on is to play different snare and bass drum combinations against the right-hand and left-foot patterns. Here are a few combinations to try.





Now that you have developed the ability to keep a clave with your left foot while playing various rhythms with your other three limbs, try the following grooves. These are challenging and fun to play.

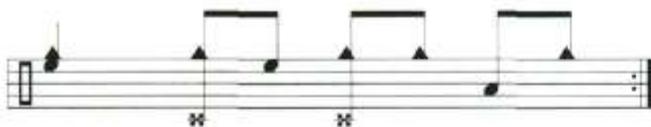
Cascara With Backbeat (3:2 Rumba Clave)



Songo (2:3 Rumba Clave)



Guaguanco (3:2 Rumba Clave)



Afro-Cuban



Funk Groove (2:3 Rumba Clave)



Try developing your own patterns as well. Also, try to go in and out of these grooves with solo/fill ideas while maintaining the left-foot clave. As always, focus on precision and balance. Enjoy!

This column was adapted from Gary Rosensweig's book Left Foot Clave. Used with permission from the publisher, Gary R Productions, P.O. Box 6846, Silver Spring, MD 20916-6846.



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Eric Kretz: "Vaseline"

Transcribed by Vincent DeFrancesco

This month's *Rock Charts* features a track from the very successful *Purple* release from Stone Temple Pilots. Eric Kretz plays well all over the album, really laying back on most of the grooves, giving a feeling of power and confidence to all of the songs. On "Vaseline" he lays down a very funky yet heavy pattern that propels the song. He doesn't interrupt the groove with too much fluff, but when he does play a fill, he plays a beauty—flammed 16ths—that just works perfectly.

MUSIC KEY			
Open	O	B.C.	C.C.
H.H.	X	X	X
S.O.	■	■	■
B.O.	■	■	■



Photo by Lisa Wales

fade in

♩ = 83

guitar in

A

B *sustain ride*

The musical score is written on a grand staff with a 4/4 time signature. It includes a tempo marking of 83 BPM. The notation features various rhythmic patterns, including flammed 16th notes, and is divided into sections labeled 'fade in', 'guitar in', 'A', and 'B sustain ride'. The score includes rests and repeat signs.

First musical staff featuring rhythmic notation with accents and a dynamic marking *v*.

Second musical staff featuring rhythmic notation with accents and a dynamic marking *v*.

Third musical staff featuring a first ending bracket labeled "1" and a repeat sign.

Fourth musical staff featuring a second ending bracket labeled "2" and a repeat sign.

Fifth musical staff featuring rhythmic notation with accents and a dynamic marking *v*.

Sixth musical staff featuring a *D.S. al* marking and a double bar line with a repeat sign.

Seventh musical staff featuring rhythmic notation with accents and a dynamic marking *v*.

Eighth musical staff featuring rhythmic notation with accents and a dynamic marking *v*.

RECORDINGS

CLIFFORD BROWN, MAX ROACH

Alone Together: The Best Of The Mercury Years

(Verve 314 526 373-2)

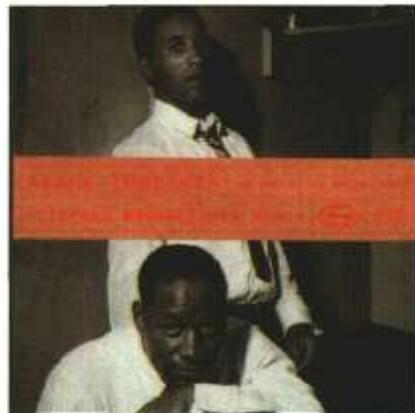


Max Roach, Roy Haynes, Osie Johnson: dr
Clifford Brown, Kenny Dorham, Booker Little: trp
Richie Powell, Jimmy Jones, Ray Bryant,
Bill Wallace: pno
Harold Land, Sonny Rollins, George Coleman: tn sx
George Morrow, Bos Boswell, Art Davis,
Joe Benjamin: bs
Julian Priester: tb
other musicians

Rare and fleeting, the *perfect* match of Brownie/Max flourished from 1954 until June 26, 1956 when an auto crash cheated away the lives of the brilliant twenty-five-year-old trumpeter and bandmate pianist Richie Powell. In those magic years, the pair co-lead one of jazz's greatest bands, a unit that transcended the angularity of bop,

rendering even chops-busting up-tempo tunes warm, melodic, and fluid. The familiar classics are here: "Jordu," "Parisian Thoroughfare," "Daahoud," "Cherokee," "Blues Walk," and others.

Unfortunately, the CD leaflet does a disservice to the collection. The cover is confusing for those expecting a retrospective of the famous team. Less than half of the two-disc, twenty-seven-cut set features the twosome. ("Alone Together" is a subtle tip-off, not the tune.) Also, Abbey Lincoln, cited as a guest artist, is nowhere on the disc. ("Never Leave Me," a vocal number, is listed but it is actually "Never Let Me Go," a trombone feature from the same original LP.)

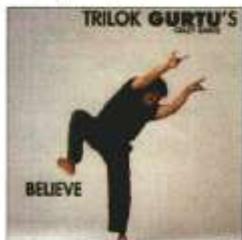
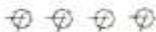


Glitches aside, this is a gold mine of prime drum cuts featuring Max with Brown and in post-Brown settings ('56 through '60), primarily in various versions of the offspring unit "Max Roach Plus Four." Bop doesn't get any better than this.

• **Jeff Potter**

TRILOK GURTU'S CRAZY SAINTS

Believe
(CMP CD 75)



Trilok Gurtu: dr, perc, vcl
Daniel Goyone: pno, synth
David Gilmore: gtr
Chris Minh Doky: bs

In a drumming world full of imitators, Trilok Gurtu is a completely unique individual—no one sounds like him, no one thinks like him, and most importantly, no one has his *spirit*. (No one has a setup like his either!) And while a lot of his approach comes from an incredibly rich total-percussion background—which he has ably demonstrated on previous recordings—on *Believe*, the

main focus is on Trilok's drumset artistry.

The music on *Believe* is "fusion-esque" (a terrible word, but one that seems to fit the Crazy Saints' direction), with odd meters, changing meters, unison lines, and lots of notes flying about. Trilok works "inside" the music, seemingly having a deep understanding of it and where it's going; he chooses his patterns, dynamics, and sounds—including his almost patented vocalizations—perfectly. (Trilok composed most of the tunes here.) And his way of playing a drumset groove is like no other's: It's playful, full of twists, turns, and *life*—by no means metronomic. You'll also find a few tracks containing extended solos from Trilok (played over repeated band vamps) that are simply outrageous. *Believe* me, this is one disc to pick up.

• **William F. Miller**

KEPONE

Ugly Dance
(1/4 Stick QS27CD)



Seth Harris: dr
Michael Bishop: bs, vcl
Tim Harris: gtr, vc

Kepone do everything right. Wielding punk-edged swords and dissonant, metal invectives, they create scarred tunes that can pummel and scorch ("Loud") or spread like an ominous mushroom cloud ("Brainflower"). Angst-ridden for sure, these songs are full of gutsy vocal hooks, boiling bass lines, and interesting melodic turns.

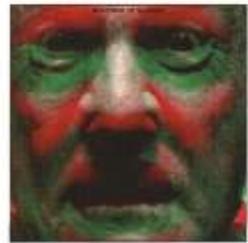
Where many bands of this ilk (think Minutemen, Meat Puppets) restrict themselves to

instrumental dwarfism, Kepone depend on each member's prowess to flesh out their rumbling arrangements. For a three-piece they get a big sound. Bassist Michael Bishop (formerly with GWAR) often propels the melodic lines (check the hyper assault of "Eenie Meenie"), while drummer Seth Harris matches him wit for wit, furiously rolling up and down his toms with the swooping melodic line of "Fly Bop" at one point.

Natives of Richmond, Virginia, Kepone possess a noisy, rebellious spirit similar to other bands who reside within earshot of the nation's capital. (Maybe such close proximity to power makes them do such ugly things.) The band hints at Helmet occasionally, boring down on a caustic grind or meshing unusual rhythms together. But largely they've hit upon their own brand of melody and maelstrom, tempered by the brutality of metal and the stop-start energy of punk.

• **Ken Micallef**

H.P.ZINKER
Mountains Of Madness
 (Energy 81113-2)



Hans Platzgumer: gtr, vcl
David Wasik: dr, perc
Uvey Batruel: bs

H.P. Zinker isn't the first modern rock band to turn the clock back two decades, but few are recapturing the feel and spirit of the early '70s as infectious as this unheralded Austrian trio.

Mixing the girth of grunge with the flair of fusion, H.P. seamlessly moves in and out of odd-time frames and several musical stylings. And through the deft stick work of drummer David Wasik, the band is able to retain some sort of continuity.

Actually, Wasik's drum sounds are more notable than any particular chops. You can hear the shell of his metal and wooden snare drums and feel the ghost strokes off the snare and hi-hat. But you really get a sense of his ability in songs such as the funky "Override" and "Birch," a sludgy rocker that slips from 5/8 to 6/8 to straight time.

Along the way, Wasik directs the band through passages of psychedelia, extended jams, and bits of banal rock cliché that could have fit nicely

on the outtake reel. Still, this is an ambitious and rewarding disc deserving a place in the mainstream rock gene pool. (Energy Records, 545 8th Ave., 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018.)

• **Matt Peiken**

FRITZ HAUSER
22132434141
 (Sound Aspects 053)



Fritz Hauser: dr

Fritz Hauser, born in 1953 in the drumming capital of Basel, Switzerland, has developed the solo kit into a truly musical instrument. He performs on a 13" snare drum; two bass drums (16" and 20"); 6", 8", and 10" toms; three wood blocks; and eleven standard cymbals. For this neat environment he commissioned the eleven compositions presented here.

Bun-Ching Lam's "Klang 1" and "Klang 2" contrast Ginger Baker-like drum counterpoint with kaleidoscopic cymbals, making great use of space and dynamics. Rob Kloet's "Wise Guy" develops lovely rolls and flams toward a deft ostinato, sounding like an entire African village before reaching a powerful climax—then picks up the brushes and shuffles off into the night. Joey Baron's "Fritz" displays excellent chops, satisfying form, and the cymbal-choking humor of its composer. Pauline Oliveros's reverb-drenched "All Fours" is a witty motive-driven prelude to Warren Smith's "Conversation," a slow 3/4 that recalls Erik Satie. The "Passage" of

Stephan Grieder sends soft cymbal 8ths and 16ths across the stereo image and over rims on its way to a rocking destination. "Das Ratsel eines Tages" of Franz Koglmann quietly studies the high sounds to prepare for Pierre Favre's mischievous "Dance." John Cage's "One 4" is all cymbals, but mostly silence. Robert Suter's "Pulsation" surrounds a wood block melody in brilliant colors. And Mani Planzer's "aire" combines bowed cymbals with an ingenious tune for the feet. Wonderful. (Sound Aspects, P.O. Box 1150, D71501 Backnang, Germany)

• **Hal Howland**

DORAN, STUDER,
MINTON, BATES, ALI
Play The Music Of Jimi Hendrix
 (Call It Anything any/vBr 2134 2)



Christy Doran: gtr
Fredy Studer: dr, perc
Phil Minton: vcl

Django Bates, Amin AH: el bs

While American populist rock tributes to Jimi Hendrix have been quick, commercial one-offs barely straying from the guitarist's original arrangements, less well-known but more adventurous musicians (Robert Dick, Kronos Quartet, an Italian group called If Six Was Nine) have repeatedly used Hendrix's compositions as the kernel of some outrageous, unusual improvisations.

DSMBA, a renowned group of European players, carries the mantle to refreshingly extreme levels. Under guitarist Christy Doran, who veers between Stevie Ray Vaughan, Hendrix,

and his own madly gorgeous bent, the quintet stretches out solos, changes tempos, toys with the harmony, adds free gibberish, and generally makes these hoary tunes their own. The blocky rhythm of "Purple Haze" begins as a dainty polka, then turns fusion à la Alan Holdsworth; "Foxy Lady" kicks off as an up-tempo Stevie Ray Vaughan blues boiler before sounding the well-known refrain, "Well, you know..." then double-timing the solo in a hard funk vein; "Manic Depression" is sleek and punchy; and "3rd Stone From The Sun" is a free reworking that recalls the jazz lilt of the original while opening up avenues for funk, rock, and third-stream experimentalism.

Fredy Studer (who was in the groundbreaking percussion group OM and has worked with Paul Motian, John Abercrombie, Chick Corea, Kenny Wheeler, John Zorn, and Charlie Mariano) is sensitively outstanding throughout, creating grooves built on Mitch Mitchell's chassis but adding original touches, such as Latin patterns (and some wicked metric modulation and kalimba) on "If 6 Was 9" and deft mallet work on "I Don't Live Today." Studer is a mature drummer, but he's not bound by any one style or era. His technique is precise while he is constantly developing interesting grooves and handling unusual time changes (standard fare here).

The biggest fault, or oddity, on this outing is vocalist Minton's over-the-top growling and belching. Talk about the-

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

Bassist Steve Bailey's *Evolution* (Victor) features some choice **GREGG BISSONETTE** and **DOANNE PERRY** power jams and creative coloring by percussionist **STEVE REID**. Mike Watt employs the use of some great drumming talent on his solo debut, *Ball-Hog Or Tugboat?* (Columbia), including **STEPHEN PERKINS**, **BROCK AVERY**, **DAVE GROHL**, **STEVE SHELLEY**, **JOHN MOLO**, and **ADAM HORVITZ**. **WALLY SCHNALLE** shows good chops as player and composer on *[it rhymes]*, his debut fusion release on Tree Fort Records (1800) 270-4060). **CHRIS SEARLES** plays some thoughtful yet non-hokey progressive drumming (as well as a bit of exotic percussion) on Ingrid Karlins' Crimson/Kate Bush-like *Anima Mundi* (Green Linnet).

RATING SCALE

- ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ Excellent
- ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ Very Good
- ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ Good
- ⊕ ⊕ Fair
- ⊕ Poor

atrics; this guy thinks he's doing Shakespeare. Otherwise, a fun and unusual release. (P.O. Box 1139, CH-3601Thun, Switzerland)

• Ken Micallef

VIDEOS THE GADD GANG

Live On Digital Video
(VAJ GAD01)



Steve Gadd: dr
Cornell Dupree: gtr
Eddie Gomez: bs
Richard Tee: kybd
Ronnie Cuber: sx

This video captures Steve Gadd's R&B quintet at a 1988 club date in Japan. In a set that includes classic tunes such as "I Can't Turn You Loose," "My Girl," and "I Can't Stop Loving You" (all of which appear on the band's two CD releases), Gadd and his colleagues give a one-hour master class in group playing.

There is little in the way of pyrotechnics here, mostly grooves a mile deep dug with sensitive and rock-solid playing from everyone. The combination of control and intensity that has become synonymous with Gadd is well represented in this performance. Check out "Whiter Shade Of Pale" for a lesson in the power of simplicity, and watch Steve's solo in "Signed, Sealed, Delivered" to see just how hot a hi-hat and bass drum can get before he breaks loose. This solo and the preceding classic drum/piano interplay with the late Richard Tee are alone worth the price of the video, perfectly capturing the character and energy of the group. Throughout the set the ensemble performs with the same drive and finesse that made Stuff (with much of the same personnel) so appealing many years ago.

Sound quality is good, but the video production and lighting are fairly low-tech, giving the tape a dark and realistic feel that some may find rather stark.

Drummers will surely crave more close-up shots of Steve (especially the fine views from behind the kit), but the evenness of camera coverage among the players seems to reflect his approach to the drums, which is to be a team player and focus on the music and soloists first and foremost.

With a group of musicians this talented and a collection of songs this good, it's hard to go wrong, and the Gadd Gang doesn't disappoint.

• Steve Snodgrass

LARRY BRIGHT

The Bright Side Of Funk
(Music Video Products, Inc.)
\$19.19, 45 minutes



Larry Bright is a note-meister in the jazz-fusion field who's landed some gigs recently with Carl Filipiak and Paquito d'Rivera, among others. On *The Bright Side Of Funk*, Bright doesn't so much lay down any sort of process to becoming a "funky" drummer; rather, the video concentrates on a series of hand/foot patterns that Bright fancies, first played relatively slowly, then up to speed, then followed by solos incorporating the ideas. Production qualities are good, with an over-the-shoulder camera angle that clearly lets us in on what is going on between the limbs, and on-screen numbers make cueing and reviewing particular "segments" easier.

The topics this video covers are rather limited, and in fact have been handled adequately in other top-notch videos. But Bright is making a name for himself in some circles, and there seem to be drummers out there interested in hearing and seeing more of him. If you're one of them, *The Bright Side...* would seem to be your next logical step. (Music Video Products, Inc., 9424 Eton Ave., Unit C, Chatsworth, CA 91311, [800] 637-3555)

• Adam Budofsky

BOOKS

STAR SETS

by Jon Cohan
(Hal Leonard)
\$22.95



It's been said before, but any honest drummer will admit in a second that half the fun of *being* a drummer is messing around with all that...stuff. Like, at the end of a gig when some bystander sees you struggling to squeeze your bass drum and hardware bag through the crowd, and they say, "Sorry you didn't take up the flute?" and you think, "Actually, no—not at all!" Well, author Jon Cohan has put together a book aimed right at the part of a drummer's brain that says, "I play the coolest instrument in the world."

At least that's what you find yourself thinking over and over while flipping through the pages of *Star Sets*. From Chick Webb's temple blocks to Tim Alexander's gong drum, Cohan does an admirable job detailing not only the equipment our greatest drum heroes played on, but why and how their setups fit into the style of music they (and their contemporaries) played. Fabulous black & white photographs abound, as do some great early drum ads (the shot of "teen idol" Shelly Manne being chased by a buxom beauty is classic), as well as a killin' color photo section.

Of course, by design a book like this is going to have limitations. The same plague that infects most of us—Setup Change Syndrome we'll call it—is not a new disease, and Cohan often had to choose representative kits of players who not only changed arrangements, but companies as well. No matter. Nit-pickers will only miss the point that the fun and fascination of the drums comes through loud and clear on these pages. What a gig we've got, huh?

• Adam Budofsky

NEW DIRECTIONS AROUND THE DRUMS

by Mark Hamon
(Centerstream Publishing,
distributed by Hal Leonard)
\$14.95



By thoroughly and methodically examining single-sticking rhythmic patterns around a snare and three toms, Mark Hamon prescribes strong medicine for the common tendency to double-stick patterns that don't "lay" well with singles, or to ignore awkward drum switches entirely. Taken as directed, the exercises will improve general and cross-sticking mobility around the drums and expand rhythmic vocabulary.

Analogous to—and often as tedious as—playing scales on a melodic instrument, Hamon's potentially bitter pill is made much more palatable by the innovatively visual way the exercises are presented. Patterns are conceived as shapes—Vs, with apexes on different drums, or clockwise and counter-clockwise circles. A designated "traveling" hand creates the shapes with its motion while a "stationary" hand remains on a single drum. Hamon stresses the importance of not only visualizing the shapes, but of recognizing the tonal patterns they produce.

The book has a couple of limitations. First, it addresses only upper body mobility; bass drum and hi-hat, not notated, are used only as timekeepers. Second, because all exercises are played hand-to-hand, and because all employ a stationary hand, every second note in each is restricted to one drum. This reduces the number of pattern variations and, arguably, the musicality of some of the patterns. Nevertheless, within its intended scope, the book does indeed provide "new directions" for both achieving greater facility around the drums and for conceptualizing the rhythms we play.

• Richard Watson



Congrats!

Congratulations to these fine SABIAN artists, and to all the winners of this year's Modern Drummer Readers' Poll. And thank you, readers, for voting for these terrific guys!



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Tito Puente
Percussionist



Charlie Adams
Recorded Performance



Vinnie Paul
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Progressive Rock,
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Russ McKinnon
Funk

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Kenneth Murphy

Kenneth Murphy is a forty-one-year-old drummer from the Detroit area whose extensive credits cover big band, jazz, rock, pop, country, blues, and studio work. Currently a member of the City Limits Blues Band and the staff drummer for Old Dogs Studio, Kenneth maintains a schedule of 200-plus dates per year in addition to frequent sessions. In 1994 some of those sessions produced a CD entitled *Old Dogs...New Tricks*, on which Kenneth's straightforward drumming provides a solid foundation for the group's blues/rock material. (A second CD is currently in production.) Ken's talents have gained him



endorsement agreements with Fibes drums, Vater sticks, Aquarian heads, Sabian cymbals, and Fishman transducers.

Growing up in Detroit in the '60s and '70s gave Ken the opportunity to interact with many of the classic Motown musicians. He cites their influence, along with that of such drummers as Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, J.C. Heard, Bernard Purdie, Ian Paice, Jeff Porcaro, and John Bonham. These diverse influences have helped him maintain a balanced approach to drumming, which he has utilized in his drum teaching practice for the past nineteen years. His goals are to continue his teaching and studio career in Detroit and expand it to include studio and performance work in Nashville and touring with a major artist. Ken's personal "secret for success" is to "perform in as many musical situations as you can, be pleasantly persistent, and maintain a good attitude!"

Todd Walker

Thirty-year-old Todd Walker's schedule barely leaves him time to breathe.

Originally from New Jersey (where he began his playing career at the age of eleven), Todd relocated to Florida in 1989. Since then he has been active as a member of several successful bands, the latest of which is a rock group called Themm that tours the south Florida area. Todd also does a great deal of free-lancing in virtually every musical style—"society" music, Latin, jazz, fusion, pop, country, rock, and even rudimental. At the same time he has parlayed his versatility into an extremely active teaching practice, both through music stores and at his



own teaching/recording studio, Mystic Sound. His teaching skills have also made him a popular clinician at drum shops and at schools from primary to college level. And as if that weren't enough, Todd is also involved in numerous recording projects at Mystic Sound as well as other studios.

In October of 1994 Todd's drumming skills took him to the finals of Thoroughbred Music's "Best Unsigned Drummer" contest. In May of that same year he won the Open Category in the "Pearl Players Drum Challenge" held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Todd's obvious talents brought him to the attention of Pearl and Sabian, and he is now an artist/clinician for both companies.

Jack Clark

Although only twenty-five, Jack Clark's background is notable for its variety of drum styles. He performed in concert, jazz, and marching bands throughout his school years, then immediately moved on to local and national club tours with heavy metal, rock, and country bands. After a stint with a local hard-rock band, the South Carolina drummer joined heavy metal rockers Thin Ice. His dynamic and creative playing on that group's self-produced eponymous

EP helped garner the band a certain amount of label interest.



An exciting soloist as well as a strong accompanist, Jack powered Thin Ice's performances during extensive club tours of the

East Coast and opening spots for such acts as Bad Company, Lynyrd Skynyrd, and Molly Hatchett. Taking advantage of his versatility, Jack has since moved on to a country group called Backstreet that is currently touring the Carolinas.

Jack displays his talents behind a ten-piece Ludwig Classic kit equipped with Zildjian and Sabian cymbals. His immediate goals are to contribute in all possible ways to whatever group he's performing with. As he looks to the future Jack hopes to achieve success on a national level.

If you'd like to appear in *On The Move*, send us an audio or video cassette of your best work (preferably both solo and with a band) on three or four songs, along with a brief bio sketch and a high-quality color or black & white close-up photo. (Polaroids are not acceptable.) The bio sketch should include your full name and age,

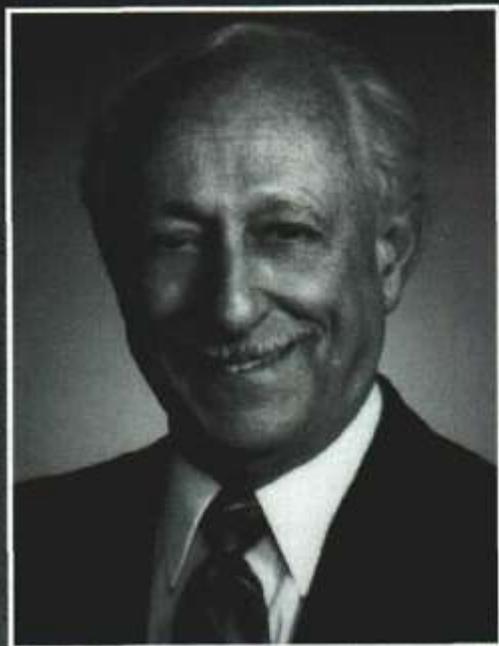
along with your playing style(s), your influences, your current playing situation (band, recording project, freelance artist, etc.), how often and where you are playing, and what your goals are. Feel free to include any special items of interest pertaining to what you do and how you do it. We'd also like a list of the equipment you use reg-

ularly. Send your material to On The Move, Modern Drummer Publications, 870 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Material can't be returned, so please **do not** send original tapes or photos.



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Leon Parker

Seeking The Essence Of Rhythm

by Bill Milkowski

The most unusual drummer on New York's jazz scene these days is a gifted twenty-eight-year-old southpaw whose minimalist approach has been turning heads for the past three years. His name is Leon Parker, and his debut as a leader, *Above And Below* (on Sony's Epicure label), is a startling manifesto for rhythm.

A diverse package of music that runs the gamut from breakneck bebop to slamming hip-hop grooves to Afro-Cuban workouts and ethereal world-beat excursions, *Above And Below* presents an open-minded musician whose innate sense of creative daring will not be denied. On the opening solo track, "Body Movement," Parker immediately distances himself from the neo-classical jazz country-club aesthetic by going out on a limb and playing his body like an organic percussion instrument. "That's something I've done all my life," says Leon. "Basically, I'm standing up, I'm barefoot, and I'm clapping. Then I'll be hitting my legs and my chest and stamping on the floor. To me, it's really dance; I'm not just standing still hitting myself. And it's like a cardiovascular exercise. To do it right I should really go into training."

Parker puts a contemporary twist on Thelonious Monk's "Bemsha Swing," shifting nimbly from solid backbeats to wickedly up-tempo ride-cymbal swing. He switches to hand percussion and delves into some world music on "Celebration" and "Evy," both performed with his wife, flutist Lisa Parker. He turns an old standard like "It's Only A Paper Moon" into a lively calypso romp with two of the brightest new stars in jazz, saxophonist Joshua Redman and pianist Jacky Terrasson. And he displays his uncanny cymbal virtuosity on the title track, muting with his left hand while drawing out colors with his right. Parker's cymbal work has become his signature. In fact, he used to show up on gigs with *only* a cymbal—and be swinging all night.

In his liner notes to *Above And Below*, noted jazz chronicler Ira Gitler recalls first seeing Leon Parker at the Village Gate in 1991: "The sparseness [sic] of his kit, pared down to a cymbal sitting atop a stand on which he operated with sticks, mallets, and brushes, and the way he used it to approximate many of the colors associated with a full set of drums while supplying creative support and the necessary swing, both astounded and gratified me simultaneously. I realized that he was something special."

Parker arrived at his decision to experiment with a lone cymbal



after much trial and error. "I began breaking apart the drumset in different configurations because I was trying to find ways of being more creative," he recalls. "I realized that eliminating most of the equipment would force me to play differently. At the same time, I was intrigued by African and Middle Eastern hand drummers because they get all these different sounds out of one instrument. So I knew I wanted to get down to one instrument—but I didn't know which one it would be. In the back of my head I thought it might have been a snare drum, but I wasn't completely sold on that. So I kept experimenting, eliminating pieces until I eventually ended up with just a cymbal."

In his search for colors on the lone cymbal, Parker says he was heavily influenced by Ben Riley, a longtime collaborator with pianist Kenny Barron who had also played with Thelonious Monk. "From watching him play, I knew that all you needed to drive a jazz band was a cymbal. So I started experimenting with getting different sounds on it: hitting it with either the mallet or the stick, hitting it on the side, with the tip of the stick, with the shank of the stick, or on the edge of the cymbal. I started experimenting with muting techniques and began getting different colors with different combinations of things. For example, a brush and a mallet gives one effect, playing with two mallets gives another effect, playing with a stick and a mallet gives another. There are many different combinations. So with that one cymbal I could serve my purpose

as a timekeeper and also experiment with different sounds. And since no one had really done that before, I was totally free to experiment. I didn't have to follow anything. It was a journey into the unknown, so it was very exciting."

Parker played around New York with a lone cymbal for about a year while also continuing to play sideman gigs with a full drumset. Following a sabbatical spent in Europe with his wife, Leon returned to New York with a fresh perspective on the kit. "I was continuing with my cymbal concept—but I was also playing a full kit on jazz gigs because I needed to work. I was being torn in two different directions because I had evolved and yet I was going backwards. So I decided to come up with a kit that would allow me to focus on the cymbal, yet still play different types of music. My basic setup since then has been a bass drum, a cymbal, and a snare drum. My playing sort of revolves around the cymbal."

Although he may occasionally augment his setup with a floor tom, Leon is steadfastly against using a hi-hat under any circumstances. "The hi-hat is not a logical inclusion into the drumset," he says. "If you listen to Jo Jones or Baby Dodds, Ben Riley or Roy Haynes...all of these great jazz drummers hardly touched their hi-hat. You listen to their records and you hear their cymbal, and that's what defines their tone. If you put on records of twelve different drummers—anyone from 1930 to 1995—and you compare hi-hats, you can't tell one from the other. But if you play all those drummers' cymbals, you can tell—because there's character in a cymbal. To me, a hi-hat is redundant. The bass player is already keeping time and the drummer is keeping time on the cymbal, so why repeat it on the hi-hat? Besides, it's not natural to me personally, because my first drumset when I was a kid didn't include a hi-hat. So through a natural evolution, I came back to what feels most comfortable to me to make music on."

Parker plays a Pearl kit with a 16x16 bass drum, which used to be his floor tom. He has a forty-year-old Gretsch snare drum and sometimes uses a 10x15 floor tom, which used to be his tom-tom. The lone cymbal that he did all of his experimenting on was an old Zildjian K. For his sideman recordings in the early '90s—notably with saxophonist David Sanchez (*Departure*, Columbia), bassist Harvie Swartz (*In A Different Light*, Blue Moon), saxophonist Dewey Redman (*Choices*, Enja), and saxophonist Jesse Davis (*As We Speak*, *Young At Art*, both on Concord Jazz)—he used an 18" Sabian flat ride cymbal.

Although Parker has an infinite capacity to swing—as he so ably demonstrates on the self-titled Blue Note debut of pianist Jacky Terrasson—he rejects the notion that he is yet another Young Lion on the jazz scene. "I have pieces on my album like 'B.B.B.B.' that have nothing to do with jazz," he says. "They have to do with me. 'Celebration,' the collaboration between me and my wife, isn't jazz either—but it's a part of me. And I realize that some people are going to say it's not valid because it's not in the so-called tradition. But to me, the African-American music tradition goes back a lot further than bebop. As far as I'm concerned, everything from Africa up to hip-hop is part of the African-American tradition. Jazz is just one part of that. It has its roots,

then it gave birth to other types of music. I'm a part of this continuum.

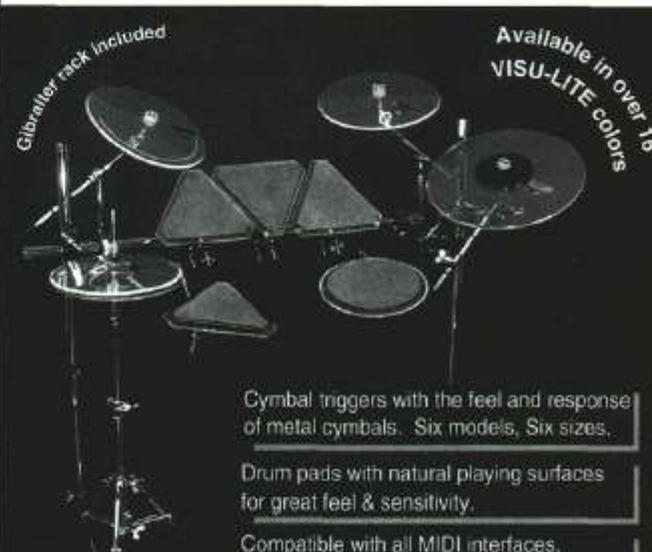
"I definitely respect my heroes, like Kenny Barren, Ben Riley, and Roy Haynes. They developed a style based on the time that they were a part of. You have to represent what's going on in your time. I grew up in the '70s and '80s. All that music is in me, and it comes out in some form when I play."

Parker's main focus these days is balancing his own band with his ongoing commitment to Jacky Terrasson's trio. "With Jacky," he says, "I'm basically a jazz drummer. But I love the situation because in a trio there's still plenty of freedom for me. When you add a horn, all of a sudden you become more of an accompanist in a rhythm section and less of a team. In Jacky's trio (with bassist Ugonna Okegwo), the team is all moving together with each other. It's like I'm a percussionist as well as a drummer. I like keeping time, but when I'm playing straight-ahead jazz I like to be more of a colorist. With Jacky, I'm not letting go of time, but I can play creatively. I'm not strictly locked into a timekeeper role. There's a lot of freedom and subtlety happening on the bandstand. With my own project, I'm trying to experiment more with hand drums and with the cymbal. My concept is more about a group sound, a vibe we're trying to give off."

While Leon has mastered the art of the cymbal, he's beginning to focus more attention on his snare. "I'm just starting to get confi-

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dent on my snare to the point where I feel like I'm dancing with the band. I concentrated on the cymbal for so long, I kind of forgot about that. But now I feel like my left hand is catching up. I'm starting to play integrated instead of separate, which Roy Haynes is definitely a master at. Both he and Ben Riley are so 'in the moment'

when they play, and that's where I want to be."

With the release of *Above And Below* and subsequent tours with both his own group and the Jacky Terrasson trio, Leon Parker is bound to make waves in the drum world and on the jazz front.



*Vic Firth salutes
the Modern Drummer
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- ★ Paul Bostaph
- ★ Terry Bozzio
- ★ Matt Cameron
- ★ Jack DeJohnette
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- ★ Peter Erskine

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Dave Tough

The inimitable Dave Tough controlled every band in which he worked with near-perfect timekeeping and his own distinct, buoyant style. Very much influenced by Baby Dodds, his primary concerns were musicality, maintaining an unwavering pulsation, and integrating the ensemble performance. His playing was subtle yet inspired, and though he rarely soloed—having little technical ability to speak of—he played with an intensity that only a Buddy Rich could match. At a mere ninety-eight pounds, Tough propelled the Woody Herman band with a fire, energy, and drive

that was unequaled. He tuned his drums to definite pitches, employed larger cymbals than had previously been used, and made the ride cymbal the basic instrument of his set.

Born in Oak Park, Illinois, Tough jobbed with Bud Freeman and Eddie Condon in the late '20s, and free-lanced in New York with Red Nichols. In 1936 he joined Tommy Dorsey, later working with bands led by Bunny Berrigan, Joe Marsala, Jack Teagarden, Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, and Charlie Spivak. However, it was his outstanding playing in Woody Herman's

mid-'40s band that drove that ensemble to inspired heights, having a profound effect on other drummers and earning him the acclaim he so well deserved.

Ed Shaughnessy remembers Dave Tough: "I first heard Davey with Woody's band, and it was a great revelation, because he had such *immense* power. He never brought the drums to the forefront, but preferred to simply build a tremendous foundation. When I got to know him, I realized he did many things that were unusual in those days. For instance, he'd keep a wet rag behind the set and wipe the calf bass head to keep it damp. He was also the first drummer I heard who played the bass drum relatively loose. While most drummers were getting a much boomier sound, Davey got a flat sound and used a wooden beater, claiming it didn't interfere with the bass player as far as tonality was concerned. As a result, he was able to play harder with a flatter sound.

"Davey also had one of the finest ears for cymbals I've ever heard," continues Shaughnessy. "Sometimes he'd reinforce brass figures with a little 15" cymbal, where anyone else would have added bass and snare. He didn't like to interrupt the rhythmic flow, so he colored it with the cymbal only. Dave was probably one of the finest examples of someone who didn't have lightning-fast hands and never wanted to solo, but was still one of the most in-demand drummers in the history of jazz."

Dave Tough died from injuries sustained in a fall in Newark, New Jersey in 1948, at the age of forty.

Text excerpted from The Great Jazz Drummers by Ron Spagnardi, published by Modern Drummer Publications. Kit information reprinted with permission from Hal Leonard Corporation. © 1994 Jon Cohan.



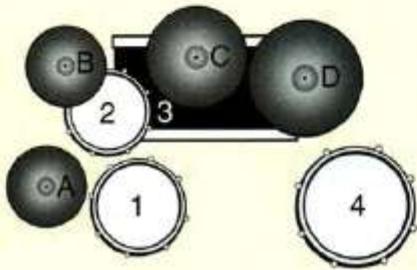
Photo by Frank Driggs

"When he was with us, the band was at its best—its very best."

—Woody Herman

Dave Tough's Kit Circa 1938

Though Tough varied his cymbal arrangement only when recording, he apparently would rearrange his drums to fit the gig. When he played with Benny Goodman, he often played the traditional "Krupa" four-piece kit, with the large 28" bass drum and a 9x13 tom-tom on the drummer's left. Other times he could be seen using a smaller 7x11 tom-tom mounted on his right, along with the 9x13. Whatever the array of his set, Tough always used the right tools for the right job.



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Excerpted from Star Sets, Drum Kits Of The Great Drummers by Jon Cohan (ISBN #0-7935-3489-5, Hal Leonard Corporation).



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Rogers Dyna-Sonic

by Harry Cangany

Drum collectors needn't look back fifty to seventy years to find a true classic. One particular drum made as recently as the mid-'60s can truly be considered a sought-after collectible.

The world-class Rogers *Dyna-Sonic* was made in a little factory in Covington, Ohio. This ten-lug, top-of-the-line model cost exactly one and a half times what the competing drums from Ludwig, Slingerland, Gretsch, and Camco did. The *Dyna-Sonic* was available in chrome over brass or in wood. The metal-shell drums are easy to find, and therefore aren't as valuable. However, the wood-shell versions are rare and are bringing ever-increasing prices on the market. I recently heard of one that was sold to a German collector for \$600—four times its original list price.

In 1960, when Buddy Rich switched to Rogers, he showed interest in the creation of a new snare drum. He wanted one that was responsively quiet as it could be powerfully loud—one that wouldn't choke with tight snares. Buddy further requested a drum whose snares wouldn't hang limp when the strainer was in the "off position—but instead would "float" below the head. Rogers' creative genius, Joe Thompson, invented a frame to hold the snares rigid at all times. He also added two lugs to the drum, giving it an even ten. Combining the words "dynamic" and "sonic," Ben Strauss (the marketing whiz at Rogers) gave us the name *Dyna-Sonic*. He described the meeting of the snares and the snare head as a "kiss."

The first models used a lug design carried over from earlier days. These are called the "drawn-brass" or "bread-and-butter" lugs. While beautiful, they are thin and extremely susceptible to cracking and splitting. I have only seen one Rogers snare drum from this period that had all lugs intact. By 1964, Thompson had developed the *Beavertail* lug. The term (first used for the 1940 Leedy lug) described a contoured work of art. Rogers also used high-collared hoops made of brass.

The shells of the wooden *Dyna-Sonics* were always made of five plies of maple. The plies were assembled with staggered seams for strength and with five-ply reinforcement rings to keep the shells in round. The finish coat was a clear sealer. At the time Grossman owned the company, other snares, toms, and basses were finished with a gloss gray primer coat. These are called "pre-CBS" or Cleveland drums. Drums from the next era (after CBS bought the company) had a gray speckled interior finish; these drums are known as Dayton-era. Then came the California drums, so named because CBS eventually moved the company to Fullerton, California.

I actually have some fun when people want pre-CBS Rogers drums and ask specifically for Cleveland drums. The sticker on the



5x14 "Cleveland" Dyna-Sonic



A rare 6 1/2x14 wood Dyna-Sonic

inside of each Rogers drum identifies its model, serial number, and "place of origin." The Cleveland sticker only means that the drums were *warehoused* in Cleveland—the site of Grossman's company. The Dayton drums were warehoused in Dayton, Ohio, at CBS's warehouse. But *all* of those drums were *made* by the same 125 people in the Covington factory. Except for different claws, T-rods, and interior finish, the drums are the same (although the later lugs were lighter in weight).

The *Dyna-Sonic* appears to have no snare bed. Actually, the bed *is* there, but it's very slight—.004". The snares hang down lower than those of other brands, and the snare-side hoop is distinctive because it has a large circular opening on the bottom to allow fine tuning of the frame mechanism.

The Rogers *Dyna-Sonic* is a wonderful snare drum, and I highly recommend it as part of a collection. If you find one, I suggest you

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check to see if the hoops are high and heavy. Are there ten lugs? Is the inside clear? Check the strainer and the frame. Is there an oval badge that says "Rogers Dyna-Sonic" on top and "Custom Built" on the bottom? Does the Rogers name appear in script on the shell?

Lastly, if the lugs are not the *Beavertails*, then examine them very carefully. The drawn-brass (bread-and-butter) casings crack and split with tensioning. There are drums with intact drawn-brass lugs out there, but don't get one with the intention of upgrading to *Beavertails*—the holes are different.

The top drum pictured here is a 5x14 Cleveland drum in champagne sparkle. Rogers and Gretsch both used a plastics company whose products were actually glitters, so a *Dyna-Sonic* is a beautiful-looking instrument as well as a great-sounding one. While any wood model is rare, deep models are extremely rare. The second drum pictured is a 6-1/2x14 blue sparkle and is the only one of that size I have ever seen. Again, I'll point out that the metal version is everywhere. But where are all the wood models? I have seen only five wood-shell *Dyna-Sonics* in twenty-five years. (Ben Strauss told me that everyone wanted metal shells in the '60s.) Excellent examples of wood-shell Rogers *Dyna-Sonics* will retail between \$350 and \$600. Brass-shell models should be in the \$150 to \$225 range.



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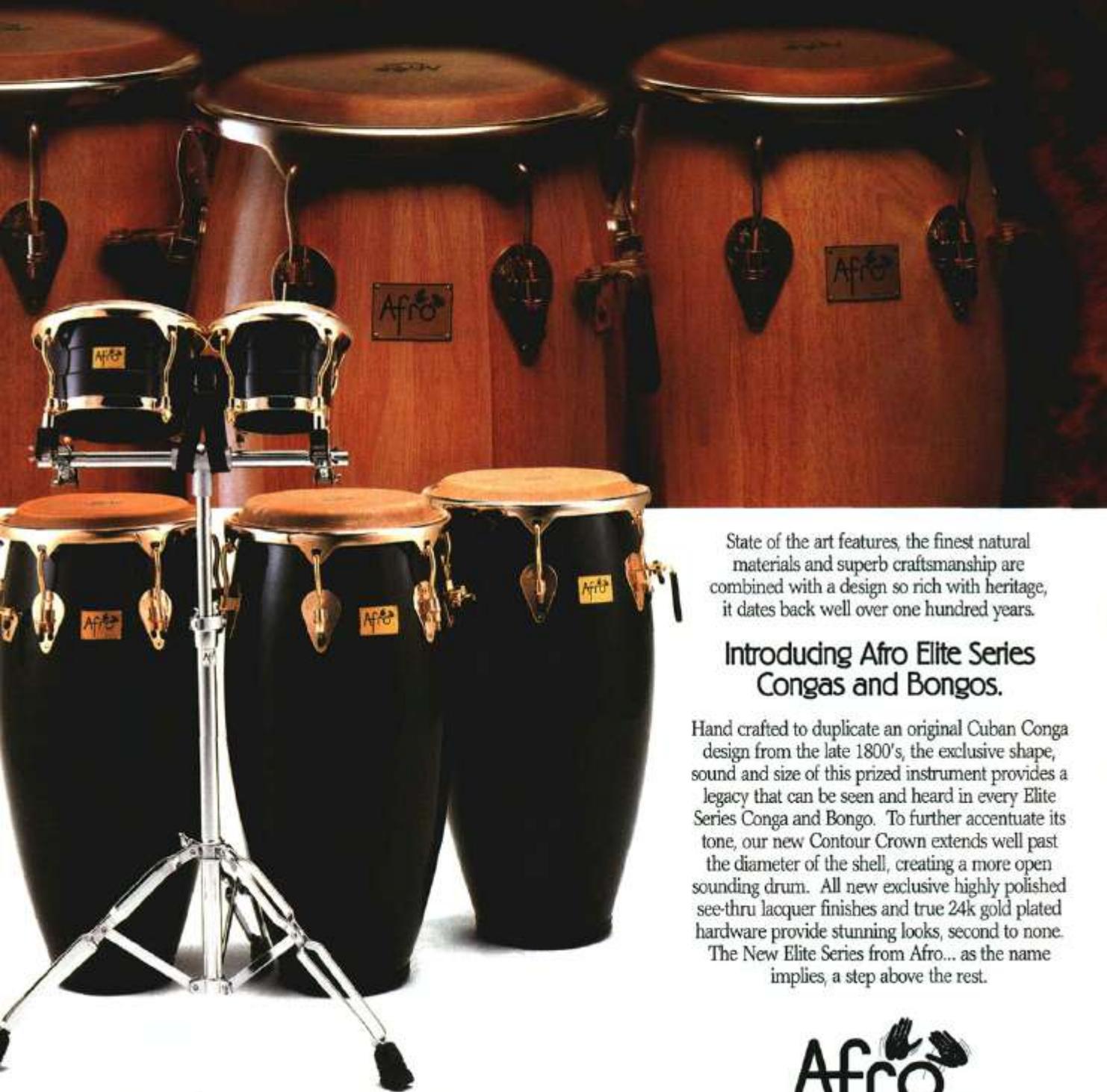
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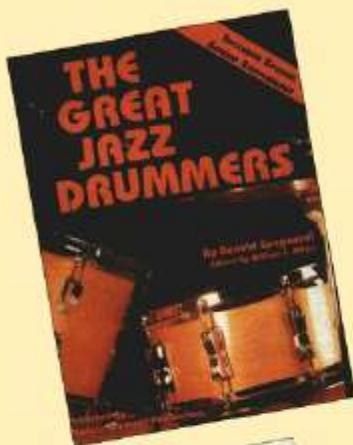
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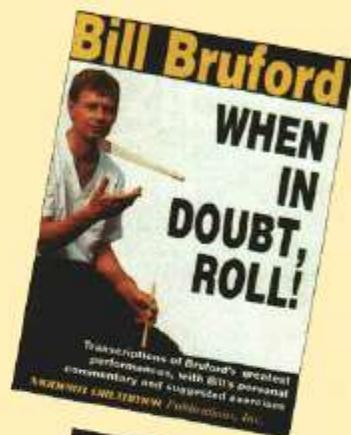
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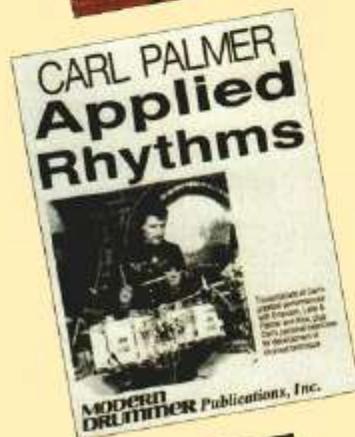
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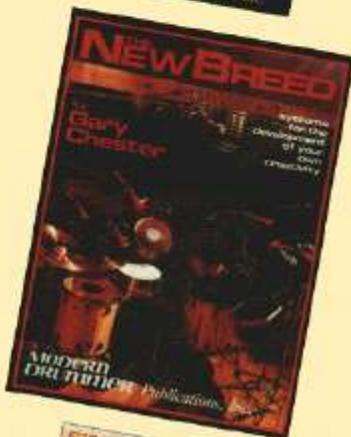
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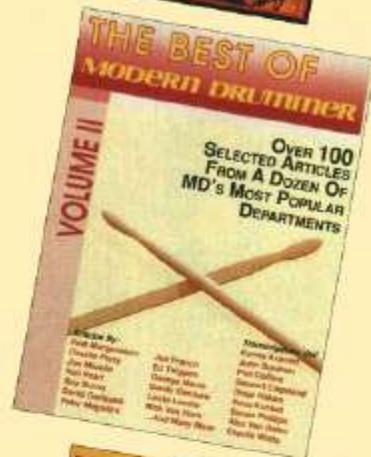
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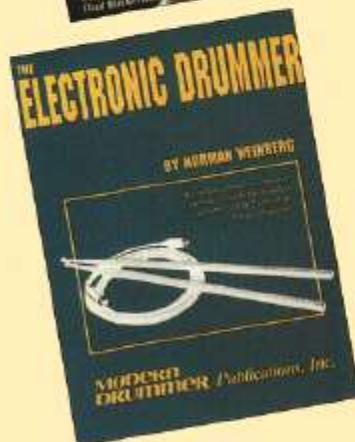
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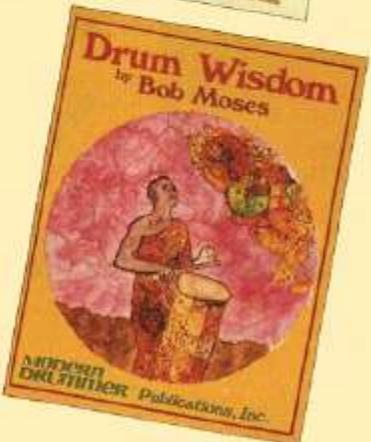
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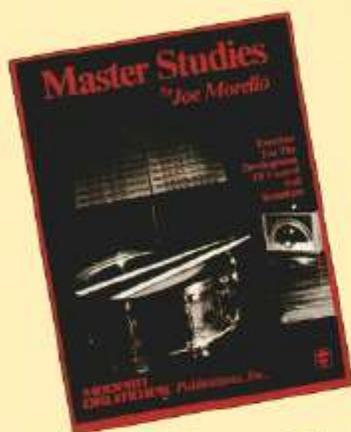


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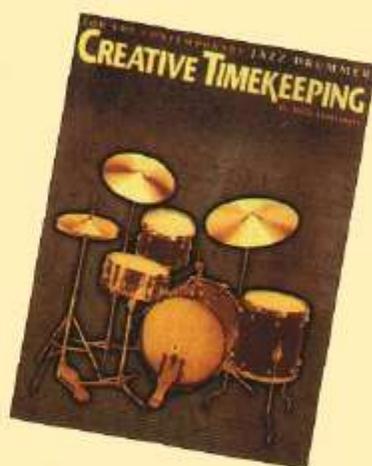
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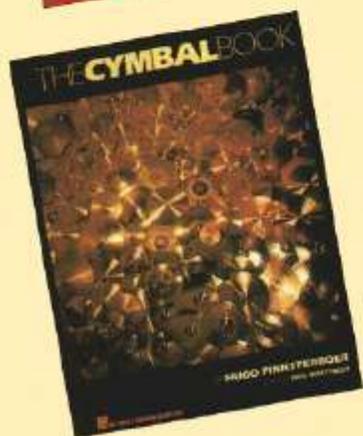
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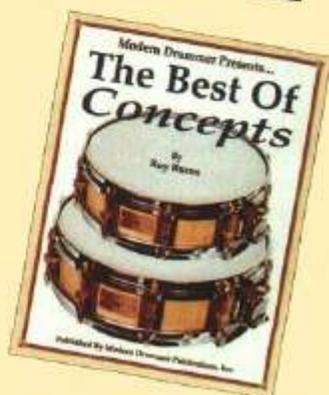
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Bad Attitudes

by Chuck Zeuren

As musicians, we've all had the misfortune of being part of gatherings of fellow musicians in which the "vibe" is so thick, you could cut it with a knife. As a teacher of many fine drummers, I'm constantly reminded by my students of these unfortunate distractions. I refer to them as "bad attitudes."

One of my students once told me a very interesting story. While he was studying with a famous teacher, his weekly lesson followed that of another student who had become a fairly well-known session drummer. Though that student was enormously talented, the teacher would comment about his bad attitude, claiming that if he didn't change it, eventually things would backfire and it would lead to his musical demise. Interestingly enough, I would hear stories of ego tantrums on recording sessions and other distasteful acts caused by this obviously disturbed musician. Unfortunately, I think his attitude did lead to his downfall. I haven't read or heard *anything* of him in quite some time.

My point is this: Music is an extremely high level of communication, and honest communication can only take place in an atmosphere void of all negativity. Egotism and arrogance negatively affect all who come in contact with them. Our insecurity as musicians is increased by someone else's arrogance (which is usually a direct result of their *own* insecurity). Music is so personal, it's hard to avoid insecurity. For better or worse, many of us are perfectionists. We've spent literally thousands of hours honing our craft, and many of us cannot be satisfied with anything less than perfection.

I'm sure we've all experienced the following: On the gig, at a point in the night when the band is burning and the music

feels great, a bandmember turns around and gives you a dirty look. You think, "What the heck did I do?" From that point on, the gig deteriorates into an undesirable memory. If you happen to be strong enough to get off the bandstand maintaining your cool, you're probably a better person than most of us. Quite possibly, if this incident hadn't occurred, the gig might have turned out to be the hippest of your career.

The best of us have made our share of mistakes. But it's our ability to accept mis-

"It's our ability to accept mistakes as learning experiences that reinforces our confidence and shapes us into better musicians."



takes as learning experiences that reinforces our confidence and shapes us into better musicians. In some strange way, because of all the hard work, we've earned the right to goof up and then move on, confident that we'll sound better on the *next* chorus or the *next* tune. It's the inability of many of our peers to realize this that leads them to believe they're actually better than we are. The truth is, under their superficial "perfect" attitude lies a feeling of insecurity

perhaps even greater than ours. They know their next mistake might be awaiting them within the next eight bars. It's also easy to forget that technical proficiency is only a small part of the entire performance situation. It's *the feeling* behind the performance that really moves listeners.

There was a time when I encouraged my students to attend what I considered to be the best music school in the world. But many of my students would tell me of unfortunate situations they had experienced while in school. Most of them were due to bad vibes and bad attitudes of other students—or of their teachers. I tried to encourage many of them to use these negative situations as positive reinforcement to achieve their own goals. Some students hung in, while others dropped out. The negative attitude of many of their teachers and fellow students was overwhelming. Some came home and continued studying privately with me. For some, the experience was *so* deep that they stopped playing altogether and pursued other careers.

Bad attitudes exist in all trades. But the difference, as I see it, is that in music one needs total concentration to achieve one's best performance. There is absolutely no room for outside interference from any negative source. As mature musicians, we have a duty to inspire young players and not discourage them through negativity. During these times of DJs and MIDI, we can't afford to scare off any prospective performers of live music.

Let's make a serious attempt to rid ourselves of negative attitudes. Let's tell our students how great they are, in spite of the fact that they didn't have time to practice this week. Let's tell the rest of the band how good they sound, in spite of a few wrong notes. And when you say to your fellow musician at the end of the gig, "You sounded great tonight, how did I sound?" don't be discouraged if you get silence in return. Use it to your advantage, and *practice harder!*



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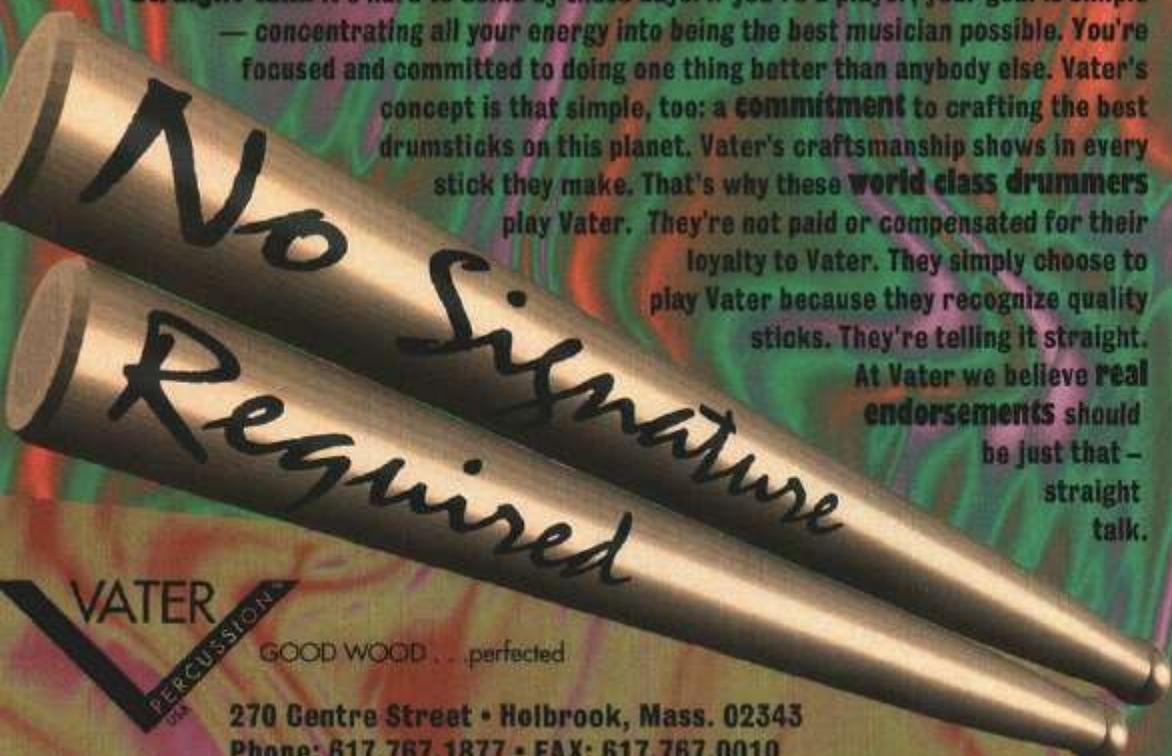
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The Drummer's Studio Survival Guide: Part 4 Compression

by Mark Parsons

Whether you're aware of it or not, most popular recordings have some amount of dynamic compression applied to them in one form or another. (Actually, one of the attributes of properly applied compression—in this context—is that it's *not* readily apparent!) That said, compression can do lots of beneficial things for the sound of your drums—some subtle and some dramatic. But before we get into that, let's briefly talk about what compressors are and how they work.

Compressors At Work

A compressor is a device used to reduce the dynamic range of a signal by a given amount once the signal exceeds a given level. The "given amount" is called the *compression ratio* and the "given level" is called the *threshold*, and they work in tandem (along with a couple of other variables) like this: Let's say you set a compressor for a ratio of 2:1 with a threshold of 0dB, and you send a drum signal through it (either while tracking or from tape). As long as you're playing at a moderate volume and the signal level is below the threshold, the compressor will pass it along unimpeded. Now let's suppose you really slam the drum, sending a +6dB spike to the compressor. The compressor will reduce the peak to +3dB (cutting it in half, your 2:1 ratio) before sending the drum signal to

the next step in the recording chain. Once the peak is over, the compressor quits the gain reduction act and things are as they were prior to the above-threshold signal.

Attack & Release

You'd think a processor would have to be pretty quick to catch and reduce a snare hit in real time—and you'd be right. In fact, the other variables mentioned above relate to exactly that: how fast the compressor clamps down on an incoming peak and how quickly it lets up afterwards (known respectively as the *attack* and *release* times). A normal range of attack times might run from less than a millisecond to fifty milliseconds, while release times are typically longer, say, from one hundred milliseconds to several seconds. For most percussion applications you generally want faster attack and release times—for obvious reasons—while more legato parts (like cymbal swells or entire mixes) usually sound more musical with slower attack and release times.

Many compressors today have program-dependent automatic attack and release, which means that they adjust the parameters of these controls according to the incoming material. A signal with quick transients (which most drum signals have) will generate quicker times than a slow bass guitar part, for example. Most compressors with auto attack and release (such as the ubiquitous dbx 160 series: 160, 160-X, 160-XT,

160-A, etc.) are very user-friendly and transparent in use, allowing you to get a musical sound in short order.

Knees & Limits

Classic compression works as described earlier: Signals under threshold are unprocessed, and anything over threshold is fully compressed at the given ratio. This is known as *hard knee* compression, labeled as such because a graph of the signal output has a hard bend (knee) at the threshold, where compression starts. *Soft knee* compression, on the other hand, comes on a little more gradually. Signals near the threshold are compressed at less than the full ratio, with compression increasing the further the input gain exceeds the threshold, until the full ratio is reached. This "variable ratio" type of compression is somewhat smoother and less noticeable in use, which may or may not be to your liking depending on whether you're looking for a natural-sounding reduction or a more dynamic effect. (More about this in a minute.)

A device closely related to the compressor is the *limiter*. Briefly stated, a limiter is a compressor with such a high ratio that the signal virtually *can't* exceed the threshold. (From a practical standpoint, any compressor set above 10:1 is going to function as a limiter.) Limiters are used when you absolutely don't want a signal to go beyond a certain level, for any number of reasons.



Why Compress/Limit?

There are an infinite number of applications where compressors or limiters are useful, but almost all of them fit into one of three categories.

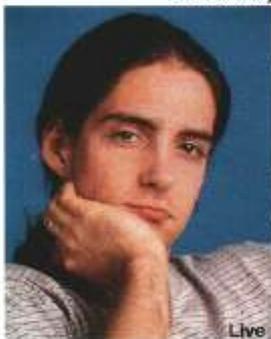
One reason to compress is a purely technical one: to keep from overdriving the recording equipment. Compared to other instruments, drums have a large dynamic range, capable of going from very subtle to extremely loud in a split second. These high-level transients can overload recorders if the peaks are too "hot," leading to distortion. Why not simply turn the signal down? You could, of course, but that might lower the level of the quiet parts to the point where they get lost in the mix. Compression just reduces the peaks, allowing the more subtle stuff to be heard. This is known as getting the signal to "fit" onto the tape. All recorders, analog or digital, have a finite dynamic range, with a noise floor at the bottom and distortion at the top—so the hotter the signal you can send

to tape (without creating distortion), the better your signal-to-noise ratio is going to be. (And while overdriving a digital recorder leads to absolutely unusable digital distortion, slightly over-saturated analog tape produces a warm, musical compression of its own, which is why many pros prefer analog machines over digital for cutting punchy rhythm tracks.)

Another reason to compress is to smooth out uneven dynamics. Let's say you've recorded a great backing track with your rhythm section, but during the mix you notice that occasionally the kick drum is played a little too softly. You have the option of redoing the entire track, but that's time-consuming and expensive—and besides, it was a great take, remember? A practical solution is to slightly compress the kick track, allowing you to bring the overall level up to where the weaker hits are hot enough to drive the groove, but where the peaks don't stick out too much. Bass guitar is frequently compressed for

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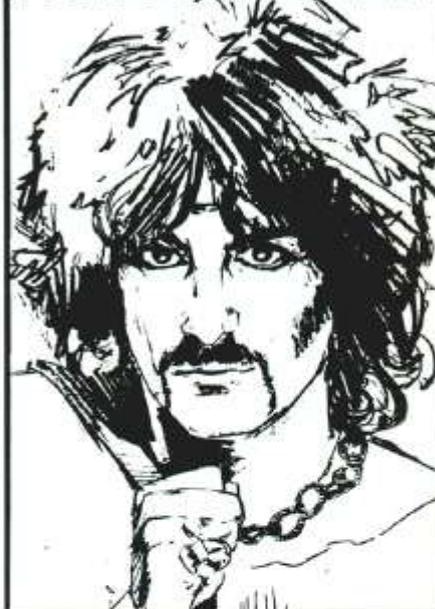


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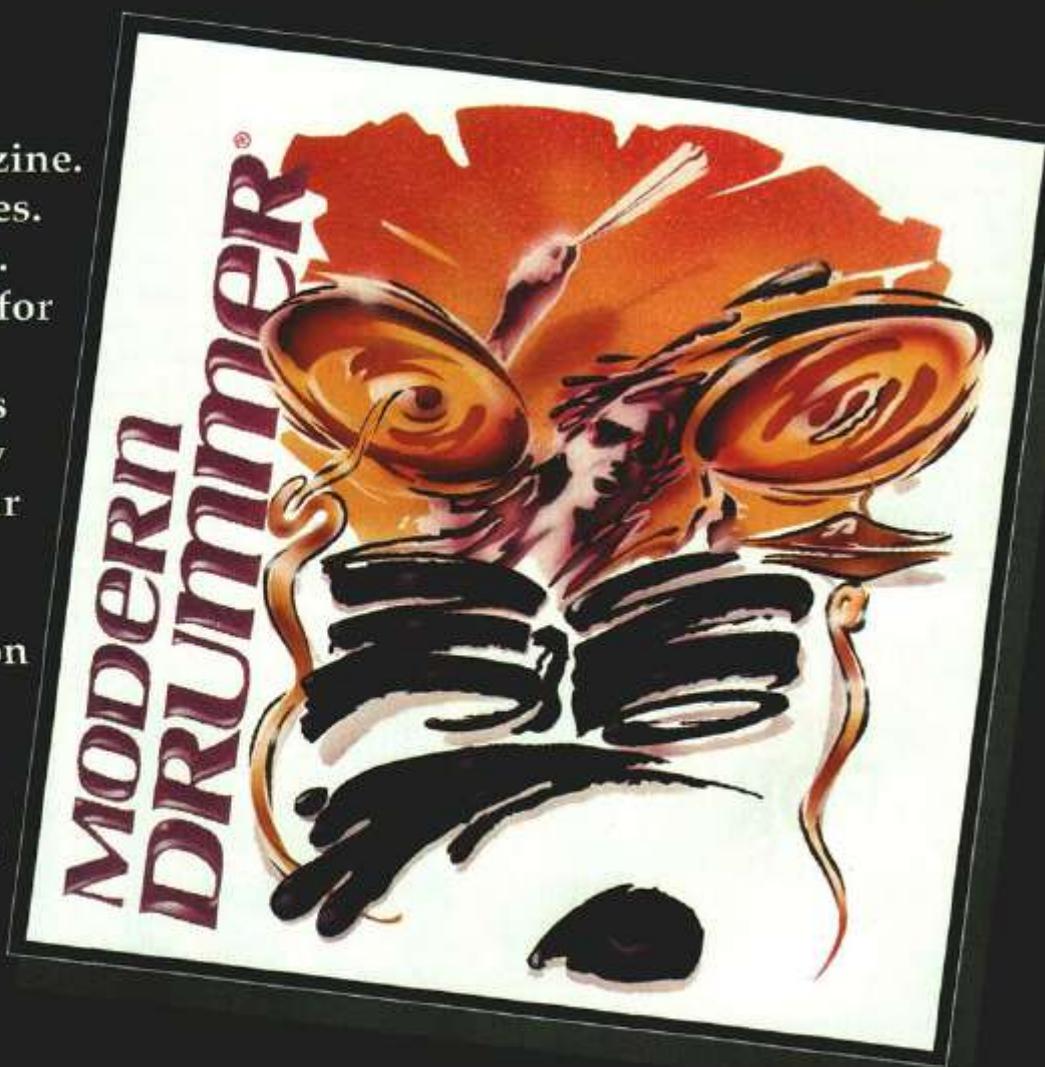
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the same reason, and a properly compressed kick track and bass guitar track can work together to give your recordings a solid, tight bottom that's not booming out of control.

The third and best reason to compress drums doesn't have as much to do with gain or dynamics as it does with *sound*. Part of the magic of compression is that it can make things sound "loud" without increasing the actual level. It works like this: a hard-hit snare, for example, has a totally different sound quality than a lightly hit one, *even disregarding the obvious difference in volume*. The one you slammed has more overtones ("punch," "ring," "bite," etc.) than the one you tapped, and it's these overtones that give the human ear clues as to the loudness of the original source material, regardless of the playback volume. Compression raises the level of these overtones relative to the rest of the drum sound, and, because it takes a certain amount of time (albeit small) to clamp down on the signal, the stick attack cuts through clearly. Add to this the fact that compression also *increases* sustain (as the sound decays the compressor "lets up," raising the level of the sustain relative to the peak of the note) and you've got a recipe for a big, fat, aggressive drum sound that will still fit into the dynamic range of your chosen recording medium.

Applications

One of the first things to consider when using a compressor is how to avoid noise buildup. (When you raise the average level you're also raising the noise floor.) There are several things you can do in this regard:

Keep your levels hot at every step of the process. Play solidly, close-mike the drums (if appropriate), keep the input levels on the board up, and send a strong signal to tape. *Keep acoustic noise reduction to a minimum*. If there's noise in the background, you'll hear it come up when the compressor lets up. This is called "breathing." Avoid it by keeping all extraneous noises out when recording. If all else fails, *gate the signal*. Many compressors include a built-in noise gate for just this purpose, but you have to be careful or you'll end up gating out some drum parts along with the unwanted noise. (We'll cover gates in depth during the next installment.)

Also think about *where* (in the recording chain) to apply compression. You can use it while tracking, while mixing, or a little of both—and there are pros and cons to each option. If you're pretty certain about the sound you're looking for, go ahead and compress while recording the individual tracks. This will help the noise situation a little (you'll avoid boosting any tape noise) and it'll free up another compressor for mixdown. (Compressors—unlike re-

verbs—are serial processors, meaning that the entire signal passes through them, thus requiring a separate channel of compression for each track requiring individual

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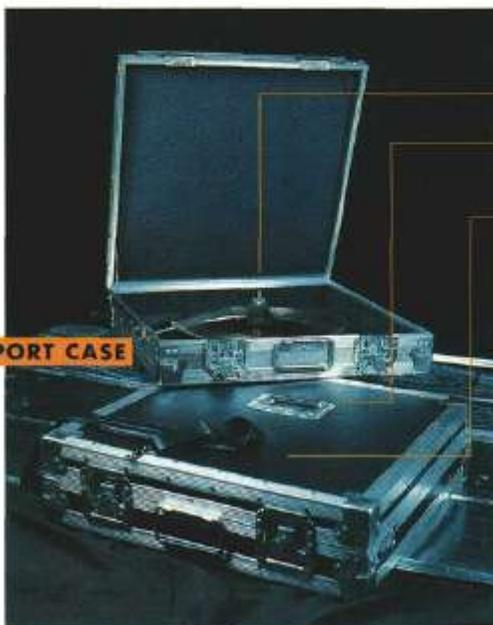
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processing.)

Saving drum compression until the mix is great if you're using a quiet multitrack (such as a digital or open-reel analog with noise reduction) and a number of compressors are available. This gives you the flexibility of trying different compression schemes against the entire mix before committing to one.

What parts of the drumkit should you compress? Good question. Since all of us have slightly different playing styles, there is no absolute answer, but I can certainly give you some general guidelines. The two examples given previously might be a good place to start: Listen to the kick track and see if a little compression doesn't tighten it up, both in terms of tone and dynamics. One of the hallmarks of a contemporary recording is a punchy, tight, *consistent* bottom end (especially in the dance, R&B, and rock genres), and a compressor can help you achieve it.

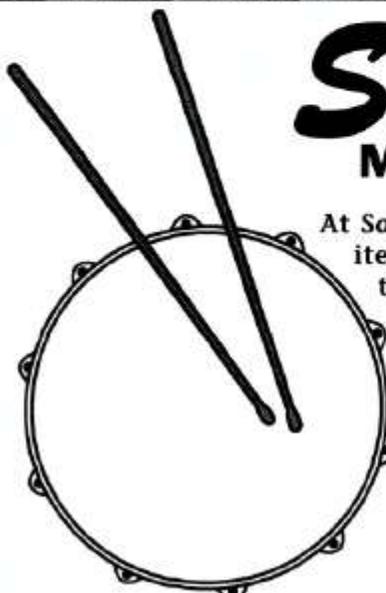
As indicated earlier, compression can

really help toughen up your snare sound. (It's especially useful for those of you working in the more aggressive end of things. For a great example, listen to "Black Hole Sun" on Soundgarden's *Superunknown* CD.) You may want to experiment with more compression on the snare than you put on the kick.

Some folks like to compress the toms and some don't—it's a matter of taste. You can compress either the close mic's on the toms or the overhead mic's. The latter method will also affect the cymbals (especially the crashes), which can be helpful if your cymbals are splattering all over the tape.

If you're recording in a nice-sounding room you can bring out some of the "air" in the studio by compressing the room mic's. (This'll let more room ambiance in when the compressors let up, adding some live reverberation to the sound.)

Engineer Ed Thacker (known for his killer drum sound on recordings by Sass



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Jordan, Heart, 10,000 Maniacs, Bruce Hornsby, XTC, etc.) says, "I generally compress the room [mic's] when I record, but I usually don't compress any other elements of the drumkit during the recording phase because you just never know how hard a guy's going to hit. He might really kill it on one take and *not* kill it on another take, and because you can't change the threshold that quickly you can get stuck.

"On the mixing phase," Ed continues, "I'll compress the snare and use a little EQ to bring out the tone. I'll often compress the bass drum a little, because a lot of times the right foot can be inconsistent—especially when there's a lot of guitar and bass for it to compete with. If you compress it you can either get a little more snap out of it or even out the playing a little bit."

Execution

So how do you dial in the right sound? It's mostly trial and error, but there's a logical process that'll make things go smoother. Set the attack and release times (if they're not automatic) close to where you think they should be (faster for kick, snare, or toms, slower for overheads and room mic's). Set a moderate ratio (2:1 or 3:1) if you're just trying to smooth out your dynamics, use a higher one (from 4:1 to 10:1) if you're trying to really change the tonal character. Feed your drum signal through the compressor and slowly start lowering the threshold setting, listening carefully.

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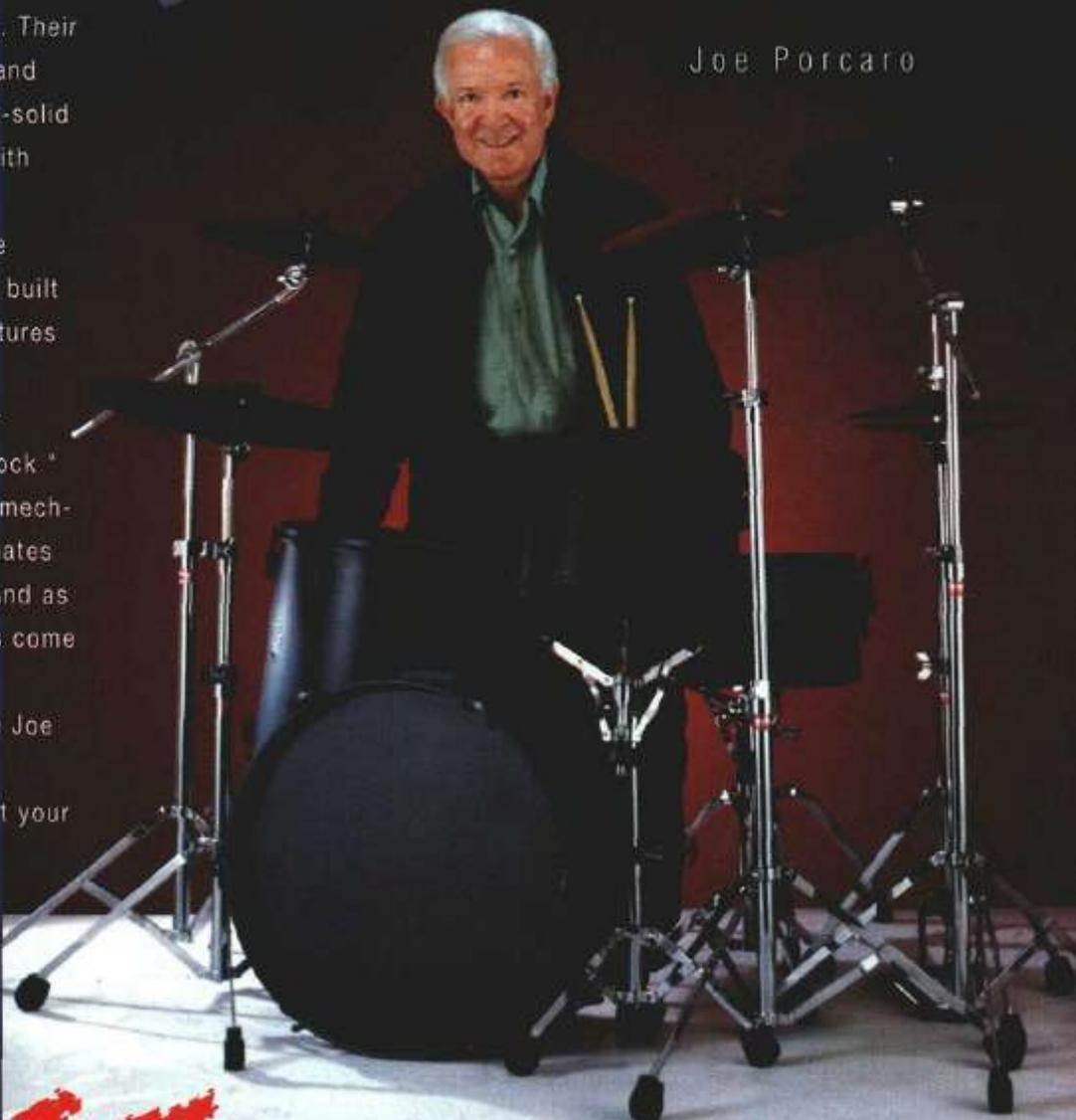
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Assuming the other controls are at least in the ballpark, the threshold knob has the most obvious effect on your sound because it determines *how much* of the signal is getting squashed. Watching the gain reduction meter will also help at this stage. It'll quickly let you know if you're just smoothing out the occasional peak or compressing the entire part.

Once the threshold's set, fine-tune the attack, release, and ratio (if necessary). The important thing here is to use your ears. If it sounds (*and feels*) good, go with it. Last, turn up the output control (sometimes called "makeup gain") to make up for the level you lost during the compression stage. Remember, we want to send as hot a signal as possible (barring distortion) to tape.

Once you or your engineer starts applying compression to your drums, you'll find it's a natural process that's not half as complicated as it sounds. While over-processing can (as always) lead to detrimental results, I think you'll find that a little compression can help your recordings sound fuller, tighter, and more consistent.

Happy drumming!

Mark Parsons divides his time between the drumset and the soundboard in his studio in Santa Maria, California. He got into recording, he says, "because I was tired of my drum sound always getting butchered."



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Philly Joe Jones

by Mark Griffith

In the post bop/hard bop period of jazz drumming, there was no other drummer as important as Philly Joe Jones. His contributions to the art of jazz drumming are immeasurable. He was a virtuoso with a pair of brushes and a genius at turning the rudiments into fluent musical ideas. More than any of his peers, it was Philly Joe's time feel that defined the idea of swing. Unfortunately, the great Philly Joe Jones died in 1985. Fortunately, for the many young drummers who never saw him play, he left a wealth of wonderful recordings for us to examine, transcribe, and enjoy. As is the case with anyone who recorded as much as Philly Joe did, not every recording is spectacular. But none lack the fire and grace that radiated every time he sat behind a set of drums.

A proper place to start examining Philly Joe's talent would be with his most popular contribution towards jazz drumming, Miles Davis's *Milestones*. Tony Williams once called this "the perfect jazz drumming record"—and I've never known anyone to disagree. The fours that Philly Joe and pianist Red Garland trade in the song "Billy Boy" are sometimes referred to as the most famous fours ever traded. A thorough examination of them could fill an entire issue of *Modern Drummer*. For some more drumming virtuosity, listen to "Two Bass Hit." In fact, this entire record is a true classic that every musician should own.

Another classic Miles recording that also sported the mastery of Philly Joe was *Round About Midnight*. This album is more subdued than *Milestones*, making it an excellent record on which to hear Philly Joe's mastery of the brush sound. This album also demonstrates a drumming technique that was identified with Philly Joe ever afterward. It can be heard on the song "All Of You" (among many others), when Joe places a crosstick on the fourth beat of the measure. This simple idea has a noticeably settling effect on the music, and adds a propulsive feeling to the time. Miles Davis continually referred to this as the "Philly Lick" to his future drummers. (Also listen to "Ah-Leu-Cha" for some more classic Philly Joe "licks.") Other great Miles records that featured Philly Joe were a series of recordings called *Workin'*, *Cookin'*, *Steamin'*, and *Relaxin'*. These were all taken from the same recording sessions in 1956, and are all superb.

Philly Joe also worked with almost every great saxophonist of his time. Perhaps most important was the great John Coltrane. When Coltrane was making the legendary record *Blue Train*, he was allowed to pick all of the musicians involved. He began with Philly Joe and bassist Paul Chambers, both of whom he had worked with extensively in the Miles Davis Band. (All of the



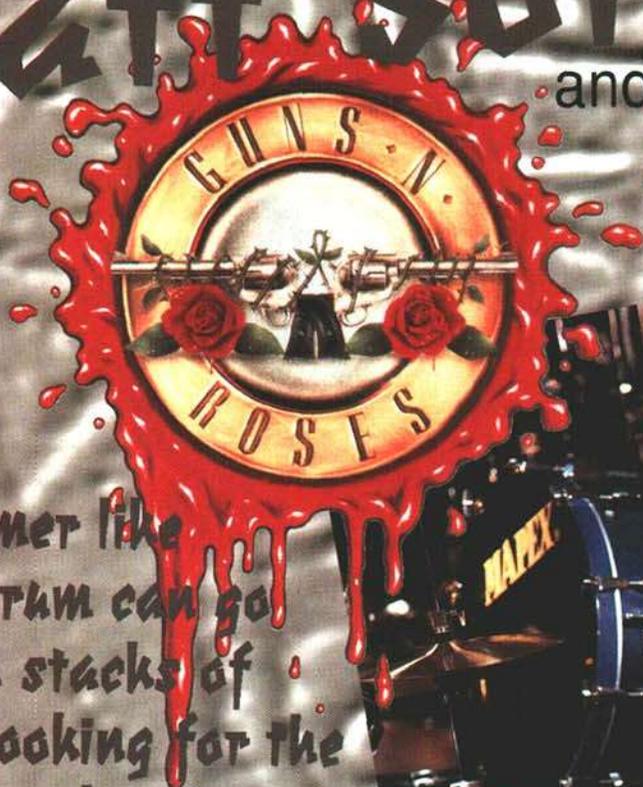
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aforementioned Miles recordings also feature Coltrane.) Coltrane's collaboration with Tadd Dameron, called *Mating Call*, also features Philly Joe.

Sonny Rollins also called upon Philly Joe for his classic recording *Newk's Time*. This recording features a six-minute duet between Rollins and Jones. Dexter Gordon's *Dexter Calling* was yet another outstanding performance turned in by Philly Joe. Jones also made many records with tenor saxophonist Hank Mobley—most notably *No Room For Squares* and *Workout*. *No Room For Squares* has a definite Jazz Messengers feel, while *Workout* is more bluesy. This bluesy, minimalist side of Jones was also portrayed nicely on Ike Quebec's *Blue And Sentimental*. Jones' left-hand comping style is changed due to the absence of a pianist, yet guitarist Grant Green brings out a side of Philly Joe that wasn't usually apparent. This is an outstanding record to listen to in conjunction with *Milestones*. While they both have the same outcome, they utilize two drastically different approaches to the music. Jones was about much more than chops, rudiments, and speed; *Workout* and *Blue And Sentimental* show his other side. Also check out trumpeter Kenny Dorham's *Whistle Stop* and Cannonball Adderley's *Portrait Of Cannonball*.

Philly Joe was a fantastic drummer in the piano-trio setting. Two prime examples of this are two of the most under-appreciated

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piano trio recordings ever. Wynton Kelly's *Kelly At Midnight* is an unrecognized classic. With the trio instrumentation you can greatly appreciate the *sound* of the drums. You can also hear Philly Joe feathering the bass drum, at which he was a master. This is one of the most *musical* recordings ever. Sonny Clark was not one of the most popular pianists in the '50s and '60s, but his recording *The Sonny Clark Trio*, with Philly Joe Jones and bassist Paul Chambers, is outstanding. This record contains all popular and jazz standards, and you get to hear Philly Joe play tunes with the trio that he had played with larger groups. Also check out pianist Kenny Drew's trio recording with Philly Joe and Chambers.

It is no coincidence that all of the aforementioned recordings except one (*Newk's Time*, with bassist Doug Watkins) have featured Philly Joe playing with bassist Paul Chambers. Jones and Chambers were perhaps *the* most popular bass & drum team used in the '50s and early '60s. They may be the best example ever of a bassist's bass line and a drummer's ride-cymbal beat becoming

Tracking Them Down

Here's a list of the albums mentioned in this month's column, including label and catalog information. Following the list are several sources you might want to check for hard-to-find releases.

Miles Davis: *Milestones*, Columbia CK-40837; *'Round About Midnight*, Columbia CK-40610; *Relaxin'*, Fantasy OJCCD-190-2; *Workin'*, Fantasy OJCCD-292-2; *Cookin'*, Fantasy OJCCD-128-2; *Steamin'*, Fantasy OJCCD-391-2; *Porgy And Bess*, Columbia CK-40647. **John Coltrane:** *Blue Train*, Blue Note B21Y-46095. **Sonny Rollins:** *Newk's Time*, Blue Note B21Y-84001. **Hank Mobley:** *No Room For Squares*, Blue Note B21Y-84149; *Workout*, Blue Note B21Y-84080. **Kenny Dorham:** *Whistle Stop*, Blue Note B21Z-28978. **Ike Quebec:** *Blue And Sentimental*, Blue Note B21Y-84098. **Dexter Gordon:** *Dexter Calling*, Blue Note B21Y-46544. **Cannonball Adderley:** *Portrait Of Cannonball*, Fantasy OJCCD-361-2. **Wynton Kelly:** *Kelly At Midnight*, Vee Jay NVJ2-914. **Bill Evans:** *Interplay*, Fantasy OJCCD-308-2; *Everybody Digs Bill Evans*, Fantasy OJCCD-068-2. **Kenny Drew:** *Kenny Drew Trio*, Fantasy OJC-065. **Milt Jackson & Wes Montgomery:** *Bags Meets Wes*, Fantasy OJCCD-234-2. **Clark Terry:** *Crusin'*, Milestone 47032. **Chet Baker:** *Sings: It Could Happen To You*, Fantasy OJCCD-303-2. **Sonny Clark:** *Cool Struttin'*, Blue Note B21Y-46513; *Trio*, Blue Note B21Y-46547. **Jackie McLean:** *Jackie's Pal*, Prestige OJCCD 1714. **Tadd Dameron:** *Mating Call*, Fantasy OJCCD-212-2; *Magic Touch*, Fantasy OJCCD-143-2. **Freddie Hubbard:** *The Body And The Soul*, Impulse A-38. **Philly Joe Jones:** *Blues For Dracula*, Fantasy OJCCD-230-2; *Showcase*, Fantasy OJCCD-484-2; *To Tadd With Love*, Uptown 27.11; *Trailways Express*, Black Lion BLP 30116.

Tower Records Mail Order, (800) 648-4844; J&R Music World Mail Order, (800) 221-8180; Audiophile Imports, (410) 628-7601; Third St. Jazz and Rock, (800) 486-8745; Rick Ballard Imports, P.O. Box 5063, Dept. DB, Berkeley, CA 94705; Double Time Jazz, P.O. Box 1244, New Albany, IN 47151.

one. This is the first part of what bassists and drummers refer to as "hooking up." This can come from endless hours of working together through tours and recording sessions, or from very keen listening. These two gentlemen did both. The telepathy, empathy, and musicality that Jones and Chambers displayed when they played together in a small group setting is unmatched.

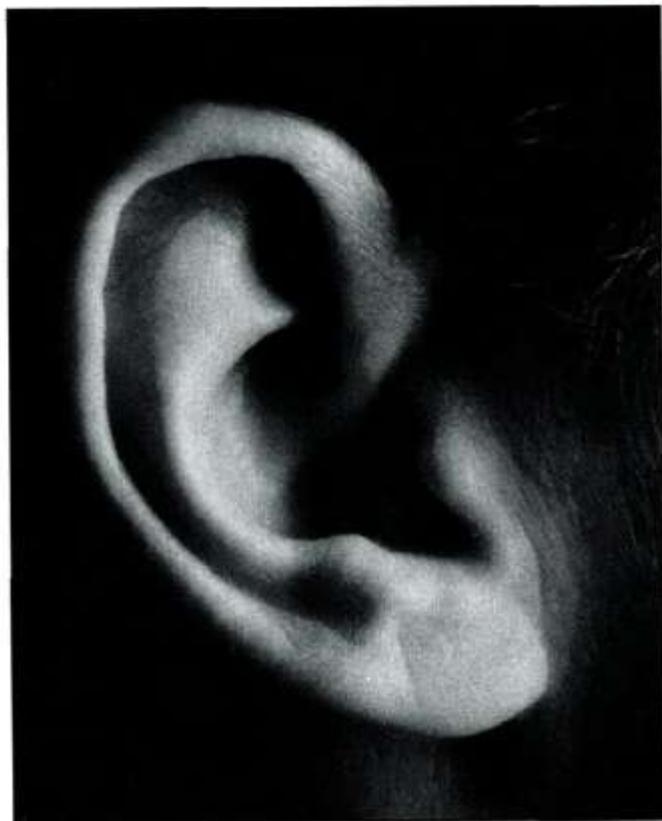
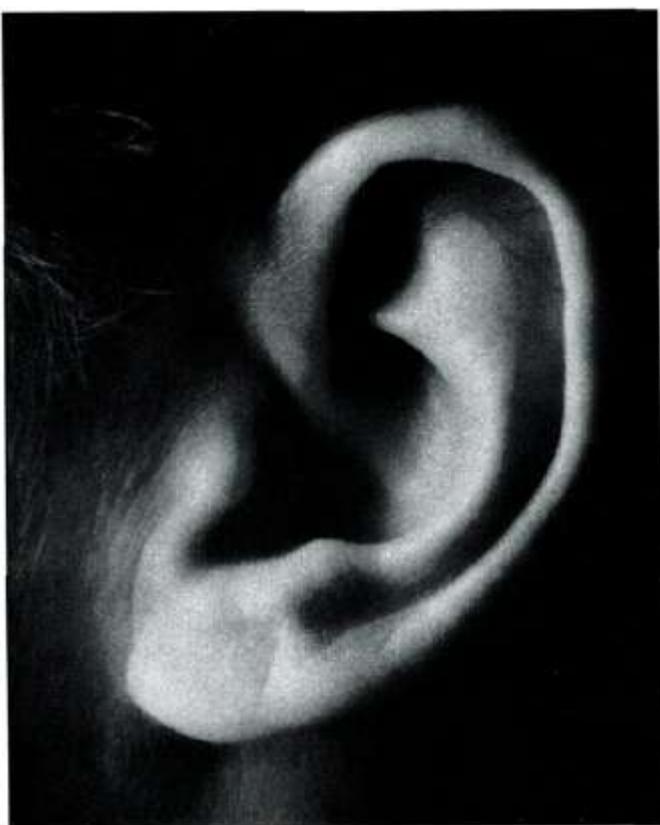
Bill Evans called upon Philly Joe when he recorded his popular *Everybody Digs Bill Evans*. In this case, Philly Joe was playing with bassist Sam Jones—and the result was one of the most popular piano-trio recordings ever made. Sam and Philly Joe (no relation) also played on vibraphonist Milt Jackson and guitarist Wes Montgomery's legendary recording *Bags Meets Wes*, and on trumpeter Clark Terry's *Crusin'* (which also featured Thelonious Monk).

Bill Evans and Sonny Clark also used Philly Joe on records that sported slightly larger groups. Both are quintets, but with different instrumentation. Both Clark's *Cool Struttin'* and Evans' *Interplay* are quality examples of how Philly Joe supports different soloists perfectly. On *Interplay*, Joe supports trumpeter Freddie Hubbard with sheer strength, while behind Evans and guitarist Jim Hall he plays lighter and with more finesse. Even when Joe was in Miles Davis's band, he was faced with the challenge of playing behind very different soloists. Miles and Coltrane couldn't have been more different in their approaches to soloing, yet Philly Joe was always the glue that held it all together. (Also listen to Jackie McLean's quintet recording *Jackie's Pal* for more fiery playing from Jones.)

Trumpeter and vocalist Chet Baker got the other side of Philly Joe when they recorded the hit record *It Could Happen To You*. Jones and the rest of the rhythm section support the West Coast "cool" sounds of Baker's voice and trumpet with sheer taste. With Chet Baker it would have been easy to overplay and steal the spotlight—but that was not what Philly Joe Jones was about.

An aspect of Philly Joe's drumming that few people talk about is his ability to drive a big band or large ensemble. Tadd Dameron's *The Magic Touch* is an excellent example of the drive and finesse that Philly Joe put behind a large ensemble of musicians. Listen to "Look Stop And Listen" (from *Magic Touch*) and wonder why more people don't talk about Philly Joe the big band drummer. Also listen to Philly Joe's own *Big Band Sounds Drums Around The World*. This is a concept album where different tunes are chosen to represent different parts of the world. Philly Joe gets creative with this idea—and some great music is the result. For other examples of Philly Joe's playing with big bands check out Miles Davis's *Porgy And Bess* and Freddie Hubbard's *The Body And The Soul*. In all of these examples you can hear that Philly Joe was a very supportive drummer who never let the flamboyance of drumming detract from the undenyng pulse that came from the ride cymbal.

Throughout his career Philly Joe Jones made a number of recordings under his own name. The two that stand out are the amazing *Blues For Dracula* (recorded in 1958) and *Trailways Express* (recorded in England in 1968, with an octet of British jazz musicians). Besides his talent on drums, these recordings nicely



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demonstrate Jones' writing and arranging skills.

Blues For Dracula gets its name from a song of the same name in which Jones does his infamous Bela Lugosi impression. The rest of the record is strictly music. This recording swings *very* hard, and Philly Joe gives a standout performance. He prods the soloists in his sextet through five mid- and up-tempo numbers, while providing just enough space for Joe to stretch out and be featured as a soloist. This was Philly Joe's first recording under his own name, and it's by far his best. It is a red-hot recording of a master jazz drummer at the peak of his career.

One of the highlights of *Trailways Express* is a rare extended solo played with brushes that Philly Joe does on the song "Here's That Rainy Day." Regrettably, because of his failing health, *Trailways Express* was one of the last superb recordings that featured the great Philly Joe Jones. However, in 1982, he began to co-lead the band Dameronia, with which he recorded the wonderful tribute *To Tadd With Love*.

Jones also authored an excellent book on the art of playing brushes called *Brush Artistry*. It was published by the Premier Drum Company and is now out of print, but it is *definitely* worth looking for.

Philly Joe Jones was an amazing drummer, a great showman, and a wonderful musician. The discography he left behind was vast, to say the least. Hopefully this column will help expose you to his best work—which is to say some of the greatest drumming ever.



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MD/S&S Sweepstakes Winner

Keith Kleinhamp of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania is the winner of the Squadron Electronic Drumkit offered by S&S Industries in the March '95 MD. Keith's postcard was the one drawn from among the thousands of entries submitted. Congratulations from S&S and *Modern Drummer*.

College Credit For PASIC Attendance

Through a program offered in cooperation with the University of Miami, music teachers and band directors can earn college credit by attending the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC). Registered attendees can earn one or two hours of graduate, undergraduate, or continuing-education credit through attendance of ten sessions per credit hour and completion of a three- to five-page paper submitted by early December to the University of Miami program representative. All concerts and clinics at PASIC are considered "sessions." The 1995 PASIC will be held in Phoenix, Arizona, November 1-4, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel and Phoenix Civic Center. The host is J.B. Smith, Associate Professor of Music and Percussion Area Coordinator at Arizona State University.

Attendees may register for the course (MED 593, Special Topics In Music Education) at the University of Miami booth in the PASIC exhibit hall. Course fee is \$145. Enrollment at the U. of M. is not required for participation in this program. Registration must be completed no later than 10 A.M. on November 2, 1995. For more information about this program, contact Ken Moses, University of Miami, School of Music, P.O. Box 248165, Coral Gables, FL 33124, (305) 284-2245.

A Wish Come True



**Loren Howard (left)
and Chad Smith**

Pearl Drums, Guitar Center, and Chad Smith recently combined to make a wish come true for sixteen-year-old Loren Howard (who had been diagnosed with cystic fibrosis). When representatives of the Make-A-Wish foundation in Orange County, California received Loren's wish for a Pearl drumkit, they approached Guitar Center for assistance.

GC worked with Pearl to find the exact kit that Loren wanted (a sheer blue, six-piece *Masters Studio* set). Chad Smith was tapped to participate in fulfilling Loren's wish.

On the day the wish was to be fulfilled, Loren was brought to the Guitar Center store in Fountain Valley, California on the pretense that he would be given a set of drums. As a joke, a small, battered kit was set up and presented to Loren as fulfilling his

wish. Although he was visibly disappointed, Loren graciously accepted the sub-standard kit and began to play on it. In the meantime a Red Hot Chili Peppers song was put on over the store intercom, and fantastic drumming started coming out of the store's drum shop. Curious to see what the ruckus was about, Loren ventured into the drum shop to find Chad Smith drumming on a sheer blue *Masters Studio* kit. When someone asked Loren what Chad was doing playing on *his* kit, Loren happily realized the joke—but couldn't believe that his wish had come true. Chad spent the afternoon with Loren and showed him a few pointers before he joyously brought his dream drumkit home.

Berklee College Fiftieth Anniversary



Photo by Liz Under

Berklee College of Music, one of the world's leading centers for contemporary music education, celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year. Working under the theme "Advancing Careers in Music," members of the Berklee community will produce a series of events paying tribute to the college that has launched many successful careers in the music industry. These events will be produced with the help of Berklee's corporate partners and music-industry friends. The first such concert (partially supported by Yamaha) was a tribute to Herb Pomeroy held on April 29. Pomeroy retired this spring after forty years of teaching at Berklee. Additional events will be held throughout the year. For further information contact Berklee College Office Of Public Information, (617) 266-1400, extensions 247, 566, or 567.

Musicians Contact Network

Fred Coury, formerly of Cinderella and Arcade, has established the Musicians Contact Network. The Network is a telephone system providing all musicians a way to leave a voice message and advertise themselves across the entire U.S. Users set up their own personal mailbox, then listen to/leave messages either locally, regionally, or nationally, for studio or live gigs. The cost is \$2.99 for the first minute and \$1.99 for each additional minute. Callers must be eighteen years of age (or have parents' permission) and must have a touch-tone phone. The number is (609) 489-1726.

Jim Beam Country Music Talent Search

The third annual Jim Beam Country Music Talent Search invites all budding country music bands to submit their best performance on an audio or video tape for selection as one of five finalists in a nationwide competition to be judged by a panel of music industry professionals. The year-long search for finalists will culminate in Nashville in November of 1995 with a "battle of the bands" at the Wild Horse Saloon. The judges will select a winning band or solo artist to perform at a private performance for record label executives. Submissions must be received by August 10, 1995. Rules and entry information may be obtained by writing to Jim Beam Country Music Talent Search Contest, P.O. Box 5016, Ronks, PA 17573.

Indy Quickies

The **Atlantic Rhythm Alliance** has been established in the Washington D.C. area to further the knowledge and careers of local musicians. The Alliance recently produced a clinic with Yamaha acoustic/electronic clinician Tony Verderosa, and plans more seminars and clinics in the future. Alliance director Jimmy Marcos can be reached for more information at **P.O. Box 387, Bowie, MD 20715, (301) 422-8122.**

David W. Bryan is the new Chief Executive Officer for the **Avedis Zildjian Cymbal Company.**

A new headquarters for manufacturing and office facilities has been selected by **Remo, Inc.** The \$10.5 million, 200,000-square-foot facility will be located on 10.5 acres in the Valencia Commerce Center in Valencia, California—approximately twenty miles northwest of the company's current location in North Hollywood. The building is expected to be completed by March of 1996, and will house all of Remo's operations under one roof.

David Via, former product specialist and district manager for Yamaha, has been named as the company's artist relations manager for the Band & Orchestral Division (which includes drums and percussion).

Yamaha is also a sponsor of the Budweiser In-Concert series, along with **Zildjian.** The series supports local bands of all styles with promotional assistance, advertising, PR, and financial aid throughout a one-year period. For more information on the program, contact Heidi Calkins in Public Relations at Entertainment Marketing, Inc., 350 W. Hubbard, Suite 430, Chicago, IL 60610, (312) 644-0600 extension 24, fax: (312) 644-0698.

Endorser News

Terry Bozzio is now playing Drum Workshop drums, pedals, and hardware.

Jazz timpanist/percussionist **Jonathan Haas** and Rare Earth drummer/vocalist **Floyd Stokes, Jr.** are Yamaha artist endorsers.

New Rhythm Tech artists include **Sony Sonefeld** (Hootie & the Blowfish), **Scan Kinney** (Alice In Chains), **Scott Crago** (the Eagles), **Bashiri Johnson** (Whitney Houston), **David Sanford** (David Benoit/Russ Freeman), **Robby Ameen** (Ruben Blades/studio), **Brie Darling** (Carole King/Jimmy Buffett), **Tony Reedus**, **Gregg Williams** (Peter Drogé), **Victor Bissetti** (Los Lobos), **Greg Hutchinson** (Roy Hargrove/Ray Brown), **Scott Breadman** (Lindsey Buckingham), **Eddie Drayton** (House Of Blues), **Michael Turner** (Kim Richmond Orchestra), **Hilary Jones** (studio), and **Jeff Martin** (studio).

Horacio Hernandez (Paquito D'Rivera/Dave Valetin) and **Thomas Pridgen** (independent) are also endorsing Rhythm Tech, as well as Pearl.

Other Pearl artists are **Herb Graham Jr.** (B Sharp Jazz Quartet), **Peter Yanowitz** (Natalie Merchant), **Johnny Kelly** (Type O Negative), **Phil Varone** (Saigon Kick), **Steve Berrios** (Fort Apache Band), **Melvin Baldwin** (Dionne Farris), **Carola Grey** (independent), **Alan Cage** (Quicksand), and **Anthony Smedile** (Dig).

Correction: A recent *Endorser News* item listed **Randy Walker** incorrectly as a Sonor endorser working with Richie Havens. Randy is an artist endorser for Yamaha drums (as well as Paiste Cymbals, Regal Tip drumsticks, and Axis pedals) and is now playing for Soul Shock Remedy.

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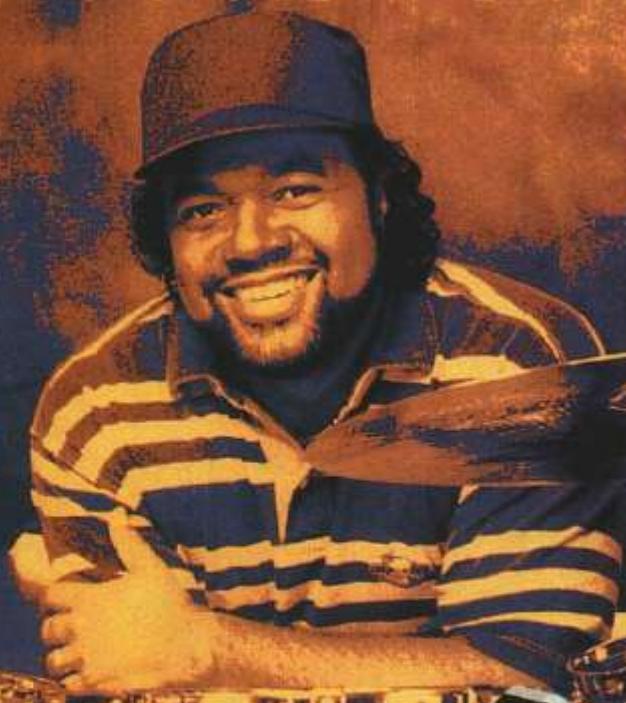
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Drumkit Of The Month



PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit. 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid

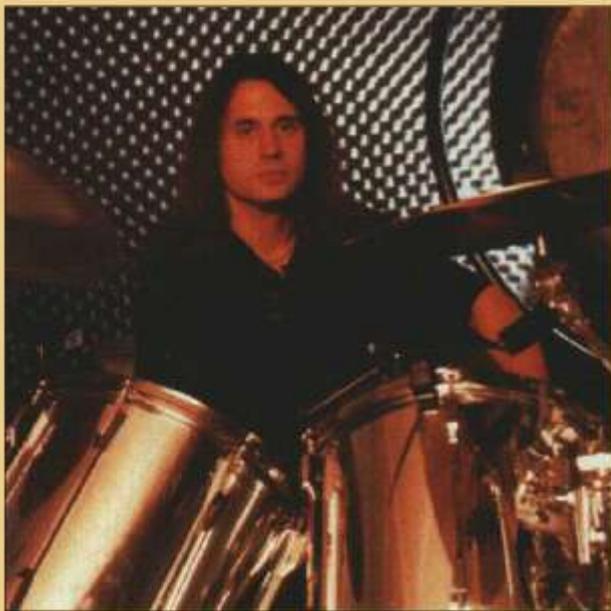
"busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit. Send photo(s) to: Drumkit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 870 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1268. Photos cannot be returned.

James Dillard of Annapolis, Maryland has been playing this colorful Ludwig Vistalite kit for the past eighteen years. The kit began as a seven-piece Jellybean Quadra-Plus model offered by Ludwig in 1974. James has added more Vistalite drums over the years (along with Zildjian cymbals, DW pedals, Remo RotoToms, and LP chimes) to create a kit that is at once historic and state of the art. He's been playing the kit in rock and country bands for over twelve years, and touts it as being "very roadworthy, with a good acoustic sound."



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it's ready to work. But all of these advanced features and the supreme quality craftsmanship it takes to build it are meaningless, unless you've got the sound to match. With Prestige Session you've got one of the best sounding kits at any price. These may sound like pretty strong claims for a mid-priced drum set to live up to. Well may be, but there's only one way to find out. Next time

you're in your local drum shop, hopefully a Pearl dealer, just sit down behind a Prestige Session kit, play it a while, and listen. Chances are afterwards, you'll feel as good about these drums as we do.

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Zildjian
Drumsticks

