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SIMON PHILLIPS

A mega-successful free-lance drummer like Simon Phillips would have to be crazy to put all his eggs in one band’s basket. But what if the bands is Toto and the shoes to fill are Jeff Porcaro’s? A different story, right? This month the recently emigrated Phillips shares the thoughts and lessons that have landed him on top.

by William F. Miller

Herman Matthews

A combination of shrewd business moves and good old-fashioned luck have landed Herman Matthews gigs with Bob James, Stevie Wonder, Kenny Loggins, and Richard Marx. Today Herman occupies Tower Of Power’s drum throne - which he says is his greatest achievement,

by Robyn Flans

Jack Sperling

Krupa and Rich may have grabbed the headlines, but Jack Sperling’s work with heavies like Les Brown, Henry Mancini, and Tex Beneke in the ’40s and ’50s ranked him right up there with the best of his time. Jack’s date book isn’t as full these days, but don’t think for a minute he isn’t swinging just as hard.

by Burt Korall

Photo by Aldo Mauro
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Roughly one year ago, we began our affiliation with The Electronic Newsstand, a web, gopher, and telnet site on the Internet. The Electronic Newsstand, which reportedly receives over 100,000 inquiries a day, is now our Internet connection to thousands of drummers around the world.

Access to the Newsstand is free to Internet users, and is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. When you locate MD on The Electronic Newsstand, you’ll find an editorial statement that offers a capsule description of what we’re all about. New readers interested in subscribing can gather more information, subscribe to the magazine directly, or even obtain a back issue via credit card or e-mail. The complete Table of Contents of the issue currently on sale is also updated each month.

For those interested in finding information on a favorite player, there’s a comprehensive reference listing that includes every drummer who’s ever been in the magazine since our first issue in 1977. And for new readers who might like to examine part of a typical issue, one entire feature article from the current MD appears every month.

Finally, there’s one new feature that’s still being developed as I write this. Soon users who tie into MD on The Electronic Newsstand will find up to ten drum company icons, which will offer online information on new products, clinic schedules, and anything else a particular company feels you might like to know more about. It’s a great way to stay on top of what our industry is offering in terms of equipment and education.

Again, the Electronic Newsstand is free to Internet users, and can be reached in any of the following ways: The Newsstand Home Page at URL http://www.enews.com/, Gopher enews.com; Telnet enews.com and log in as enews; or e-mail gophermail@enews.com.

The Electronic Newsstand is actually Modern Drummer’s first serious venture into cyberspace. However, it’s only the start of a host of new and exciting ideas we’ve got planned for the future. Stay tuned for more in the months ahead.
Profile: Doane Perry of Jethro Tull

PERSONAL DATA:
Doane Perry
BORN: New York City, USA

CURRENT & RECENT PROJECTS:
- Completed 18 month World Tour with Jethro Tull, celebrating the band's 25th Anniversary, and accompanying Boxed Set and Anniversary Video.
- Recorded and performed with Ian Anderson on "Divinities" Tour, playing orchestral and tuned percussion, as well as drumset.
- World Tour with Jethro Tull from 1995-1996 to promote new album entitled "Roots to Branches."
- Recorded my own project entitled "Thread" due out this year.

EQUIPMENT CHOICE:
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PEART ON STARTING OVER

I really enjoyed the article that Neil Peart wrote on “Starting Over” [November ‘95 MD]. I’ve found that everyone comes to a plateau, at which they think their playing is just not improving or that their methods are somewhat dated. I’m not saying that Neil’s methods are dated by any means, but I think he has tried to convey that not only is there always something out there to learn, but that there is always the ability for any drummer, no matter how many years he or she has been playing, to jump to another level. I believe that anyone who is willing to open themselves to another’s perspective will achieve something far beyond what they thought they were capable of.

Brad Trimas
Haslett, MI

RICHIE HAYWARD

I’d like to thank MD for the October ‘95 cover article on Richie Hayward—a drummer who I think gets too little attention for all the joy and inspiration his work has given us. He’s one of the reasons I keep trying to capture that illusive thing we call feel. I’ll never be a great drummer, but Richie’s work is one significant incentive for trying to do the best I can with what I’ve got—and to keep trying to gain more of what I don’t have.

I’d also like to thank Richie (again) for signing my copy of MD following the Little Feat concert in Dundee, Oregon last August. (I’m thirty-five years old and I feel like a kid who just got his baseball hero’s signature.) It will be framed and humbly hung in my home among other sources of inspiration. Someday someone will ask me, “Who is that?” and I will say, proudly, “Oh, that’s Richie Hayward.”

Michael Munk
Portland, OR

Your addition of the “Stars On Richie” section was an enlightening touch to a great article. It was refreshing to know that four drummers of the caliber and diversity of Rod Morgenstein, Jim Keltner, Chad Smith, and Vinnie Colaiuta feel that way about an overlooked drumming great.

Dave Ferris
Kearney, NE

SEPTEMBER SONG

Your September issue had features on three drummers I’d either never heard of, or just never heard—all of whom work more or less exclusively in the USA, in musical genres a long way from my own tastes. (I’m an unrepentant pub rocker.) Despite this, all three were full of interesting, thought-provoking, and inspiring material—in particular Carl Allen’s succinct analysis and generous praise of his peers, and Jon Fishman’s explanation of Phish’s practice techniques for improvising. The “Bouncing Back” feature was brilliant; my thanks to Matt Peiken, and kudos to all the drummers who contributed what must have been, at times, painful memories. I don’t know when I’ve gotten more out of a magazine. Congratulations, and thank you.

Martin Scott
London, England

DRUMMING HANGOVER

Your September ‘95 It’s Questionable department featured a letter from Scotty Kormos regarding a “drumming hangover.” (Bless you, Scotty. I thought I was the only one who suffered this phenomenon.) Your excellent answer to Scotty’s question has been the greatest piece of advice I have ever read! It has quite literally changed my life. I play three nights per...
Possibly the busiest guy in town, Eric McKain is a true native of South Central LA.
He's developed his own personal sound by a cross between classical Jazz and the urban
feel of his surrounding. This sound was brought all around the world many times
with such artists as Michael Jackson, Pointer Sisters, Sheena Easton,
Patrice Rushen, Benny Golson and the LA Philharmonic Orchestra,
to name a few. Presently Eric is not only active as a recording artist,
he also works on commercial jingles, TV shows, movies, musicals and
his own project. In this marathon generation, versatility is of the essence.
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week, either with my jazz trio or a punk band. I've always felt very ill the next day—and I rarely drink alcohol. After following your advice I feel normal again in the morning, and ready for my day job. My wife would like to thank you as well!

Tom (and Becky) Goodard
Watford, England

SPECIALTY BEATERS REVIEW

In regard to the review of specialty bass drum beaters in your October 1995 issue, we feel that you did a good and impartial comparison review of our products as well as the other products included in the article. However, somehow our most important claim got mislaid in the transfer of information from us to you.

We are making, as far as I know, the only bass drum beater for pedals with a standard 1/4” shaft that comes with an unconditional lifetime guarantee against the shaft breaking. The beater heads can wear out, of course, and can be replaced with any beater head that has a 1/4” hole. But the shaft is guaranteed unbreakable.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to amend the information about our product.

Mitch Greenberg
Product Design/Owner
Bison Drum Company
Wheeling, IL
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DW Drum Artists shown above (from left to right) are Tris Imboden (Chicago), Jim Sonefeld (Hootie & the Blowfish), Michael Baker (Whitney Houston), Tommy Lee (Motley Crue) and Denny Fondekier (LA studio).

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Because in addition to giving him an authentic “trashy” sound, they can stand up to the kind of punishment he dishes out. So take it from Simon: the best way to get the crowd out of their seats is to make them notice what you’re doing in yours.
Gregg Field

Do drummers really make good producers? Just ask Sinatra’s Gregg Field. It seems he’s had quite a bit of success as the producer of Dennis Rowland’s latest Concord Jazz offering, *Rhyme, Rhythm & Reason*.

"I'd like to believe that's true," Gregg says. "I know drummers make a different type of producer. Obviously, we're approaching things from a predominantly rhythm-oriented way, rather than a harmonic perspective. I suppose for that reason it creates a fresh approach. If the drummer is not harmonically skilled, if he hasn't learned that side of music, it could be a little limiting. I know I've run into that barrier. I might want to hear a particular chord, and where a piano player can pull it right up, I have to sit and think about it and figure it out."

Field does admit, however, that it can be difficult playing on the records he produces. "It's more convenient to play on the record just because I have an idea of how the whole thing should sound. The difficulty it creates, though, is that sometimes you're not able to see the forest from the trees. You're focusing on what you're playing and trying to keep a large perspective at the same time. Sometimes you can miss something that's going on. I haven't hired a drummer on anything I've produced, but it's something I'm going to have to consider. Besides being easier to play it myself, there's ego there, which is something I want to get past so I can focus on getting everything done right."

Field reflects more on the problem of ego in drumming: "That's something that took me a long time to learn: When I joined Basie I would play the music aggressively. When we would do a loud portion, I would play it like a quasi drum solo between the band figures. Years later, I listened to Sonny Payne playing Basie's music and it was remarkable how much he didn't play. It was as though the drums played a much more complementary role. There's a real tendency for the ego to want to jump in and fill all these holes and play a lot, but the music suffers. So the question is, do you make the choice to play something that is going to make drummers say, 'Wow,' or do you make the music work? There's no question for me what I'd rather do.

"I really began to appreciate Irv Cottier when I listened to a lot of his work with Sinatra before I started to record with Frank. It came down again to really picking and choosing the spot to play that hot fill and knowing what not to play."

Speaking of the chairman of the board, Gregg can be heard on Sinatra's recent release.

---

Pete Sandoval

They Don't Call Him "Pete The Feet" For Nothing

Pete Sandoval says he is quite proud of Morbid Angel's latest release, *Domination*. "I really like the title song because, as far as the drums are concerned, it's like a tornado from beginning to end. The speed is a challenge. We used a metronome, so there was no way I could slow down—or speed up. There's a lot of double bass, and a lot of blast beats where the snare and the kick are super fast. The timing is so fast that you cannot miss beats.

"'Nothing But Fear' is pretty special because it's got about six different kinds of double bass incorporated into different timings," Pete says. "It's broken down into even types of timing. I'm actually pretty content with the whole album. The sound and production were just the best we could ever expect. And playing-wise a lot of songs were challenging for me."

One must have an inordinate amount of stamina to successfully drive a death metal band. "The stamina builds by playing a few hours a day, non-stop," Pete admits. "The more you play this kind of music, the more you get used to it. I've been playing it for a long time, and I've been with Morbid since '88. I'm still working hard to get it perfect."

While on their current world tour, Sandoval says he definitely must warm up before shows. "I can't just sit down and play our set. A lot of our songs are so fast that I have to be a hundred percent in shape and my mind has to be completely on it. When we play America, I have a small Roland electronic kit that I bring with me, which helps me warm up. An hour before we go on stage, I can set up this little set in any corner of any dressing room. I do that most of the time so I can play with perfection and conviction."

---

Robyn Flans
David Rokeach
Covering The Musical Map

Since completing a Ray Charles tour in 1991, David Rokeach has made it a point to visit as many areas of the musical map as possible. The drummer can be heard on new CD releases by blues/rock singer Lady Bianca, Brazilian pop guitarist/vocalist Joyce Cooling, jazz diva Kitty Margolis, fusion guitarist Jeff Massanari, and hip-hop pointman Dreadformation. The West Coast-based drummer has also recently backed singers Mark Murphy and Claudia Gomez, performed drum duets with Louie Bellson in Fred Berry's Jazz 91 KCSM All-Stars, and taught with Leon "Ndugu" Chancier at the 1995 Stanford Jazz Workshop.

"The key is having respect for each style you play," says Rokeach. "In most idioms the masters play only that. And in order to play an idiom well, you kind of have to live the music. I want it to sound like it's the only music I play, that I've played it all my life. "My role is usually to make the music feel good," Rokeach continues. "Sometimes solos are required, and you have to understand the idiom to solo in it. It's not the same chops or sounds. The sounds help define the idiom, and that's not just equipment or tuning...it's touch."

The drummer's level of commitment has paid off with calls from Los Angeles conductor (and former Ray Charles arranger and conductor) H.B. Barnum to play several television gigs, backing up artists including Patti LaBelle, Aaron Neville, Lou Rawls, and Mavis Staples. His flexibility paid off again in creating interesting rhythm tracks on NeverEnding Game, the debut Island release by Dreadformation, which combines heavy hip-hop grooves with hot horns, cool acoustic piano, and heady rapping. "I'm really excited about this project," Rokeach says. "The drums helped give the music form. [Composer/bandleader] David Allen, Jr. would play me his demos, and then ask me to find something that worked. I'd usually play the first thing that came into my head, then write it down. And a lot of times the gut feeling was the best."

---

Duran Duran's
Steve Alexander

Not too long ago, Steve Alexander's musical credibility was in danger of being shot to pieces. In the late '80s, the Welshman was drumming for British teenybopper act Brother Beyond, but was, nevertheless, an accomplished musician. "I'd get recommended for gigs after being in that band, but people would think it was a joke," he recalls. "So I would say, 'Fair enough, here's a tape,' Thankfully, my playing would get me the gig, Even when I began to do clinic tours, which I've been doing for the last couple of years for Zildjian, I would still get laughed at before I went on to play,"

Nobody's laughing now, as Alexander is one of the U.K.'s fastest-rising drummers. He has been a star attraction on Zildjian's worldwide clinic tours, has been playing with Boy George, and has landed the spot as Duran Duran's recording and live drummer, "Because of the quality of Duran's last album, all of a sudden I've gotten instant respect from everyone. Warren (Cucurullo, guitarist) is quite demanding regarding what he wants from a drummer, and that suits me a hundred percent. We're working on a new album, which will be released soon. It seems very comfortable and relaxed when we all play together,"

"I think Duran is a very challenging gig," Steve figures, "because of what they demand, and they've used Terry Bizzio and Vinnie Colaiuta on their albums. They know what makes a good drum track, So it's very gratifying for me to be playing at that level, Warren also wants me to play in his solo project, Thanks To Frank, which is this intense trio with fiendishly complex music. He used Vinnie on his album. So I've got that in my Walkman at the moment while I'm rehearsing for the gigs with Warren's band."

Teri Saccone

Chris McHugh recently finished up Amy Grant's tour. He can be heard on Grant's new album, due out shortly.

John Molo is on Bruce Hornsby's newest record, Hot House, as well as a new album by Asleep At The Wheel and Mike Watt's Ball-Hog Or Tugboat. He will be going on the road with Hornsby in the spring. While Suicidal Tendencies is on hiatus, Jimmy DeGrasso has been working with Alice Cooper as well as doing some dates with Y&T.

Herb Schucher has been working with Lisa Brokop. Also, congratulations on his marriage to Regina.

Jay Schellen gigging with J. Ferron. He can be heard on the debut album by Murderer's Row.

Zach Alford on the road with David Bowie.

Chris Vrenna on tour with Nine Inch Nails.

Albert Bouchard on the Brain Surgeons' newest release, Trepanation.

Deen Castronovo is no longer with Ozzy Osbourne. Longtime Ozzy sideman Randy Castillo is back in the band. Congratulations to Rhonda and Rick Latham on the birth of their daughter, Tori Rose.

Also, congratulations to Barbara and Paul Wertico on their new arrival, Talia Rose. (Roses seem to be popular these days!)
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Bon Jovi

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Matt Sorum

Q I really enjoy your cool drumming when I listen to a Guns N' Roses album. The most amazing thing is your drum sound. What do you use for drums and cymbals in the studio?

Oliver Boese
Knefeld, Germany

A Thanks for the kind words, Oliver. I use Mapex drums and Zildjian cymbals, and when I'm in the studio I try many different setups. Sometimes I'll use one rack tom—a 13" or a 14"—and two floor toms: 16" and 18". On ballads like "November Rain" and " Estranged" I used 10", 12", and 13" rack toms, along with the two floors. That gave me more pitches to work with on the tom fills I was doing.

I may use different sizes of kick drums, depending on the track. On a slow track, like a ballad, I'll use a 24"; on a faster rock tune I'll use a 22" to get a little more attack.

I use a lot of different snare drums, depending again on the track. For ballads I might use an 8x14 maple drum, or something even a little fatter or deeper-sounding. For an up-tempo song, like "You Could Be Mine," I might use a 6 1/2" brass drum or an old 5" Ludwig Black Beauty. I have a collection of about sixty different snare drums that I can choose from in the studio—and I'll bring most of them. I work with a lot of different sounds and textures, because I believe that the snare sound and the backbeat on the drum track makes a major contribution to the feel of the song. As a drummer, you should try to listen to the song and decide what kind of feel you want to put into the track, not try to be so much out on your own.

As far as drumsheads go, I change those as well. I use Remo, and use everything from coated Ambassadors for a more open sound to coated Emperors for a thicker, fatter sound. On my snare drums I'll usually use a coated Emperor only because I hit so hard. On the kick drum I use a Powerstroke 3, which I love—and very little padding. But that depends on the track again. If it's a slower track I can open it up a bit; if it needs to be punchy I'll muffle it down a little.

I change my cymbal setups a lot in the studio. On Slash's Snake Pit solo album I used a different setup on almost every tune. I might use a 21" rock ride with a big bell sound on a rock tune, and switch to a K ride on a ballad. I love the A Customs for their sweet, high pitch range—but then again I love big KS. If I'm playing a ballad and I want to hear that cymbal ring across four bars, I'll use something like a 20" K crash. It reminds me of John Bonham on "When The Levee Breaks." I'm also into splashes, pangs, and effects cymbals.

I should mention that the choice of equipment is not always mine (or any drummer's). A lot of it may be up to the producer. I just did a track on an album for an artist named Poe. It was produced by Dave Jerdan, who also produced Alice In Chains' Dirt and has worked with multitudes of people from the Rolling Stones to Jane's Addiction. I went into the studio in a very different situation from a GN'R session. Dave wanted a certain sound on the snare drum, and he loves a particular rental piccolo from Ross Garfield, the Drum Doctor. So he asked me if I could play it. When I was playing it I didn't really like the way it sounded. But when Dave was done mixing the track, I could hear and understand exactly what he was going for. He laid a sample underneath it, and he needed the crack at the top from that piccolo drum.

On that same album Dave used a very different setup for recording the drumkit. He set up a P.A. in the studio, and ran the kick and snare through that into the room. I had never done that. Putting the bass drum into the P.A. gets it out to the room mikes and really fills the room for a bigger rock sound. Bands like Motley Crue, Metallica, and Alice In Chains use that technique.

I worked with Phil Spector the other day on a Celine Dion record. There was already an existing track with a seventy-five-piece orchestra and Jim Keltner playing a backbeat on snare and brushes. I set up my whole kit, but Phil asked me, "Could you just play 'dum, dum, dum, de-dum, dum' on the toms?" I said I could, and then he said, "Good. Do that in every chorus." It was very similar to when Axl Rose asked me to play the "boom, boom, boom-boom-boom" fill over and over in "November Rain." To this day drummers ask me why I did that same fill twenty times. Mainly it was because Axl asked me to, and because he wrote the song and I respect that. Phil Spector wrote the song for Celine Dion, and he heard a certain thing—and I respected that. And it lent itself to that song. Besides, it wasn't a drum fill about Matt Sorum. It was for the song—period.

When you're working with a producer, he's the one with a vision of what the track is going to be like, so he's the guy you look to for guidance. You have to respect his opinion. That's basically what I've learned from working with producers. Besides, it's great to be able to collaborate with creative people.
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PRO Chinese
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Editor's note: A large percentage of the inquiries we receive for It's Questionable have to do with old or "vintage" drums. So from time to time we devote the entire department to such inquiries. Our first answer this month comes courtesy of Tama's very knowledgeable product specialist, Paul Specht.

Tama Superstar Drums

Q About three years ago I bought a seven-piece Tama Superstar kit with four single-headed rack toms and a double-headed 18" floor tom—all in a natural lacquer color and in fairly good condition. I'd like to know some of the kit's history: its original cost, the composition of the shells, and where I might find a 10" single-headed rack tom and a 16" double-headed floor tom to add to it.

A "Your Superstar kit, with its single-headed toms, is what Tama referred to as a 'concert tom' set. (Others often refer to single-headed toms as 'melodic toms'.) Concert tom sets were very popular in both our Imperialstar and Superstar lines until about 1983, when the trend in sets with all concert toms ended.

Superstars featured six-ply birch shells and were offered in the U.S. from about 1978 until 1986. These were very highly regarded pro drums and were Tama's top-of-the-line drums until the debut of the Artstar series in 1985. Probably the Superstar kit that drum enthusiasts are most familiar with is Neil Peart's mammoth fourteen-piece kit in candy apple red that he used in the '80s.

In 1978 there were two available lacquered or stained finishes. You refer to your set as being a 'natural lacquered color.' If your set is dark, it has a mahogany finish; if it's light, it's a maple finish. The earlier finishes were more matte or satin-style, while the later Superstars of the early to mid-'80s were done in very high gloss. Our 1978 catalog also shows a covered 'platina' (silver) finish.

Based on all your information, your set is most likely the Superstar 7C outfit, model number 9677, which retailed in 1979 for $1,760. Your best bet for finding add-on drums would be to put an ad in the 'wanted' section of Modern Drummer's classified ad department. They may be hiding in someone's attic or garage somewhere."

Editor's note: All of the following answers are provided by MD's crack drum historian, Harry Cangany.

Rogers Holiday Drums

Q I own a set of 1968 Rogers drums with the following information found on the sticker inside the bass drum: "Holiday model, serial #101512, Dayton, Ohio." I purchased the drums new back in 1968 and have kept them in good shape over the years. They are still used for rehearsal purposes and still sound very good. The set consists of the snare drum and its original stand, one bass drum, two shell-mounted rack toms with the original tom holder, two floor toms, and the original bass drum pedal and hi-hat. Any information and history regarding these drums would be greatly appreciated.

A "The Rogers drum company was purchased by CBS in the spring of 1966. The new owner continued to use the Covington, Ohio factory (built in 1953 by the previous owner, Henry Grossman) until the move to Fullerton, California in 1969.

Your set is a variation of the Londoner outfit. I say variation because you have two floor toms. You didn't mention the drum sizes, the finish, or the model of the snare drum. I will assume a pearl covering and either a 20" or 22" bass drum, two 16" floor toms (Rogers made very few 14x14 floor toms), two cymbal stands, a Swiv-o-Matic tom holder, a bass drum pedal, and a regular snare stand. Your set listed in 1968 for $760 (with a Powertone snare drum). A Dyna-Sonic snare would have added another $60. Today, in great shape, your set is probably worth about $1,100."

Gretsch Drums And K Zildjian Cymbals

Q I'd like some information on my Gretsch kit and K Zildjian cymbals. The red sparkle kit includes a 20" bass drum, a 13" mounted tom (with no vent hole), a 14" snare drum, and a bass drum pedal that says Floating Action. The cymbals include a 20" ride, an 18" crash, and 13" hi-hats. (The bottom hi-hat cymbal is cracked.) I'm especially interested in the value of the kit.

A "You have a pre-'71 Gretsch kit that appears (from the photo) to be in great shape. The snare is the Name Band model, which featured the Micro-Sensitive strainer. All of the parts to the snare and the other drums seem to be original. A tom-tom with no vent hole dates the kit from the mid-'50s to the mid-'60s, slightly..."
favoring the latter. Are there three or six plies of wood? My guess would be six plies, with silver paint on the interior. That narrows us down to the late '50s to mid-'60s. The snare stand may not be Gretsch, but the pedal is (although it was made for Gretsch by Camco).

"The K Zildjian cymbals were imported and sold by Gretsch during the same period, and are highly prized. It's too bad your 13" bottom hi-hat cymbal is cracked. I'd guess from the configuration of the kit and the sizes and condition of the cymbals that a 'little old jazz player' owned and loved this drumset. There are many dealers who can help you complete the set should you want to add a Gretsch hi-hat and floor tom."

"Value is subjective. There are Gretsch aficionados who constantly seek out pristine examples. On the other hand, many buyers would view these drums as simply 'old fashioned.' But at this moment in time, an estimate of the retail value of each piece would be: bass drum—$225; 9x13 tom—$225; snare drum & stand—$275; pedal—$25; 20" ride—$200; 18" crash—$150; 13" hi-hats (bottom cracked)—$100. The total comes to $1,200."

"Premier drums kept the same basic look from the 1960s to the mid-'90s. But from some clues in your picture—such as tom legs and bass drum spurs—I would peg your set as a '70s model. At that time, the American distributor of Premier was Selmer Musical Instruments (then a division of Magnavox). Your four-piece set with the metal snare was initially called the PD101 and later the Raider. Premier has always made wonderful equipment, and your drums are beautiful. Enjoy them!"

"The P4067 Tone Control—the flip arm with three lines in the handle—was a disaster for many owners, because the interior compression spring often gave way and the arm flapped. By 1967 Ludwig started to revert to the P4066 round-knob tone control that is, theoretically, still in use (with a larger knob)—when anyone wants such a creature. On the other hand, the P83 strainer on your drum is the best Ludwig ever made."

"Ludwig put serial numbers on drums by 1967 so that the owners could insure them and recognize them. Ludwig and its competitors kept no record of serial numbers, and the odds of four or five drums in a set having consecutive numbers would, no doubt, baffle even Mr. Spock."

"Ludwig made pre-serial number Supraphonics from brass, which plates really well. Serial numbered snares are made from an alloy...or brass...or God knows what. (They built from what was affordable on the metal market.) The first and third choices can be prone to pitting and rusting. To protect your drum, you should always wipe it off and put it in a sealed bag and/or case between gigs. You can also try to coat the drum with a clear acrylic spray. Lacquer is used on brass. Perhaps if you call an antique refinisher or paint store they could give you advice on what material to use."

"Good luck with your thirty-year-old prize. And by the way, what did you give your girlfriend?"
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Mapex Orion MapleTech Drums

Mapex’s Orion MapleTech series incorporates new hardware innovations and increased shell, finish, and lug selections from which drummers can create their own unique setups. All MapleTech shells are made of 6-ply North American maple, with 45° bearing edges countercut for optimum head seating and performance. The drums are available in seven transparent lacquer finishes and three natural wax finishes.

The series offers three separate models. Orion Custom Maple drums feature 7.8mm-thick shells matched with full-length chrome lugs. Orion Birdseye Maple drums are identical except for an outer veneer of birdseye maple wood. Orion Traditional Maple models have "vintage-style" 5mm-thick shells on all toms and 7.8mm-thick shells on bass and snare drums. Traditional Maple drums also feature individually mounted 24-karat gold-plated lugs.

The MapleTech series also boasts the Omni Directional Telescoping Tom Holder, said to provide drummers with maximum possibilities in tom positioning while increasing shell resonance. The system does not enter the bass drum, and it has individual tom holders that can each be adjusted vertically or horizontally. The holder itself can move back and forth in a two-inch range along the bass drum shell, allowing drummers to pull or push their mounted toms towards or away from the batter head.

The series also includes the Suraya Hemp Fiber Shell Snare Drums.

Suraya Percussion is now offering snare drums with shells composed of 100% hemp fiber composite material. Hemp is an organic, "environmentally friendly" substance with a consistency similar to that of wood (in composite board form), and is said to produce familiar, wood-like tones. The drums are available in a variety of finishes and hardware appointments, in sizes ranging from piccolos to 8" deep. They vary in price from $400 to $700 depending on the extent of custom fabrication. For detailed literature on the advantages of industrial hemp fiber, including a 48-page book, send $5 to Suraya. (Other inquiries will receive a standard product brochure.) Suraya Percussion Components, One Cottage St., Box 27, Easthampton, MA 01027, tel: (413) 529-2319.

Grover Drums And Snare System

Grover Pro Percussion has added five new models to its snare drum line. A 6 1/2x14 Concert snare features black anodized low-mass tube lugs, CST (composite) shell, Cam-Lever strainer with snare extenders, five-point adjustable micro-fine tuning, special air dispersion vent, and Grover’s own Silver/Bronze snares. It lists for $810. A 5x14 version is priced at $790; a 4 3/4x13 piccolo sells for $760.

Grover’s new Symphonic snares offer the same hardware configuration as the above-listed models, but feature 10-ply all-maple shells finished in a hand-rubbed clear lacquer. Drums are available in 6 1/2x14 ($840) and 5x14 ($820) sizes.

Also available from Grover is their Performance Snare System, available in Jazz, Club, and Stadium models at $39. Each of these straight, non-spiral snare models is also available with silver (bright) or bronze (dark) strands. The system retro-fits onto any conventional snare drum. Grover Pro Percussion, Inc., 22 Prospect St., Unit #7, Woburn, MA 01801, tel: (617) 935-6200, fax: (617) 935-5522.

Applied Microphone Technology A-95 Mini Drum Mic'

Applied Technology’s A-95 drum mic’ is an American-made, ultra-miniature microphone designed to clip on to the rim of any drum. Each unit features a super-cardioid element, a built-in shock mount, an LED phantom power indicator, and anodized aluminum construction. The mic’s offer a frequency response of 50Hz to 20kHz and can withstand sound pressure levels (SPLs) of up to 141 dB. They weigh only 1.6 ounces, including their cable. Applied Microphone Technology, P.O. Box 715, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076, fax: (201) 994-5139.
Remo Product Introductions

Among new products and services introduced by Remo are fully customized drumheads and shells, Muff'l strips for customized bass drum muffling, and two new sizes of marching bass drums.

Remo’s custom art department has the equipment and expertise to accurately render logos, Pantone colors, custom colors, airbrush treatments, original artwork, photo reproductions, “or just about anything anyone can dream up” onto heads or drumshells. The usual turnaround for a custom request is three weeks, and cost is determined by the cost of the head or shell requested, production costs, and “editing” cost (an hourly rate to cover any time and materials necessary to create or manipulate the art). Call Remo’s art department for accurate quotations.

Remo’s Muff’l sound absorber is now available in strips. Two 9’ lengths of 1 1/4” x 7/8” self-adhesive foam strips are contained in each plastic pack (priced at $15.50). The strips have pre-cut notches to help them bend into a perfect circle around the circumference of the bass drum and are said to be easy to apply and secure.

In the area of marching percussion, Remo has added a 14x16 bass drum to their Triumph series ($510), and a 12x16 bass drum in their lighter Bravo series for younger players ($310). Remo, Inc., 12804 Raymer St., N. Hollywood, CA 91605, tel: (818) 983-2600, fax: (818) 503-0198.

Aquarian Super Kick And Regulator Bass Drum Heads

Aquarian’s Super Kick bass drum batter heads feature a “narrow” muffling ring approximately half the width of the company’s Impact muffling ring. The new “floating muffling system” is made of felt and is said to “float and breathe with the drumhead,” producing a sound that is “deeper, fatter, and bigger than any other pre-muffled head on the market.” Heads are available in single-ply, double-ply, or single-ply coated with a power dot. A 22” two-ply head lists for $67.50.

Beyerdynamic MCE 83 Microphone

Beyerdynamic’s new MCE 83 is a studio condenser microphone suitable for instrument miking. The mic’s back electret technology is said to give it a wide frequency response, making it ideal for all formats of recording. Beyerdynamic states that the MCE 83’s cardiod characteristics are “similar to higher-priced studio microphones,” allowing it to “capture the sound required with the greatest of ease.” The mic features a heavy-duty brass body to withstand the rigors of studio use.

Beyerdynamic, 56 Central Ave., Farmingdale, NY 11735, tel: (516) 293-3200, fax: (516) 293-3288.

Pro Wrap Cable Ties

Kajo Company offers Pro Wrap reusable hook-and-loop cable ties designed like a belt with a buckle. Wrap a tie around a cable bundle, slip the excess strap through the buckle, pull tight and seal down to grip the bundle securely. Available in three lengths and in black, gray, and green colors. For free samples and information contact Kajo Company, 6640 E. Snowdon Circle, Mesa, AZ 85215, (602) 830-9798.

Concert One Add-A-Pad

Concept One Percussion has introduced the Add-A-Pad, an accessory electronic trigger pad that mounts onto the rim of any acoustic drum, using only one of the drum’s tension bolts. The pad rests over the surface of the drum taking up only a 4” by 5” space—allowing for full playability of the acoustic drum surface below. The unit has been designed to work with most trigger-to-MIDI modules (Alesis D4, Yamaha TMX, Roland TD-7, etc.) It carries a suggested retail price of $99. Concept One Percussion, 126 E. Water St., Decorah, IA 52101, tel: (319) 382-3684, fax: (319) 382-5261.
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Play what you like.
P.J.L. Percussion Drums

by Rick Van Horn

An individualistic design philosophy gives these new American-made drums a look and sound all their own.

P.J.L. Percussion is a new line of American-made drums created by drummer/designer Peter Ladka in Greenwood Lake, New York. According to Peter, he spent years experimenting with different shell configurations "on a trial-and-error basis" before settling on the two he now offers. The Classics line features toms with 5-ply shells and 3-ply reinforcing hoops and bass drums with 6-ply shells and 3-ply hoops. The Contemporary series uses 8-ply shells for toms and bass drums, with no hoops. (All P.J.L. snare drums feature 8-ply shells with no hoops.)

P.J.L. drums feature all-maple shells, precision-cut and hand-sanded bearing edges, and shell interiors with hand-rubbed oil finishes. They also feature machined-brass R.E.A.L. (Resonance Enhancing Active Lug) lugs—which are a special feature of P.J.L. drums and will be discussed in detail later.

For the purpose of our review Peter sent us a Classics kit finished in a see-through aquamarine stain. The kit consisted of an 18x22 bass drum, 9x10 and 10x12 rack toms, 12x14 and 14x16 suspended "floor" toms, and a 5x14 snare drum. (Peter also sent along a 6x13 snare drum finished in see-through root beer stain.) Peter recommends the use of RIMS mounts for P.J.L. drums, and our test drums were fitted with them. Beyond that he leaves the choice of hardware to the consumer and offers none. We mounted the drums on a rack graciously provided to us by Gibraltar.

R.E.A.L. Lugs

What makes P.J.L. drums different from most others is Peter Ladka's philosophy regarding drum lugs—which he is not shy about expressing. "Due to the air space inside the hollow die-cast lugs found on most drums today," he says, "a portion of the drumshell's resonance is being absorbed. In many cases this problem is enhanced when an 'insulator' is placed between the lug and the shell. This can be paralleled to methods of sound dampening employed by many recording studios today. Multiple layers of material cause vibrations to be subdued, not enhanced. As a result, insulators and foam packing simply do not work, and they actually restrict shell projection and resonance. For this reason R.E.A.L. lugs are crafted from solid brass and are secured directly to the shell—collectively creating an instrument that resonates as one body."

P.J.L.'s R.E.A.L. lugs are essentially small blocks machined from 7/8" hexagonal brass stock. Each block is affixed to the drumshell with a single allen-head bolt, and each is fitted with a swivel nut to receive the tension rod. The highly polished lugs are small, unobtrusive, and fairly attractive—in a utilitarian sort of way. The fact that they are brass while the rest of the hardware on the drums is chrome may bother a few people, appeal to some, and not make any difference at all to others—depending on their aesthetic tastes.

Sound

It would be impossible to conclusively verify Peter Ladka's philosophy without a battery of scientific instruments to measure all of the variables involved. It becomes a matter of hearing subtle differences in a drum's tonality, response, and sustain. Well, the
P.J.L. drums had all of those features—especially sustain—in spades, so there must be something to Peter's theory.

The toms came fitted with clear Remo Ambassador batters top and bottom, and with this head combination they produced a very fat sound, with lots of punch and attack. The hand-rubbed oil finish on the interior of the drums kept them sounding warm and deep (as opposed to the bright, reflective sound that can be produced by a heavier sealant or a lacquer interior finish).

We had the P.J.L. kit set up in our product-testing room during an open house at our office recently, so lots of drummers got a chance to play it and comment on it. Some preferred the toms with a low tuning, remarking on how big and full they sounded. Others thought that tuning was a little "tubby"—but they were impressed by the sustain of the toms when the heads were cranked up a bit.

Listening to the P.J.L. kit being played by other drummers gave me a different perspective—and the impression that the bass drum was in a world of its own. It was fitted with the Evans EQ3 head/pillow system (including a 5" hole in the front head). That head configuration—and 18" of depth—combined to give the bass drum a tremendously big, deep, punchy sound. And it was a controlled sound, too—even though the EQ3 muffling pillow was placed so its smaller end just touched the front head, and the "business end" was actually 2" away from the batter head!

The way the bass drum sounded with a twin-ply batter head made me wonder whether the toms would sound as deep and round with similar heads. So I fitted them with Cannon Attack Thin-Skin 2 batter heads from among those sent for the review included elsewhere in this issue. I was very pleased with the result. The drums lost some attack and sustain, but in return they picked up warmth and roundness—and greater focus on the low-end fundamental tones. I thought that this character made the toms blend a bit better with the bass drum, but that's a matter of personal taste. In any case, it's a testimonial to the performance of a drum when you can theorize what it should sound like with a specific head—and achieve that sound, with no unpleasant surprises.

When it comes to snare drums, I tend to favor medium-weight, single-ply batter heads as the best compromise between the equally desirable attributes of sensitivity and durability. So I was happy with the coated Ambassador fitted on the P.J.L. snares. In terms of drum sound, the 5x14 produced the kind of pleasing, woody snare sound that you'd expect from a premium ply snare drum. It had good snare sensitivity and excellent projection, and it could produce both a respectable fatback sound (when tensioned loosely) and an impressive "crack" (when tightened up a bit). It might not have quite the penetration of a solid-shell wood snare, but such drums can be a little on the one-dimensional side, while this drum would be excellent for virtually any purpose or musical situation. (For example, it responded well to brushes, yet didn't "choke" when slammed with the butt end of a 2B stick.)

The 6x13 snare was an absolute joy to play. I'm beginning to think that 13" is the optimum diameter for a snare drum. Everything you want from a snare seems to be enhanced at that

WHAT'S HOT
- unique lug design for one-body resonance
- exceptional sustain
- beautiful appearance

WHAT'S NOT
- snare throwoff can be sluggish
size: crispness, quick sticking response, cut and projection, and snare sensitivity. And where you might think a smaller drum would automatically put you into higher pitch ranges, that can be tailored by the depth of the shell. For example, the 6" depth of the P.J.L. 13" drum gave it good bottom, while the smaller diameter gave it great top end. That's a winning combination, and the drum's 8-ply shell made the most of it. The fundamental tone was solid (and surprisingly big), while the crispness and crack of the drum really took the sound out front. The root beer stained finish gave the drum a visual richness, too; I'd love to see an entire kit in that color.

**Fittings**

As I said earlier, no stands are offered by P.J.L., so the only hardware to talk about is the actual fittings on the drums themselves. We've already discussed the lugs; other points to mention include the drumkey-operated tension rods on the bass drum (a plus!) and the throwoffs on the snare drums. The throwoffs were of a design I hadn't seen before. The lever employed a side-to-side action, which, in turn, operated an assembly that moved up and down in a vertical track to raise or lower the snares. I found the mechanics of this design a little sluggish. In fact, the throwoff on the 5x14 snare tended to bind significantly. However, Peter Ladka has informed me that he's already converted to a more familiar, generic side-throw strainer, which will be fitted on all P.J.L. snares.

**Appearance**

Drum finishes just keep getting better and better as technology in that area improves. It might be in the chemistry, it might be the mechanics of spraying, or it might just be that more and more drum craftsmen are gaining experience and savvy when it comes to finishing drums. P.J.L. drums are no exception. Peter Ladka's work in this area is simply exquisite. The aquamarine finish on our test kit was deep and lustrous, with the natural maple wood grain showing through to good advantage. The finish, according to P.J.L.'s catalog, is achieved by applying colored stain directly to the wood's surface, then applying lacquer in multiple, finely sprayed layers, and finally hand-buffing the finish to a high luster. (P.J.L. offers a total of fourteen stains, four opaque finishes, and three coverings as "standard" items, but stresses that their policy is that "any finish is possible." Brass plating of drum hardware is also available as an option.)

**Conclusions And Prices**

Peter Ladka has done his homework. He's taken what's well-known about the properties of maple shells, combined it with his own research regarding ply configurations, and added a dash of personal philosophy when it comes to lugs. Into that mix he has thrown a dedication to craftsmanship and personal attention to every detail of a drum's construction. He also maintains a willingness to make drums in virtually any size and with any finish desired by a given buyer. The result is a new brand of American-made drums that looks and sounds as good as just about anything out there.

P.J.L. drums are not bargain-priced; that would be too much to expect from what is essentially a custom-made line. But they are competitive with other premium brands. The drums are sold essentially "a la carte" as individual pieces (either with or without RIMS), but you may find a package kit available at your local dealer. Our review kit, for example, carries a retail package price of $5,300 (with the 5x14 snare drum). The 6x13 snare is priced at $690. If you can't find P.J.L. drums in your local drum shop, contact the company at P.O. Box 1709, Greenwood Lake, NY 10925, tel and fax: (914) 477-9504.

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**Attack Thin Skin Drumheads**

by Rick Van Horn

**High performance and low price make these new heads exceptional values.**

When I reviewed the Cannon twin-ply Deadheads (now called Attack 2s) back in the November '92 MD, I found that they offered tremendous durability and an undeniably distinct tonality, but that they were a bit too thick and, well, dead-sounding—at least for live performance use. On the other hand, when Rick Mattingly reviewed Attack coated single-ply heads in March of 1995, he found them to have "a focused sound with plenty of impact and a great deal of sustain and volume." (We both liked the performance characteristics and response of Cannon's Japanese-made Dynaflex film—which resembles the Mylar used on other heads but has an acoustic identity all its own.) I figured that if Cannon could only come up with a twin-ply head that was somewhere in between the Deadhead and the Attack series, they'd have a real winner.

Enter the Attack Thin Skin 2. This new head features one paper-thin ply on top of a second, medium-thin ply. A 1"-wide, ultrathin ring of glue at the perimeter of the playing surface serves as a bond and muffling agent between the two layers. The film itself is not glued into the head's collar, however. Instead, a steel locking ring secures the film into an aluminum channel. (This system is so secure that Cannon guarantees all Attack heads against pull-out for the life of the head.)

We were sent both clear and coated Thin Skin 2 heads to try. I was very impressed with the performance of the clear versions on both tom-toms and bass drums. According to a press release, the heads were supposed to produce "a fat, wet sound with plenty of attack" and "maximum durability with resonant tones and studio
warmth.” That may sound a little high-handed, but it’s exactly what the Thin Skin 2 clear models did. They were neither too sharp nor too mellow, they were controlled yet offered plenty of round, clear projection, and they seemed extremely resilient. This last quality was made evident in two separate ways: The heads offered excellent stick/beater rebound, and they held up to heavy playing extremely well without pitting. All in all, the Thin Skin 2s seemed to be the perfect compromise between the clarity, attack, and sustain of a single-ply head and the warmth, depth, power, and durability of a twin-ply head. I was really impressed!

The coated Thin Skin 2s added a different dimension to the drumhead sound. The coating used by Cannon is called Duraflex. It’s made in the U.S. and shipped to Taiwan (where the heads are manufactured), and it’s a bit thicker than the coating found on most coated heads. As such, it added a bit of muffling to the sound (taking down some of the roundness and resonance), while at the same time enhancing the attack sound. Overall, the coated heads sounded dryer and flatter than the un-coated versions. I didn’t care for them as much on tom-toms or bass drums as I did the clear heads, but I found them excellent on snare drums. They were more sensitive than a heavier, twin-ply coated head would be, while offering more durability (and player confidence) than a single-ply head. I think they’d be an excellent choice for a medium-to-heavy hitter who didn’t want to sacrifice drumhead response and drum sensitivity simply to get a head that wouldn’t break.

By the way, I tried the twin-ply batter heads with two types of bottom heads: Cannon’s standard one-ply clear Attack heads, and their new one-ply Attack Thin Skins. (Ah yes, they have them in single-ply too! More on that in a moment.) As you might expect, the thin bottom heads projected more overall resonance—along with greater brightness and more high end. The slightly heavier Attack heads didn’t produce quite the clarity of their thinner cousins. On the other hand, they did concentrate their projection in the lower pitch ranges, giving the drums a fatter, rounder overall sound.

But what about the one-ply Thin Skins as batter heads, you ask? Well, they offer a very melodic sound and terrific sensitivity. (They’re available in clear and coated; the coated models offer outstanding brush response on snare drums.) But we’re talking paper-thin heads here—probably around the weight of a Remo Diplomat, if not thinner. So for classical or light jazz applications they’d be dynamite, but I can’t recommend them as general-purpose batter heads.

The Attack series includes 12”, 13”, and 14” medium and thin snare-side heads (very responsive and still guaranteed against pull-out). All of the other heads I reviewed are available in sizes from 6” to 24”. (A series of ported, one-ply front bass drum heads is also available.)

I did have one problem with the Attack Thin Skin head series. (Actually, it exists in all of Cannon’s Attack heads.) For some reason each head is stamped only with the “Attack Series” logo. There’s no indication of what model of head it is. Only on the original package is the head identified. This may sound like nit-picking, but if you’re rummaging through a spare-heads bag in a hurry (like during an emergency change in the middle of a gig) you don’t want to have to identify which head you’re grabbing by its look or feel. You want to be sure. Labeling each head model would just be a matter of creating a few rubber stamps or silk screens, and it would really make an important contribution to the usefulness of the heads.

Representative prices for Attack Thin Skin single-ply heads (in coated or clear) include: 10”—$9; 12”—$11; 14”—$14; 16”—$16; 20”—$26.50; and 22”—$30.50. The clear Thin Skin 2s go for: 10”—$10; 12”—$12; 14”—$16.50; 16”—$19.50; 20”—$28; and 22”—$37. (Add $1.50 per size for coated models.) If your drum store doesn’t stock Attack heads, contact Cannon Percussion at 2773 E. Midlothian Blvd., Struthers, OH 44471, tel: (800) 282-0110, fax: (216)755-6400.
Over the past few months Pro-Mark has added several new models to their Autograph series. Some are actually familiar models that have been adopted by specific artists, while others are totally new designs. Let's take a look at each in terms of its dimensions, playing feel, and sound on drums and cymbals. (For the purpose of comparison, we tested each stick on a 20" Paiste Alpha series Full Ride cymbal, and on a P.J.L. 12" rack tom.)

**TX5CW Charlie Adams.** Charlie’s stick features a 5B shaft (19/32" in diameter, 16" long) with a 5A tip and a thinner taper. A 5B is a good, middle-of-the-road size in terms of weight and resulting volume, but the narrow taper on Charlie’s stick helps give it extra rebound and a lighter balance than you’d expect. It produces a good, medium-bright cymbal response and gets a solid fundamental tone out of a tom-tom.

**TX717W Rick Latham.** Rick’s stick is based on a 5A shaft (9/16" in diameter, 16" long) but features a fairly gradual taper to a thin neck and a small, barrel-shaped wood tip. This design makes the stick fairly light in weight, with good balance and rebound. It also produces a cymbal response that is just slightly “pingy-er” and a bit more defined than the Charlie Adams model. In terms of drum sound, Rick’s model exhibited a characteristic that was consistent among all of the sticks in our test group that featured a narrow neck and small tip: It pulled a bit less sound out of a tom than the thicker-necked, heavier-tipped models.

**TXALW Ringo Starr.** Ringo’s stick is basically an elongated 5A (9/16" in diameter, 16 1/2" long). The extra length makes it a bit front-heavy, reducing rebound but adding impact power. As a result, it gets a louder, “clangy-er” sound out of a ride cymbal, and pulls a bit more tone out of a tom-tom than a standard 5A. It would be a great stick for players who like a little more “reach” but don’t want to go up to larger model to get it.

**TX733W Michael Carvin.** Michael is a tasty jazz player, and his stick reflects his style. It’s slightly smaller in diameter than a 5A (17/32") and is 16" long, and it features a very short taper to an extremely thin neck and a tiny round wood tip. That neck/tip combo elicits a dark, warm, subtle sound from a ride cymbal, with a lot less pure impact “ping” than any other stick tested here. And even though the stick feels a bit front-heavy due to the short taper, it still pulls a little less out of a tom-tom than would a stick with a larger tip—perhaps offering a little more dynamic control.

**SX735W Steve Ferrone.** Now we start getting into the larger models. Steve’s stick is long (16 3/16") and moderately thick (19/32"), and has a jazz-style tip on a gradual taper to a beefy neck. This gives it a powerful downstroke, with a loud, dark sound on a ride cymbal and plenty of impact power on a tom-tom. It’s not a huge stick, but it plays like one.

**SD-9 Bill Bruford.** Bill has given his autograph to Pro-Mark’s existing SD-9 model—but only in maple. This gives the fairly large stick (19/32" in diameter, 16 1/4" long) a much lighter weight than you’d expect, and consequently a much faster action. This feel is further enhanced by the gradual taper to a moderately thin neck.

Maple is not only a lighter wood than hickory, it’s also softer, so the stick sound on a ride cymbal is a bit subdued, even though the tip is a reasonably large acorn shape. Realistically speaking, you
can't expect this stick to be as durable as a hickory stick, but it sure feels comfortable in your hand. (A hickory model is available, by the way).

**TX808W Paul Wertico.** Paul has chosen one of Pro-Mark's most popular models to endorse as his choice. The stick is 19/32" thick and 16" long, and features a thick neck and a large, round tip. This is definitely an impact-oriented stick, although it feels surprisingly more balanced than some of the thinner models in our test group. It produces a lot of "clang" on a cymbal, and really pops the sound out of a tom-tom. Paul's model is the hickory version with wood tip; other versions are listed below.

**TX722N Jonathan Moffett Duo.** Jonathan is famous for his showmanship (among his other talents), and part of that is his penchant for stick twirling. So it's no surprise that he might opt for a double-ended stick. But Jonathan also tours in arenas and stadiums around the world, so he still needs a stick that can produce plenty of sound, and that he can hold on to comfortably. So his design features a 2B-diameter shaft (5/8") with a standard 2B taper, neck, and nylon tip on one end—and a larger, stronger 2S neck and tip at the other. This provides a choice in impact power and corresponding volume—albeit at the higher end of the scale overall. The stick is quite comfortable when held at either end (which would not be the case if the neck were a 5B taper or smaller), and is reasonably well balanced. Rebound and feel are what you'd expect from a stick this size, and the large nylon tips produce loud, bright ride-cymbal sounds and punchy tom response. This may look like a novelty stick, but it could prove quite versatile—and entirely practical—for any high-volume gig where a little "flash" was desired. (And even if you're not a stick twirler, it might be handy to have two volume levels available from one stick while still retaining a legitimate "tip" sound as opposed to that of a butt end.)

All of our test sticks were produced with Pro-Mark's *Millenium II* manufacturing process. They were all of premium quality in terms of straightness, color, grain, etc. The big thing with this new process, however, is that the sticks are supposed to get a little tacky as your hands warm up, thus making them easier to hold. Unfortunately, I couldn't experience this phenomenon, because my hands don't get warm and moist when I play. In fact, I have more of a problem with dry hands, and I found the *Millenium II* finish a little slippery on that account. On the other hand (no pun intended), I've spoken with about a dozen devoted Pro-Mark players, many of whom have had problems with sticks slipping due to perspiration, and they all sing the praises of the new finish.

The sticks in our test group are available only in hickory with wood tips, with the exception of the Bruford model (maple with autograph, hickory without autograph), the Wertico model (hickory and wood tip with autograph, oak or hickory with wood or nylon tips without autograph), and the Moffett model (hickory with two nylon tips). They are all priced at $9.25 per pair, with the exception of the Ringo model ($9.75) and the Moffett model ($10.75).
"These drums are absolutely startling"...

...Simon Phillips

As one of the original members of the Starclassic design group, Simon Phillips is one of the most important reasons why Starclassic drums are "absolutely startling." Simon's exacting approach to drum sound made his contributions to the development of Starclassic immeasurable.

"The big, big difference about these drums is that they all have die-cast hoops," remarks Simon. "Die-cast hoops do seem a little 'harder'...and I think that is something one has to get used to, but tuning precision and tuning longevity are better because die-cast hoops don't warp or bend like triple flanged hoops."

The strength of die-cast hoops makes another stand-out Starclassic feature possible: the Star-Cast Mounting System*. Star-Cast is simply easier...easier to set-up, easier to change heads and easier to pack up at the end of the night. Says Simon: "It's a very serious, very elegant system of suspending the drum. You just unscrew these three rubber things, and the drum comes away in your hand."

Die-cast hoops and the Star-cast Mounting System are just two of the many features that make Starclassic "the ultimate drum." But there's more. A visit to your Starclassic Dealer will help you understand how much more.

Perhaps Simon says it all..."I played 38 shows in Europe and Japan where everybody just freaked out about these drums...they loved the sound of them. Now you'd have a pretty tough time taking them away from me."

Starclassic

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The Keys to Starclassic Sound & Strength

Die-cast hoops (left) are somewhat more expensive than the triple flanged hoops (right) found on most pro drums, but they offer better consistency, strength and attack. The resonant highs of die-cast hoops work beautifully with the warm lows of Starclassic’s super-thin shells for incomparable dynamic range and tone.

The Star-Cast Mounting System* allows unrestrained shell resonance and total tom isolation. Unlike other systems each bracket arm is specifically sized for each drum so even hoop tension is ensured. Remove just three rubber-coated Star-Cast attachment bolts and “the drum comes away in your hand.”

*The Star-Cast Mounting System is licensed under Percussion patents
It begins as a groove, holding all of the elements together. Then variation—altering the perception of the time. Enter the toms, with polyrhythmic, extended fills that blur barlines. Cymbal crashes abruptly bring it back to the repeating riff, but then a three-note-per-tom "round-house" fill whirls over the huge kit. More cymbal crashes, this time "out of time," followed by the bass drums introduced within tom accents. A clean single-stroke roll on the snare leads to cymbal explosions—intensity building. Double bass 16ths enter, switching to rumbling 16th-note triplets with crashes, driving the solo to its end. And finally, with one enormous, complex unison band figure, the song erupts in ending.

An amazing drum solo, to be sure.
The song? "Indian Summer."
The album? Symbiosis.
The drummer? Simon Phillips.

Yes, Simon Phillips' new album contains some of that same unbelievable drumming we’ve almost learned to expect from him. (He still manages to surprise.) But while the playing here is spirited and more inspired than ever, Simon’s real growth can be witnessed in his songwriting, the compositions on Symbiosis coming from a different direction from his previous work.

This new artistic depth can in part be linked to his move three years ago from his home in England. After a career that had included noteworthy recordings and tours with such artists as Pete Townshend, Mick Jagger, Jeff Beck, Stanley Clarke, Tears For Fears, Jack Bruce, Roxy Music, and the Who, Simon decided to change the direction of his life. So he came to the States, joined veteran LA band Toto, and began establishing himself in the local studio scene. It's been a radical change, but according to Simon, "It's been a bit of a rebirth for me."

Recent months have found the drummer particularly busy, Simon's solo project and a Toto studio album taking all of his energy. Unfortunately, the extensive work load has taken its toll. And to worsen matters, a case of blood poisoning (leading to other medical complications) further weakened the thirty-eight-year old Phillips. Thankfully, Simon's been able to take the time these past several weeks to get himself back in form, and he will be re-joining Toto on tour shortly to promote Tambu, the band's new release.

Without question, the last three years have been remarkable for Simon Phillips.
THE BIG MOVE

"I'd always thought about living in America," admits Simon Phillips, lounging poolside at his L.A. area home. "A lot of the people I grew up listening to—Buddy Rich, Gene Krupa, Louie Bellson, and bands like Count Basie, Stan Kenton, and Don Ellis—were from there. Coming here has been a bit of a dream."

But when was the decision made to uproot his life? "About 1965," he jokes. "Actually, the decision was made in 1991, but I'd been thinking about it in earnest since 1990, right after the Who tour. I realized that my career had changed quite a bit in recent years. It was getting to a point where all of the work I was doing involved me going to the airport and flying to either the States, Japan, or Europe. I was doing very little 'session work' in England."

Simon's session career in England skyrocketed in the late '70s when, while still in his teens, he played on numerous recording projects. That's when the legend grew: Who is this kid playing those incredible parts? Who's this Phillips guy with the amazing feet? Simon's status mushroomed from that of being a good British musician to that of being a world-class player. Records and tours with the likes of Jack Bruce, Jeff Beck, and
Stanley Clarke cemented that reputation. However, as his reputation and career grew, artists and industry people began thinking that he must be off in some other country making records or touring (and he was a lot of the time). In addition to that, all of this was early in the drum machine era, when producers were opting for button pushers over players. Because of these factors, Simon indicates that, "By the mid-'80s 'session work,' per se, in England really slowed."

In 1986, while he was involved in a number of high-profile gigs (Pete Townshend's Deep End band, among others), Simon's entrepreneurial spirit expanded his musical opportunities. "I built my own studio [White House], so a certain portion of the sessions that I actually did in England were done in my studio," he says. "People would ring me up and say, 'We've got this track, it's finished, ready to mix, but we want to add some real drums. Can you play on it, and can you recommend a studio?' I'd say, 'Well, you can work at the studio you're already in, or you can come to mine. My drumkit is set up, miked up, and ready to go.'"

"I ended up doing a lot of sessions at the studio, which was actually attached to my house," Simon continues. "I also had people coming to use the studio for their entire project. Nik Kershaw, Madness, Bonnie Tyler—all sorts of artists—started using the place because it was a nice country studio. And having the studio right in my house was lovely. Oftentimes I'd end up being the maintenance engineer on a project, sometimes I engineered."

But as time passed and the '80s drew to a close, there was less and less to hold Simon in England. "The only reason I liked living in England at the time was because of the situation where I lived—a beautiful home/studio in a lovely village two hours from London, very safe. Then, come 1991, my wife and I decided to divorce." He knew then it was time to move on.

With that decision made, the move was just a matter of logistics. Or was it? "Not quite," Simon laughs. "I had a house in England, a serious nut to pay every month, and a lot of projects I was involved in. I had to figure out the right time to break from all of the work I was doing. Then I'd have to time that with all of the paperwork—my corporation, work visa, cessation of tax.... I sort of earmarked October of 1992."

Then tragedy played a hand.

THE CALLS

Simon had several projects pending at the end of the summer of 1992. He was about to begin mixing the tracks for his second solo record, the live Force Majeure. He was slated to record with Scottish band Big Country for tracks that would lead to their Buffalo Skinners album. Also on the docket was a TV show for a wealthy German producer that featured an all-star line-up of American and...
British musicians, to be performed in Ibiza [a resort island in the Mediterranean]. Maybe after that was completed Simon could make his move.

"October was looking pretty good," he says, "provided I could get all of these projects finished. I went over to Ibiza for this TV show, which ended up being a working holiday for me and the other musicians—a lot of great musicians, including Bobby Kimball, the original lead singer with Toto. We were there for five days to play one show!"

But while enjoying this beautiful setting a sad event occurred on the other side of the world that would play a part in Simon's life. "I'll never forget this," Simon utters, lowering his voice to almost a whisper. "I was walking towards the kitchens at this resort, and I saw Bobby Kimball on the telephone. He had this look on his face.... I knew something was wrong. He turned to me and said, 'Simon, Jeff has died.' I said, 'What? Jeff Porcaro?' 'Yes, I'm just getting the news now.' Bobby was distraught. I was stunned. We couldn't believe it." It was a sad coincidence that Bobby and Simon were there together when the news came.

A week later Simon was back in England about to begin recording with Big Country, and then he got a call. It was Toto leader/guitarist Steve Lukather calling from L.A. "When Luke called," Simon relates, "I thought he was just calling to talk. They had just had the funeral for Jeff, I knew Luke, and I thought maybe he wanted to talk to me about it—maybe he didn't know I knew about Jeff."

Lukather had something else in mind. "Simon," the guitarist said, "this is the situation: The band is all here at the office and we're having a meeting. We have a three-month European tour planned. Road crews are booked, some are on wages, we've got three trucks, three busses, a lot of
people depending on work. And we have wonderful attendance for the tour—many sold-out venues. The thing is, we've been sitting here trying to figure out what to do. Do we call it quits, or do we get a new drummer? You're the only person we can think of that we want in this band. Will you do the tour?"

Simon was shocked. "The last thing I ever expected to do was to play in Toto," he states. "I told Luke I was very honored to be asked, but I had a lot of my own things going on and a lot of things to consider." Toto didn't have time. "The problem, Luke told me, was that the band only had weeks before the tour was scheduled to start, but I had several things in the works. I told Luke I'd need a few days to think about it.

"I thought about the coincidence of my wanting to move to L.A.,” Simon continues. “A great band with incredibly talented musicians—what a wonderful thing to be asked to do. I phoned everyone I had scheduled work with, and everybody told me I should take the gig. Basically I was saying, 'Sorry, I have to cancel on you.' And they were like, 'No problem, this is a great opportunity. Go and do it.'"

The "U.S.S. Phillips"

**Drumset:** Starclassic
A. four 6" Octobans (low set)
B. 3 3/4 x 14 brass piccolo snare
C. 6 1/2 x 14 maple snare
D. 9 x 10 tom
E. 10 x 12 tom
F. 11 x 13 tom
G. 12 x 14 tom
H. 13 x 15 tom
I. 14 x 16 tom
J. 14 x 20 gong drum
K. 16 x 24 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian
1. 22" A Custom swish
2. 14" A Custom hi-hats
3. 22" A Custom ride
4. 12" A Custom splash
5. 19" A Custom crash
6. 17" A Custom crash
7. 10" SR hi-hats
8. 22" Oriental China Trash
9. 18" Custom crash

**Sticks:** Pro-Mark Simon Phillips model (hickory with wood tip)

**Hardware:** Tama, including two strap-drive pedals with felt beaters, Tama Power Tower rack system designed, customized, and built by Simon

**Heads:** Remo C.S. Reverse Dot on snare batters, Ambassador on snare sides, clear Ambassadors on tops and bottoms of toms (occasionally switching to clear Diplomats on bottoms), clear Ambassadors on front and back of bass drums, with no holes cut in heads (towel inside taped against batter head, Microphone mounted inside), clear Ambassadors on Octobans, Timpani head on gong drum

**Microphones:** AKG D12 in bass drums, Shure SM57 on snare drums, Sure SM98A on toms, EV N/D408 in Octobans, Beyer M88 in gong drum, Shure SM89 for hi-hats and overheads (live situation only)
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Simon called up the anxious Lukather and agreed to do the tour. He'd come over as soon as he finished the Big Country album. They'd have less than three weeks to prepare.

While Simon had wanted to move to America and had planned it for a long time, the day he left England for the States was bittersweet. "I remember leaving the house with two suitcases," he says. "It was the last time I saw my house, my studio, and my wife. I was excited about what was coming, but a little sad as well."

**JOIN TOGETHER**

The members of Toto are like brothers. (In Mike and Jeff Porcaro’s case, they were brothers). They’ve been playing together since they were kids. In fact, there’s a bond of friendship that goes much deeper than the music. All of this made trying to rise above the tragedy that struck the band on August 5, 1992 nearly impossible.

Simon remembers the situation: "I arrived in LA, met everybody, and we all had dinner. It was awkward. I mean, it hadn’t been more than a few weeks since Jeff had died. Everybody was hurting." But Steve Lukather was the one who got things going. "Luke is very outgoing, and even though he was probably more upset than anybody, he got all of us inspired to play. I can remember his words: 'Now look guys, come on, Jeff is here with us. It's fine. He knows what's happening and he's digging it!'"

"So Steve, Mike [Porcaro], David [Paich], and I sat down and played 'Hydra,'" Simon continues, "and it was phenomenal. The band just clicked. I was like, 'whoa.' I couldn't believe how solid the time was between those three. Their command of the time was just unbelievable." And how did the rest of the band feel about it? According to Simon, "Everyone turned around and said, 'Wow, this is going to work. It sounds totally different, but it sounds right.'"

Things progressed quickly from that point—they had to. Within two weeks everything was clicking. It seemed clear that a "band sound" was developing that everyone was very excited about. This led to Simon being invited to join the band. "I was really happy about it," he insists. "There is a misconception that Toto is a session-musician band that met in the studios—absolute rubbish! Toto is a real band in every sense, and they made me feel not only like a member of the band, but like a member of the family."

The rehearsals seemed to be progressing well, yet there must have been a few hurdles to overcome. While both great drummers, Jeff’s style was vastly different from Simon’s. "That's true," Simon asserts, "but from the very beginning the guys in the band told me to play 'like me.' They didn't want me to try to
She's toured with such legends as Cobham, Duke, and Hancock. She's dazzled audiences the world over while performing with Prince. She's been called upon by Barbra Streisand, Natalie Cole, and Patti Labelle. She's constantly in demand. Why? Because she's a gifted percussionist who gets the sweetest sound.

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duplicate Jeff or his parts. They could have brought in a session guy if they'd wanted that. Of course, I'm not going to radically change the basic feel of certain songs—play 'Rosanna' with straight-8th notes, for instance—but my fills will definitely be my own."

And while Simon feels he has the band's confidence to take the music in some different directions than Porcaro did, Simon's respect for Jeff runs deep. "I'm honored to be following in Jeff's footsteps," Simon states in a sincere tone. "His are big shoes to fill. I've been a fan of his since his early Steely Dan recordings. He was always such a mature player, even early on. I think in some ways I still sound like a young whippersnapper compared to the way he played."

Coming into the band wasn't a completely smooth transition for Simon. One trouble spot he had to contend with was song tempos. "There's a big difference between listening to a song on an album and playing it live. I would count off a tune and the guys would stop me and say, 'Simon, that's the album tempo, we play it more like here.' Also, they've been playing some of these songs for years, so the parts have evolved."

One of the biggest differences for the band to get used to was the sound of Simon's kit. The overall projection of Simon's set, with his love of open, ringing drums, is coming from a different perspective than Jeff's more controlled, studio-oriented style. "Yes," Simon agrees, "my drums project more than other drummers' because I tune them very differently. Most drummers tune lower than I do, and they put damping on as well. That's going to take away volume. My drums are very dynamic. They all have double heads, including the kick drums, so I get a lot of projection, especially from the bass drums."

In terms of his playing, Simon admits that working with Toto has helped him. "It really has," he urges. "Playing with great musicians will always improve your playing." But when it's pointed out that he's played with some tremendously talented musicians, Simon responds: "Yes, but play with a great band. Nothing can equal working with great musicians who have played together for years."

And while Simon is full of praise for his bandmates and thankful for what he's learned, they've learned a few things from him as well. "I'd at least like to think so," he laughs. "One way I've seen them grow is in how they deal with all the weird shit I love to play—the polyrhythmic fills. They've learned to relax into them and stay focused, which is tough to do especially when I go out—sometimes way out."

On one occasion Steve Lukather felt that Simon had gone too far on one of his fills during a gig, actually screwing up. Lukather made a wager with Simon about it. "He bet me a hundred dollars that I had made a mistake," Simon chuckles. "I told him he didn't want to bet with me on it, but he held firm. So we...

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**Si-Phi Music**

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

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"I'm always listening to different things.
Ask me next week and I'll have a different list!"

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"I'm always listening to different things.
Ask me next week and I'll have a different list!"
checked the gig tapes, and my fill was correct. It was David who had made the mistake! So I said to Luke, 'Give me my hundred bucks!' And David quickly left the room! We were all laughing."

**A SIMPLE ALBUM**

While Toto has always been a pop band, early on in their career they had a tendency to flirt with a fusion-esque side. You might think that they’d be tempted to head in that direction having Simon in the band. “Funny enough,” he says, ‘our new album is just the opposite, really. It’s very simple, like an older R&B approach. A lot of the playing is incredibly simple, with a focus on the songs.”

Simon was very happy to be able to contribute to the album in a songwriting capacity. "The band's attitude," he asserts, "is the best song wins. I co-wrote three of the songs that made it onto the album, and that was very satisfying for me. I mean, this band has some of the best songwriters in the business—Steve Lukather and David Paich are incredibly talented writers, and Mike is excellent as well. I'm learning a lot on the writing end."

The sound of the new album was guided in large part by producer Elliot Scheiner. His work on Steely Dan's *Aja* and *Gaucho* releases, as well as with the Eagles, is best characterized by dry sounds. Simon concurs: "Elliot is a wonderful guy and good to work with. He specializes in 'honest' sounds. He puts the faders up, and if it doesn't sound good he looks at you and says, 'I'm doing everything I should have to. It should be sounding good. Get your shit right—make it sound good.'"

"We got on great," Simon states, "and he loved the sound of my drumkit. Elliot wanted a natural sound, especially from the drums. So this record lets you hear exactly what my kit sounds like when you're sitting next to it in the room—very revealing!"

The new album has just been released in Europe, and the band is happy that it will be released in the States as well. (Due to label conflicts, their last few have not.) Simon is hoping that the band will be able to re-establish itself here. 'I think there are a lot of people here who remember the band, and there are a few people who know what I've done. Hopefully my being in the band might spark some interest on a certain level. I'd like to see this album get some radio play, though, because I think it's well-suited for it.'

Toto's success in Europe and Japan hasn't wavered, and the band is embarking on a major tour covering those areas. "We'll be playing 15,000-seat halls," Simon states, "which is medium-sized compared to some of the bigger bands. But I'm really impressed with Toto's operation: Everything is top-notch. With all of the big tours I've done—A.R.M.S., Jagger, Jeff Beck, the Who—there's always been an area that's been overlooked or not handled correctly. With Toto, everything is covered. It's another reason why I was happy to join the band."

**PARTY IN SIMON’S... PANTS?**

Back in the late '80s, Steve Lukather brought together Jeff Porcaro and a few other LA studio veterans to jam at a local club. That initial gathering metamorphosed into Los Lobotomys, a Lukather-inspired side project that gave players a chance to get out and stretch—serious players who could let...
their hair down and not be too serious about the music (although the band did get serious enough to release a hard-to-find album that both Jeff and Vinnie Colaiuta played on).

Lukather invited Simon Phillips to be "lobotomized" during his first tour with Toto. "We were in the Philippines," Simon recalls, "and Luke had just gotten off the phone with David Garfield, the keyboard player. I guess they started planning a get-together. Luke said, 'Hey man, when we get back to the States you've got to come play with Los Lobotomys.' And I asked, 'Los what?'

"After we got back Luke called and asked me to come to a rehearsal," Simon states, "So I turned up and met the band. We started jamming. I loved the music, which reminded me of all the fusion stuff I had played back in the late '70s with people like Jack Bruce and 801. I had fun and just went totally out. Luke was laughing, Garfield was like, 'Wow.' It was a very loose, 'just sit down and play' attitude.

"As the day of the gig approached," Simon admits, "I started to get a bit nervous because I hadn't played in a small club in years. I don't mind playing in front of sixty or seventy thousand people, but three hundred people up close—that's a bit nerve-racking. Add to that, I was told that every drummer in town would be coming down to check it out.

Simon wanted to please his fans, so he went the extra mile. "I decided to take my entire rig—the full kit with the Octobans, the gong drum, everything! It was a lot of gear for a club gig, but it's my instrument. And I thought people who were coming would dig seeing me play the whole thing. I can remember how I felt when I was a kid, going to see Billy Cobham. If he didn't have his full kit I'd be disappointed. So we squeezed the kit in there and played, and had an absolute ball!"

Some point after that, Steve Lukather had the opportunity to do a solo album for Sony, and he decided it would be good to recruit his Lobotomys buddies. "He asked me to do it," Simon says, "and I thought it was going to be his solo project. But the project evolved into a Los Lobotomys record."

Simon took the opportunity to co-write something for the album. "I called Luke and asked, 'Would you fancy writing something together?' He was into it, and I got very inspired. I knew Luke likes riffs, and he always told me how much he liked the odd-meter stuff I do. So I came up with this riff in 17, and loosely worked it into a song. The essence of that particular groove is the push (accent on beat 8). I thought that would really get him."

Lukather loved it, and the track made it onto Los Lobotomys' Candyman, which is a fun little showcase for Simon's drumming—lots of great double kick work and some nice soloing as well. Oh, and Lukather's colorful title for the song: "Party In Simon's Pants," of course.

**IN SESSION**

"It was amazing how quickly it started happening...I was surprised," Simon happily admits about his rise up the LA studio-session call list. But maybe he shouldn't have been too surprised, considering the reputation he's garnered over the years. As word has spread that Simon is "in town," he's gotten calls...
from a number of different producers and artists eager to make
good use of his talents.

Now that Simon's had a chance to work in several of the more
famous LA studios, what differences has he noticed between
recording in England and here? "The rooms," he replies,
straight away. "They are very different. The rooms in England
are much more live, and the sound of my kit [that open sound
again] worked beautifully there. Also, many of the top studios in
England have been remodeled and are spotless.

"In L.A.,” he continues, "the rooms in general are quite dead.
They're very nice-sounding rooms, but they've been set up for a
different type of sound. I've also been surprised at how old the
rooms here look, even being a bit run-down. But people know
these rooms and the way they sound, and the equipment,
athough in some places a little older, is beautifully maintained."

Simon's large and live set—"lovingly" referred to as the
U.S.S. Phillips—wasn't always well-received on sessions, the
dead room sound not meshing with his more open approach.
"The engineers here are used to hearing a much drier drumkit
than mine, manipulating those drier sounds with effects." But
Simon's kit works as a single unit, the reverberation of all the
drums working together to create his sound. Luckily, he's
worked with people who've enjoyed a fresh approach. "Yes, the
discipline is slightly different," he admits, "but a lot of engi-
neers have worked with me to get a sound happening. I get it to
sound as good as I can in the room acoustically and let them do
their work."

While he's had a couple of challenges adapting to the differ-
ent "procedures," Simon has been thrilled with the change of
scenery. "First of all," he blurts out, "it's great to turn up on a
session and find out you're recording with some musician
you've admired, or working with an amazing engineer." It's of
special interest to Simon to see how the engineers get on. "I
engineer," he admits, "and I love to see what they do and how
they do it. I've had almost twenty-five years of doing this, so
coming here and getting into the approach has been such an
inspiration. It's been a bit of a rebirth for me."

**BEHIND THE BOARD**

With so many years of recording experience behind him—
well, actually owning a professional recording studio—Simon
knows an awful lot about getting a good sound in the studio. His
interest in recording, though, goes way back and, in fact, starts
with his mother, Judyth. It may have been Simon's father, Sid
Phillips, the British Dixieland band leader, who helped Simon
get his start in music. (Simon was recruited into his father's
band at age eight.) But it was Simon's mother who instilled in
him a fascination with recording.

"It all started with Mum owning a couple of Revox tape
recorders, a valve amp, a pre-amp, and two microphones." Simon
gestures lovingly to his mother, who was actually sitting
in at this point of the interview, visiting from England. "He was
about four years old when he started playing with those tape
recorders," she proudly adds.

Simon actually showed an aptitude for electronics when he
was nine. "I started recording my drums around then," he says,
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"and I was getting into a basic understanding of stereo and microphone placement. But Mum's setup was wired together in a way that didn't work all that well. So I came up with a way of using switches to link the tape decks—a patch bay of sorts. I took bits of wire and pieced this thing together, and miraculously it worked!" Simon's been in love with the technical side of recording ever since. (In fact, he recently did all of the wiring for a rehearsal/demo studio he and Toto bassist Mike Porcaro set up.)

Learning how to record drums in a pro-studio situation came about through experience. "I actually took notes back when I did sessions in the '70s," Simon admits. "I jotted down what mic's were being used on the kit, where they were placed, and how they affected the sound. I watched every engineer and tried to ask questions without being in the way."

But even with all of that experience, Simon must have had some training in actually using a studio board. "Well," he says, "the person who was really responsible for me getting into professional engineering was Mike Oldfield [musician/producer/engineer of Tubular Bells fame]. He asked me to play on a record of his called Crisis [recorded in 1983]. By then I was pretty experienced about a lot of studio techniques—what mic's to use, where to place them, what channels in the desk to use, aligning tape machines, stuff like that. Mike mentioned to me that he was looking for a new producer for Crisis, and I told him I had an interest in producing. I asked him if he and I could do it together."

Oldfield was intrigued. He gave Simon a week's trial. "I went out and found an engineer who knew how to work Mike's equipment," Simon states, "because he owned a NEVE 8108 desk, an Ampex ATR124 tape machine, and Necam computers—all pretty complicated stuff. Unfortunately, Mike didn't like the engineer I brought in and sent him home. Then Mike dropped the NEVE manual in front of me and said, 'I'm going out for a few hours. Learn how to use it!' It was a great experience, and I learned a lot from Mike."

Simon's engineering experience has directly affected—and improved—both his playing and his drum setup. He explains: "I've learned how to set up the kit, how to hit the drums, how to select gear, all based on that recording experience. There's a lot to learn about what to do to properly get your sound on tape.

"First, the positioning of the kit is important," Simon insists. "I always position my cymbals high, away from the drums. One of the big problems for engineers is cymbal leakage into tom mic's. Placing cymbals high helps avoid that." And although he sets up in such a way to record his drums in the best possible way, Simon makes sure the kit is—first and foremost—comfortable for him to play. "I position my hi-hats right next to my snare drum, which makes riding with my left hand very easy. But positioning them there can lead to leakage problems, the hi-hats bleeding into the snare mic'. However, I'm careful to select hi-hats that sound good but aren't too loud."

Simon's Zildjian cymbal choices are all carefully considered. "I've learned that using lighter-weight cymbals works better," he says. "They have to balance with the drums, so while some are bigger sizes, they're still very light. My crashes—even the
Alex Acuña and LP.

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Alex Acuña has forged a style all his own. From playing on the beach in Condado, Puerto Rico to his experience with marching cajon bands in his native Peru, Alex Acuña has acquired a vast array of musical influences. While Acuña’s roots are South American, his influence is global. An innovator in the wide world of music, Alex brings his vast array of influences to everything he does, such as the historical Weather Report cut “Birdland”, George Lucas motion picture soundtracks, and sessions with Al Jarreau, Larry Carlton and Andrae Crouch, in addition to his own group Alex and the Unknowns. Along the way, Alex has become one of the most admired and imitated percussionists and drummers in the world. A benchmark of excellence, he brings key elements of hand drumming to the drum set.

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—explode when I hit them and don't sustain too long. The rides and Chinas are also carefully selected to work together dynamically. And I don't clamp down cymbals. I don't want them to be choked." (If you look carefully at Simon's kit you'll notice he doesn't use felt washers on top of his cymbals.)

"I think of the drumkit as one complete instrument," Simon insists. "There are separate components, but they all make up one instrument. Each component has to work in conjunction, sympathetically. Take away a few of those ringy toms or the second bass drum, and in a way it's like taking away keys from a piano. They all make up a part of the sound." And Simon feels that "balance" is the key when it comes to the sound of a kit: "You could record my kit with two microphones—something I've done on demos—and the individual pieces are so well-balanced that the kit records beautifully."

This balance concept has been a factor in why Simon continues to use Tama (and now Tama's sister company, Starclassic). "I've played on most of the different manufacturers' drums, and a lot of it is nice-sounding stuff, especially their bass and snare drums. But I've always found that Tama tom-toms are far superior. They project more. That stronger sound makes them easier to play and helps a great deal in that 'balance' philosophy."

Recording experience has played a part in the way Simon plays, even down to his bass drum technique. "My bass drums have both heads on them with just a rolled-up towel taped against the batter head for muffling," he says. "I've found that the best way to get a great sound on the drum is to pull the bass drum beater off the head immediately, not forcing it up against the head." But how does he tension his pedals to be able to do this as well as play those incredibly quick double bass runs? "Very loose," Simon states, "and I use Tama's lightweight strap-drive pedals with felt beaters. I don't want any excess tension in my feet or legs."

Simon has one other piece of advice for drummers in the studio—something he was first told by Frank Zappa. "Frank produced a record I played on early in my career, Shankar's Touch Me There," he says. "He told me to stop playing so hard. Hit the drums lightly and let them sing. He said that if you hit a drum too hard you actually choke the sound."

"Playing too hard in the studio," Simon continues, "will make you tense up, and when that happens the feel goes. If you back off on the intensity and volume, you can concentrate on the feel. If you listen to my playing on a record it might sound like I'm really whacking the drums, but actually I'm playing relaxed, hitting them lightly and letting the drums do the work."

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

Has moving to L.A. broadened Simon Phillips' musical sensibilities? Give a listen to his new solo album, Symbiosis. It's a different Simon Phillips from the one we've heard before, especially compared to his previous solo releases, Protocol and Force Majeure. Gone are the carefully arranged, sequenced tracks and those perfectly scripted, almost composed drum patterns. This album is alive. Simon turned off the machines this time and just played.

And there's another element to Symbiosis that we haven't
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heard from Si-Phi before—a Latin influence. "There is so much Latin music in L.A.," Simon enthuses. "When I wasn't out on the road with Toto or Los Lobotomys, I was checking out a lot of great Latin groups around town. I went down to the Baked Potato to hear Cecilia Noel & the Wild Clams, and just loved it. Tris Imboden plays great with that band, but when he's out of town they have guest drummers sit in. They invited me to play, and I ended up playing two gigs with them. It was such fun—a fifteen-piece band with horns, with Sheila E. and Michito playing percussion, and there I was doing my shit—just a wonderful experience."

The Latin influence shows up in different spots on Symbiosis (having Sheila E. as well as Toto percussionist Chris Trujillo playing on it certainly helps), especially the title track. "That song is directly influenced by a timbale rhythm that Chris taught me," Simon states. "It's a rhythm I play on the hi-hat, which is the main phrase of the melody. I was just driving around one day, singing the rhythm to myself, and the melody came to mind."

Simon has a tendency to personalize an influence once he starts working with it. Check out "Biplane To Bermuda," probably the coolest track on the record. The tune seems to revolve around a mambo pattern that Simon plays, but he couldn't just play the "correct" pattern—of course not—he had to alter it, twist it. He did it by playing in seven.

It came about this way: "I do like to come up with something original," Simon admits, "but whatever I play I base on the music first. As for 'Biplane,' I was thinking, 'Wouldn't it be cool to play Latin music in odd meters?' Most Latin music is in four, and they base what they play on clave. It's very strict that way.

"I thought I had an original idea about the odd meters and Latin music," Simon continues. But then a get-together with another drummer gave him more info. "Gregg Bissonette found out that I live just up the road from him," Simon mentions, "and he invited me over to have a play—just a little 'dueting,' if you will. [Oh to have a tape of that!] Gregg's a great guy, and we had a lot of fun playing for each other. I would play something and he'd yell, 'What the hell was that?' And then he'd play something and I'd yell it back at him.

"Gregg played some Latin patterns for me," he says, "one thing being in an odd meter. I told him I wanted to get into that sort of thing, and Gregg pulled out some records by these Cuban bands I hadn't heard of, stuff that was very interesting. They were traditional Latin musicians playing in nine and fifteen, and soloing over the meters. I loved it.

"I talked to John Pena [Los Lobotomys bassist who played on Symbiosis] about Latin music and odd meters," Simon states, "and I mentioned I had a song in seven I wanted to record for my solo project. I asked him if what I was writing was valid. Would it be laughed at or considered incorrect? John said that as long as the cascara was right and that the clave was adhered to, it would be fine."

Simon programmed a drum pattern that he had in mind for the song to see how it might sound, and Pena felt the pattern worked. "It worked," Simon admits, "but I couldn't play it—it was incredibly challenging for me to learn. [Nice to hear that]"
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happens to even Simon Phillips.] No, really, it was pathetic," he
laughs. "I didn't think I'd ever get it. But I just sat down and
practiced it over and over, and learned it through sheer tenacity.
Slowly the feel started to come, and I learned to play it leading
with both hands."

Here is the basic pattern to "Biplane To Bermuda" that
Simon expands on during the recording:

"Biplane To Bermuda" clearly illustrated to Simon that using
a click track could be a hindrance. "We first tried recording the
song with a click, but it was just restraining everybody," he says.
"It made the song feel stiff. The overriding attitude I had for
Symbiosis was that everything had to feel great." That outlook
came from his work with Toto. "Their top priority is feel," Simon asserts. "It's something they really focus on. And so for
my album I felt that the groove on every one of my tracks had to
be slammin'. I wouldn't settle for less."

Another tune from Symbiosis, "Indian Summer," harkens
back to his fusion roots. It's in 15/8, and not only does Simon
have a field day with it drumming-wise, he makes the tune feel
oh so good. But how does he do it? "I go to the lowest common
denominator in any odd meter I play, breaking the pattern down
to twos and threes," he says. "I think in terms of downbeat and
backbeat, just like I would if something was in four, and I don't
over-emphasize the first beat of every measure. I hear a lot of
drummers doing that: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Don't
count it, feel it."

The concept for "Indian Summer" goes back to the '70s, to
Herbie Hancock's Headhunters era. "The idea for the song
came from Herbie's album Thrust," Simon states. "Do you
remember the beat to 'Palm Grease'? Mike Clark plays brilli-
antly on it, and the beat he played inspired 'Indian Summer.' I
wanted that effect, the open hi-hat coming in the middle of the
pattern. I'm playing it faster and in fifteen, but it's coming from
that concept."

Here's the basic groove to "Indian Summer." On the record-
ing Simon fills in the pattern with various ghost notes and varia-
tions, and he says, "I play all of the hi-hat notes with my left
hand, except for the open note in the middle of the pattern
[beat 9], which I play with my right. It makes the time feel bet-
ter and the pattern easier to play."

As previously mentioned, for Symbiosis Simon decided
going against using prepared tracks that the band would essentially
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play along to. "I was fed up with playing to sequencers. I wanted to get away from it," he affirms. "What that meant from a compositional standpoint was that it would be much more difficult, especially since most of my songs in the past were written using a sequencer. The whole writing process was a big step for me and something I will continue to work on. I owe a lot to [guitarist] Ray Russell, who co-wrote a lot of the material with me and added so much to the album."

HIGH TECH

When it comes to technique, Simon Phillips is certainly recognized as a drummer who has developed his skills to a high degree. His ambidexterity, double bass chops, and the sheer speed at which he can get around his kit have all been inspiring. But possibly the most impressive aspect to Simon's playing is his creativity. Few other drummers can match him in his ability to "compose" unique drum patterns.

Anyone who has followed Simon's career has certainly marveled at some of his beats. A fine early example can be heard on Pete Townshend's Empty Glass. Remember the pattern Simon played during the latter portion of "Gonna Get You"? He keeps a burning groove happening while using the toms on his old Octaplus kit to create a quasi Afro-Cuban effect.

One of Simon's most interesting—and probably his most complex—patterns (with the possible exception of the 33/8 workout he wrote for his DCI video) is on the title track of Force Majeure. Here Simon incorporates Octobans, kick drum, snare, hi-hat (with left hand and foot), and gong drum in a dizzying combination. Talk about four-way coordination!

But how does Simon come up with this stuff? "If I'm on a session," he says, "and I have an idea for that type of thing, I don't really have time to properly work it out. At that point it's, 'to hell with the sticking, just get the sound I'm hearing on the drums.' Then if I have a moment I'll come up with the best way to play it."

This happened to Simon recently while recording Los Lobotomys' Candyman, on the verse sections of "Hero With A 1,000 Eyes." "Luke doesn't like to waste time, especially in the studio," he says, "I had to get that pattern together fast. I came up with what I thought was the simplest way to play what I was hearing and just went for it."

Where does the inspiration come from to play these involved patterns? "I'm always striving to play something I haven't heard before and make the song a bit unique," Simon states. "In its simplest form, I'm thinking along the lines of being both drummer and percussionist at the same time."

Yes, but how does Simon explain a beat like his "Force Majeure"? "That's coming from all of the drum machine stuff keyboard players were creating back in the '80s," Simon explains. "Ever since then I've been inspired to come up with those really involved drum machine-sounding beats—the ones that sound impossible to play—and actually be able to play them, hopefully with a more human feel." (While Simon's new release doesn't contain as much of that sort of playing due to its
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"freer" approach, there are a couple of interesting patterns, most notably the one he plays during the piano solo of "Indian Summer.")

Another technical area of expertise for Simon is his double bass work. And no better proof of these abilities occurred during the taping of his DCI educational video. During a playback of the double bass shuffle tune "Outback," the recording engineer "soloed" the bass drum tracks to check the EQ. The double kick pattern was completely exposed, and it didn't waver—not one bit. The consistency and control Simon displayed between the two bass drums—both in regard to the time and the dynamics—was just plain scary.

When Simon is reminded of that event, he shrugs it off. "That has to do with the feel," he says. "I'm playing a groove, and just like with any other beat you'd play, you want it to feel good and be accurate."

Simon does have a good piece of advice for double bass players, though, especially concerning playing grooves. "Volume is the key," he urges. "One of the secrets about playing double bass patterns is that you shouldn't play them too loud. You're filling up a lot of sonic space, so you must back off with them. It's something I tend to forget, but it's very important.

"By playing them softer," Simon continues, "you're able to play certain accents within the pattern to help it work within the song. And more importantly, if you're playing softer you have less tension in your legs, so your control will be better. If you go back and listen to something like 'Outback,' you'll notice I'm not just pounding away on the bass drums."

When asked about what he would recommend drummers practice to improve their control with two bass drums, Simon states, "I would just set up a stool and two bass drums and slowly play through the hand rudiments with my feet—singles, doubles, paradiddles, double paradiddles, some triples, and playing 8th notes, 16ths, and triplets in different combinations. I think it's more important to work on accuracy than just trying to play fast."

When asked about developing hand technique, Simon had one quick suggestion: "As you're working on things like rudiments with your hands," he says, "I feel it's really important to practice on a variety of surfaces. I have a very rubbery practice pad from Billy Hyde that I use, which is great for finger control. I also use one of those horrible Moon Gel pads—I say horrible because they're tough to get a bounce out of so they work different muscles. It's similar to playing on a pillow. I found using both a real benefit."

One other area that Simon is recognized for is his ability to play ride rhythms with either hand. But he's quick to point out, "I'm probably still a bit stronger playing certain things with my right than with my left," Simon admits. "Coordination-wise, my left might be more advanced, but when it comes to playing something like up-tempo jazz, I favor my right. That's one technique that never quite got transferred." ("Harlem Nights," from Simon's DCI video, shows him playing a quick swing pattern with his right and left.)
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"I think leading with either hand has helped my playing," Simon mentions. "It's helped me in terms of keeping my larger setup more compact, and the coordination that's developed from it has certainly helped."

In terms of coordination, Simon continues to experiment. "I've also tried to play patterns where my feet are reversed," he says. "The left-foot bass drum thing isn't too bad, but opening and closing a remote hi-hat within a pattern with my right foot is just murder," he laughs.

**THE BOTTOM LINE**

During the past fifteen years Simon Phillips has—along with a handful of other players—been at the top of his profession. But with that position comes pressure. Some artists can crack under it, feeling they have to constantly live up to their status. In Bill Milkowski's excellent biography, *Jaco [Pastorious], The World's Greatest Bass Player*, the author theorizes that one of the things that led to the famed bassist's tragic demise was the pressure he felt to be "the greatest." Many "name" drummers interviewed in *MD* have said that they at times have felt a certain amount of pressure to play in a more technical way—that their fans expect it from them.

Does Simon feel this type of pressure? "It used to be enormous," he candidly admits, "especially when I was younger, playing with people like Stanley Clarke and Jeff Beck—playing that 'fusiony' type thing and soloing every night. I felt I had to play something technically amazing every time, which is not a mature way to approach it. I play a solo when I'm on tour with Toto, but I don't feel that kind of pressure. I don't feel I always have to play a strictly technical thing: I'll make it simple, or take it in a lot of different directions. It's a confidence thing that you have to build up." "Besides," he chortles, "when you've made the kinds of mistakes I've made on stage, you learn not to worry about it too much." But what of Simon's reputation for being a very accurate player? "I've made my share of mistakes," he laughs, "and in front of some very big audiences. You just have to keep a good sense of humor about it. You just have to say, 'Hey, I actually am human.'"

So it's a confident and happy Simon Phillips who's on the mend and enjoying a new life in Los Angeles. And he's quick to point out one of the reasons he's especially happy to be there: "There are so many great players," he says. "It's lovely to go down to a club and hear someone like Carlos Vega, Joey Heredia, Tris Imboden, or Gregg Bissonette. It's so inspiring. It's fantastic to go to a studio and hear some great player in the next room. I turned up at Capitol and Vinnie [Colaiuta] was in the next room. He came over and joked with me about borrowing a pair of brushes, so I went in and told his engineer that he didn't tune his drums properly," Simon laughs at the thought. "That's the thing about being here—all of the great people. It's really nice, you know?"
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Herman Matthews always has a lot going on. Since moving from Texas to L.A. in 1988, Herman has worked with such people as Kirk Whalum, Bob James, Sheryl Crow, Stevie Wonder, the Isley Brothers, Kenny Loggins, George Duke, and his current two situations: Richard Marx, with whom he has been recently cutting tracks, and Tower Of Power, with whom he can be heard on their new release, *Souled Out*.

When Herman is home in L.A., he works with an alternative band called Pixel Tang as well as with his funk group, Doc Huck-A-Buck And The Bazooky Brothers. Without a doubt, Herman Matthews is well on his way to enjoying a very satisfying career, both musically and financially.
RF: It has been said that one can’t learn to play a groove; a person is either born with it or they’re not. Do you agree?
HM: Yes, to a certain degree. It’s like dancing—either you have it or you don’t. Yes, you can learn to dance and you can learn to groove, but whether or not it’s natural is a different story.

RF: Aside from listening to blues and R&B growing up, do you think you did anything in your formative years that might have helped develop your ability to groove?
HM: My mom played organ and piano in church, so I always listened to gospel music and Bernard Purdie with Aretha Franklin. Also, I played in my uncle’s organ trio, and he wanted me to just play groove. It wasn’t about a lot of drums, and that’s really what my drumming is about today. I don’t think about the left-handed inverted paradiddle that starts off with the left foot and bounces off the cowbell…. I can’t get with that whole theory because that’s not music to me. Playing the song is really important—getting out of the way is also important.

RF: What did you do to learn drumming? Did you take lessons?
HM: Unfortunately, I did not take any lessons when I was a kid. I say unfortunately because I do think that’s very important. I did go to the High School for the Performing and Individual Arts, though, which was Houston’s version of the “Fame” school. I learned how to read and write there.

My background was in big band, jazz, and also some legit things. Learning everything is something I’m into—whether it be jazz, rock, funk, R&B—anything. You want to work as a musician, not just a certain kind of musician.

I started playing drums when I was seven, and I started playing clubs when I was eleven in my uncle’s organ trio. That gig involved playing the blues, shuffles—just that fatback kind of thing.

RF: While you were growing up in Texas, did you think to yourself, “I’m going to have to leave here eventually”? 
HM: Most definitely, although
Houston is a great place to grow up playing music. There is a lot of great music out of there. I played with Ornette Cobb and Jimmy Ford. I moved out to L.A. playing with Kirk Whalum. But before that, while I was in high school, I was doing shows. The contractors in town would hire musicians from that high school, so it was a great place to grow up because you had to play country, R&B, and rock.

I fell into the trap of working with great musicians and making great money at a young age, though. That's why I did not move to L.A. until 1988. I wanted to move to L.A. or New York after high school, but I was playing with the Paul English Group, which was a fusion band that Kirk Whalum and all the great musicians in Houston played in. I did that for about three years and did a couple of records with him. I also played in Top-40 bands that were very musical. But when you're nineteen years old, making $550 a week, it's hard to leave. I would call my friends out here in L.A. and ask them what was going on and when I could move out, and they'd say, "Let me get this straight—you're making $550 a week, you're nineteen years old, and you're in an apartment that's $325 a month with two bedrooms and one and a half baths. Why do you want to move to L.A.? Are you nuts?" And when I moved out here, I understood what they were saying.

RF: What got you out here?

HM: The Houston scene dried up a bit. The oil thing left, music was gone, and the band I was working with at the time was a Top-40 band that had Dwight Sills playing guitar. We were playing at a Holiday Inn type of place, and I had had enough. I decided then to move to L.A. I had no money, nothing. Three days later, I got a call from Kirk Whalum, who was out on the road with Larry Carlton. He talked to me for about an hour from Minneapolis and said, "I want you to move out to L.A. and be in my band."

RF: The first I heard of you was with Kenny Loggins. How soon after your move to L.A. was that?

HM: A lot of this had to do with luck and being in the right place at the right time. The second night I was in town, I played the Baked Potato with Kirk Whalum. I hung out and met a lot of musicians that night. Doc Gibbs saw the band that night and he was looking for a drummer for the Bob James group. Kirk was working with Bob James too. Kirk said to Bob, "My drummer would be interested in this gig." Doc Gibbs went to Bob and said, "I saw this drummer at the Baked Potato named Herman Matthews." So two different people mentioned it to him and it all fell into place.

I started working with Bob James in addition to working with Kirk Whalum. Soon after that, Kirk Whalum was doing a gig with George Duke. Freddy Washington, who was also working

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"I don't think about the left-handed inverted paradiddle that starts off with the left foot and bounces off the cowbell. I can't get with that whole theory because that's not music to me. Playing the song is really important."

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MODERN DRUMMER FEBRUARY 1996 73
with Kenny Loggins, asked, "Do you know a drummer who can play rock 'n' roll and R&B, both with conviction?" George Duke started naming all my heroes: Chester Thompson, Rick Marotta, Vinnie Colaiuta, Rayford Griffin. Kirk Whalum said, "What about Herman Matthews?" Freddy had just seen us play. He said, "Okay, right." Two days later I got a call from Kenny Loggins himself. I was at home, playing Pictionary with friends, and I heard this voice talking into my answer machine. I said hello and he said, "Herman, this is Kenny Loggins." It took him a minute to convince me he was Kenny. He said he wanted me to audition for the band.

One of the bands I had played with in Houston had played all of Kenny's music, all of Al Jarreau's music, and all of George Duke's music, so I knew Kenny's material. But I walked into the audition already knowing that I couldn't do the gig because of the dates. The first three days of rehearsals conflicted with the last three days of the gig with Kirk Whalum in New York. But I wanted to audition anyway so they could hear me.

I set up my drums, and after the first tune, Kenny asked what my schedule was all about. I said, "Thanks a lot, but I really can't do the gig because of my commitment with Kirk Whalum." He understood, and asked for my number. At 8:00 the next morning, I got a call from Kenny, "Are you sure you can't change your schedule?" I said, "I really can't do that; it's an ethical thing." Kenny said he'd call again and we'd stay in touch. He called again that afternoon. About that time I had gotten my mail and there were some bills. I got a call from Kirk's secretary as well, saying a couple of dates had been canceled. That sort of made up my mind. Kenny was saying, "Call my manager and talk money."

So I didn't do the Whalum gig, and although I gave him a month's notice and a sub, it was a problem. Kirk Whalum was the reason I came out to L.A., and to this day I love him to death. Things are okay now. It never really got sour, but it was time for me to look out for what I needed to do.

RF: What went into the Kenny Loggins gig for you?

HM: To this day, I say that the Kenny Loggins gig is the best gig for me, musical-
ly. It had rock 'n' roll, it had R&B, it had pop, it had a kind of Cajun side of things. We even got to play a couple of shuffles. It was everything I grew up on. Also, he gave me freedom to create. That's a perfect situation for anyone.

RF: How long were you with him?

HM: Five and a half years. For two and a half of those years, I was working with Bob James and Kirk Whalum at the same time. I was fortunate in the sense that the schedules never conflicted. Of course, I was catching red-eyes from gig to gig, but it worked out great. I got a chance to play jazz, rock, and R&B.

RF: What's been the toughest gig you've had?

HM: The Kenny Loggins gig! The drum chair in the Loggins gig is the hot seat. He thinks drums. He's very demanding—in a good way. He thinks rhythms, which is great. It was a constant challenge for me to go home after a rehearsal and work certain things out so that I could then present to him. He always gave me room to create.

The first session I did with him was a big deal for me because it was a session with David Foster for the movie Wild Horses. Kenny had me doing all kinds of things. I literally had to grow two more arms to give him what he wanted. I was determined to do it and it came out great. Later on, after really getting into Kenny's head, I found that there were easier ways of getting to the things that he wanted.

RF: Can you elaborate?

HM: After there was no more room on the drum track, Kenny wanted me to do this extra thing on the bell of the cymbal. I had been trying to do it, but it was tough. I stopped and said, "Wait a minute, man, who told you about this?" Kenny, with a smirk on his face, said, "Tris Imboden did." I said, "Tris is an idiot because no one can do this!" Tris and I laugh about that all the time. Kenny wants to hear a certain thing when you play. It's a lot of stuff. Kenny lives a writer's life.

RF: Did you end up being able to do the bell on the cymbal?

HM: Oh yeah, but in an easier way. Drumming is an illusion—the way things sound. A lot of people hear certain things
that you're either ghosting or giving the illusion of having done. If he didn't have to look at me, it would work out great.

Then there's the other side of it, like working with Richard Marx. His whole thing is, "I just want to hear the groove. I don't want any 'dig me' fills; the song is already written. Just play that."

RF: That's funny, because Richard Marx was weaned on the Kenny Loggins school of music.

HM: That's true, there are certain similarities. Richard grew up listening to Kenny, but when I first got the gig with Richard, I asked him, "What do you have against drummers?" I saw so many different drummers go through that band. But I love that. That's appealing to me because I want to give those people what they want; that's the challenge for me. I want to work for those people because I know I can give them what they want.

RF: What did Richard say when you asked him that?

HM: He said it looked worse than it really was. He had certain drummers who couldn't stay with the band because of other commitments, and then there were
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Check out the sound of John Astrik Custom on White Zombie's latest release "Astro-Creep 2000."
other drummers who could play the rock thing but couldn’t play the R&B thing.

Richard wants a drummer who doesn’t think fills. He told me his favorite drummer was Jack Bruno, who is now playing with Joe Cocker. He’s one of my favorite drummers also. He sounds like he’s on a record every night. Richard told me a story about him: Jack was playing a certain groove, and Richard asked, “Can you play a little more?” And Jack said, “Do I have to?” Richard fell in love with the guy. He wants it to feel good, he also wants you to have a good time, but he doesn’t want you to take away from the song.

RF: If Kenny’s was such a creative situation, why did you leave?

HM: Kenny is great to work for, but he has gotten to a point in his life where he doesn’t have to work as much. His Leap Of Faith record took three years to make. It’s a great record; it did pay off. While that was going on, I did a TV show. But he kept booking the Live At The Redwoods gig and canceling it. He did that three times. I tried to work my schedule around Kenny, but it just became a conflict. While Kenny was moving this date, my mortgage was due. I had gotten a call to go out with Kirk Whalum and the Winans, opening for Whitney Houston. So what do you do? Then I came back with Kenny and got a call for Richard Marx about two or three months after that, and he made me an offer I couldn’t refuse.

RF: You also had a high-profile gig on the TV show Into The Night.

HM: Regardless of what kind of TV show it was, I could not pay for that kind of exposure. The band was called Burning Herman And The Mastermix, which was not my idea. It appeared that I was the musical director of the band. I was not. I was more of the spokesman for the band. I was the Paul Schaeffer of the band. What made us different from all the other show bands was that we played Top-40 songs because the host, Rick Dees, was a DJ. It was great for that. I did that for eight months until Rick Dees left, which is when I left, just when Loggins went back on the road.

RF: Currently you are with Tower Of...
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Power.

HM: The gig of a lifetime. I think every musician grew up listening to Tower Of Power, worshipping the ground that Garibaldi played on. David will always be the drummer for Tower Of Power; he laid the groundwork.

I had gotten a call from the leader of the band, Emilio Castillo, who asked if I'd be interested in playing with the band or doing the record. I said, "Give me a couple of days to think about it." I thought about it, dreamt about it, and called and said of course I would do it.

RF: What did you have to think about?

HM: My background was playing with artists like Kenny and Richard and those kinds of gigs, where there are five guys in the band and you are splitting the pot in a certain way or you're asking for your dollar. I had to think about Tower Of Power because when you've got ten guys in the band and you're splitting that dollar ten ways, you're talking money. But, on the other side of it, playing-wise, there's no other gig in the world like it. That's where the gratification comes in. No one is playing this kind of soul-funk music anymore. It's something I've always wanted to do. I figured since I had moved to L.A., I had always been doing things for everyone else. This is the first self-indulgent gig I've ever had in L.A.

RF: Besides the funk, what do they need from a drummer?

HM: Someone who is very musical, someone who is able to kick the horn section in the ass, yet still keep the groove going with Rocco [Prestia, bassist]. They need someone who is aggressive yet sensitive. There are a lot of 16th notes that are flying by, yet it has to be danceable. There's a lot of chugging going along; their groove is like a freight train, a lot of herky-jerkiness that you've got to smooth out to make it sound like something someone would want to tap their feet to.

The only thing that Emilio says is that he likes "foot," which is something I love doing—playing from the bottom up. I'm a groove drummer. That was the only request. He wants someone who can be musical, and kick the band in the ass.
RF: When you say this is a more self-indulgent gig....
HM: I preach a lot about drummers who are into themselves, about "dig me" drumming. I've always asked the question—and we've had many a talk on the bus about this—are you an asshole first and then you become a drummer? Or are you a drummer and then you become an asshole? It's the chicken and egg theory.
RF: And what conclusion do you reach?
HM: It's funny. We enjoy watching and listening to drummers who play a lot of notes. There is something exciting about that. It is not always appropriate, though. A lot of young drummers grow up listening to Vinnie Colaiuta, Dave Weckl, and Dennis Chambers. I can't do their stuff, and it's great that those guys can make that kind of music happen, but young people don't realize that those guys are putting that kind of playing into a situation that calls for that. Kids today want to put that kind of playing into everything.
RF: I don't think it's just kids today. I think it's just kids.
HM: Exactly. I can remember when I was younger and I got an extra cymbal or something. Every song I played had that cymbal in it. When I got a new lick, every song I played had that lick in it. There's a certain maturity that comes.
RF: Richard Marx's gig is the opposite.
HM: Richard is straight groove and a fill every other song. With Tower, people forget that the band is soul-funk with sort of a twist. When a lot of drummers and musicians think of Tower Of Power, they think of "Squib Cakes" and all of the interesting things that Dave Garibaldi did. They forget about the other simple soul songs. Tower is a soul band, then a funk band, and then all of the other tricks come on top of that.
RF: I've got to say that I've never played so many 16th notes in all my life. It's great, though. That's why I think it's so important for musicians to be well-rounded, to be
able to read and go in and do a session, whether it be playing 2 and 4 all night long or whether it involves taking it out somewhere. You have to know when and where to do that. My favorite drummers and musicians are able to do that sort of thing.

RF: Like who?
HM: Jim Keltner. What he brings to the table is incredible. Steve Jordan brought 2 and 4 back for me. His fusion chops were incredible too. Of course Steve Gadd, Harvey Mason, and Jeff Porcaro, God bless him. He had that certain discipline, although he hated to do drum solos, which I understand. He was one of those guys who could lay down a groove and make it feel so sweet, but yet turn around and do something that Vinnie would do. I love what Charlie Watts does in that band, as simple as it is. Of course there's Clyde Stubblefield and people like Tony Williams and Elvin Jones; there's so much you can learn from them. Ricky Lawson is one of my heroes today because he has a certain magic to his playing.

RF: Is there anything tough about the Tower gig?
HM: Maybe the toughest thing, and this is not that tough, is that I set up and tear down my own drums. The only thing that gets tough about that is when the band wants to get to a gig as close to sound check as possible. I need to go earlier in order to set up, change my heads, and make that happen.

When I set up my drums, I'm getting in touch with them again. I'm changing the heads, I'm not relying on a tech to do that. It's great. Maybe two years from now I'll get tired of doing it, but for now it's wonderful.

RF: What kind of drums do you use?
HM: DW, the only drum. If I did not endorse DW, I would be playing DW drums. With Tower, I'm only playing four drums. With pop and rock groups, I use a bigger kit. With Richard I use seven drums, with five toms—two up top, two at the bottom, and one on my left-hand side. I did the same thing with Kenny. That kind of music calls for it. Tower music is straight up and down soul-funk. All you need is a kick drum, snare drum, and hi-hat to make music like that, but I have two toms in
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order to add the color. Drum-wise, it just gets me thinking a different way. The cymbals stay pretty much the same. I'm really a cymbal freak.

RF: You sit low.

HM: The first time I saw Vinnie Colaiuta was with Zappa on *Saturday Night Live*. I was trying to see who was playing drums and all I could see was the top of his head. I got a side shot of him, and sure enough, this guy was sitting as low as possible, which confirmed what I thought. When I was a kid, I sat at a normal height. I didn't like the guys who sat on high thrones, and I was trying to find a happy medium. Though I'm a big guy, my legs are short, so it helps when I sit low. It gives me more leverage on the kick drum. It gives me a better center of gravity. I play my cymbals high, I sit low, and it's very comfortable for me.

RF: There is a new Tower album, *Souled Out*.

HM: This is their attempt to go back to what they've always been, a soul band.

RF: When you say that, what does that mean from a drum perspective?

HM: There's a certain hump, a certain lope to soul music, and then there's a certain hump and lope to Tower music. They started out twenty-five years ago playing the soul hits of the day. When they started writing their music, they started adding the kick to it. This record is reminiscent of *Urban Renewal*, which I think is one of their finer records. The difference with this record is that they have some loops on it.

RF: What prompted this?

HM: [laughs] Airplay. They did three records in the late '70s when the disco thing was going on that quite frankly sounded like shit, and they admit that, because they were trying to be something they were not. I think in the lifetime of Tower, they've had three radio-airplay tunes, which is weird when you think of how everybody knows who Tower is. Talk about a live cult following!

This record has great songs on it. I went in and did everything in three, no more than four takes. I wanted to hear the song a couple of times and just go in and play it, because I had the pressure of being in the drummer's seat where Garibaldi had been. I could easily get caught up in this thing of, "I've got to play this in order to impress the fans," but that goes against my nature. So my thing was to go in there and give a good solid track and leave it alone. We did one of the ballads, "Loving You Forever," in one take.

The album was produced by Jeff Lorber and Emilio, and my bottom line was that if I saw the two of them tapping their feet or bobbing their heads, or in Emilio's case, shaking his butt, I knew we had the track. To do things fifteen or sixteen times, I lose the juices.

RF: You made the statement that there is a certain lope to soul music and there is a certain lope to Tower music. Can you explain the difference?

HM: What I mean is that there is a simplicity and solidness. Everything is feel. That's what a hump and a lope is. Being from Texas, that's something we always talk about. The difference between playing soul music and Tower Of Power soul music is that

Tower Of Power music has a huck-a-buck in it. To define huck-a-buck, it is all the 16th notes, the things in between 2 and 4, all the stuff in the cracks, the stuff that makes you shake your butt.

RF: Of all your recorded history, which projects are you most proud of?

HM: I'm still growing in the studio, although in Texas I did a lot of jingle work. I love the studio. If I could make my living in the studio, I would do that. There's a certain magic that the studio creates. When you play something that's incredible and it's captured on tape—wow. You're in this business for those special moments where the song is right, the groove is right, the take is right. Those times when it comes together are few and far between.

The recordings in the past I've been real proud of include *The Promise*, Kirk Whalum's third record. It was produced by Bob James, and I got a chance to play with Gary King, Doc Gibbs, and Ron Carter. That was a very creative record for me. I'm also on one cut called "Money" from the latest George Duke record, and he's one of my heroes. It's just a straight-ahead, good-feeling groove record. Everette Harp's first record, which is self-titled, is smoking. He's my best friend, so that was great. I got a chance to play on both of Dwight Sills' records. He's one of my best friends too, and it meant a lot.

I love the studio, and hopefully I can bring something to the table. I want people to think of me as a well-rounded musician.

RF: As I'm getting a sense of your life, it's been sort of a "right place at the right time" situation. Were there tough times?

HM: Of course, but you know how it is—when you're excited about doing something and you run into those obstacles, you find a creative way of getting around them. I've been lucky. When I came to L.A., I got gigs within the first year I was here that people who have been here ten years are still trying to get. There's a lot of luck involved, but that only applies when people are calling you. You still have to take care of business on the drums.
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At seventy-three, he's still full of enthusiasm. He looks forward to each playing opportunity. Like many who are deeply taken by music and a particular instrument, Jack found them both quite by accident. One day when he was very young, he heard a band and a drummer on the radio and experienced that wild feeling of discovery. Jack never had to wonder what he would do with his life.

When I first heard him with the Glenn Miller Orchestra under the direction of Tex Beneke, at the "400" Restaurant in New York City right after World War II, it was clear he had talent, that he was in the right profession. It was equally apparent that he loved Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich.

Jack had good hands and taste. Moreover, he knew what to do and how to play in a variety of situations. He could lift you out of your seat on a good evening. Most important, he had an underlying quality in his playing, a sense of conviction, that made you believe him.

And even back then, he had his own way, his own sound—despite his affection for Krupa and Rich. He was learning and open to everything. "Time" was an existing concern. His deep involvement with the pulse continues so many years later.

The Miller band, under the direction of Beneke, recorded a Ray Wright arrangement of Haydn's "Surprise Symphony" for RCA Victor. If you can find it, I urge you to listen. Jack really caught my attention on that one. Crisp, technically interesting, and surprising, he creatively linked all the elements in the chart and set a fire under the band.

Beneke certainly had been right to hire him over a number of others. The Miller management wanted a top-liner for the band along the lines of Ray McKinley. But the Texan insisted on "the kid" he had played with in the Navy. And the young drummer did what had to be done; he never made the boss sorry he had gone out on a limb for him.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Jack Sperling's discovery of music and drums was comparative to the surprise of Christmas...or finding the perfect girl. "Until then, I had been play-
ing violin," Jack explains. "My mom was teaching me. I must have been three or four. But I wasn't too serious about. I would sit in front of the radio and try to pick out bass notes on the violin while listening to a dance band. I was serious about time and rhythm.

"Raised in Kingston and Pennington, New Jersey, I was a sickly kid—an only child—with heart murmurs and all kinds of bad things. One day, I saw a little drum in a five-and-dime somewhere. My mom and dad bought it for me a little before Christmas.

"I can't tell you how good I felt about that gift. Soon after that, I got a little set from my aunt. I kept pounding on 'em playing with dance bands on the radio. I was eight when I first played in front of people...at a church social."

Five years later, Jack had other major experiences: "I heard a Benny Goodman recording of 'Stardust.' It knocked me out! Then, one night, my dad came home from work and told me that the Goodman band could be heard on the radio on Saturday nights. When we listened to the Let's Dance program for the first time, I flipped out. Benny, the band, and particularly Gene Krupa were really special. I tuned in every week and became more and more excited.

"Then The Big Broadcast Of 1937 was released. I remember sitting in this quiet little movie house. There was a scene in a nightclub. The Goodman band was up on the stand. The guys wore white dinner jackets and black tuxedo trousers. They were the essence of glamour as far as I was concerned."

Jack pauses, then continues with typical verve, "You heard the hi-hats going in the background. Up on top of the band was Gene with his glittering, white pearl set. He was doing his thing, playing some wonderful ideas in such a graceful manner. Then he went into his showmanship bit—all the gyrations. He looked like he was in ecstasy.

"I stood up in the movie and began to scream," Jack remembered. "The people were yelling, 'Shut up, kid! Sit down!' It was like I was possessed. A weird thing: I felt I knew what Gene was experiencing.

"When I got home, I painted my drums white. I put a shield on the front of the bass drum with my initials on it. Like so many other drummers my age, I tried to look, act, and play like Gene. For three years, I led the dance band at Pennington Central High School. I was more of a hero than the guys on the basketball team."

"I kept listening to Gene and the Goodman band," Jack recalls. "It seemed they were always on my mind. I caught as many broadcasts as I could from the Manhattan Room of New York's
Hotel Pennsylvania. I had to listen to those remotes in my dad’s car. There couldn’t be noise around the house. My mom was not well. I even had to go outside to practice my drums.”

He points out: “I had never formally studied. But I could take direction. A lot of people were helpful to me. Al Zahler, a drummer/bandleader who got all the key work in and around Trenton, was one of them. Al wanted to front his band and play vibes, so he needed a drummer. I was recommended and hired after a tryout. Al would watch me and say, ‘Hey, Klopski’—he called me Klopski for some reason—you’re a little sneak; you look just like that guy with the Goodman band!”

“I’m very grateful to Al. He taught me what the instrument was all about. He insisted I get deeply into ‘time.’ He kept reminding me: ‘Don’t make a big noise at the end of every eight bars! Keep the time steady! Keep it coming!’ I became more of a rhythm section player because of him—not just a drummer who chewed gum, made faces, and took a lot of solos.”

Jack began learning about the realities of the music business quite early. At one point, he quit high school to go on the road with the Ryder College Dance Band. “We thought we were going to become overnight stars,” he recalls. There was an ill-fated trip to Pittsfield, Massachusetts, for a one-month engagement. It didn’t work out, and there was a bit of a panic. Jack returned home, sat around the house for a few months, and finally returned to school and joined Al Zahler.

The young drummer left high school in the first part of his last year to work as a senior clerk stenographer at Fort Dix, New Jersey. The salary: $3,200 a year—a lot of money during the Depression. Back then, everyone needed income, including the Sperling family. The principal was very understanding; he allowed him to take the job and said, “You can come back and get your diploma in June.”

Jack went with Bunny Berigan in July of 1941, giving up his day job. It was his first name band. Berigan came through Trenton. All of his players had left him. Berigan was going bankrupt. He was drinking heavily. It had become a bit complicated for the great trumpeter. But he left town with Jack as his drummer, taking some local players with him. The future didn’t look
too promising. But Jack was excited about the prospect of spending a lot of time with a really knowledgeable musician and leader.

"I learned more about drums from Bunny than I did from most teachers," Jack reports. "By that time, Buddy Rich was my idol. I loved Gene, but Buddy was 'the one.' I remember my first couple of nights on the band. They weren't terrific by any means. The band didn't have too much to offer. Bunny's old library was owned by his old drummer, Al Maisel. We eventually got a few of the charts back, like 'The Prisoner Song.' But mostly we played stocks and jammed.

"I attracted attention, doing the obvious, superficial, nonsensical things drummers do when they're young. Bunny laughed when I tried to imitate Buddy. He gave me good advice. 'Jackie, hit the wood!' he said. What he meant was to get off the cymbals and into 'time' on the drums. I played press rolls on faster things and ballads. He liked that.

"Bunny taught me about swinging tempos. He'd walk back and forth in front of the band, singing whatever tune we were going to play—until it felt good to him at a certain tempo. Then he'd count it off. There were really only three tempos on that band: medium, a little slower than medium, and a little faster than medium.

"He constantly reminded me about time," Jack continues. "If I'd start to drift away or get impressed with myself, he would get on me right away. 'Keep it walking, Jackie! Keep it walking!' Bunny didn't let up until he got what he wanted. The main thing, as far as he was concerned, was to keep the feeling alive. Never mind technique or anything else.

"I think of Bunny every time I sit down to play. I loved the man! I learned so much from him about values—in music and life. We went through a lot together, playing all kinds of unlikely gigs, like the one at the Crystal Danceateria at Buckeye Lake, Ohio. Constant music. No intermissions. The brass section really suffered. And getting to the bathroom was a major problem. "There were good things, too. We traveled through the South..."
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with Joe Frisco, a great comedy artist, who kept us laughing. The band persuaded Bunny to cut down on his drinking. He began looking better, playing better. Though we performed for practically no money—the ‘bread’ went to pay off his indebtedness—everything was fine.

"Then Bunny’s father died. He came back from the funeral a basket case and soon went into the hospital. Bunny passed not long after that. He had so much beauty... and frustration in him," Jack adds, sadly. "He was so admired. Perhaps he didn’t realize how musicians felt about him. Top players, including Louis Armstrong, frequently came by to hear him. On a good night, Bunny was awe-inspiring."

While on the Berigan band, Jack realized he was struggling. He needed help from a teacher who could make it easier for him to play. He put in his notice while Berigan was recovering from pneumonia. The trumpeter returned on Jack’s last night with the band. There was a touching good-bye scene. They had been working together for almost a year.

Henry Adler became Jack’s teacher. Responsible for a book called Buddy Rich’s Modern Interpretation Of Snare Drum Rudiments, Henry had been strongly recommended by a number of knowledgeable people in New York. His connection with Buddy also impressed the young drummer. He was just twenty.

"My folks took me over to meet with Henry," Jack explains. "I was off the band. I wasn’t working. Henry asked me to play. I don’t think he liked what he saw and heard. His comment: ‘We’ll have to start you at the beginning.’ And I thought I was so hot!

"Henry knew what he was doing. He had scientifically looked into the playing process for some time, analyzing how hands turned. He determined the best way to develop technique and free a drummer to be expressive.

"He got me a job drumming at the Fallsview Hotel in the Catskill Mountains—a resort area in upstate New York—so I could pay for the lessons," he vividly remembers. "I worked with Sammy Kaplan, a pianist, and Joe Lello, who played the reed instruments. I was up there for three months, working for $21 a week and room and board, getting great experience, and having a ball. We performed for dancing and shows every night but Monday.

"I would ride into New York on Mondays with Sammy to take a lesson with Henry. Sometimes I would break away on another day, come into town to see Henry and go over stuff. The rest of the time I would sit in the dark casino/playhouse, practicing on a pad. I became a bit of a recluse; the owner of the hotel suggested I get out and mingle with guests. So I took the pad to the pool every day—practiced and checked out the ladies.

"I could see changes within a couple of months. Things got better and better. My hands felt and looked good; I found it easier to execute, to project my ideas," Jack says. "Henry made it possible for me to be more flexible. He enhanced my ability to handle all kinds of musical situations.

"Henry has been my mentor when it comes to technique ever since that eight months of concentrated work. Whenever I’m in New York, I go to see him and take a lesson. Briefly, years later, I consulted with Alvin Stoller—a great drummer, as you know—about finger control. That was
In music, change sometimes seems like the only constant. That's the challenge that faces today's musicians, from veterans with decades of experience under their belts to novices still learning their chops. But that creative flux is what keeps music fresh and exciting. And, more than likely, it's one of the key reasons why you became a player. Despite both revolutionary technological advances and the inevitable waxing and waning of styles, modern music always returns to the solid foundations built by its groundbreaking stylists and craftsmen. In Rock, it's a renewed commitment to the elemental.

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the only other formal studying I've done."

Jack didn't wait to be drafted during World War II. He wanted to be a Naval air cadet. But he ended up signing up for six years, November 11, 1942, and going to the Navy School of Music, right outside of Washington, D.C. He played with a variety of bands, studied theory and harmony, and practiced a great deal as well. After eleven months, he was transferred to the Naval Air Technical Training Center in Norman, Oklahoma, where he met Tex Beneke.

"Tex, a chief specialist, was in charge of the dance band—the Gremlins. I joined the band. Tex and I became buddy-buddy; it was a good situation," Jack indicates. "I played all the time, continued to work hard, and got a few things down. I practiced four or five hours a day, at least. I smoothed off the edges in the service. In 1945, I was sent back to the Naval School of Music and ended up in an admiral flag band in Norfolk."

Jack was ready when his discharge came. Beneke and Don Haynes, a key member of the Miller management team, pulled some strings and got him out of the Navy early. He joined the Miller band in March of 1946. An exciting, large ensemble, including brass, reed, and rhythm sections, plus strings and a vocal group, it was very much along the lines of the orchestra Major Glenn Miller had headed in the Army Air Force. It was the sort of ensemble Miller had planned to put together after the war. Of course, he didn't live to realize his ambition. The orchestra under Beneke had a built-in following and enjoyed immediate success.

Jack feels "the rhythm section was real good: Roily Bondock [bass], Bobby Gibbons [guitar]—he played rhythm like Freddie Green did in the Basie band—and Hank Mancini was on piano for quite a while.... There were top players throughout the orchestra: Bobby Fring on trombone, Bobby Nichols and Graham Young in the trumpets, Vince Carbone on tenor. Ray Wright wrote some really impressive arrangements. So did Mancini, Neal Hefti, Bill Finegan, Billy May, Norman Leyden, Jerry Gray, and Perry Burgett, among others."

After a few years, the string section was dropped. Beneke went back to a standard dance band instrumentation, lessening the emphasis on the Miller style and identificat...
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fessional. The arrangers, including Ben Homer, Frank Comstock, Wes Hensel, Skip Martin, and later Jim Hill and Bill Holman, made it even more interesting. What's more, Jack had always wanted to live in Southern California. All in all, it was an appealing job for a drummer who wanted to play good music in affable circumstances.

Jack gave Beneke four weeks' notice. His old friend wished him well. The drummer sweated out his transfer to the L.A. union, often working Monday nights at a Hollywood club that featured contemporary jazz players like Chet Baker, Bud Shank, and Art Pepper.

The Brown band offered multiple opportunities: all the Bob Hope radio and TV work and the comedian's tours here and abroad. The Band Of Renown also made many recordings and played one-nighters, theater, and hotel engagements. There was a lot to do.

It was a particularly fruitful period for Jack. He became sharper, increasingly individual and musical, using the set and cymbals in a more liberated, color-conscious manner. Two LPs cut live by Coral's Bob Thiele at the Hollywood Palladium show the drummer to great advantage. He makes the band crackle and shout, pushing hard but never intruding on the ensembles, sections, or the soloists. His technique and timing, the shape and substance of his comments remind one of Buddy. But like many of the musicians who came up through the big bands and swing, Jack was very clearly concerned with making his own mark, leaving evidence to indicate just who was back there playing the time and the fills, creating a wave of spirited rhythm. In particular, try Wes Hensel's "Montoona Clipper" and Ellington's "Caravan"—arranged by Frank Comstock—on the first volume of Concert At The Palladium.

Other albums with Brown, notably Swing Song Book and Jazz Song Book (Coral), reiterate Sperling's growing ability to use finely honed technique in a well-edited, potent manner. He strongly enhances the underlying pulsation of the band without undue flash and complication. What he learned from Dave Tough about simplicity is quite apparent.

The recent Brown digital fiftieth-anniversary set on Fantasy tells a similar story. Jack plays for color, using the toms on fills in a refreshing way. He moves right along, keeping the energy level of the time quite high. His comments behind the ensemble, the sections, and the soloists are essentially modern and provoking. When he plays little ideas with his left hand against or as a supplement to the basic time, he suggests counterpoint and further activates the band, while making more than a little musical sense. In essence, Jack motivates the band and the listener to think and feel.

"I left Les late in 1954 and went to work on the Bob Crosby TV show five days a week," Jack says. "I had to play more commercially and cool myself down a little. But it worked out well. The show had a good band, including trumpeters Charlie Teagarden or Johnny Best, Morty Corb [bass], and Al Hendrickson [guitar]. I stayed with the show for three and a half years. But I missed Les's band terribly. I used to go to the Palladium and sit in whenever the guys were there. Yet I didn't feel I could break away and go on the road at that time. I was making three times the money doing television. And that's important, too."
As Jack got increasingly into studio work in Hollywood, he found it necessary to study mallet instruments. But work took him out of town too much for the involvement with teachers Earl Hatch and Lou Singer to really take hold.

Now a many-faceted percussionist, Jack was constantly on the go and often busy seven days a week. He did TV, films, recordings, clubs, concerts—everything you can think of on the Hollywood scene. Henry Mancini, his friend from the Miller/Beneke days, had given him a start in TV and pictures and called him for a lot of projects like the Peter Gunn and Mr. Lucky series. In 1959, he went on staff at NBC and remained thus employed for thirteen years. Soon he was on everything at the network: This Is Your Life, plus shows headed by Steve Allen, Dean Martin, Andy Williams, Roger Miller, and a number of others.

Sperling also made time to play and record with Les Brown, and with Charlie Barnet. Barnet's Big Band 1967 (Creative World Inc.) is a good example of Jack's ever-evolving style. He worked in New Orleans and recorded extensively with Pete Fountain, the prominent Crescent City clarinetist. Try "China Boy" on Pete Fountain Day (Coral), another collector's item. Jack shows what can be done with press rolls. His favorite album, however, is Pet Project (Liberty), a 1960s big band set by arranger/composer Bob Florence, built around music made popular by singer Petula Clark. It features leading West Coast players, including Ray Brown [bass] and Howard Roberts [guitar] in the rhythm section. Jack reveals unusual stylistic flexibility, dealing with much material that has a rock flavor.

Through the years, Jack has kept experimenting both stylistically and when it comes to equipment. For a period of time beginning in 1951, he used two bass drums. Buddy Rich came in to hear the Brown band one night. "What the hell are you doing with two bass drums?" he asked in his typically gruff manner. "I haven't learned to play one yet!" Then he sat behind Jack's drums and played an impossibly fast single-stroke roll on the two bass drums—just to let everybody know he had a pretty good idea of what to do with them. Jack has reverted back to a single bass drum, but now he uses a double pedal.

To keep his jazz chops in shape during the years in the studios, Jack went on the road whenever possible with Les Brown and filled in with other bands, including the Basie and Ellington ensembles and the Buddy Rich assemblage. "I subbed for three nights in August of '67 with Basie," Jack recalls. "It felt unbelievably good. It was as if I'd been waiting all my life to do that. I'm so proud that Basie called a few times and said, 'Hey, come on and have some fun. Travel with us as long as you want.'" But Jack was tied to L.A. because of business and personal commitments.

A month later, he filled in for Sam Woodyard with the Ellington band for three nights. Another good scene for Jack Sperling: "Duke was terrific to me. The guys were nice. It worked out so very well! I helped Buddy out one night in the 1960s when he was sick—he had had some shots. I came to hear him at a place out here called Marty's On The Hill," he explains. "When I walked into the club, Bobby Bryant and a few of the guys in his band asked me to play for the evening. I
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said, 'You gotta be kidding!' Then I realized the band was stuck, so I told them okay, I'd do my best. I read the things I didn't know off trumpeter Chuck Findley's parts. I was familiar with most of the book from listening to the records and because I frequently went out to dig the band. Because the guys were so time-conscious, playing with them was the easiest thing in the world. I enjoyed it!

"Buddy came in the next night. He said, 'I owe you. I heard how you played. Why don't you get back on the road with a band? Kids ought to hear a guy like you. Get the hell out there, you fat studio musician!' Shortly thereafter, I did. And I used to leave notes for Buddy when I saw that his band followed Les's into a club or auditorium. I'd put him on, saying stuff like, 'I'm after you, man!'"

After the staff orchestras disbanded and the live TV variety shows went off the air in Hollywood in the early 1970s, things changed for Jack Sperling. He worked—and continues to do so—in a variety of situations, but not as much as in the past. Though he still plays very well, he has been a victim of the age stereotype, an unconscious form of discrimination.

Jack is still with Les Brown. He plays with a number of big bands in and around L.A. and does jazz festivals. Often he backs major acts when they come to town. TV and films, however, are a dead issue. Record dates aren't too frequent. One young producer asked him on a session to duplicate what a drummer had done on an older recording. It turned out Jack was the drummer on the original record!

The picture has darkened because friends keep disappearing. Buddy Rich's death destroyed Jack...as it did many of us. He visited Buddy in the hospital in L.A. and was traumatized, seeing his idol in such bad emotional and physical shape. He brought Buddy encouragement and good words, though he knew recovery was not possible. Jack told him, "You're the guy we all look up to. You owe it to us to beat this!" When he was about to leave, Buddy put his arms around him, pulled him down, and kissed his cheek. "I went out to the car and just sat there for a long time and cried," Jack says, adding, "I loved him. And I knew I would never see him again."

Make no mistake, Jack's life is not a down scene. His wife and young children bring him great happiness. Music and drums keep him in an "up" mode. He stays close to "the happenings"...and listens. He spoke enthusiastically about Bob Florence and Bill Holman—two of the Coast's leading writers for big bands—and about several West Coast drummers, notably Peter Donald, Gregg Field, Jeff Hamilton, and Steve Houghton.

A drummer of major consequence, a historical figure, Jack Sperling is still reaching out. People close to music have long acknowledged his importance. Ray McKinley admired him. Legendary jazz trumpeter Roy Eldridge, who played with Jack on the Basie band, loved the feeling of his work. George Simon, a key commentator regarding big bands and the swing era, felt that at his height, "Jack Sperling was probably the best all-around drummer in the business."

The beat goes on. Jack insists, "The older I get, the more I love everything about drums and music."
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Style-Mixing Grooves

by David Garibaldi

Approximately two years ago I wrote a couple of articles titled "Sideways 4/4." In those articles I based all of the exercises on an 11/8 pattern that I had developed for a project I was involved with at the time. The leader of that project was a world-class bassoonist from the San Francisco Bay Area named Paul Hanson. Since that time I have continued to work with him on all of his recordings as well as with his three bands, which operate simultaneously. One of those groups was put together to perform music that Paul had written as a result of winning an NEA grant.

Hanson's music is an unusual mix of styles—bebop, funk, and Eastern European folk music. Such a mix is unique to say the least, and it offers some real challenges rhythmically. I'm going to show you an array of grooves that I used in some of the pieces that we performed in concert. All of the basic grooves were composed by Hanson and then I "stylized" them for comfort.

Space doesn't permit me to include the parts that were submitted to me in the beginning stages. Most of the rhythms were in skeleton form—only the basic rhythms and no ghosted strokes. I've also included tempo markings for each exercise, which are very important. All of the grooves use hi-hat, snare drum, and bass drum except for example 4, which includes a bell.

Examples 1 and 2 are in 9/8, but don't let that scare you. The basic pulse is a dotted quarter note, and I think of this as 3/4 with triplets ("1&ah 2&ah 3&ah"). Don't forget the ghosted stroke.

Example 3 is the percussion part that accompanies the drumset. I included it because of the cool polyrhythmic bell part. Try playing this on the drumset, substituting hi-hat and sidestick or bell and sidestick. The feet could play the basic dotted-quarter pulse in unison.

Example 4 is very slow and uses a bell. I also substitute sidestick for snare. Blasticks or Rods sound great on this groove.
Example 5 is in the funk style, and tempo is very important here. I improvised the part by substituting snare rimshots for some of the bass drum notes.

Example 6 is in 13/8 and can be very intimidating. I practiced this groove a lot, and after a while I found that I could easily hear the pulse. Also, singing the groove was very helpful. I subdivided this 4-4-5.

Example 7 is a two-bar pattern and was the most challenging groove of the evening. Fortunately, this is not played at a real fast tempo (play it slow), and once I was comfortable, everything locked right in. (If you think of the tempo in half, the groove will sound like 16th-note funk.)

Example 8 is basically 16th-note funk with the snare accents on the "ah" of 2 and the "ah" of 4.

Example 9 is in 11/8 and was the basis for the "Sideways 4/4" concept. I subdivided this 4-4-3.

Example 10 is in 7/8 and is subdivided 2-2-3. I usually think of this particular groove as one pattern, which to my ear sounds very similar to 4/4 with an 8th note missing.

I realize that these rhythms are going to be difficult to grasp. Hopefully they will be recorded at some future date so that you can hear what this unique blend of styles sounds like. Learning all of this music was such a powerful experience that I had to share some of it with you.

See you next time. Enjoy!
A long time ago, when I was teaching at my drum studio in Long Island, I was showing one of my students how to play in 7/8 time. I asked him to play a 7/8 groove and play his hi-hat on 8th notes. He tried to do as I asked, but instead played his hi-hat on quarter notes. I said that was wrong, since he wasn't playing 8th notes—but that it was pretty cool!

What he did, in a way, was put 4/4 against 7/8. The hi-hat would come around every three and a half beats, going on and off the beat. The feeling was like playing or feeling quarter notes in the first bar and then upbeats on the next bar, back and forth. The cool thing is, it happened automatically.

The first thing to do in order to understand the concept is to see how the repeating quarter notes work over two bars of 7/8. The last "quarter note" of the first measure (actually written as an 8th note) is played on the count of 7. The next quarter note starts on beat 2 of the second measure, and then plays on beats 4 and 6. So the quarter-note pulse is consistent while the 7/8 bars are changing underneath. This gives you the illusion of an up and down feel.

A simple exercise to help you get comfortable with this concept is to clap your hands on quarter notes while you count in seven. Put your foot in on beat 1 of every bar of seven. If you do this correctly you will feel what I've described.

People have asked me, "What can I do with this?" Well, for example, Vinnie Colaiuta applied this type of pattern to a few of the tracks he recorded on Sting's Ten Summoner's Tales. If I'm playing a song in 7/8 and, say, we're at the last part of a guitar solo, I'll go to a China cymbal and start playing quarter notes against the 7/8. It really picks up the energy.

Another great use for this idea is when you're trying to figure out what time signature a song is recorded in. When you clap your hands in quarters and feel yourself go "on and off the beat, that means the song is in an odd 8th-note time signature, since this concept will not work with even time signatures.

The following are some odd 8th-note time signatures you can clap 4/4 against.

One way to practice this concept involves method books. Play any odd meter patterns from rock drum books, and superimpose quarter notes on the cymbal/hi-hat while playing the notated bass and snare parts.

The following example will give you the basic idea. Practice this pattern slowly at first and gradually pick up the speed. I also recommend reversing your sticking, leading with both your right and left hands.

I've found these concepts to be a lot of fun and inspiring. Hopefully they will open you up to new ideas.
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Caution! Drum color may vary at the speed of light.
Perhaps the oldest quest for all drummers is to develop both hands to the same level of proficiency. But the natural order of the universe is that there are no two things that are exactly the same. And certainly, if you're anything like me, you have a stronger hand that just functions better than your weaker hand. It moves faster, it has more control, it performs in a more comfortable and natural way. And for sure, the inadequacies of your weaker side can drive you absolutely crazy with frustration.

"Role modeling" is an exercise technique used in contemporary drum corps drum lines that addresses closing the gap between the stronger and weaker hands. Role modeling exercises are single-hand exercises first performed by the strong hand (most often the right), and then played by the weaker hand. The goals of these exercises are many—improving concepts like uniformity of style, bounce technique, accenting skills, tempo control, etc. However, the main objective, whether the drummer plays traditional or matched grip, is to equalize the skills of the two hands.

In practicing role modeling exercises, the goal is to have the weaker hand imitate the way the role model hand feels when it moves. Make adjustments to copy the tone quality, the mechanics, and the muscle tension of the stronger hand. Use your eyes, ears, and sense of touch. Keep in mind that the most basic exercises are often the best tools to allow us to advance.

Equalizing the chops is a never-ending battle that requires patience, persistence, and discipline. You have to really get inside yourself—analyze and program through repetition—the adjustments that are borne through the role modeling process.

Using a metronome, work through a wide tempo range and play each exercise ten times at each tempo.
Chet Doboe is well-known to drum corps and rudimental drumming enthusiasts as the founder and leader of the innovative corps-style quartet Hip Pickles. He is also the author of several drumset books, including *Funk Drumming Idea Series* and *The Funk Drumming Workbook.*
When Ignacio Berroa landed on the shores of Key West, his luggage consisted of an Afro-pick, an extra T-shirt, and a toothbrush. He spoke no English. Behind him—across ninety miles of ocean that he had just crossed—lay the city of Havana, Cuba, where he had seemingly "had it all." Ignacio left it behind for two reasons: He wished to live free, and he wished to drum with the world's greatest jazz artists. In less than a year, he would grasp both of those dreams. (Another dream—freeing his family—would take longer.)

In his native Cuba, Ignacio had been the first-call recording drummer. With an overstuffed date book, his salary had allowed him the life of the well-to-do—in a nation where much of the populace struggled for daily bread. Castro's official line on jazz (as "the music of the enemy" and thus off-limits for local musicians) was only one small symptom of the greater repression that caused Ignacio to flee. His father, a violinist known for his work with the Cuban Radio/TV Orchestra, had raised him as a free thinker. Ignacio's chance to escape a stifled future came during the dramatic exodus of the Mariel Boatlift in 1980.

When Ignacio was growing up, learning and practicing jazz was virtually an underground affair. Jazz records got passed around from travelers, and when the weather was clear, U.S. radio stations cut through—including the jazz programs on Voice Of America. When Ignacio was ten years old, his father brought home albums by Nat King Cole and Glenn Miller. "Something in my body told me immediately that I wanted to be a jazz drummer," Ignacio remembers. "I was always dreaming about coming to the U.S. Even if Cuba were a free country—aside from the political situation—I was coming to the U.S. no matter what."

In his formative post-army years in Cuba, Ignacio played jazz with Felipe Dulzaides' group in a tourist area. It was one of the few groups allowed to play jazz publicly. (Apparently, an out-of-the-way tourist spot posed a lesser threat to national ideology.) The gig earned him notice, and by 1975 he moved to Havana, playing with more contemporary groups. Recording calls came soon, and he became the house drummer for EGREM studios.

But there were no jazz gigs in Havana, due to the party line. Ignacio recalls a bizarre incident that took place when he was recording an American arrangement from the '50s with the National Radio/TV Orchestra. The arrangement contained a sixteen-bar swing section. He opened the chart to find the deviant bars crossed out—censored. "They tried to penetrate in any way so that we would not play that music," Ignacio explains.

Still, musicians would find ways to bypass the jazz taboo—such as gathering for word-of-mouth jam sessions. "I would sit at the jams for six or seven hours just to get a chance to play one tune," Ignacio says. It was at such gatherings that he rubbed elbows with famous local figures like saxman Paquito D'Rivera.

Despite his studio success, Ignacio grew increasingly restless with imposed limitations. "I simply was not free. Some people point out that Castro's communism gave free education and free health care. But I didn't want to learn the drums and then be told that all I could play was polkas. Was that the price I had to pay? It was like teaching me how to read and then saying that I couldn't read Shakespeare."

After long soul searching, Ignacio's wife agreed that he should risk the Mariel crossing. She stayed behind to care for her mother and son; Ignacio was to send for them as soon as possible. As it turned out, it would be four and a half years before she won her freedom.

Tina Brown, Ignacio's New York-based cousin, responded to his plight. She flew to Miami, then jumped into a rented boat with fourteen other hopeful passengers on a similar mission. Landing in Cuba, Tina had to wait a frustrating and expensive month before Ignacio finally gained clearance. "I owe my success to Tina," Ignacio empha-
"If it wasn’t for her, I wouldn’t be here. I landed in Key West on May 25, 1980. On the following day they took me to a camp in Pennsylvania, where they processed out spies. I spent thirty-six days there before being allowed to travel to New York City.”

Upon Ignacio’s arrival in New York, a Cuban jazz “freedom train” extended its hand to the determined drummer. Several jazz expatriates who had settled before Ignacio did knew of his reputation, and they escorted him around the scene for introductions. A phone call finally offered work. Although he had no drums and spoke no English, the refugee was ready.

“I arrived in New York on June 29, and my first record session was August 5!” says Ignacio. “A flute player named Gonzalo Fernandez, who knew my father, hired me over the phone. I went out to the first music store that I saw, bought sticks, brushes, and mallets, and went down to do the job. This guy had heard a lot about me but he didn’t know what to expect. I will always remember that he took a chance. I went in and did what I used to do every day of my life. It was a Latin pop single session. We laid down six or seven tracks. On the following day they asked me to lay down timpani, then vibes. Everyone went out from the session saying, ’There is a new kid who can really play. He comes from Berklee [laughs] and he doesn’t speak English—but he can read everything!’ Gonzalo was proud: He was Cuban, I was Cuban, and he was a friend of my dad—so I made him look good.”

Word spread. Ignacio was invited to Mario Rivera’s “Salsa Refugees” band rehearsal—where he met cutting-edge harbingers of Cuban grooves, Andy and Jerry Gonzales. In storybook style, the resident drummer faltered, Ignacio was invited to sit in, and he ended up securing the gig. Enter Mario Bauza, the late, great bandleader who had immigrated early on and opened doors for others. Hearing the exciting new drummer, Bauza took him under his wing and became his “Cuban connec-
tion Godfather." "I'm taking you over
tomorrow to get your union card," Bauza
told Ignacio. What he didn't tell him was
that he was going straight home to phone
Dizzy Gillespie. As Ignacio learned later,
Dizzy was told, "There's a guy who just
came from Cuba who plays all the Latin
rhythms. But he can really swing too. Keep
this in mind."

Jingles came in, along with gigs with
Paquito, who had defected earlier and was
now a rising star. "Then Mario Bauza
called," Ignacio remembers. "He was all
excited. He said, 'Ignacio, do you want to
play with Dizzy tonight?' I said, 'C'mon,
you're too old for this kind of joke.' He
said, 'No, I'm serious. Diz is playing at Fat
Tuesday's and his drummer got stranded in
Boston because of a snowstorm. So he
called and asked about the Cuban drummer
I told him about. Go down, 'cause he's
waiting for you!' I said, 'Mario, I don't
even speak English, how can I...?' 'Just
go!' he said."

In a frenzy, the auto-less Ignacio called
the Gonzales brothers. With their help, he
sped his kit into Manhattan. Heart pump-
ing, he arrived to find another drummer on
stage. After the set Ignacio was disheart-
ened but happy to meet the idol. "It's
okay," said Dizzy. "Set up your kit; you'll
play the second set. Don't worry, I worked
with Chano Pozo and he didn't speak
English either. This means 'four,' this
means 'six,' and this means 'stop.'"

"I was nervous," Ignacio recalls. "But at
the same time I was thinking that this was a
big break for me. I thought of my family in
Cuba; a lot depended on if I did well with
my career. I had to do the playing of my
life that night. I had spent a lot of time lis-
tening to Dizzy's music in Cuba. He had an
arrangement of 'Night In Tunisia' that
started in 6/8. I went to the cowbell and
started doing my Cuban stuff—and every-
body started smiling."

Six months later, the gig was his. While
touring with Dizzy, Ignacio taught himself
English, adapted to his new country, and
sought help for freeing his family. But his
asylum limbo still haunted him. Obtaining
visas for foreign tours caused red tape
nightmares for Diz's management. To
make it easier on the band, Ignacio voluntarily dropped out for a four-year period. When he left, Dizzy told him, "This chair is going to be yours for as long as you want." The two friends stayed in constant touch, and in 1987 Dizzy got an ecstatic phone call: "Man, I'm an American citizen!" Back behind the kit, Ignacio worked with the Bopfather until the legend's death in 1993.

Mario Bauza always coached that originality is what counts in America. Ignacio's trademark was the way he blended the swinging "looseness" of jazz phrasing with true Afro-Cuban feel. The seams between the two worlds were less obvious in his hands as the clave became more implied: 4/4 swing and Latin 6/8 alternated and were often superimposed. "Dizzy always said that I am the only Latino in the history of American music who came over here and played jazz with the cats," says Ignacio. "Alex Acuna did it in a different scene with Weather Report. If I've opened any doors, it's for any other Latinos to know that they can do the same."

Ignacio is passionate about rightfully crediting the lineage of Latin jazz drummers—especially percussionist Chano Pozo, who paved the way. Ignacio himself has earned an important place in this lineage as one of the major pioneers in applying Latin percussion section parts to the drumset. But he credits Guillermo Barreto, "a huge influence and one of the greatest drummers who ever lived," as the father of the section-to-kit concept.

Another debt owed to Ignacio is his role in the introduction and evolution of the songo groove in American jazz. Too many times, he protests, the story has been told wrong. "Although Changuito played a major role in the songo, he did not create it. Juan Formell, the leader of the band Los Van Van, created the concept in a dance band context. Their drummer, Blas Egues, recorded the first songo tracks with the group. Then when Changuito became the drummer, he started moving patterns around. He took it to a whole new level."

Inspired by his master-drummer friend, Ignacio applied the songo rhythm to the jazz feel. Once in New York, it seized the ears of progressive Latin/jazz players. More than a few bass players were thrown off. "I played a lot at a club called Soundscape," says Ignacio. "Michel Camilo heard it there. When Dave Weckl joined Michel's trio, he learned it from Michel. Robbie Ameen told me that he got everything about songo first from the *Batacumbele* album that I recorded. Terri Lyne Carrington said she got it from my drumming on McCoy Tyner's *La Lenyenda De La Hora.*"

Ignacio cites the 1981 songo landmark *Batacumbele* as one of his favorite recorded performances, along with Paquito D'Rivera's *Live At Keystone Korner* and *Manhattan Bum.* But his most progressive playing to date, he feels, can be heard on Danilo Perez' *The Journey,* an ambitious album that has been praised for pairing Latin rhythms with the most modern of jazz concepts and harmonies. "That album takes it to another level," Ignacio says, proudly. "Chick Corea sent me a fax congratulating me on my performance."

Scanning the roster of stars with whom Ignacio has played reveals a stylistic sweep that illustrates the folly of pigeonholing Cuban drummers as "Latin-style only": Kenny Barron, Tony Bennett, George Benson, Terence Blanchard, Gal Costa, Lionel Hampton, James Moody, Milt Jackson, Michel Camilo, Freddie Hubbard, Randy Brecker, Airto, Wynton Marsalis, Clark Terry, Toots Thielemans, Eddie Gomez, Tom Harrell, Jimmy Heath, George Coleman, Carmen McCrea, Jon Faddis, Monty Alexander, and Jaco Pastorius are just a few.

Ignacio recalls his brief stint with Jaco with fondness for its seat-of-the-pants spontaneity. "It was just two gigs with no rehearsal," he says. "Jaco got on stage and went into 'Teen Town,' which I knew. So I went right into it. The best compliment you can get—when no one knows what to expect from you—is a big smile. If the
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leader turns around and gives you a big smile, you're fine." This philosophy carries through Ignacio's informative DCI video, Mastering The Art Of Cuban Drumming. Drumming to make the band feel good, he stresses, is foremost. "Pyrotechnics can be amazing—but they're mostly just amazing to other drummers."

With Ignacio's increasing stature in the jazz world, his dreams of freedom and musical success have been realized. He also realized his third dream—reuniting his family—albeit by a torturously circuitous route. During his wife's long detention, the authorities strained the couple's hopes by assuring her that she would never see her husband again. A separation ensued, during which Ignacio married here in the States and was later divorced. Meanwhile, Ruben Blades and trumpeter Victor Paz helped win a visa for Ignacio's first wife. She emigrated to Panama for two and a half years before gaining clearance to come to America—where she is now remarried to her drummer husband.

The long hard journey has strengthened Ignacio musically and personally. His jovial air is girded by the assertiveness of one who will not be stopped. To him, it's a simple moral that too often escapes Americans: "I don't take anything for granted."

All those who leave behind everything they know for a new land—whether searching for the heights of musical fame or for basic human rights—share the same central hope: a new sense of belonging. It's not surprising, then, that Ignacio's voice becomes pensive and hushed when reliving a simple encounter: "I was in L.A. with Claudio Roditi. Milt Jackson, Cedar Walton, and some other great musicians were playing in a club there. When we walked in, all the guys came over saying, 'Hey! Ignacio, how you doin'?" Later, Claudio said to me, 'Ignacio, do you realize that you belong here?' I said, 'No, what do you mean?' He said, 'Do you see the way these people say hello to you? They say hello like you are part of this great family.'"
**AL GREEN**
Greatest Hits
(Hi/The Right Stuff)

Al Jackson, Howard Grimes: dr, perc
Al Green: vcl
Leroy Hodges: bs
Charles Hodges, Archie Turner, Michael Allen: kybd
Teenie Hodges: gtr
Memphis Horns: brass

You know that sound: the loping mid-tempo soul with an easy cool burn. The open mid-rangey snare goes DOOoov, and a crash or ride are rarely heard. It’s the ’70s Al Green hit sound, and Al Jackson, along with the Hi Records house rhythm section, defined that seductive sound just as much as Green’s suave soul voice.

Memphis’s most-wanted soul drummer, Jackson delivered hard-hitting tracks for Stax while moonlighting across town at rival label Hi, where he applied a different touch and feel to the softer Green sound. Many of the biggest hits were also co-written by Jackson. On a few cuts, fellow session man Howard Grimes handled the drum throne or added percussion.

Newly reissued on CD, this compilation includes five extra tracks. Unfortunately, the repackaging police should bust The Right Stuff label for failing to update personnel credits such as drummer Johny Toney’s work on "Belle."

Although many of the hit-formula tracks from this period sound suspiciously similar, that real-feel rhythm wave hits the central pleasure zone every time. These quintessential less-is-more drum tracks transcend decades and passing trends. (The Right Stuff, CEMA Distribution, 21700 Oxnard St., #700, Woodland Hills, CA 91367, [818] 587-4000)

**JONAS HELLBORG**
WITH SHAWN LANE AND KOFI BAKER

Abstract Logic
(Day Eight DEM 035)

Bassist Jonas Hellborg has been responsible for some of the best post-Cream Ginger Baker sessions of the past decade, including the acclaimed Unseen Rain on Hellborg’s Day Eight label. Now Hellborg is giving the showcase to the next generation of Bakers; on Abstract Logic Kofi Baker shows off fine hands, big ears, and judgment to match. He’s got a good grounding in tom-toms, inherited from his dad perhaps, but displays a more adventurous, bold, and brainy side on cymbals and higher frequencies. In fact, this power trio, with Black Oak Arkansas’ Shawn Lane on guitar, is actually more Tony Williams Lifetime than Cream.

On "Rice With The Angels" Baker’s solo floats over some adventurous changes, and his concentration is unwavering. His drum solo at the end of "Put The Shoe On The Other Foot" is a frankly impressive, well-composed, full-throttle excursion. The Holdsworth-inspired “Throwing Elephant And Wrestling” is a fine fusion effort that enables Kofi to lay into the drums hard, keeping a good grip on the time and time signatures. At other times Baker displays a true, playful instinct for turning beats around, and on cuts like "Serpents And Pigs," his comfort with polyrhythms becomes clear.

Abstract Logic documents Kofi Baker’s well-controlled, decisive stroke, and puts his name on the map, regardless of lineage. (Day Eight US, 532 LaGuardia Place, #421, New York, NY 10012)

**NATURE**

Nature
(Zoo 72445-11107-2)

Bassist Brendan Etter has been responsible for some of the best post-Cream Ginger Baker sessions of the past decade, including the acclaimed Unseen Rain on Hellborg’s Day Eight label. Now Hellborg is giving the showcase to the next generation of Bakers; on Abstract Logic Kofi Baker shows off fine hands, big ears, and judgment to match. He’s got a good grounding in tom-toms, inherited from his dad perhaps, but displays a more adventurous, bold, and brainy side on cymbals and higher frequencies. In fact, this power trio, with Black Oak Arkansas’ Shawn Lane on guitar, is actually more Tony Williams Lifetime than Cream.

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**Robin Tolleson**

Nature
(Zoo 72445-11107-2)

Brendan Etter: dr
Brian Threatt: gtr, vcl
Hugh Bonar: bs
Andrew Parsons: gtr

This may sound like a strange mix—Nine Inch Nails, Queensrychhe, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, hip-hop sounds, and even a hint of Prince—but somehow, it works. Nature juggles all these without letting any one of them stay in the hand too long or crash to the ground.

Though Nature builds most of its songs atop an industrial foundation, an ever-present flesh-and-blood feel keeps the band from being bogged down in mechanical monotones, the kind that often dominate NIN and its scores of second-rate copycats. Not surprisingly, the human quality makes this record very strong.

It’s difficult simply by ear to tell when Nature uses drum machines or triggers samples. But the acoustic contributions by drummer Brendan Etter are obvious—from the subtle, well-placed bell of the ride cymbal to the swingy rhythms in songs such as “Z-man’s Party.”

Etter turns the clock back to ’70s Motown to come up with drum sounds for “Mr. Blond,” which features a short, mild drum solo. Etter’s best effort comes across on “Zodiac 99,” when Nature shelves the industrial feel for an infectious, bottom-ended funky groove.

Guitar fans, meanwhile, will appreciate the extended explorations Andrew Parsons goes on throughout the album.
Though there's a lot to like about this record, at the very least, Nature deserves credit for simply keeping music in the industrial mix.

**HENRY THREADGILL**

**Makin' A Move**
(Columbia CK 67214)

Threadgill re-ignites his Very Very Circus band for another round of serious giddiness. With a format of two tubas, two electric guitars, French horn, drums, and reeds produced by aural pioneer Bill Laswell, you know it's gotta be a joyride on the road not taken. "Circus" is the centerpiece here, while other cuts feature multi-acoustic guitars and cellos. Contemporary classical, jazz, and funk elements all find their way into the audacious mix, making the ensemble results Very Very Threadgill.

**DIANNE REEVES**

**Quiet After The Storm**
(Blue Note CDP 7243 8 295112 4)

Those bemoaning contemporary vocal jazz’s proliferation of paper-thin, "perfume commercial" voices and indiscriminate cross-breeding with pop have a powerful champion in Detroit-born, Denver-grown Dianne Reeves. The genuine jazz article with a throaty, full-bodied sound that reminds of Carmen McRae, Reeves has it all: concept, technique, and pipes! Her third major release, Quiet, respectfully tugs at the genre's American roots in Arlen's "Sing My Heart," Ellington's "In A Sentimental Mood," and a tribute to the sea in Portuguese, and a Zawinul gospel tune with Reeves' own words. To her further credit, Reeves wrote several of the lyrics and co-wrote one of the melodies.

The arrangements present few sharp turns, but the journeys are all interesting. Drummer Billy Kilson supports with mostly lighter colorations, but kicks the ersatz big band opener and skillfully guides the fluid 7/4 bossa, "Nine." Terri Lyne Carrington sits in on the forceful, loping funkier "Smile," once again turning "plays like a girl" into a compliment and making many of us willing to give our left, er, arm to play like her. Other luminary guests include George Duke (who also produced the album), Kevin Eubanks, Roy Hargrove, Hubert Laws, Luis Conte, and Airtro Moreira. Together with her excellent core group, they only speed Reeves' inevitable rise above the wimpy din of pretenders.

**THE KLEZMATICS**

**Jews With Horns**
(Xenophile 4032)

Klezmania, Licht takes command of tight arrangements that fuse the Jewish folk-dance idiom with jazz, rock, and humor. Krakauer's accordion, percussion, and clarinet trio allows the players to stretch improvisations in a more open, adventurous forum.

Having played with Eugene Chadbourne, one of modern music's most outrageous and notorious idiom-mixers, Licht is well-equipped to blend genres with an open mind. The spirit here is very real; it's the ghosts of the old world jamming in today's Lower East Side. (Xenophile, 43 Beaver Brook Road, Danbury, CT 06810, [203] 730-0333; Tzadik, 61 East Eighth St., Suite 126, New York, NY 10003)
JERRY BROWN, ANDREW SMALL: DR
AIRTO MOREIRA, RICHARD AJILEYE, MABI THOBEJANE: PERC
BYRON WALLEN: TRP, FLGHN

Byron Wallen’s discography includes a variety of projects and collaborations, featuring musicians such as Jerry Brown, Andrew Small, Airto Moreira, Richard Ajileye, Mabi Thobejane, Peter Martin, Gary Crosby, and Jose Neto. Wallen’s work spans different genres, showcasing his versatility as a musician and composer.

Books

GRETSC/CH DRUMS
By Chet Falzerano
(Stick)stream)
$34.95

Compared to recent Centerstream publications on the histories of the Ludwig and Leedy drum companies, this book pays tribute to the history of Gretsch drums. It is more about people than products, highlighting the influential role that Gretsch drums played in the music industry.

Videos

TECHNIQUES OF LATIN SOLOING FOR THE DRUMSET
by Phil Maturano
$39.95, 90 minutes
(with book)

This video and 59-page book package is not a compilation of licks, but a method to teach how to solo over the rhythms. It’s an important and abstract concept that Maturano has chosen to teach, and his well-formulated method works. The video and book together provide a comprehensive guide to soloing in Latin rhythms.

VIDEOS

FEAR FACTORY
Demenquette
(Roadrunner 8956-2)

Raymond Herrera: dr
Burton Bell: vl
Dino Cazares: bs
Christian Wolbers: gtr

Fear Factory features Raymond Herrera on drums, with Burton Bell on vocals, Dino Cazares on bass, and Christian Wolbers on guitar. The band is known for their aggressive and industrial metal sound, with a focus on technical precision and a heavy dose of electronic elements.

Metal bands are wrapping their muscles in industrial foil. And Fear Factory has an underlying technical feel that, at times, borders on unnerving. But just when things are starting to sound hopelessly mechanical, Herrera lets you know there’s a real person holding the drumsticks.

His aggressive, staccato double-kick work permeates the record, from crisp riffs and quick triplets to heavy-footed fours. Herrera does a good job of mixing up his double-kick beats, showcasing his hand-foot independence at times and rarely resorting to the four-on-the-floor parts that some metal drummers never get away from.

The only time Herrera gives his left foot a real vacation, though, is when the entire band decides to shift from metal to mood music. Airy vocal and musical passages, including the waste-of-nine-minutes album-closer, are borderline disastrous. But those moments are thankfully few, and Herrera spends most of the record proving it’s possible to get real music out of a jackhammer.

Matt Peiken

Byron Wallen
Sound Advice
(B&W Music BW063)

BYRON WALLEN

Jerry Brown, Andrew Small: dr
Airto Moreira, Richard Ajileye, Mabi Thobejane: perc
Byron Wallen: trp, flghn

Of Britain’s varied jazz crop—Us 3 among them. On who has accompanied the best of music.

Melodic, percussion-rich, and favored them had more of a and the jazz drummers who reminisce about their fellow Gretsch endorsers such as "Papa" Jo Jones, "Philly" Joe Jones, Max Roach, and Mel Lewis. (Unfortunately, they don’t discuss the drums themselves.) Combined with old Gretsch catalog pages and advertisements, it adds up to an affectionate look at some classic drums and the musicians who played them. (Gretsch Drums is also available in a limited-edition hardcover version that comes in its own slip-cover box. It costs $60 and can be obtained directly from Gretsch at P.O. Box 2488, Savannah, GA 31402.)

Rick Mattiingly

Involves straight 8ths with the same is then translated into a 6/8 pattern. The student gradually shifts between the two as variations of accents, sticking, and kit orchestration intensify. The video also has plenty of hot live concert footage featuring Maturano tearing it up with the band Zumbadah-Asche. Viewers get a rhythm bonus observing percussionists Luis Conte and Kevin Ricard, along with Emil Richards on vibes.

A little patience, Maturano’s method proves to be fun and quite effective.


Jeff Potter
I'm a fan of the Rogers *Dyna-Sonic* snare drum. For those of you who are not familiar with a *Dyna-Sonic*, it was the top-of-the-line snare built by Rogers. It featured a metal frame assembly that was connected to the bottom hoop. Attached to this assembly were the snares—held at constant tension. The strainer raised and lowered the entire assembly, not just the snares.

In a 1988 *Modern Drummer* article, Bill Ludwig, Jr. reminisced about his life and experiences. One of his comments was about the *Dyna-Sonic*—and about a Leedy drum that he felt was its predecessor. I was intrigued. Not only could I not find a picture of such a drum, I couldn’t even find any reference to it.

I’m proud to say that since that time Bill Ludwig, Jr. and I have become friends. He once showed me his collection—and there was the Leedy with the unique strainer. The drum is the metal-shell *Floating Head* model, which was introduced about 1924 (when Leedy was manufacturing in Indianapolis, Indiana). The earliest example of that drum had a very simple strainer called the *Utility*, which had been patented in 1912. Then came the *Presto* strainer (by 1924). By 1925, Leedy offered the *Speedway*—an extension strainer reminiscent of the Slingerland *Radio King* three-point or *Krupa* strainer.

However, in one Leedy catalog (catalog "N") there is a reference to the *Marvel* strainer. My friend Dan Paul sent me a copy of the catalog pages that describe it. The idea used by Leedy (and later by Rogers) was to have constant tension on the snares whether they were in use or not. Historically speaking, too often gut snares became loose. The *Marvel* could hold the gut tight. Using the *Marvel* system, a player could also change the snare unit to another type—gut, silk, or wire—in less than a minute. Changing the type of snares changed the sound.

How rare is the *Marvel*? I have seen two—and I bought the second one! I’ve heard about a *Marvel Elite*, but I’ve never seen one.

The *Marvel* strainer is mounted to the drum shell with the same hole pattern used for other Leedy strainers of that time (circa 1924-25): two holes. The factory suggested that owners of *Floating Head* model drums send their drums back for the installation of a *Marvel* snare system. But I have a feeling that most owners passed on the offer. Although a drummer could appreciate the advantage of having a second "bridge" (snare assembly) standing by, the $6 cost was prohibitive. (It was two and a half times the cost of the *Presto*, four times the cost of the *Utility*, and the same cost as three 13" brass cymbals.) In addition, the bridge sat so low that it interfered with many snare stands. The idea, it seems, was dropped.

So, the *Marvel* slipped into history along with other products that seemed good on paper but were "before their time." A very rare *Floating Head* or *Professional* model with the *Marvel* strainer should cost about forty percent more than the regular models. Look for prices from $550 to $750, depending on condition.
There’s an amazing amount of information available to today’s drummer. Aside from MD, we have access to hundreds of books, albums, and videos. It would be impossible to ingest everything in one lifetime. Even so, it recently occurred to me that there are still certain unanswered questions—indeed, mysteries—about our beloved profession.

Apparently, there are no rational explanations for these phenomena. I hereby submit the ten most puzzling, unexplainable mysteries of the working drummer, beginning (in the "Top-Ten List" tradition) with #10 and working down.

#10: The Stick Bag Metamorphosis

Having spent half an hour in the music store selecting the perfect pair of sticks—rolling, tapping, and weighing them—you pull them out at the gig that night to find that one of them suddenly feels like a #2 pencil, while the other feels like a softball bat.

#9: The Inverse Fun/Pay Ratio Of Gigs

The gig on which you can play exactly the kind of music you want (to an adoring crowd)—and on which you find yourself accomplishing things on your instrument that would mystify Buddy Rich—pays $20 (which will arrive in your mailbox three months later).

The gig on which you play utterly boring music, work with inept musicians, drop a stick every twelve bars, and perform to a crowd that apparently hates every note, pays $300 (in cash, in advance).

#8: The Mysterious Cymbal Bag Transmutation

The $400 cymbal that you test in the music store sounds like a choir of angels. You excitedly rush it home and put it in your cymbal bag. That night at the gig, you take it out and begin playing it, only to find that it has been mysteriously transformed into a piece of Kryptonite that clashes with all other instruments in all keys.

#7: The Suddenly Obsolete Equipment Part

At the exact moment a piece of equipment breaks, replacement parts disappear from every music store in existence. At the same time, the piece is discontinued by the manufacturer. Attempting to find a substitute part at a hardware store, you are informed that the threads on the piece are incompatible with every known thread configuration in the history of machining. (This only happens if you use a common brand of equipment. If you are using a 1961 Trixon set, you will find an abundance of parts at any 7-77 store.)

#6: The "Evidence That There Is Evil In The Universe" Bass Drum Pedal

Your trusty pedal works flawlessly through hundreds of hours of merciless stomping. Then, one night, an agent who is able to get a million-dollar record contract for your band comes in to hear you play your super-funk-fuzoid original tune. At the exact moment the bass player begins the incredibly syncopated figure you spent two months rehearsing and perfecting together, the pedal spring breaks.
**#5: Multiple Vaporizing Drumkeys**
The five drumkeys in your stick bag, the two on the floor-tom tuning lugs, and the one on your key chain simultaneously vanish as you sit down to play for a crowd of ten thousand people and find that your snare drum batter head is split down the middle. (If you play a set with slotted tuners, all screwdrivers and coins will also vanish.)

**#4: The Equipment Schlepping/Weather Syndrome**
You get a call for a gig with a high-powered rock band. You load your 10-piece, 26-ply rock ‘n’ roll kit (the one with the seventy-pound bass drum and forty-five-pound triple-braced cymbal stands) into the car and drive to the gig. There, you are informed by a security guard that you must park in the employee parking lot (which is a mile away), drag your equipment to the building, and go up six flights of outside stairs because the elevator is broken. As soon as you receive this news, the worst thunderstorm in recent history begins.

Conversely, you get a call to do an hour of background music at a cocktail party. You bring a snare drum and a pair of brushes. Upon arriving at the gig, you find that you are able to pull your car up to a door that opens directly onto the bandstand. The weather is perfect.

**#3: The Famous Drummer/Unknown Drummer Sitting In Syndrome**
A world-famous drummer, who has recorded several hundred albums, been on the cover of *Time* magazine, and authored two dozen drum books, comes into the club and is invited to sit in. As you cower nervously in the corner, he gets behind the drums and picks up the sticks. He then proceeds to play too loud and with unutterably bad taste, while dragging the tempo down to half of what it originally was. After one tune, the band politely ushers him off the stage.

Conversely, an unknown drummer walks into the club and asks to sit in. His claim to fame is two months on the road in 1958 with the Claude Kochanowski Polka Band. You graciously allow him to play, assuring the other band members that you will return after one short tune. You leave the bandstand with a knowing smile on your face. Then your smile disappears as the drummer proceeds to play things that would send Vinnie Colaiuta back to the woodshed. The band urges him to play the rest of the night as you sit in the corner mentally calculating how you’re going to pay this month’s bills now that you’re out of a gig.

**#2: The Wrong Drumkit Phenomenon**
You show up at a gig with your new $10,000 hand-made African teakwood-finished drumkit. You find that the gig is outdoors, next to a swimming pool. Kids are in the pool, throwing tidal waves of water on your set. Their parents are dancing directly in front of your drums, stepping on your front bass drum hoop and leaving black rubber heel marks all over the front head. It is 110° outside, and pits are already beginning to form on the drums’ chrome from the sweat pouring off of you. A waiter, carrying a tray of food, slips in a puddle of water and dumps guacamole all over your tom-toms. The bartender, who is right next to you, accidently knocks the lid off the blender while mixing a batch of brandy Alexanders, plastering your beautiful wood-finished shells with sticky brown goop.

Since you had to disassemble that kit to clean it up, you have to make the next gig with your spare kit—the thirty-year-old no-name kit with the missing bottom heads, peeling chrome, and bubbled pearl finish—that you bought at a garage sale for $25. A smiling bellboy helps you remove the drums from your car and carries them piece by piece into a large ballroom, where you will set them up on an eight-foot riser under a twenty-foot-wide bank of dazzling white stage lights. Steve Gadd will be sitting in, and the gig will be televised.

And, the number one drumming mystery (drum roll, please)...

**#1: The Incredible Leaping Drumstick**
At the precise moment in your drum solo when you have brought your press roll down to a whisper-quiet level at which it sounds like a piece of tearing silk, and you could hear a pin drop because everybody has stopped talking and every eye in the room is trained on your hands, one of your sticks suddenly....

Well, you know the rest.
Send quick, proven tips that have saved you time, money, or effort to Drumline, c/o Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Items can range from equipment maintenance, repair, or design tips to practice and playing ideas. Please keep tips to 150 words or less, and be sure to include your name and address. We will pay $15 for every tip we publish.

Keeping Vintage Drums In Round
I do a lot of research on—and collecting of—vintage drums, and I was recently thinking about the venerable Slingerland Radio King. Since many that I’ve encountered have been anything but round, I decided to discuss the subject of solid-shell drums with my friend Ryan Payne, who makes steam-bent solid-shell snare drums himself. I told Ryan that I knew that wood, when cut into planks, has a “memory.” The wood tries to unbend in order to go back to straight plank form. Hopefully the glue used on the shell seam and the reinforcement hoops (or “glue rings”) prohibit that.

But since I have seen a number of oblong Radio Kings, I asked Ryan if there could be more to it. He thinks that too many Radio Kings have sat without heads on them, and thus under no tension. Those absences affect the roundness. There may be other reasons as well, but for safety’s sake I suggest keeping the heads on a Radio King and on any other vintage (or even newer) solid-shell snare drum.

Harry Cangany
Indianapolis, IN

Re-Seating Edges Of Drum Covers
Are the seams of your pearl drum covering material curling and coming unglued? The fix is simple: shirt cardboard, acetone, and a household iron. Clean the dismantled shells normally, let them dry, then clamp them down. Heat the iron to a low, dry setting. Place a piece of the cardboard on the seam, touch the point of the iron to a corner of the cardboard (so you can see what’s happening), and work the iron and the cardboard together slowly back and forth across the seam. You will see the plastic relax and the seam begin to close and seal as the heat permeates the covering and reactivates the glue. When the seam is closed and smooth, let it cool, then clean up any excess glue carefully with acetone.

The process takes a light touch, but anyone can get the hang of it quickly. It took about an hour or so to repair all five of my drumshells. The result of my efforts was a pearl covering as smooth and tight as new.

Kevin Sharp
Danielson, CT

Cymbal Sleeves
Keeping cymbal sleeves on my own stands is hard enough, but I’m also responsible for the six complete drumsets owned by the college where I teach. Surgical tubing is great, but it’s hard to come by in a small town. Instead, I’ve found that many ballpoint-pen caps work well. Just cut the ends off with a pair of scissors. Comparison shopping for pen caps has led me to believe that Bic Round Stic pens are the best. They don’t have the narrow taper that many other caps have. They do wear out a little faster than nylon sleeves, but I can get a dozen free in every box of pens we buy.

Terry Gunderson
Casper, WY

Cleaning Ear Protection Devices
Over the past few years more and more emphasis has been placed on protecting our hearing. It’s equally important to prevent possible ear infections due to dirty hearing protection devices (and we all know how dirty our hands can get from handling gear at a show). I use a quick and easy method to keep my earplugs clean.

Every so often I fill a small, capped container (an empty baby food jar is ideal) 3/4 of the way with warm water and a few drops of shampoo. I shake it vigorously a few times—and voila! My earplugs look like new. This method works well on all types of
Packing Up Hi-Hat Stands

One of the more frustrating aspects of loading and unloading equipment is the hi-hat footboard. Once the rods that hold it to the base of the stand are disconnected it just swings around and gets hung up on every piece of gear in your trap case.

Remedy this by taking a large rubber band or a strip of inner tube and wrapping it around the hi-hat stand tube between the legs. Once this is done, tie it in a knot. Then you can use the strip to hold the footboard against the stand when you pack up the hi-hat.

Geoff Cowan
Sutter, CA

Big Sound From Small Bass Drums

A few years ago I bought a drumset with a small bass drum: 14x20. But today I’m a rock drummer, and the small bass drum doesn’t usually provide the bottom end necessary to “cement” the music. To remedy this problem, I came up with the following tuning of the drum: With the drum free of muffling, I tuned the batter-side head one turn above the point where it started to wrinkle and become slack. I tuned the front head (which did not have a hole in it) very high—to the point where I could easily hear a definite pitch. This gave me the big, “Bonham” sound that I wanted—from a small bass drum.

Phil Parisot
Seattle, WA

Securing Hi-Hat Clutches

Are you a heavy hitter? Does the wing screw that holds your hi-hat clutch onto the pull rod continually work itself loose, dropping the top cymbal? If so, I have a couple of tips for you. First, drill a hole opposite the current wing screw and tap the hole to the same size thread as the current wing screw. Insert another wing screw into this hole and you have twice the gripping power of one screw alone. You might be able to fit three screws on a clutch this way, although I haven’t tried it. If the additional wing screw isn’t enough holding power, try putting a Tama or other brand bass drum pedal beater weight under and above the hi-hat clutch. This should take any amount of abuse and withstand any musical style.

Brad Schlueter
Hanover Park, IL

Emergency Pedal Repair

Once during a show the hook that connects the spring of my bass drum pedal to the camshaft broke in half. I had to finish the song without a bass drum, and we had to take an early break.

In a frenzy, I followed a suggestion offered by my guitar player: I cut a wire coat hanger to the approximate length, bent it into a similar shape as the original hook, and installed it in place on my pedal. It took some adjusting of my pedal tension, but eventually the pedal felt exactly the same as it had before. The repair got me through the night—and through the past several months as well!

Kenny Shepard
Dana, IN

Note: The tips presented in Drumline are suggestions based on the personal experience of individual drummers, and are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Modern Drummer magazine. Modern Drummer cannot guarantee that any problem will be solved by any Drumline suggestion, and cannot be responsible for any damage to equipment or personal injury resulting from the utilization of any such suggestion. Readers are encouraged to consider each suggestion carefully before attempting to utilize any Drumline tip.
N. Scott Robinson

Scott Robinson is a drummer/percussionist who has taken a different path than most of his peers. Although he studied with such drumset artists as Peter Erskine and Keith Copeland and has performed and recorded on drumset with Benny Carter, Scott has put his emphasis on "percussion that draws from music of other cultures." He is now concentrating on hand drumming and percussion "because I feel I have my own voice and style. A lot of drummers try to find ways to play rhythms from other kinds of music on the drumset, but I try to play drumset styles on traditional instruments with correct traditional hand technique." Scott bases this effort on intensive study with great hand drummers like Glen Velez and Nana Vasconcelos, and with orchestral percussionist William Moersch. Scott currently leads a world-percussion trio called World View, and his first CD has just been released in Japan. Concurrently, Scott is the music director for the Modern Dance Department at Shenandoah University, in Winchester, Virginia—a position that allows him to pursue composing and performing the diverse music he enjoys.

When he performs on drumset, Scott plays a Gretsch kit with Tama hardware and K Zildjian cymbals. His percussion arsenal includes a lengthy list of instruments made by Remo, LP, Gope, Spectrasound, UFIP, Paiste, Deagan, Wuhan, India Street, Hugh Tracey, and Korg, along with indigenous instruments from around the world. His goal is "to continue recording with World View, and to eventually break into the international jazz festival circuit."

Larry Lelli

Minneapolis native Larry Lelli recently relocated to Nashville, where he landed the touring drum chair with top country comedy act Pinkard & Bowden. Although it’s a terrific opportunity for the twenty-six-year-old drummer, it is a departure from his previous experience: jazz and show drumming.

Back in Minneapolis Larry had performed with local and national jazz luminaries like saxophonist Greg Keel, trombonist Andre Stephani, pianist Matt Harris, and the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra. He drove the city’s best-known big band and played a list of shows including The Will Rogers Follies, Camelot, Anything Goes, and West Side Story. On top of that busy schedule, he served as a faculty member at the Indianhead Arts Center/Shell Lake Jazz Camp. Larry’s talents and accomplishments have gained him endorsements with Yamaha, Sabian, Pro-Mark, and Remo, and have made him a sought-after teacher and clinician.

Although Larry is enjoying his touring work with Pinkard & Bowden, he has very specific goals. Those include: "to gain the respect of my peers for my creativity and musicality, to continue teaching everyone the joy of music and inspiring them to support the arts, to have so many calls for gigs that I get sick of hearing the phone ring, and to play in as many musical situations as possible, including Natalie Cole's big band, Go West, Michel Camilo, Whitney Houston, and the Manhattan Transfer. I’d also like to conduct a show on Broadway! In essence, I hope to keep getting new gigs that challenge me musically. Who knows where I’ll finally end up, as long as I’m growing as a musician and making great music with great people."

Douglas Belote

At the tender age of twenty, Douglas Belote has already developed a versatile yet distinctive playing style. Based on such diverse influences as Peter Erskine, David Garibaldi, and Johnny Vidacovich, the Lafayette, Louisiana drummer brings taste, technique, and enthusiasm to his various freelance gigs and recording sessions. Doug’s versatility—aptly displayed on his demo tape—allows him to play jazz, funk, blues, R&B, rock, zydeco, Cajun, and gospel music with equal skill. It also keeps him working an average of five nights a week in clubs, riverboat casinos, and churches across south Louisiana. In addition, Doug is in demand for album sessions and demos for groups in the area. He divides his performances between a Tama Swingstar kit and "a PureCussion fold-up kit," and uses both Zildjian and Sabian cymbals.

Though he already has a substantial base of experience, Doug is looking to the future, and has enrolled at the New School of Jazz in New York City. He hopes this will help him reach his ultimate goals, which are "to play and record with top-name artists, get a major drum company endorsement, and be on the front cover of Modern Drummer one day."
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The final mixdown of your multitrack recording won't involve any actual drumming on your part, but that doesn't mean you can take the day off. You've struggled this far to keep your drums sounding the way you originally envisioned them, so don't slack off now. The mix can go a long way toward either making or breaking your drum tracks (indeed, the entire recording!), so extra attention is warranted at this stage. Before we get to the nuts and bolts of mixing your tracks, however, let's look at some of the logistics of the process.

Where?

Although there's a good chance you'll mix your tape at the same place you recorded it, don't automatically assume this is the only option. The increasing popularity of modular digital multitracks such as the Alesis ADAT and Tascam's DA-88 has made it possible to track in a project studio and mix at a pro facility (where they're likely to have a great board and tons of processing gear). The reverse situation also occurs on occasion, where your chosen studio isn't capable of recording live drums so you go to a big room for drum tracks (or entire rhythm tracks), then back to the smaller studio for vocals, overdubs, and mixing. If you do end up mixing where you tracked you'll have the advantage of already being familiar with the equipment, the control room acoustics, and the monitors—all of which makes it easier to make critical decisions when listening to the mix in progress.

Who?

Here, too, several options are available to you. There are advantages and disadvantages to having various parties mix your tape, so let's examine each of them briefly:

**The producer.** If your project has a separate producer, he's probably a good choice to oversee the mix (although he'll usually have the engineer actually turn the knobs). By this stage the producer should be very familiar with your music and the direction you want to go in. (You should beware of the producer who seems bent on his own agenda without regard for the band's desires.) As an indicator, if you've been happy with the producer's creative decisions during the tracking sessions, you'll probably be in agreement with most of his mixing decisions, too.

**The outside mixer.** This is a person with both production and engineering skills who specializes in mixing. (Bob Clearmountain comes to mind as an example.) If the scope of your project warrants it, you or your producer may decide it's worth it to hire such an individual specifically to do the mix. On one hand, he probably won't be as familiar with the music as someone more closely associated with the project, but on the other hand he'll be very experienced at mixing, and he'll be able to get a professional sound together in short order. Big-budget commercial recordings frequently use an outside mixer.

**The engineer.** Many independent recordings are done at small studios utilizing an in-house engineer (who may or may not be the studio owner). In this situation bands will often leave the mixing duties to the engineer. On the plus side, the engineer knows the equipment very well and by now should be somewhat familiar with the songs. But he really has no artistic stake in the project, and you're liable to get a mix that features his taste in music more than yours.

**You.** (I'm referring to you and the other members of your band, as in "y'all.") Unless you're recording at home on a multitrack cassette machine (in which case self-mixing is probably a necessity), I really wouldn't recommend mixing without some additional assistance. First of all, audio engineering is a skill—just like playing an instrument—and the place to learn that skill is not on an important recording in which you've by now invested considerable time and money. Yes, you know what the music should sound like more than anyone else. But without some engineering expertise you'll have a very difficult time getting that sound.

Second, it's always helpful to have the input of someone outside the band who can render an objective opinion when called upon. Without this, chaos can reign. When bands mix themselves, each member usually (and naturally) wants to hear more of his or her own instrument in the mix than the other folks deem necessary. This results in the classic "more me!" situation, with each member raising their respective level in the mix until all the faders are at

"You can't learn to be a mixing engineer in the course of one article, but there's one thing you're more of an expert on than anyone else in the studio: how your drums should sound."
10, the meters are well in the red, and smoke’s coming out of the board—and the lead singer’s ears! Time to consider the next option....

You and the engineer. This gets my vote as the best method for mixing most projects—especially self-produced or indie-label recordings. One workable version: The engineer sets up a basic mix, and the band members indicate what changes they’d like to hear, which the engineer then carries out. The musicians re-evaluate, the engineer tweaks some more, etc. This method can quickly result in a pro-sounding mix (due to the engineer’s involvement) that still reflects the unique vision of the band (due to your detailed input). Also, the engineer can act as an informed referee should a difference of opinion arise.

When?

In reality you start work on the final mix as early as the pre-production phase (when you make up a track sheet for each song) and during each session along the way (when you make a note whenever you get an idea about how you’d like things to end up). For example, if during tracking you visualize huge drums during part of the song, write “big reverb on toms during bridge” on the track sheet right then. (Define thy vision...remember?)

As for the actual mix, there are a couple of ways to schedule it. If you’re doing very simple arrangements (such as “songwriter demos”), you can mix as you go. This involves recording a song, immediately mixing it, and, assuming you’re happy with the results, going on to the next one. For anything more involved, however, your best bet is to do the tracking for all the tunes before starting to mix. There are two reasons for this.

First, once you’ve got the board and all the outboard gear set up to record, the most efficient thing to do is to record everything, since it takes quite a bit of time to set the correct levels and patch everything together. The same goes for setting up to mix. Second, a similar philosophy applies to your mental attitude. When you’re recording you should be primarily concerned with musical matters. (Was that part tight? Were we in tune? Did I rush?) But during the mix you put on your “mix ears” and think about sonic things. (Is the vocal loud enough? Does the bass guitar need compression? Is there too much reverb on the snare?) It’s difficult to switch back and forth rapidly.

Ear Calibration

The engineer will calibrate the various machines, but before you mix you must calibrate your ears to the mixing environment (that is, everything in the playback chain, including the amps, the speakers, and the room). The easiest way to do this is to bring in some CDs you’re very familiar with (ideally in the same style as the music you’ll be mixing) and listen to them over the control room monitors. This will give you a reliable indication of the tonal character of the speakers, and you can adjust your mix accordingly. If your favorite CD sounds a little bright, that’s okay—you aim for the same amount of high-frequency content in your mix, and so on. Refer often to your reference CD throughout the mixing process (for subtle things like relative level of instruments, as well as EQ) and it’ll keep you out of trouble.
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The Process

No matter how you like to build your mixes, it's helpful to have a basic game plan to follow for each song. We're going to go over a general outline that I've found useful, but feel free to modify it to suit your needs. No, you can't learn to be a mixing engineer in the course of one article, but there's one thing you're more of an expert on than anyone else in the studio: how your drums should sound. Always keep this in mind, and don't be afraid to speak up if you detect something amiss with your sound.

Before we heat up the speakers, here are some tips regarding your ears: Set the monitors at a moderate level, and keep them there. If you mix at high volume your ears will become fatigued in short order and you'll find yourself adding increasing amounts of high end in an attempt to compensate. (If the mix is so bright the next day it tears your face off, that's a sure sign your ears were toast when you mixed it!) Take frequent breaks—at least every two hours, if not more often. Even at moderate levels your ears start to attenuate the high frequencies over time. Your brain needs a rest, too; listening to the same song for several hours without a break can render it an indecipherable mess.

In the end what matters is how your kit sounds against the completed song. However, on my way to that goal I try to optimize each part of the drumset before adding it to the mix by listening to it solo and getting it in the ballpark sound-wise. We've discussed all manner of processing in previous installments—EQ, reverb, delay, noise gates, compression, and limiting—and here's where it all comes together. (We don't have room to cover it again other than to indicate where it might be appropriate, so you may want to review those articles if you feel you need more in-depth info on signal processing.) That said, let's go through a sample mix.

First, bring up the kick drum, pan it to the center, and listen. It should sound punchy. If not, try cutting some lower mids as well as boosting the top end to increase the beater attack. The fundamental should be strong but not so much that it booms. (The bass guitar will help fill in the bottom, so leave some room for it.) If the sound needs to be tightened up or lacks dynamic consistency, add compression.

Next bring up the snare, also centered. To bring out the snare wires, boost the high end a little. Need more or less stick attack? Adjust the upper mids. Sounding boxy? Pull out some lower mids. To thicken or thin the overall feel of the drum, tweak the fundamental up or down a bit. (Go ahead and experiment with these and other EQ schemes, but try to end up using the smallest amount you think you can live with—it'll hold up better in the long run. If in doubt, go hit your snare drum. That's the sound we're aiming for.) Set up a reverb sound for the snare, keeping in mind that the slower the tempo, the more 'verb you can get away with (and vice versa). If the hi-hats have bled onto the snare track, try gating the reverb send from the snare (instead of gating the snare itself). Now that you've got a reverb sound you like, turn it down until the rest of the drum tracks are in the mix.

Bring in the overheads, panned hard left and right. Assuming you've close-miked the toms and the overheads are primarily for the cymbals, try rolling off the bottom end and adding a tiny bit at the highest frequencies. Bring in the hats at three o'clock (or nine o'clock) and give them the same EQ as the cymbals. (A word
about panning: You can set up the left/right perspective from either the drummer's or the audience's point of view. That is, either with the small tom and hats to the left and floor tom/ride cymbal to the right, or the other way around. I prefer the drummer's perspective, but it's your call.

Put up the tom tracks, panned appropriately. To get a nice, fat sound pull out some mids, and if necessary boost the fundamental (for sustain) and the top end (for cut). Bring in the room mic's, if available, panning them hard left and right and adding whatever EQ is necessary for a big, warm sound—usually a reduction in the lower mids.

Now sit back and listen to the whole drumset, paying particular attention to the relative volume of the individual pieces. The snare should be the loudest part of the kit, cutting with snap and authority, with the kick close behind in terms of level. The toms should be full-sounding (as opposed to thin and wimpy), but not as hot as the snare. The cymbals should be relatively low in the mix—they should sparkle rather than splatter—while the hats can be a bit louder than the ride cymbal as long as they don't come across as being harsh. Add just enough of the room to give the kit a feeling of natural ambience—too much and it'll sound washy and indistinct. Now you can determine the amount of reverb needed on the snare and/or toms. Proceed with caution: Tons of cavernous reverb may sound exciting when you mix, but I can almost guarantee you'll hate it in six months.

At this point listen to the drums as a single instrument. Do they blend well, or does something stick out due to its level, EQ, or other processing anomaly? If so, now's the time to make adjust-
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The goal is to have it sound like an integrated set of drums rather than a collection of unrelated instruments.

Add the bass guitar and see how it sits with the kick. They should lock up sonically as well as rhythmically, with the kick providing the initial attack and fundamental and the bass giving the melodic sustain. Tweaks in the EQ may be in order here, as well as some compression to tighten up the bass. From this point on every mix is different due to varying instrumentation and arrangement, but in general the rhythm instruments should be next (guitars and/or keyboards), using panning and different EQ to separate them if there's more than one. Of primary concern here is to avoid an abundance of midrange buildup, since we must leave room for the vocals.

The lead vocal is next, front and center. This is where most of the listener's attention will be (assuming we're mixing a song with vocals, of course), so everything else must be supportive of it. Can you clearly hear the singer during vocal passages? If not, rethink the dynamics and/or EQ of the other parts. If done right, the instruments will be strong and the vocals intelligible because you've left room for everything, both in the frequency spectrum and in the arrangement. Next are any solos, which are given the same prominence in the mix as the vocal, followed by backing vocals and any instrumental sweetening.

Are you done? Maybe. Play it on your stereo...on your friends' stereos...on your Walkman...in your car. Does it sound good? Listen to it the next morning. Does it still sound good? It does? Congratulations—you're done!
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George Hooks
Drumming For The Greatest Show On Earth

by Rick Van Horn

Thirty-two-year-old George Hooks was born in Atlanta, Georgia, but grew up in Knoxville, Tennessee. He showed an interest in drums at the age of four, started taking lessons at five, and turned pro at sixteen. "I did all kinds of crazy gigs around Knoxville," George recalls, "but one of the craziest was a circus gig just outside of town. It was a tiny show set up on a baseball field, and the 'band' was just a cordinvox player and me."

To prepare for playing circus acts George turned to another entertainment medium. "I'd practice to the motions on TV shows," he says, "especially sports broadcasts. I'd catch people's movements with the drums. The more complex the motion, the more complex lick I'd try to play."

The tiny circus gig brought George to the attention of Keith Killinger, who was the musical director for the Shrine Circus. George credits Killinger for really training him to be a circus drummer. "I was seventeen—just out of high school—and I'd go out on the road with the Shrine Circus for three weeks at a time. It was an education—but after five months I decided to go to the University of Tennessee to get a 'real' education as a studio and jazz major."

Only two years later the circus life called again, when George was recommended by Keith Killinger for the position of staff drummer with the Red Unit of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus. But even though this was "The Greatest Show On Earth," George didn't take the call seriously at first. "I thought it would be like a Shriner's kind of thing again," he says, shaking his head. "Besides, like every other music student I wanted to finish school, get a degree—and then get a gig with Weather Report! But I agreed to try it for six months. I've been here now over eleven years."

In those eleven years George has clocked over 150,000 hours of playing Ringling shows. He's toured the world and has performed on four network TV specials. He's also on a CD released in 1995 by Eric Michael Gillette, the show's singing ringmaster.

Playing for the circus requires a remarkable combination of attributes from a drummer, including stylistic versatility, flexibility, and spontaneity. For example, although there is usually a click track for each act's music (which the band needs to follow for the sake of timing and consistency), a circus act is live, and anything can happen. "Things are constantly changing," says George. "Arenas are different, with different dimensions. The acts have to adapt, which calls for different timing on their part—and on ours. There will be more chords with different drum fills in between. And if an act doesn't get out on time, we have to slow the music down to cover."

In terms of musical creativity, George says that he's generally free to do whatever he wants—within the context of the material. "That is, as long as I don't lose the band," he laughs. "We carry a full band now, which is cool. We used to hire ten guys at every stop we played—which could be a little tricky. Hiring studio musicians from New York is one thing; hiring local guys from Podunk is another. Of course, if you can make a band like that sound good, it's that much more of an accomplishment."

The current circus band uses several keyboards, two trumpets, a trombone, a sax, and a bass, plus George. "We don't use much in the way of sequenced tracks," he says, "but there are a lot of samples to fatten up the sound. For example, all the background vocals in the big production numbers are played from the Kurzweil synth."

The music for a modern circus show is both contemporary and challenging, encompassing elements of classical, ethnic, pop, and high-tech. Some of today's top composers write for the Ringling shows—which can sometimes present difficulties for George. "Let me show you the chart for one of our horse-trainer acts," he says, spreading out seven pages of music taped together. "When I first read this I told the composer, 'Never do this to me again.' The chart changes time signatures about every twelve bars—3/4, 4/4,
tried to work their feels into the percussion scene in San Francisco. I've really been influenced by these fine players, and I've tried to work their feels into the percussion that I play by myself in the other shows. Each act has its own style, and George needs to tailor his percussion to help create the feeling of motion. For example, I help 'punch' the visual gags for the clowns. I have to make sure that the cymbal crash happens just exactly when the clown's fanny hits the floor. And instead of playing the traditional snare drum roll when someone is spinning in the air, I'll use double-bass to put an ominous-sounding roll underneath. I'll also use it as someone falls into a mat."

Years ago traditional circus music was about equally divided between marches and classical pieces. But today's repertoire sounds more like a cross between a pop act and a Broadway production. "To a point that's true," comments George. "But we still have to 'catch' the movements of the live acts, and we have to be able to play in a much wider variety of idioms than most musicians do. We need to be open-minded to everything from Sousa marches, 'tricks' that will give the piece its character. For example, on that nightmare chart I mentioned earlier, in one section I played a disco-style ostinato time figure on the hi-hat, a guaguanco conga figure on electronic percussion, and a backbeat on the snare. On some of the shows in the larger venues we've hired percussionists—like Michael Hinton in New York and Michael Sprio in San Francisco. I've really been influenced by these fine players, and I've tried to work their feels into the percussion that I play by myself in the other venues."

When it comes to "catching" the movements of the various circus acts, there's more to it than just a cymbal crash here and there. Each act has its own style, and George needs to tailor his percussive punctuation to that style. "I use imagery to help me create the parts for my playing," he says. "Most of the time, the more complex the trick the more I'm going to try to play it. I'll try to 'play' the piroette or the somersault. I'll use dynamics—crescendos and decrescendos—to help create the feeling of motion. Timing is also critical. For example, I help 'punch' the visual gags for the clowns. I have to make sure that the cymbal crash happens just exactly when the clown's fanny hits the floor. And instead of playing the traditional snare drum roll when someone is spinning in the air, I'll use double-bass to put an ominous-sounding roll underneath. I'll also use it as someone falls into a mat."

George accomplishes all of this percussive support from a position that offers only a limited view of the arena. His elaborate kit is set up in a 10x10 space, surrounded by acrylic panels and covered over with a tarpaulin that looks for all the world like a patio awning. This playing position presents George with some challenges that most drummers never have to face—not the least of which is seeing the conductor through all the acrylic panels. "I can see the conductor fine now," says George, laughing, "because they replaced my panels a few weeks ago. But they get scuffed up in handling, and after a while it gets really tough to see him."

And what about seeing the circus performers at the far end of the arena—or high in the rigging? "I have a TV monitor up to my right that lets me see the ring farthest from me. I can generally see the other two rings all right. But the TV is a fairly recent addition. Years ago, when we'd play Madison Square Garden, they'd leave the Plexiglas walls up around the arena floor. For years I'd actually play Gunther Gebel-Williams' big-cat show watching his reflection in those walls! The TV gives me a much better sense of timing for the acts, but I still need to have good peripheral vision."

Sometimes the difficulty George faces is not just seeing an act, but at the same time being able to play all of the various instruments on his diverse kit. "Take the Moroccans," George says by way of example. "They're a combination equestrian/acrobatic act that plays all over the arena floor. I have to watch a great deal of movement happening all over the arena simultaneously. Meanwhile, I'm playing tabla and doumbek sounds on the drumKAT on all sorts of Moroccan-style 9/8 music, just to stay in the context of their ethnicity. My monitor is up to my right, and the drumKAT is ninety degrees to my left. To add to the problem, I use a 12" snare drum. So sheer sticking accuracy becomes an

Between his drumkit, percussion, electronics, and sound equipment, George's setup is big enough to fill a circus ring in itself!

The drum chart for one of the show's elaborate production numbers testifies to the fact that "it ain't all Sousa marches."
Besides the drumKAT previously mentioned, George uses electronic triggers on his kick and snare drums, along with poleKAT pads triggering orchestral cymbal crashes, timpani sounds, a triangle, and some ethnic percussion. "Drummers should be very well-versed on electronics, because they’ve gotten to where drummers can fully express themselves musically as well as rhythmically. That makes them a lot more versatile and valuable in a band context."

Having said that, George is still playing behind a sizable acoustic kit. Why does he continue to play such a kit when he has an electronic palette at his disposal? "It all depends on the musical idiom that we’re doing. On a lot of the techno and dance-oriented stuff I’ll play a lot of electronics layered with congas and other percussion. But I love acoustic drums. I love the sounds of cymbals—and the presence that the kit has. If I went totally electronic the other guys in the band wouldn’t feel that ‘oomph.’ Most of them are using inner-ear monitors now, but you still don’t get that physical push from an electronic kit."

As if to illustrate his point, George has both an acoustic timpani on his kit and an electronic timpani sample on a poleKAT. Why both? "I really like a real sound for a timpani roll, but for quick beats with some of the clown bits, it’s easier and faster for me to hit a poleKAT. Besides, as a practical matter I could never go all-electronic. I mean, what if the power goes out—which it has! When we were in Japan we had to use generators because of the different electrical systems they have over there. There was a fire in one of the generators, and the power went out on the whole circus—during a high-wire act, no less. I wound up being the only one in the band still playing: I played a roll that lasted almost fifteen minutes!"

Besides his acoustic and electronic drum sounds, George utilizes an extremely eclectic array of Zildjian cymbals. Is that strictly for circus-oriented specialty qualities, or does he like a lot of different sounds? "I like wide intervals in crashes," George responds. "I also have a jazz ride that I can use as a crash as well. I'm left-handed and right-footed, so I have a K custom ride on one side and a secondary ride on the other. I also love riding on Chinas when the music gets intense. And I’m playing a set of hi-hats with the first hi-hat cymbal I ever owned on the bottom. It still has smoke from clubs and every other kind of dirt on it. I added an A Custom top, and I really like the way it sounds. I also use the Oriental China Trash combo hi-hats for an urban sound. Of course, I also have a trash can sample for when one of the acts is actually dancing on trash cans." It takes intense concentration to "catch" a circus show—and it takes a lot of energy to drive the circus band. Obviously, stamina and physical comfort on the kit are important to George. "Fortunately, my wife has really helped me out in this area," he says. "Besides being a dancer in the circus, she also teaches a program of neuro-muscular therapy that involves finding your center of gravity. I used to have a problem with my cymbals being too high, and having to stretch out to reach things. Now I try to stay centered. Even though I have a lot of gear on my kit, I don't really
have to move all that much to reach any given thing. Nothing is exaggerated. That's something I've been working on over the past few years. It's made a tremendous difference to my comfort and endurance.

"My wife is a real good critic for me," George continues. "Because she dances in the show, the manner in which I do what I do directly affects what she does. She can tell me if I'm too busy, or if the tempos are a problem."

George and his wife were married, by the way, in a private ceremony held in the center ring of the circus. True to show-biz tradition, the four o'clock wedding was followed by a 7:30 performance that same night!

One aspect of modern circus drumming can be aggravating. Since the demise of the "big top" several years ago, the circus has moved into arenas across the country—which must often be shared with sporting events. As George explains, "We may have to tear down completely for a basketball game or a tractor pull in the middle of our run—and then set right back up again. I'm paying one of the clowns $20 a show to help me break down. We've got it to the point where we can get me completely packed up in thirty-five minutes."

Interruptions in the show's schedule don't really bother George, though. In fact, he tries to take advantage of them. "What's cool when it happens is that I get a night off when I might otherwise be working. I can spend time with my wife and daughter, or get out to see other people play. And sometimes I just hang around and catch the game!"
In 1963, the young free-lancing jazz drummers were greats like Louis Hayes, Ben Riley, Billy Higgins, Jimmy Cobb, and Albert "Tootie" Heath. Masters like Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, Roy Haynes, and Max Roach had become established bandleaders. Meanwhile, a teenager from Boston named Tony Williams had sneaked up and taken the drum world by surprise. His time felt like that of Blakey, Hayes, or Philly Joe, and his melodic soloing style came from Max. As such, he had one foot planted firmly in the tradition of the masters. But Tony's arrival coincided with a change in the artistic climate of the time.

While working with the John Coltrane Quartet, Elvin Jones had permanently changed the concept of jazz drumming. All of the aforementioned established drummers (as well as the whole musical community) were trying to digest Elvin's powerful and highly evolved drumming style. To add to that commotion, along came this "whiz kid" named Tony, sounding uniquely like, well... Tony. Not like Elvin, or anyone else. While it's undoubtedly true that Elvin's aggressive style opened the doors for Tony, they are two very different drumming forces.

Tony Williams' first recordings were made in 1963, when he was seventeen. In a four-month span, he played on Jackie McLean's *Vertigo*, Herbie Hancock's *My Point Of View*, Kenny Dorham's *Una Mas*, and again with McLean on *One Step Beyond*. *Vertigo*, Tony's first recorded work, is an outstanding record, but unfortunately is not in print on CD and is very hard to find. Instead we will examine Tony's second recording, *My Point Of View*. Tony's drumming here is far from flawless. In fact, all of the musicians sound very imperfect. This was a group of musicians who, in a few years, would completely change jazz. However, at this point they were all young (except for Hank Mobely) and still exploring. From Tony you hear ideas that don't resolve perfectly, and an occasional slight wavering of the time. However, at this point they were all young (except for Hank Mobely) and still exploring. From Tony you hear ideas that don't resolve perfectly, and an occasional slight wavering of the time. However, he is already starting to push the boundaries of jazz drumming. His technical flaws are part of a refreshing imperfection—something you don't hear in music these days. This is an interesting recording to listen to in retrospect—now that we know where Tony was going. For example, listen to the looseness of the time behind Herbie Hancock's solo in the song "A Tribute To Someone." In fact, pay close attention to how differently Tony accompanies all the different soloists. It was just a hint of what was to come in the future.

Just days later, Tony played on Kenny Dorham's *Una Mas*, which featured the aforementioned Hancock and saxophonist Joe Henderson. *Una Mas* was a more traditional, hard bop recording. Tony played the role of the supportive sideman, so you hear the traditional side of his drumming.

On the other hand, looseness and elasticity were nurtured and encouraged in Jackie McLean's working band. In 1963, this young group (including Williams, vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson, and trombonist Grachan Moncur III) took their experimentation into the studio. The recording was the outstanding *One Step Beyond*. McLean had been involved in bebop and the post bop styles of jazz, but now was venturing into something different. This "new music" borrowed from the modality that Miles introduced and the freedom that Ornette introduced—but with a much less abrasive surface. *One Step Beyond* took the experimentations that you heard Tony interjecting on the *My Point Of View* session and stretched them even farther, with far more success. The more cohesive musical concept was a result of the band's live work, combined with the important fact that all of the musicians involved were on exactly the same musical page. It is with this band that Tony would start playing the way he did with Miles Davis in the later '60s. *One Step Beyond* is a masterful record. All
of the musicians play with taste, musicality, and a keen sense of freedom, making this recording unique and very important.

Just months later, under Grachan Moncur’s leadership, this same band (augmented by trumpeter Lee Morgan and a different bassist) recorded the appropriately named Evolution. This record was similar to One Step Beyond and used the same writing style and textures.

These are some very under-appreciated jazz recordings that are just now beginning to be rediscovered by musicians. Keep in mind that these albums were made in the span of one year, and that on them the teenaged Tony Williams played the drums like a mature, seasoned, evolved jazz musician. This was why in 1963, at the age of eighteen, he was asked to join Miles Davis’s band.

In the first few years that Tony played with Miles, he was unhappy with one of his bandmates. Saxophonist George Coleman and Tony were not on the same musical page. While the first Miles record Tony played on—Seven Steps To Heaven—was good, one can hear how Williams felt, in a sense, musically handcuffed. However, this didn’t prevent the band from giving one of the most legendary jazz concerts ever to be recorded. In 1964, Miles’ quintet recorded two records—Four & More and My Funny Valentine—at a benefit concert in New York’s Carnegie Hall. Fueled by anger and resentment (Miles had told the band moments before showtime that they weren’t being paid), the tempos of the music on these recordings (now released on one CD set) are faster and more furious than most music recorded before or since. Williams was at the helm of these tempos, and he never let them waver. Tony was beginning to show a musical bravado that would

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.

**Herbie Hancock:** My Point Of View, Blue Note TOCJ-4126; Empyrean Isles, Blue Note CDP 7 84175; Maiden Voyage, Blue Note CDP 7 46339. **Andrew Hill:** Point Of Departure, Blue Note CDP 784167. **Eric Dolphy:** Out To Lunch, Blue Note CDP 7 46524. **Kenny Dorham:** Una Mas, Blue Note TOCJ7 4127. **Jackie McLean:** Vertigo, Blue Note BN LT 1085; One Step Beyond, Blue Note TOCJ 4137. **Grachan Moncur III:** Evolution, Blue Note TOCJ 4153; Some Other Stuff, Blue Note TOCJ 4177. **Wayne Shorter:** The Soothsayer, Blue Note CDP 7 84443. **Sam Rivers:** Fuchsia Swing Song, Blue Note TOCJ 4184. **Miles Davis:** Seven Steps To Heaven, Columbia CK 48827; The Complete Concert: 1964 (Four And More + My Funny Valentine), Columbia C2K 48821; E.S.P., Columbia CK 46863; Miles Smiles, Columbia CK 48849; Nefertiti, Columbia CK 46113; The Sorcerer, Columbia CK 52974; Filles De Killamanjaro, Columbia CK 46116; Miles In The Sky, Columbia CK 48954; Water Babies, Sony Records SRCS 5710; Live In Tokyo, CBS/Sony CSCS 5146; Live In Berlin, CBS/Sony CSCS 5147; The Complete Live At The Plugged Nickel 1965 CBS/Sony CK 66955; No Blues, Jazz Music Yesterday JMY 1003. **Tony Williams:** Lifetime, Blue Note TOCJ 4180; Spring, Blue Note CDP 7 46135.

Tracking Them Down

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.
become one of his trademarks. This recording is simply and absolutely stunning. George Coleman eventually left the band, and many different saxophonists were used on a temporary basis until Wayne Shorter (the Tony Williams of the saxophone) joined the band in 1965.

Williams had played with Shorter on a couple of occasions, because they were both free-lancing heavily. (In fact, while Tony was in the Davis band in 1964, he contributed towards six outstanding records.) Wayne, Herbie Hancock, and Tony joined Grachan Moncur III on his seminal recording Some Other Stuff, a dark, loose, must-have jazz recording described so aptly by its title. Tony also supported the explosive Eric Dolphy on his brilliant Out To Lunch. And Tony was reunited with Dorham, Henderson, and Dolphy on Andrew Hill’s legendary Point Of Departure. Herbie Hancock then called on Tony to contribute to an outstanding quartet recording called Empyrean Isles. Tony finally led his first date, a remarkable session called Lifetime (not to be confused with his later fusion efforts). On this recording Williams employed the searching talents of saxophonist Sam Rivers. In return, Rivers called on Williams for his recording Fuchsia Swing Song.

These six recordings, made in a seven-month period, are all equally amazing, and Tony Williams’ awesome drumming was their common denominator. They clearly represent the new jazz of the ‘60s, and will, as a whole, stand up as being one of the turning points of modern jazz and jazz drumming. But it didn’t stop there. In 1965 Tony led his second date, a completely free record called Spring. Spring features free drum soloing and expressionism, and is not for the meek. (Although it is outstanding music, it is not easy listening.) Also listen to Tony in 1965 with Wayne Shorter on The Soothsayer and with Herbie Hancock on his Maiden Voyage.

Miles Davis knew he had a band with a wealth of creativity, foresight, and musicality. Between the years of 1964 and 1968, Miles’ great quintet (Shorter, Williams, Hancock, Carter) recorded seven studio records: E.S.P, Miles Smiles, Nefertiti, Sorcerer, Filles De Killamanjaro, Miles In The Sky, and Water Babies. They also recorded three live albums: Live In Tokyo (without Shorter), Live In Berlin, and Live At The Plugged Nickel. E.S.P, Miles Smiles, and Nefertiti are similar because of the close recording dates. Sorcerer, Filles De Killamanjaro, and Miles In The Sky are much looser, occasionally border on fusion, and use some electronic keyboards. Live In Tokyo is good. Live In Berlin is excellent; it was recorded in 1965 when the group was really starting to gel. Shortly after it was made, the band took a break due to Miles’ health problems.

During the hiatus everyone did their own projects, including playing some of the “new music” breaking at that time. When the band reunited in late 1965, Miles managed to capture lightning in a bottle. This reunion was miraculously captured on tape and has finally been released as an eight-CD box set called The Complete Live At The Plugged Nickel 1965. Due to their extended break, their “new” musical experiences, and some personal circumstances, the group explored and took monumental musical chances—and some magical music was created. They were play-
ing the old standards, but with a completely fresh outlook. The
time flow is very elastic, the band is unusually aggressive, and cre-
vatity and musicality reign supreme. Although slightly expensive
($129.99), the Plugged Nickel recordings are the perfect example
of old material being given a new sound.

There are many unauthorized live Miles Davis CDs, but none
are as good as No Blues. It represents the end of this quintet’s evo-
lution. Recorded in late 1967, it picks up two years from where the
Plugged Nickel recordings had left off—and that is precisely how
it sounds. By 1967, Miles’ group was playing continuous hour-
long sets, when one song ran into the next. The group was using
song forms to paint tonal pictures, not just playing solos. The band
had been a working unit for almost four straight years, and the five
musicians had raised their musical skills to new heights. This
music transcends chops, licks, chords, and scales to become sheer
musical expressionism. The disc may be hard to find, but it is well
worth the search; it’s some of the most amazing music I have ever
heard. Tony’s drumming goes beyond explanation.

We have now covered five very important years in the evolution
of Tony Williams, and in the evolution of jazz. Williams is an
integral part of this evolution. Tony’s drumming—unique, ground-
breaking, and so very musical—erased the boundaries of jazz
drumming. To many, these were Tony’s greatest years. However,
there are also those who believe that his best playing came after he
returned to music, right after the birth of "fusion." This is where
we will pick up with Part 2: the "new" Tony, beginning in the
1970s.

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MD Giveaway Winners

Jim Rollins of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was the grand prize winner in the Modern Drummer/CMP records "Trilok Gurtu" sweepstakes in the May '95 issue. Jim’s prize was a trip to London to attend Trilok Gurtu’s Zildjian clinic there, along with a private lesson with Trilok.

Matthew Miller of Redmond, Washington is the winner of a custom-made Magstar snare drum (featuring a Suraya segment shell and 24 karat gold-plated hardware). Matthew’s card was drawn from among those submitted in the October '95 issue MD Giveaway. Congratulations to the winners from CMP Records, Magstar, and Modern Drummer.

Drum-Building Intensive Course

A one-week intensive course on drum-building will be offered from February 20 through 24 at the School of Fine Woodworking, One Cottage St., Easthampton, Massachusetts. The hands-on program will be conducted by custom shell-builder Glen Suraya, and topics will include steam bending, stave shell construction, veneering, covering, bearing edges, snare beds, drilling, and finishing. In addition, master classes will be taught by well-known drum-makers Joe Montineri and Rob Kampa. The cost for the program is $675, and space is extremely limited. Call (413) 529-2319 for further information.

Jeff Berlin Opens Music School

Legendary bassist Jeff Berlin, whose credits include work with such drumming luminaries as Bill Bruford, Neil Peart, Billy Cobham, Steve Smith, Tony Williams, and Vinnie Colaiuta, has turned his efforts toward the creation of a music school focusing on the true requirements of being a professional musician. His new Players School of Music offers full-time and part-time programs in guitar, bass, keyboards, and drums. To create the drum curriculum Jeff enlisted the help of top drum instructor Chris Kohler. They created a comprehensive drum program specifically designed to prepare drummers for a career in music. According to Jeff, the school is small, the programs are flexible, and the student can therefore receive a better educational experience. For more information contact The Players School of Music, 2519 McMullen Booth Road, Box 510-267, Clearwater, FL 34621.

Special Events

The first annual Berklee World Percussion Festival was held August 15 through 20, 1995 at Berklee College of Music in Boston. Students attending the event came from across the U.S. and Canada, as well as from several foreign countries. Berklee faculty participating in the event included Giovanni Hidalgo, Victor Mendoza, Casey Scheuerell, Mike Rindquist, Sa Davis, Jamey Haddad, Steve Wilkes, and Joe Galeota. Guest instructors included Trichy Sankaran (South Indian music specialist) and Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez (Afro-Cuban drumset specialist). Each day of the Festival featured industry exhibits and three class periods; afternoon master classes and evening concerts were also presented (including performances by guest artists Glen Velez and Leon Mobley). The BWPF was considered a major success, and planning is under way for a repeat event next year.

Roland Meinl Cymbals and Percussion sponsored "Meinl Night In Sao Paulo, Brazil" on August 23, 1995. Top South American groups and percussionists such as the Heart Breakers, Amadito Valdez, Alaor Neves, Carlos Figueroa Jr., Duda Neves, Jorge Mihovilovic, and Rudy F. Moral performed before an audience of over 500 drumming enthusiasts. Meinl cymbals and percussion products were also on display.

Indy Quickies

Ringo Starr recently joined with Pro-Mark artist relations manager Pat Brown to announce the release of Pro-Mark’s Ringo Starr Autograph Series drumstick. In related news, Pro-Mark has been awarded a trademark for the name "Millenium II" from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Congratulations to Chris Lombardi (of Drum Workshop) and his wife Halli on the birth of their son.
Connor, August 20, 1995. (Further congratulations to the proud grandfather, DW president Don Lombardi.)

Sabian (U.S.A.) Inc. has relocated to expanded facilities at 100 Enterprise Drive, Marshfield, MA 02050, tel: (617) 834-3656, fax: (617) 834-3670.

Michael Morse has been appointed director of sales and marketing for the newly revitalized Fibes Drum Co. in Austin, Texas. Morse had been national promotions manager in the Los Angeles office of the Avedis Zildjian Co. for the previous nine years.

Andrew Borden is the new product specialist and artist relations coordinator for Evans Drumheads (now owned by J. D’Addario & Company, Evans has also named well-known touring and recording drummer John Ferraro as a member of its Musicians Advisory Board.

In an effort to expand its role as a leader in percussion education, Pearl Corporation has announced the signing of a two-year corporate sponsorship agreement with Bands Of America. Pearl will be an active sponsor of all the BoF A events, supplying percussion equipment for camps and festivals, along with clinicians, trophies, and displays.

A Roland Users Group has been established for electronic percussionists, drummers, and programmers. Anyone with an interest in electronic percussion can join the Electronic Percussion Connection. All members will receive a quarterly newsletter written by Roland's top percussion specialists and featuring information to help users get the most from their equipment. A question-and-answer forum will also be included. Membership costs $5, and may be obtained by calling (800) 386-7575. Members will be entitled to a 10% discount on anything ordered from the Roland Superstore.

Drumtech, a top London drum school, has moved to The Power House, 74 Stanley Gardens, London W3 7SD. The new facilities include five fully equipped drum rooms, two large drum classrooms, a 150-seat live performance room, and a state-of-the-art keyboard lab and music library.

Remo, Inc. has broken ground on the site of the company's new corporate headquarters in Valencia, California. The 217,000-square-foot building is scheduled to be completed May 1. In related news, Remo Belli (right) served as honorary chairman of "The World In Potsdam," a festival held in Potsdam, New York on Saturday, September 16. The festival celebrated the diversity of people through music, dance, arts, crafts, food, and prayer. Remo, Inc. also sponsored a community drum circle featuring Arthur Hull as part of the festival activities. Finally, Remo, Inc. was recently awarded the Oppenheim Toy Portfolio Gold Seal Award (given for a valuable new musical introduction to the educational market) for its Kid’s Percussion Floor Tom-Tom.

Endorser News

New Aquarian drumhead endorsers include Sterling Campbell (Soul Asylum), Paul Bostaph (Slayer), Nick Menza (Megadeth), David Grohl (Foo Fighters), Patty Schemel (Hole), Shane Evans (Collective Soul), Mick Fleetwood (Fleetwood Mac), Glen Graham (Blind Melon), Michael Botts (Dan Fogelberg), Andy Peak (Jimmy Buffet), D.W. Turnbow (Chris LeDoux), David Filvera (Korn), Brett Fredrickson (Scotti Mishoe Project), and Joe Morris.

Joel Rosenblatt (Spyro Gyra), Hilary Jones, and the Crossmen Drum & Bugle Corps are Cannon Attack drumhead artists.

Jef Hamilton is now playing Remo drums, while Ben Mize (Counting Crows) and Fergal Lawler (Cranberries) are drumhead endorsers.

Beato drum bag users include Steve Gadd, Omar Hakim, Jim Keltner, Dennis Chambers, and Peter Erskine. In addition, Tico Torres, Gregg Bissonette, and Charlie Benante endorse Beato gloves.

Blues drummer Willie Hayes is endorsing Slug Percussion Products.

New Zildjian cymbal artists include Carter Beauford (Dave Matthews Band), Charles Ruggiero (Chuck Mangione), Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez (Michel Camilo), Brooks Wackerman (Infectious Grooves), Patty Schemel, Jim Sonefeld (Hootie & the Blowfish), Ron Welty (the Offspring), Dee Plakas (L7), John Tempesta (White Zombie), Robin Goodridge (Bush), Cary Bonnecaze (Better Than Ezra), and Tom McGinnis (Buffalo Tom).

Drummers now using Zildjian drumsticks include Dennis Chambers, Roy Haynes, Eric Singer (KISS), Ed Soph, Gary Chaffee, Bill Stewart (John Scofield), Joe Franco (Widowmaker), Zach Alford (David Bowie), Tre Cool (Green Day), Chris Vrenna (Nine Inch Nails), William Goldsmith (Fool Fighters), Phillip Rhodes (Gin Blossoms), Paul Brouwer (Gigolo Aunts), Tom Cotton (Fossil), and Michael Malinin (the Goo Goo Dolls).

Shane Evans, Ray "Killer" Allison (Buddy Guy), Melvin Baldwin (Dionne Farris), Jeremy Taggart (Our Lady Of Peace), Patrick Wilson (Weezer), Tim O'Reagan (the Jayhawks), and Cecil Brooks III are playing both Zildjian cymbals and Zildjian sticks.

Zig Wajler (the Animal Band, the Moffatts, James Payne) now plays Pearl drums, Sabian cymbals, and Vic Firth sticks.

Meinl cymbal artists now include Robin DiMaggio, Dave Alford (Rough Cult), Eric McKain (L.A. studio percussionist), Barry Brandt (Angel), John Boutin (Gwen Mars), and Floyd Sneed (Chuck Negron).

Mexican studio artist and video clinician Mike Portillo endorses Yamaha drums, Sabian cymbals, Remo heads, Vic Firth sticks, and Shure microphones.

Current Fibes drumkit endorsers include Steve Gorman (Black Crowes), Aaron Serfaty (Arturo Sandoval), Stu Nevitt (Shadowfax), Mike Palmer (Garth Brooks), Jody Cortez (Crosby, Stills & Nash), and David Sanger (Asleep At The Wheel).

Now playing with Pro-Mark drumsticks are Taylor Hawkins (Alanis Morissette), Dana Heidemann (Jeff Carson), Rocky Lindsley (Lorrie Morgan), Bobby Huff (Black Hawk), Russell Simins (Blues Explosion), Howard Joines (Miss Saigon, Broadway), Gary Seligson (Miss Saigon touring co.), Chuck White (Michael Angelo), Marcelo Mira, Owen Hale (Nashville studios), and Perry Baggs (Jason & the Scorchers).
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ATTENTION DRUM INSTRUCTORS:

GET LISTED IN MODERN DRUMMER’S UPCOMING...

International Drum Instructors Directory

If you’re a drum instructor anywhere in the world, here’s your opportunity to be listed in MD’s International Drum Instructors Directory. The Directory will be available to students of drumming around the world through schools, colleges, universities, and music shops, and will be advertised to MD’s worldwide readership through the magazine. Simply fill out the Instructors Profile on the opposite page and mail it to us. A listing costs only $10, and display advertising is also available. (See below.)

Students across the country and around the world are continually in search of drumming instructors. If you’re a qualified teacher who’s serious about teaching, don’t miss out on this opportunity to have your profile seen by thousands of students interested in the services you offer.

DISPLAY ADS: 1” or 2” display ads for more prominent visibility in the Instructors Directory are also available. And when you take a display ad, we’ll list your profile FREE OF CHARGE. Simply submit ad copy on a separate sheet, or as a camera-ready ad, and mail it to us with your Profile and remittance by January 31, 1996.

1” Display Ad: (1” deep x 2½” wide)—$30

2” Display Ad: (2” deep x 2½” wide)—$50

Please limit ad wording to name, address, phone, and brief statement. MD reserves the right to limit ad copy to fit designated size.

Deadline for Profiles and Display Ad reservations is January 31, 1996.
INSTRUCTORS PROFILE

Please Print Or Type

Name:
Address:
City_________ State_________ Zip_________

Telephone (____)____________________

Age:_________ # Years Playing:_________

# Years Of Private Instruction:_________ # Years Teaching:_________

Formal Education (Schools & Degrees):

Professional Experience:

Levels Taught: □ Beginner □ Intermediate □ Advanced

Styles Taught: □ Rock □ Funk □ Show □ Jazz □ Fusion

□ Big Band □ Latin □ Rudimental □ Symphonic □ Other_________

Areas Of Emphasis: □ Reading □ Technique □ Coordination □ Other_________

Other Percussion Taught: □ Timpani □ Mallets □ Latin Instruments □ Other_________

Teaching Aids Used: □ Video □ Electronics □ Other_________

Currently Teaching: □ Full-Time □ Part-Time

Average Number Of Students Taught Weekly:_________

Other Teaching Locations:

Store Name:
Address:
City_________ State_________ Zip_________

Telephone (____)____________________

Will Teach At Student's Home: □ Yes □ No

□ Listing Only Please: $10 Enclosed

□ 1" Display Ad: $30 Enclosed. Please run my listing FREE of charge.

□ 2" Display Ad: $50 Enclosed. Please run my listing FREE of charge.

Please refer to the instructions on the opposite page.

When placing a display ad, simply submit ad copy on a separate sheet or as a camera-ready ad, and submit with your profile.

Mail this page (or a copy) with remittance to: Modern Drummer, c/o Drum Instructors Directory, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Please make checks or money order payable to Modern Drummer. Deadline for all materials is January 31, 1996.
Dennis Jakeway of Indianapolis, Indiana plays with a group called Willow River. In keeping with the spirit of the group's name, he commissioned Joe Partridge, Jr. of Mojoe Custom Drums in Jackson, Mississippi to construct this custom kit and decorate it with a Southwestern artwork motif. "I thought the design was kind of silly," says Joe, "until I got the art on the shells. It turned out rather striking after all." Dennis was confident of the outcome all along.

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, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.

BILL STEWART
NYC's HOTTEST PLAYER?

FEMALE DRUMMERS ROUND TABLE

PARKER & THOMAS: VINCE GILL'S DOUBLE DRUMMERS

FLAMING LIPS' STEPHEN DROZD

TONY WILLIAMS ON TRACK
"When I was about fourteen or fifteen years old, a good friend of mine who played drums in Joe Cocker's grease-band was playing Gretsch. I persuaded him to sell me his kit. From that moment, I was a Gretsch player. I still own that kit and it still sounds great today."

"Gretsch has always been 'a drummer's drum' and when the opportunity developed allowing me to play Gretsch again, I jumped at the chance."

"There is a great deal of detail and sophistication associated with the Gretsch product, name and over one-hundred year heritage. Sometimes I wish I did everything as well as they do."

"How do I like my new drums? They're beautiful in sound and looks...And most important, they're Gretsch."
Introducing the New K Custom Dark Crashes, Rides & HiHats

Now Zildjian offers a complete line of special cymbals born from the legendary K Zildjian range, that offer traditional K Zildjian sounds for a modern musical environment. Cast from the legendary secret Zildjian alloy, no two sound the same. Each has its own unique voice and character so you can create your own signature sound. As you can see, they’re in hot demand among some of the world’s greatest drummers. But don’t worry, you’ll be able to get your very own. There’s plenty to choose from at your local Zildjian dealer.