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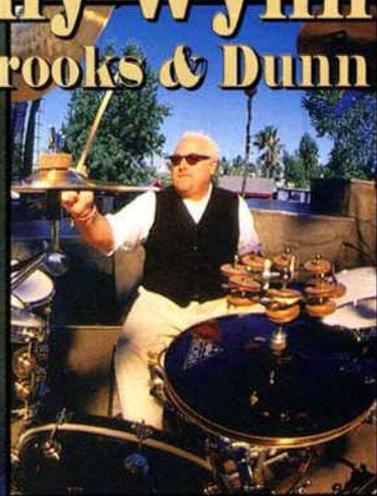
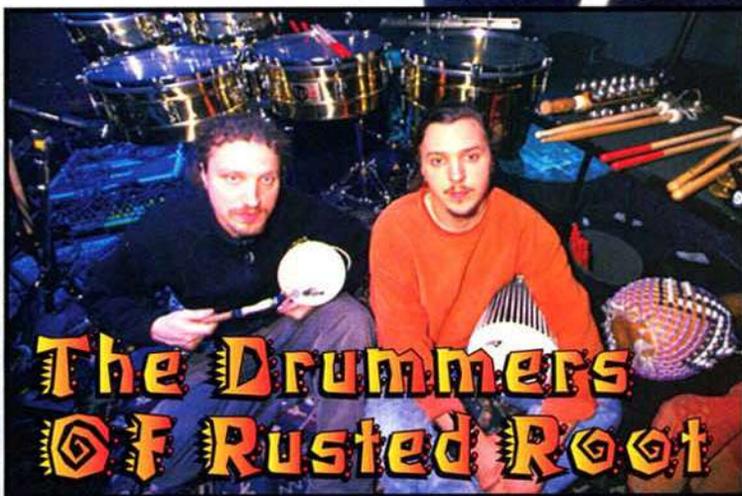
May '97

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Brian Blade

Dony Wynn
Of Brooks & Dunn



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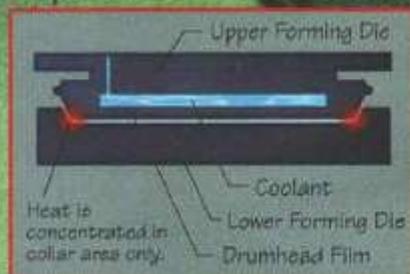
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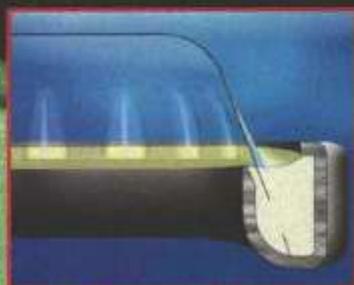
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Brian Blade

There's versatile—and then there's *versatile*. Brian Blade swings jazz giant Joshua Redman at breakfast, provides stripped-down accompaniment for country diva Emmylou Harris at lunch, and squeezes out folk/jazz/rock grooves for Joni Mitchell at dinner.

by Ken Micallef

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JIM DONOVAN & JIM DISPIRITO

World music goes pop in a big way on Rusted Root's unique recordings, and it's drummer Jim Donovan and percussionist Jim DiSpirito who set the tone, tempo, and tension & release. Exclusive sidebar: Jim & Jim on creating the monster groove.

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The world's premier musical instrument event just gets bigger and bigger each year. They showed, we clicked, you'll drool.

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For Drum Instructors Only

Since *Modern Drummer* began over twenty years ago, our *Teachers' Forum* department has served as the place in the magazine for tips and advice for drum instructors. Unfortunately, space limitations have prevented us from running all of the valuable articles we receive for that department. So we've decided to approach the situation a bit differently for the many instructors out there who have asked for more information.

I'm proud to announce that *Modern Drummer* will soon be publishing a special newsletter entitled *Drum Instructors Only*. The purpose of the newsletter is to supply serious teachers with a wide variety of information on issues that affect all instructors. Written by teachers for teachers, *Drum Instructors Only* will offer hundreds of ideas to help drum instructors do

their jobs more effectively and efficiently, and in the process build a more successful private teaching practice for themselves or the studios where they teach.

Edited by *MD* associate editor Rich Watson and designed by assistant art director Lori Spagnardi, *Drum Instructors Only* will feature articles with some of the world's leading teachers for insights on how they handle matters that teachers are regularly faced with—matters as diverse as motivating students, handling payments and absences, promoting one's teaching practice, screening students, maintaining enthusiasm as a teacher, soundproofing a studio, and helping a beginner select the right equipment. Teachers will also find transcriptions and exercises, as well as reviews on the latest books and videos, with special emphasis

on how these materials can best be used to produce better students.

We feel there's long been a need for a publication of this nature, and the concept has been on the *MD* drawing board for quite some time. In essence, the future of drumming lies in the hands of those who've dedicated themselves to passing the information down to the next generation of players. We feel anything that can more effectively aid those who've taken on that very important responsibility is certainly a worthwhile investment of time and effort. Further details on how to subscribe to *Drum Instructors Only* can be found on page 93 of this issue.

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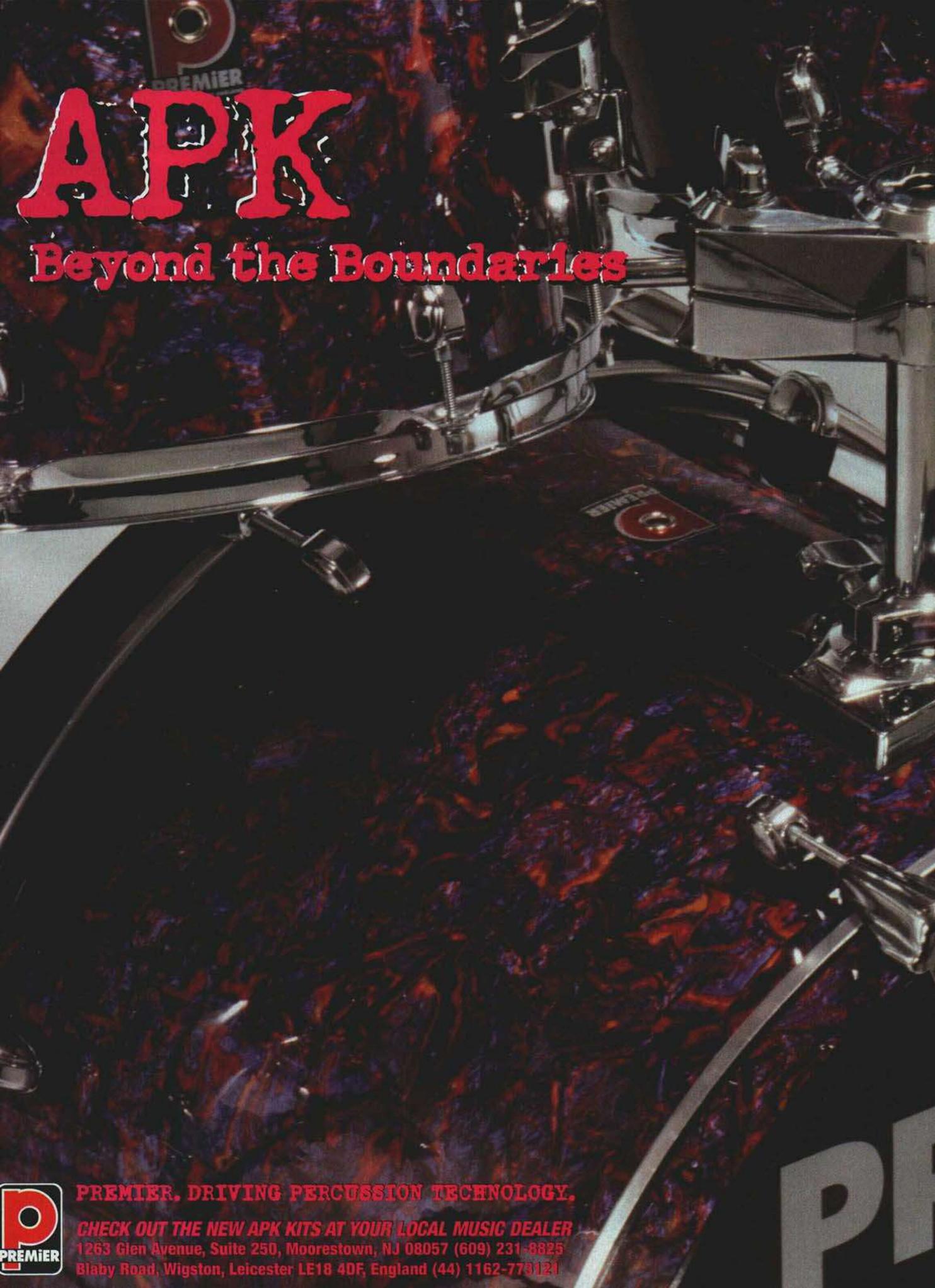
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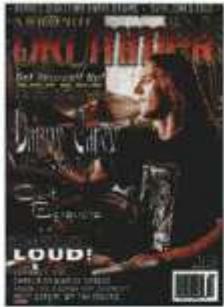


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HOW TO REACH US

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bye-mail: moddrum@intac.com

DANNY CAREY



Your February issue with Danny Carey on the cover is probably the best I've ever read (next to the Carter Beauford cover issue). While I wasn't that much of a fan of Tool's previous albums, when my guitar player brought over a copy of *AEnima* I was literally floored. The playing on this album is the best hard-rock drumming I've heard in a long time. When I heard the new album I was hoping you guys would be smart enough to do a story on Danny. It exceeded my expectations. Thanks.

Sandra Fritz
via Internet

Your article on Danny Carey was great. I've never been a Tool fan, but I was glad that Carey finally got his due. He's a fine drummer, and is quite musical (considering the music his group plays). Now, how about cover stories on Chad Gracey of Live and Chad Sexton of 311?

Chris Merriam
Towson, MD

I'd like to thank you for my cover story in your February issue. There is, however, an important correction I need to make. On page 74, Matt Peiken made the statement that Adam Jones, our guitarist in Tool, is "into Scientology." I just want to make it clear that no one in Tool is involved with Scientology in any way.

Danny Carey
Los Angeles, CA

Editor's note: Our apologies for the error.

DANCING WITH DESTRUCTION

"Dancing With Destruction," by Zoro, in your February issue was very informative. It hit me particularly, because I'm a drummer/singer and I'm doing time in prison right now on drug-related charges. I allowed drugs and alcohol to interfere with what I love to do most: play music. It's devastating to think of all the years I've wasted and the people I've hurt. My advice to those who believe that it "can't happen to them" is to quit living in delusion. Regain your inner strength and apply those energies you spend involved with the substances toward your gifts and talents. They can be taken away just as they were given.

This time behind the walls is what it has taken for me to realize that I've got to do things differently to produce different results. The rehabilitation process has been a real struggle, but well worth it. I just pray that those of you who are still "dabbling" don't have to take this same path, or—worse yet—don't end up without a choice. I'd be pleased to correspond with anyone who'd like to discuss this important subject.

Tim Goulart
E.C.D.C.

Rt. 1 Box 60; ND4
Lake Providence, LA 71254

My only complaint with Zoro's article was that it might have been better coming from someone who had gone through the ups and downs of drug abuse personally. I commend Zoro for never having been there. I have, but when it finally came to a choice between drugs or music, I chose music.

It is important to educate all people—especially the young—about the destruction that drugs and alcohol create. To think of it as a glamorous life is an illusion. But we all make mistakes in life; we can only hope to learn, grow, and change in a positive direction. Though Zoro's tone was a little harsh, I understand that he was earnestly trying to get a point across. My only hope is that the article has reached someone out there. We must all stand together.

Casey Korder
Seattle, WA

JIM SONEFELD REDUX

After reading the letters in the February *Readers' Platform* criticizing your Jim Sonefeld feature [October '96 MD], I became very concerned—and even irritated—by the very "superior" attitudes of those who assess that this man isn't entitled to any recognition. Hey guys—there are many facets to being a drummer outside the technical mechanics of drumming. We owe it to ourselves to be fraternal, and to abolish the slander!

Ray Gayleard
Brooklyn Park, MD

I've heard more criticism of musicians by musicians than from anybody else. Why do we do this? People who put up skyscrapers don't put down people who build public housing, and you don't hear the winner of the Indianapolis 500 saying that the guy who came in fourth really sucks. Am I a "goody two-shoes" for not wanting to shred someone like Jim Sonefeld simply because he doesn't play as fancy as someone else does?

Danny Wyant
Sioux City, IA

The suggestion that *MD* should only feature drummers on the "cutting edge" is ridiculous. Profiles of any drummer of interest, old and new, should be welcome. With no disrespect to drummers like Neil Peart, Kenny Aronoff, Tony Williams, and Louie Bellson, I also want to read about Charlie Watts, Ringo Starr, Mick Fleetwood, Hal Blaine—and yes, Jim Sonefeld. All are successful, and all have contributed greatly to their musical settings.

Phil Sollar
San Francisco, CA

One of the main reasons that Hootie & the Blowfish have sold over ten million CDs is because the music *feels* so good. And that's largely because of Jim Sonefeld's smooth, great-feeling groove abilities. Carter Beauford is an excellent, technically proficient player, but he does not possess the same groove as does Sonefeld. Carter's playing works in the Dave Matthews Band and makes that band unique and successful. Jim's playing is every bit as valid in

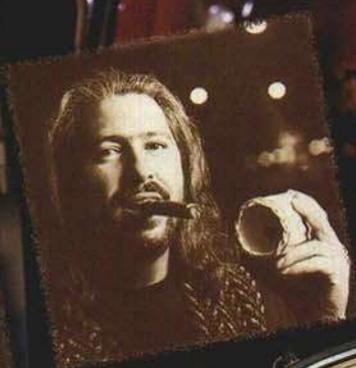
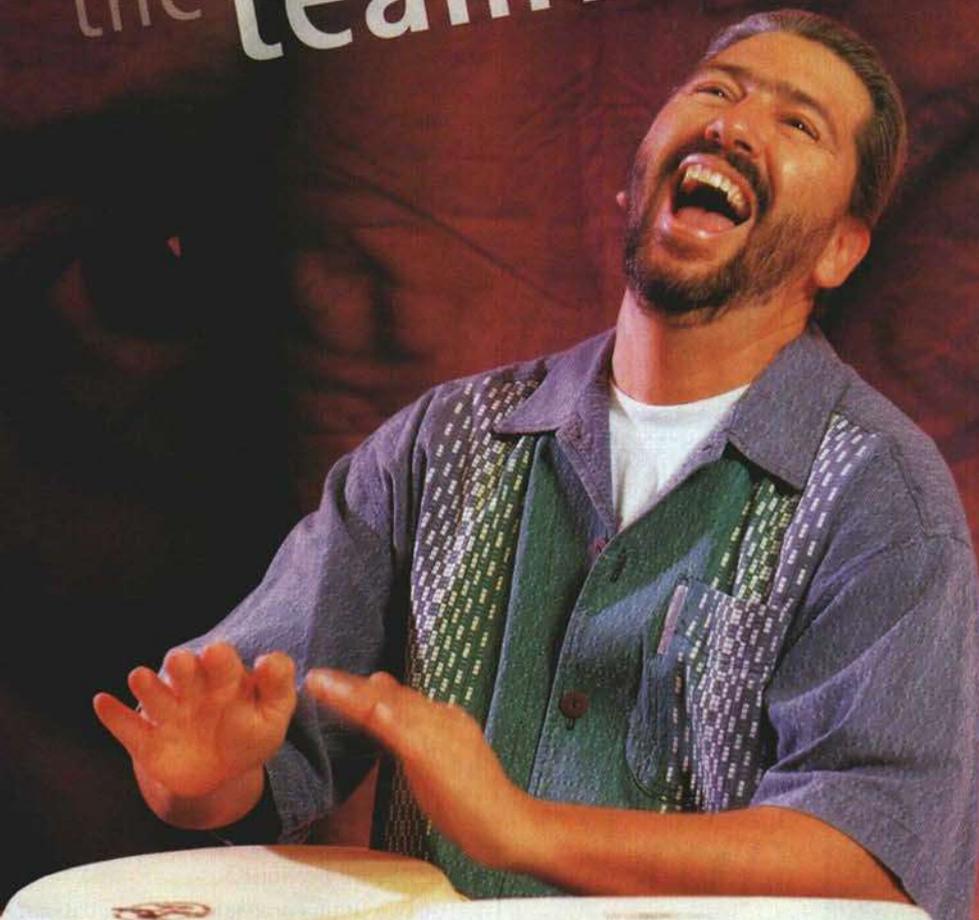
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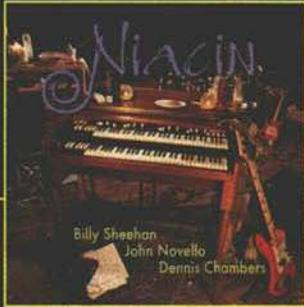
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Hootie. Change drum chairs and *both* bands would suffer.

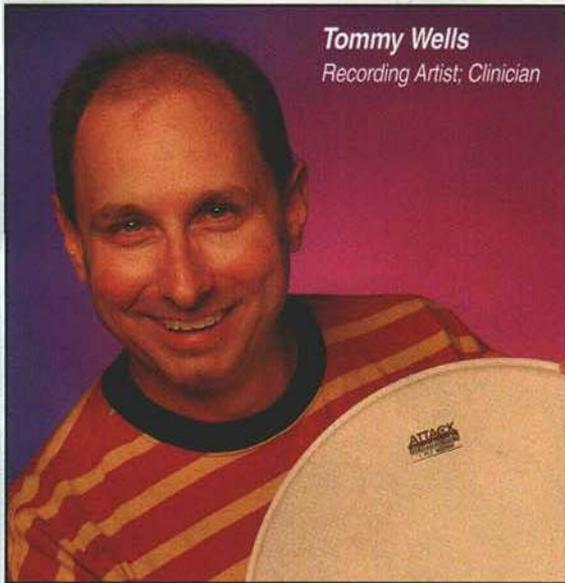
J.D. Delatore
Costa Mesa, CA

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

During the recent Christmas season I saw an ad in *MD* for a sample pair of Pro-Mark's *Bill Bruford* model drumsticks direct from them. I figured I'd receive them in January, but to my surprise they came four days later, and I was able to give them to my son as a gift. I recently saw another Pro-Mark ad for a free catalog. Once again, not only did I receive the catalog in a very timely manner, but also other useful literature, along with a tape of Pro-Mark's Herb Brochstein performing with a big band. I wrote to thank them, and I received a phone call back from Bari Brochstein Ruggeri of Pro-Mark to thank *me* for my letter.

My point is that this is one company that really cares about its customers—large or small, pro or novice. Now I know why they won the "most service-oriented" company award, along with four other awards, in the last *MD* Consumers Poll. My compliments to the fine people at Pro-Mark.

Ralph Lambiase, Sr.
Lynbrook, NY



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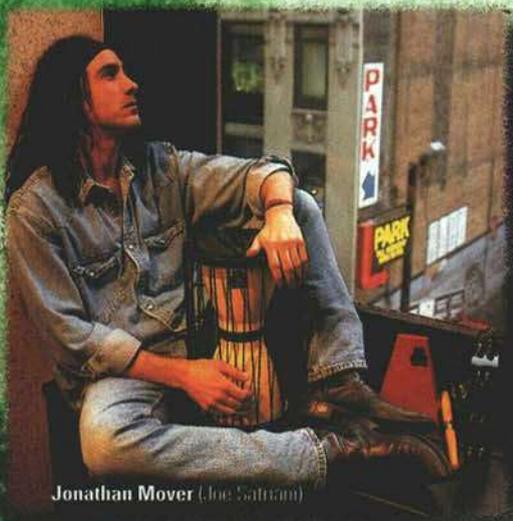
DRUMS AND ECONOMICS

Today's drum companies and cymbal companies have made drumming synonymous with terms like "net gain," "profit," and "dividend." It's frustrating when my parents and relatives ask me what I would like for my birthday or for Christmas. How do I tell them that the one thing I love and respect more than anything is something they cannot afford? I'm involved with every type of drumming, so I even see the money problem at school. My high-school band director can't afford to replace the band's outdated percussion equipment, because the price would be astronomical.

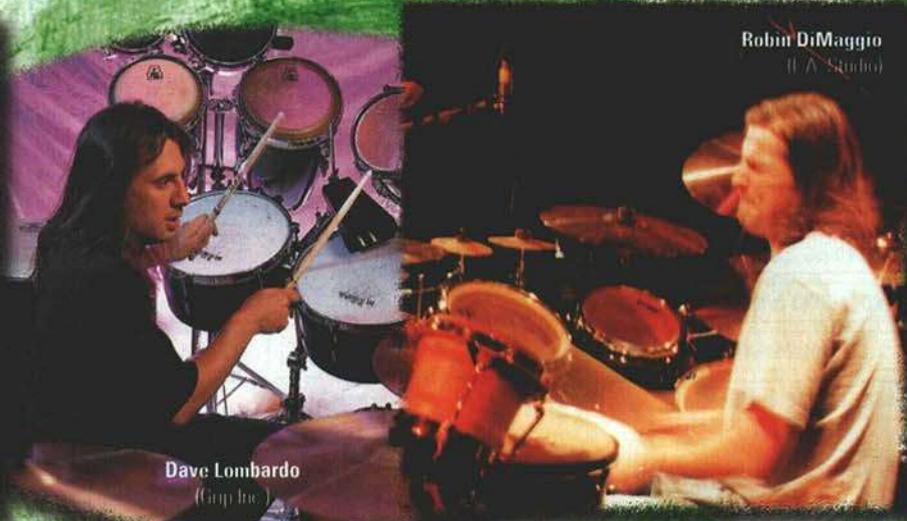
The companies say that they are small companies only concerned with drummers and their needs. Take a look at the prices of products today, and you can see that this is a lie. If they *really* cared about drummers, they would also care about the drummers' checkbooks. It is nearly impossible for a

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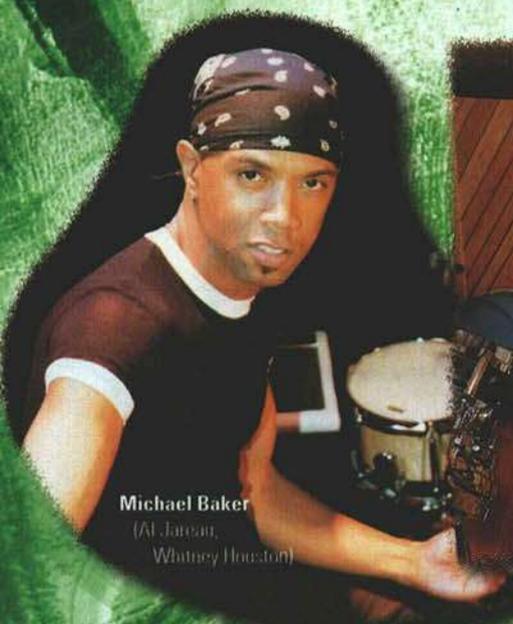


Jonathan Mover
(Joe Satriani)

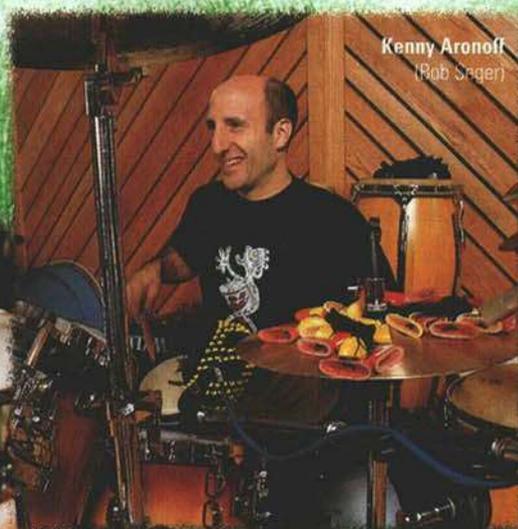


Robin DiMaggio
(U2 Studio)

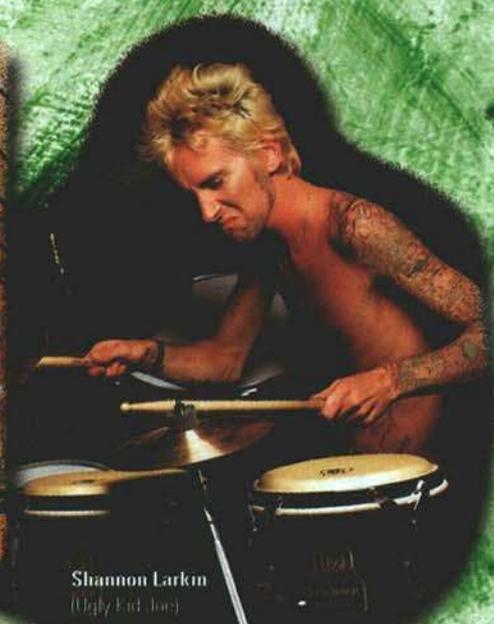
Dave Lombardo
(Guns N' Roses)



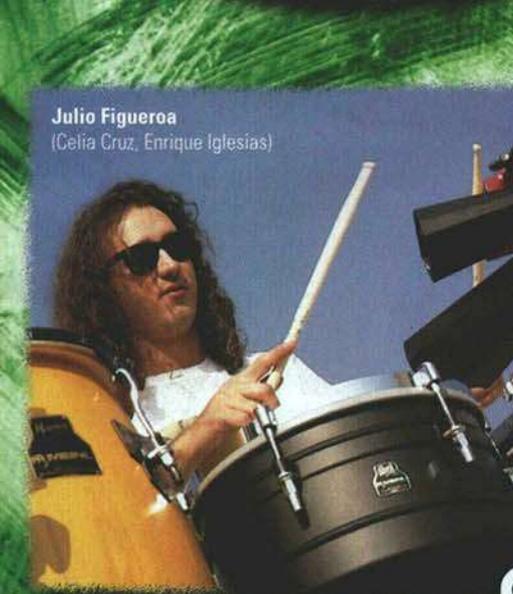
Michael Baker
(Al Jarreau,
Whitney Houston)



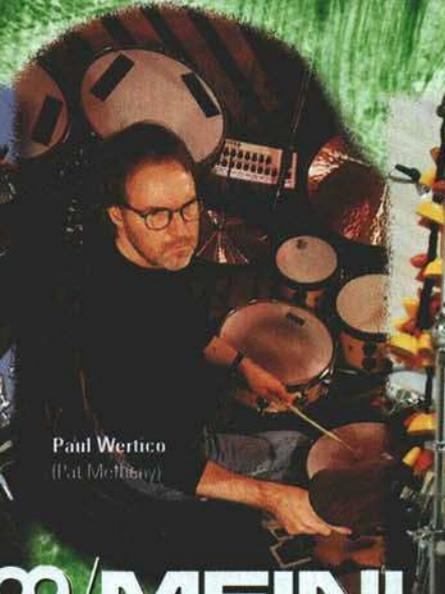
Kenny Aronoff
(Rob Seger)



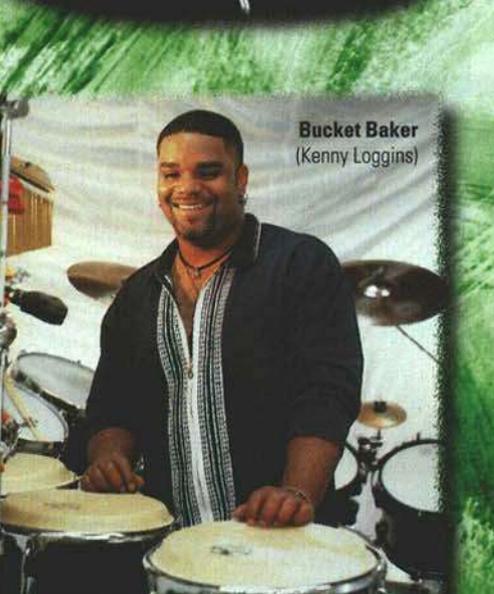
Shannon Larkin
(Ugly Kid Joe)



Julio Figueroa
(Celia Cruz, Enrique Iglesias)



Paul Wertico
(Pat Metheny)



Bucket Baker
(Kenny Loggins)

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good drummer to afford a quality set with cymbals, and still have money to take his girlfriend out on a Friday night.

I'm sorry that I, along with many other drummers, could not get any new drums or cymbals this past Christmas. It's sad when you can't afford the things that you need to express who you are as a person.

Chris Beck
 Westlake, OH

A "KOOKY" COVER COMPLAINT

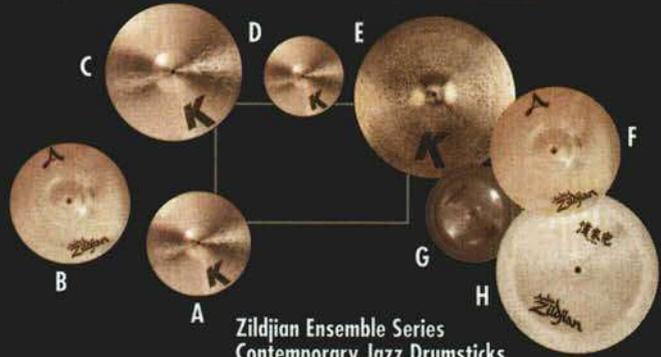
I was hoping that as 1996 passed, so too would your recent fondness for "kooky" type treatments on the cover of *MD*. The overall effect is one that lacks authority, is schizophrenic, and is, at the very least, flaky. Not since the March '96 issue with Bill Stewart on the cover has *MD* had the look of a magazine devoted to musicians with smarts. How ironic that this look is projected from the publication that should be fighting the stereotype of the flaky non-musician behind the drums.

Gary Rogers
 Northport, NY

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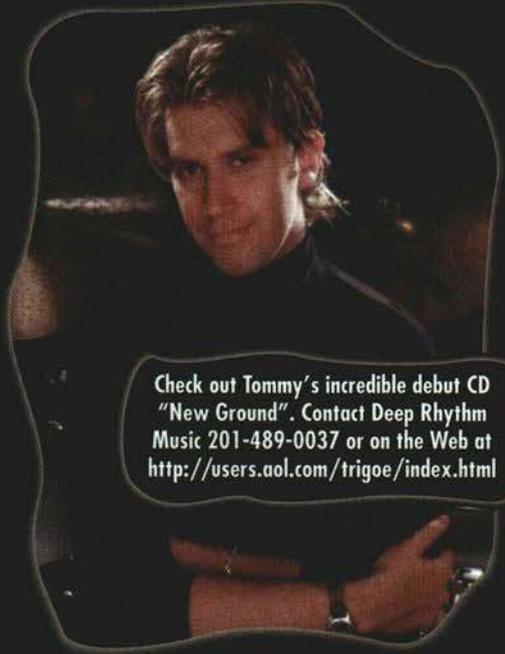
Tommy's Set-up:

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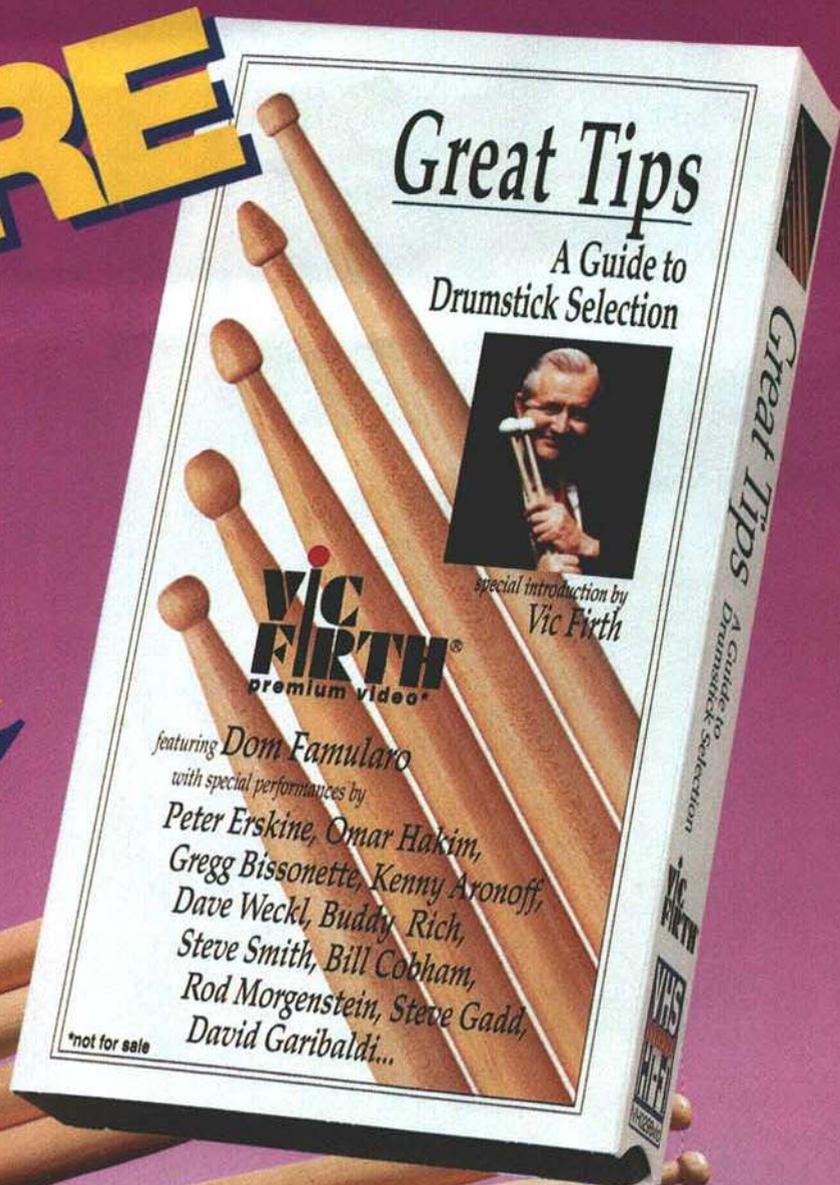
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The Butthole Surfers'

King Coffey

When King Coffey joined forces with the weirdest punk band in Texas, he never thought he'd have a career as a Butthole Surfer. Fifteen years later, the band has enjoyed a major modern-rock hit with "Pepper." Coffey is the proud owner of an independent record company, Trance Syndicate, and the drummer has a side project, Drain, devoted to sampling and electronic experimentation.

"We're sort of the flavor of the moment, but I'll take that," Coffey says with a chuckle. "We've gone through every other phase in our paltry career, and any diversions are entertaining. But what I find curious is people who think we're just like any other commercial radio band."

Well, not quite. The Butthole Surfers have long been devoted to a noisy and warped style of psychedelic punk that's alternately disorienting, disturbing, and amusing. Shows used to feature nude go-go dancers and autopsy films projected over the group as Coffey and Theresa (just "Theresa") played the drums standing side by side. ("I'd play the kick part on a floor tom with one hand and snare with the other while Theresa added fills," Coffey says.) These days, Coffey sits on his own, behind a conventional set. The dancers and films are gone, but the swirling lights, smoke, and general mayhem remain.

"We're kind of amazed that we've become a precision rock kind of thing," Coffey says. "What's really strange is that we have to play 'Pepper' live. 'Pepper' was a full-on experiment in the studio, and we weren't even thinking of playing it live because it has to be played to a click. The whole thing is a sequence. I've played to a click in the studio, but live, it was hell at first. Now I really dig it. It takes me back to when I was playing with Theresa. I had to loosen up a bit and realize that I was really playing with something else, and even though it's a machine, I'm still interacting with it."

A native of Fort Worth, Coffey started Trance Syndicate in 1990 to record other Texas bands that weren't being heard. "When I first got into punk rock in the late '70s, I was taken with the whole idea that you could do anything, and you didn't have to know what you were doing to join a band or have a club, a record label, or a fanzine," he says. "Before punk rock, Texas music means a lot to me, and that's Texas that put out records. Texas music scene as I see it."

Trance Syndicate's releases have included recordings by Bedhead, Sixteen Deluxe, Roky Erickson of the legendary 13th Floor Elevators (a major influence on the Buttholes), and, of course, Coffey's one-man band, Drain. But despite the label's success, he doesn't foresee a time when he'd leave the Butthole Surfers to concentrate on the business.

"In the next few months, I could be a monk somewhere in Thailand and maybe the Western world will never see me again," Coffey says. "But given my gregarious nature and the fact that making records is still a lot of fun, I'll probably be making music as long as I'm capable of doing it."

Jim DeRogatis

SLY DUNBAR

When the face of Sly Dunbar appeared on the cover of *Modern Drummer* magazine some twelve years ago, it was an indication of the level of respect he had achieved as the percussive half of the rhythm section of Black Uhuru—one of the most successful Jamaican groups ever.

With bassman Robbie Shakespeare, Dunbar had synthesized what was then known as the "cutting edge" style of reggae—a merging of rock and R&B with reggae from the Jamaican perspective. Since those times, Dunbar's career has continued to grow, although he has gradually moved from the drumseat into the producer's chair at his studio, the Mixing Lab, and the associated Taxi label.

Dunbar's current efforts are focused on legitimizing Jamaican dancehall as a music with longevity. "I look at dancehall as part of the lowest form of music," he says. "I think rock steady is the best form, 'cause we have songs. So we can do the same thing for dancehall if we just work on it, 'cause rock steady came to that level. And I think it can work if you

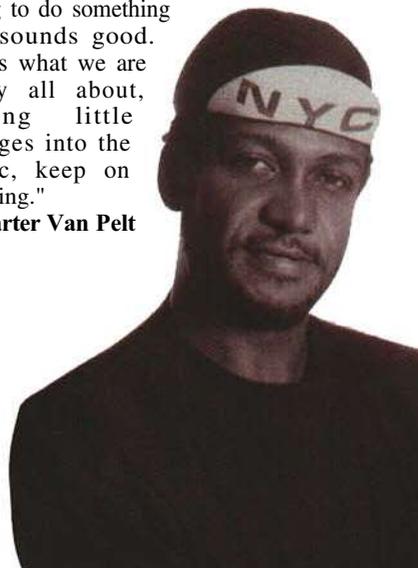
get the singers into it." Sly explains that the work of Chaka Demus & Pliers, who hit in 1993 with "Murder She Wrote," was an important stage in the development he is seeking. "Some dancehall is a one-hit thing, then it's over. But I want to take dancehall and make it last forever."

The trend in dancehall production since the mid-'80s has been towards programmed rhythms. Sly spends plenty of time with an Akai 3000, but he says it has its drawbacks. "What is lacking in Jamaican music now is you're not getting the real soul of Jamaican records as you used to get—the way you would listen to a drummer and say, 'This fill is wicked.' You don't hear that no more. We try not to lose the regular live session sound."

Sly encourages his engineers to experiment, take chances, and always search for the next sound. He elaborates on a number of current production trends. "What's going to happen now is merging the dancehall with R&B and country & western—just to make it different. Some of the engineers are trying to do so many

mixes, and they start merging a dancehall beat with a soul type of keyboard, and it's working. And we're going into samba, the Brazil kind of rhythms. We're going to incorporate the whole of that. You might not sell a million copies or even ten thousand, but if people see what you're trying to do, they'll probably appreciate the musicians trying to do something that sounds good. That's what we are really all about, putting little changes into the music, keep on updating."

Carter Van Pelt



George DuBoise

RHYTHM KING

Tony Braunagel

For Tony Braunagel, parting company with singer Bonnie Raitt after seven years in the drum chair wasn't easy. "I had to adjust in the beginning," says Braunagel of Raitt's 1990 decision to disband her touring band and regroup with new faces. "Some people can get hung up on it and not move forward. For me it was a therapeutic experience."

The forty-seven-year-old Los Angeles R&B, soul, and rock drummer always responded whenever Raitt called for a road trip. What he found after life with Bonnie was time for his own projects. First, he started playing with several local bands, including soul-rockers Jack Mack & the Heart Attack. A one-time member of the China Club's house band, Braunagel soon found himself propelling grooves for actor-singer Jim Belushi at the House Of Blues. The group, which includes ex-Raitt guitarist Johnny Lee Schell and current Raitt

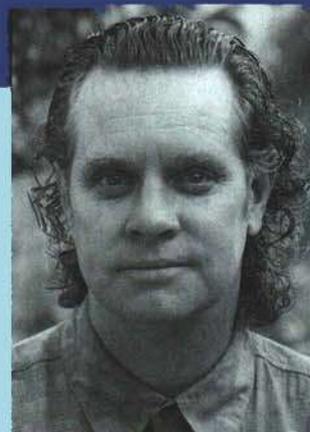
keyboardist Glen Clark, will appear as part of *It's Good To Be King*, a pilot sitcom for the ABC network.

Braunagel, who once turned down the chance to drum for Huey Lewis & the News, also resumed composing—writing songs and regional jingles. Producing also appears to be part of his emerging resume. "I'm always in the A&R state of mind when I hear some bands," says Braunagel, who's interested in recording guitarist Jake Andrews, a sixteen-year-old Jimmy Vaughan-like wunderkind from Austin, Texas.

Meanwhile, Braunagel returned to the studio, where his crackling backbeat surfaced with legendary blues singer Taj Mahal. (Los Angeles-based producer John Porter called Braunagel to play on Taj's 1993 *Dancing The Blues* and 1995's *Phantom Blues*.) To hawk the *Phantom* album, Taj took the band out for a few weekend shows last year. "From the moment we hit the first downbeat it just locked," says Braunagel of his first road gigs in six years. What started as a few promotional shows, however, became full-blown concert appearances at the Monterey Jazz Festival and the H.O.R.D.E. Festival. In November, Braunagel backed Taj in Germany, where the singer staged a reunion of his late 1960s Fillmore East recording, *The Real Thing*, with Howard Johnson's Gravity! tuba choir.

Working with Taj always sends Braunagel back to basics, studying blues and soul drummers, such as Fred Below and Al Jackson, Jr. "Although I have my own way of playing, I still go back to the old cats," Braunagel says. "And Taj is the real thing. We're not talking about someone pretending to do this music. I'm getting an opportunity to work with a legend."

Charles Levin



The Blues Groove

The Newsboys' Peter Furler

The Newsboys saw value in lively, theatrical concerts long before they adopted Christian values. Today, though, drummer Peter Furler says the madness and message go hand-in-hand. "We have a bunch of moving lights, and we're running video on this tour," Furler explained this past summer as the Newsboys began supporting their latest record, *Take Me To Your Leader*. "It started in our early years in Australia. When people paid ten dollars to see you, if you didn't put on a good show, you took a beer bottle in the head. So even though we're Christians, the entertainment value doesn't have to slip away. Now when people see us, they expect a good show and music that maybe goes a little deeper than the average rock 'n' roll."

The Newsboys didn't begin as a Christian band in 1986, when they plied their music in the Australian club scene. (Furler has since moved from Australia to Franklin, Tennessee.) Soon after forming, though, a couple of members discovered Christianity, and the rest of the band followed. Writing songs with Christian themes was simply a natural progression, said Furler, who has been the group's primary songwriter for the past three albums.

On *Take Me To Your Leader*, the group's sixth disc overall and first with Virgin Records, the Newsboys continue in the style that has made them a fixture not just in contemporary Christian music, but in modern alternative and pop circles. "I wouldn't even want anyone to hear our first three records anymore. As a band, we've made all our mistakes in public, and I'm happy to report we're making good pop records now. We've been fortunate to have that crossover audience, but we still have our guard up. You never know when that next beer bottle's gonna fly at you."

Mart Peiken

Christian Drummer From Down Under



Glen Sobel is on the road with Gary Hoey after a recent tour with Impellitteri. He can also be heard on their recent release, as well as on releases by Jennifer Batten and Saga.

Denny Fongheiser has recently finished a forty-four-date arena tour with the Japanese rock band B'z. Since returning home, he's been in the studio with Richard Page, Phil Cody, and Kim Hill, as well as recording for Disney movies *Timon And Phumba* and *The Mighty Ducks*. He's also recorded the soundtrack for *Dear God*.

Max Roach is among the list of musicians on the recently released Rhino collection *Yardbird Suite: The Ultimate Charlie Parker Collection*.

Ben Perowski is on Spanish Fly's second album, *Fly By Night*.

Willie "Big Eyes" Smith is on Mark Hummel's *Heart Of Chicago*.

Ringo Starr is putting together his "All Starr" band for what he says will be his last tour.

Bob Danielson has signed on for another year with *Beach Blanket Babylon* in San Francisco. At twenty-three years, the show is the longest-running musical revue in theater history.

Sue Hadjopoulos was recently in the studio recording projects with They Might Be Giants and Joe Jackson.

Bill Bruford recently completed a CD sample package of his drumming, which includes his work on acoustic drums, percussion, and electronic percussion, playing riffs, lines, odd meters—a veritable A-to-Z of Bruford stuff. It is titled *Packet Of Three*, because of its availability in three formats: CD audio, CD ROM, and MIDIfile. In other news, Bill will begin working on a new studio album with King Crimson in May.

Congratulations to Roy Haynes on his being given the *Chevalier Arts et Lettres*, the most prestigious fine arts award in France.

Congratulations also to Connie and Jack Gavin on the birth of their daughter, Cheyenne Jane.



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Marilyn Manson's Ginger Fish



In a now infamous night at New York's Irving Plaza, Marilyn Manson (the band and the leader share the same name) were nearing the end of their set when a nightly ritual of violence occurred. Into that phase of the evening, when the band played their "destruction songs," Marilyn, the self-described "antichrist superstar," picked up a weighty microphone stand and began smashing the drums. Tom-toms exploded into splinters, cymbals flew off their stands, but drummer Ginger Fish kept playing what was left.

As Manson seemed lost in this flurry of blows, the base of the mic' stand connected with the side of Fish's head. Backing off as Fish hit the floor face down, Manson nonchalantly walked away. For five minutes the crowd remained silent, until Fish showed signs of life and was carried off stage by the road crew. An unusual occurrence on an otherwise typical tour? Not quite.

Marilyn Manson is a singular breed of rock artist. Picking up where Alice Cooper left off, Manson's credo is based on his goal to conquer the world. Though a recent Rolling Stone piece avoided any analysis of the troubling nature of Manson as role model and media icon, his band represents a new plateau on the rock scene. Some kids throw mud at their band of choice while the band spits back. Manson not only abuses the crowd and himself, he attacks his own bandmembers. Some see this as the ultimate theater or the ultimate rock 'n' roll rebellion: annihilation as entertainment.

Theater aside, *Antichrist Superstar* is a brilliant album of crushing, distorted rhythms and harrowing melodies. Illustrating a theme of rebirth and power, its songs draw on punk, industrial, glam, prog, and metal with a uniquely twisted bent.

Drummer Ginger Fish's contribution to Manson's theater of hate is the result of years playing everything from show tunes to orchestra standards, from big band to Top-40, from original music to well-grooved cover tunes. The son of a crooner and a dancer, Fish has now reached his life's goal: He's a rock star with the world at his feet. He's also a talented drummer, adept at manipulating machines and playing drums while dodging nightly assaults on his person.

by Ken Micallef

photos by Robert Hakalski

KM: Your drumming is very creative, flashy, and funky within the scope of Manson's music. Do you and the bassist take a traditional role in creating your parts?

GF: Most of this album was written with me. Twiggy Ramirez, and Manson sitting in a room bouncing ideas off each other. Manson plays drums himself, and so does Twiggy. Being a drummer. I get all the bad drummer jokes, but nothing affects me. I like my role in the band, and I like everybody in the band. It's a "keep your friends close, but keep your enemies closer" mentality. I don't flinch, even though the band is very mentally and physically abusive. Even the stage show in itself is very abusive. Tomorrow night I'm getting a new set of drums because my last set didn't make it through the last show. A mic' stand with a fifteen-pound base can put one big hole in the bass drum.

KM: Is all this worth it?

GF: There is a sick amusement to it all. The band is fun, and the music is challenging. Manson envisions everything: he sees everything. Some people call that a dictatorship, some call it one man's vision. He's great at what he does. He's not going off

half-cocked. He knows exactly what is going on.

KM: How did Marilyn Manson hear of you?

GF: I was always a first-call drummer in the southern Florida area, but I had given up on the scene and moved to Las Vegas in '95. Just as my unemployment ran out in Vegas, I got a call from Manson. Two weeks later I'm on the road with them.

I wasn't on the first album, but after they called me. I learned it in a weekend, then made a videotape of myself playing the music and sent it to them. They flew

"I have to know what Manson's going to say, what he's thinking. If I miss a cue I'm liable to get a mic' stand thrown at my skull."



me out that week to meet them, and *boom bang*, I went from homeless unemployment to being on the tour bus.

KM: What's your personal background?

GF: I was born in Boston. My parents were entertainers, so we moved a lot. My mom danced in the Little Rascals' chorus. My dad is a crooner. They made a living, but there's not much retirement in the music business. Anything I do in music is me paying back their dedication to the arts. I went to high school in Las Vegas, then got out and became a carnival barker for two years. But I played the drums before I could walk. I came out of my mom banging with spoons. I played the Partridge Family toy kits. In Boston, I took drums in the second and third grade. In the seventh grade, I started playing in pit bands, and I learned to read music. I did the marching thing too: drum corps for three years, and college corps at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. It was a great experience; no drummer should pass it up. I also played in the Nevada All-State Big Band. By my senior year of high school I had finished my regular curriculum early, so I had all music classes. I never left the band room.

Being in Vegas for high school was a trip. We backed up Paul Anka and Barry Manilow for two weeks. I also went to the University of Palm Beach for music, but I got sick of teachers trying to tell me how to make it in music, when *they* obviously hadn't. I left school to tour with a Top-40 band in the mid-'80s. When I got tired of that I went to South Florida. I did a house gig in Pompano, then another in Daytona Beach.

Being successful in that scene had a lot to do with image. You

have to look the part...be a team player...the whole thing. Some drummers don't have a clue, or don't know about electronics. I've always dealt with machines, from the Korg *Super Percussion* machine to the Commodore 64 to the Macs and the Apples. I used to do all the sequencing for my bands. That was a crazy time.

Being a drummer, you have to play everything. For example, my parents were theater buffs. They bought a theater in Orlando, and I started playing for the shows. We did *Company*, *Chicago*, *No No Nanette*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *The Merry Widow*, *A Chorus Line*. My parents and I did it all.

KM: I hear a little Neil Peart and Stephen Perkins influence in your drumming. Who else has inspired you?

GF: Besides playing with the Partridge Family albums, I would set up and play for the kindergarten kids, doing "Smoke On The Water." But up to this day I'm still searching for that great drum influence. I dig Terry Bozzio; I like his tapes, where I can really listen to him. But being a great drummer means being part of the song. All the Zappa stuff with Bozzio and Colaiuta kicks ass. And the guys in this band have turned me on to Cop Shoot Cop, Black Sabbath, and Pantera. Vinnie Paul has a good feel with his double bass. I play double bass; on the last tour I was doing the Dennis Chambers thing: playing the hi-hat and the left bass drum pedal with the same foot. It let me pop the hi-hat and still play the bass drum. On the record I played a lot of the songs single-footed. I love Chambers on John Scofield's *Pick Hits*. And I like track three on Dave Weckl's *Master Plan*. The timing and the feel of that makes me crazy. Weckl is great.

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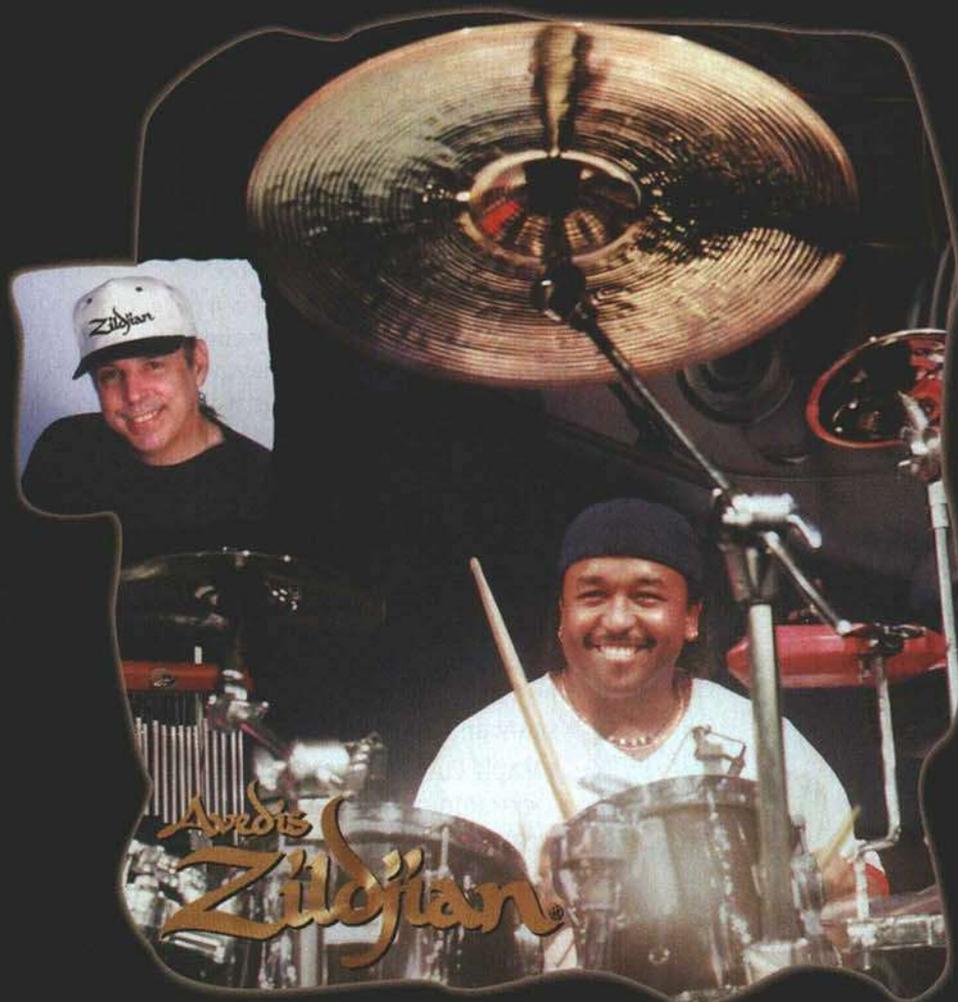
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"When I first heard Carter, it literally stopped me in my tracks."

Nashville Great Eddie Bayers on Carter Beauford



"I was in the studio between sessions, and a video had just come on. I literally stopped in my tracks. 'Who is that?' I just had to know who it was. It was the Dave Matthews Band. Carter's playing is so unique and individual. He plays with so much intensity, it inspires me to play."

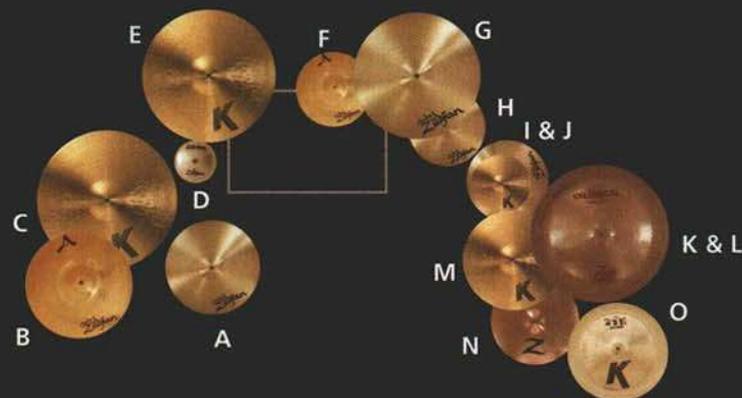
Carter Beauford on Zildjian:

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"To me, my A's and Z's represent a rock influence; I use them when I'm jamming around Dave's and Stefan's riffs. When Boyd is doing his bluegrass-cajun thing, I like to lay into my A Custom's. And when Leroi is doing his 'Coltrane' the K's do it for me."

Carter's Set-up:

- | | | |
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| B. 16" A Custom Crash | G. 18" A Medium Crash | L. 18" Oriental China Trash on top of K |
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KM: Did Manson call while you were doing the theater gigs?

GF: No, I did house gigs, went back to Top-40, and did several original bands. I did some albums at a studio in New Jersey where the Plasmatics, Jean-Luc Ponty, and Rainbow had recorded. None of those records went anywhere, even though I was always in good bands. I paid my dues, living in warehouses to rehearse. Then the money ran out and I lived in my car for a year and a half. I gave up on Florida. I wanted to move out west to see my family and maybe get work as a hired gun. Before I left I was in a restaurant and ran into one of Manson's road managers. He called me two months later in Vegas to audition. Three years of playing originals and twenty years of playing covers led to that. It was the dedication to play originals that made it.

KM: You mentioned earlier that you're incorporating a sampler on stage.

GF: We have the samples from hell on stage. I play with an Akai *MFC 3000*, and the keyboardist is using a Kurzweil. Everything is in time and clocked to a certain point. We have to play with a click track. I know what beat we're on in a song at all times. Sometimes it's free-form, but the majority of the gig is playing with the computers and the click tracks. I check all my gear myself before we go on stage. So many things can go wrong with MIDI and samples; every little button can screw up a thousand things. If I didn't know how to use machines and play with click tracks, they would never have hired me. Everything is computerized now, even the effects on the vocals.

KM: Do you practice on the road?

GF: I carry a Gibraltar practice set on the bus, and I set it up a few hours before each show. I have to push myself because the music is pushing me. It's great to be able to play the show, but what happens when new songs come along and you can't play them? It's all well and good to be able to program the parts, but when you're in front of an audience, you do have to play the drums. And there are so many distractions. I used to think that playing perfectly was the most important thing. When I joined Manson I was playing *too* perfectly. They said I played like a drum machine. They wanted me to sloppy it up. Luckily, it's easier for a good player to play sloppy than for a sloppy player to play good. I'm still playing with machines without having the hi-hat so tight.

KM: It sounds like you're an air traffic controller.

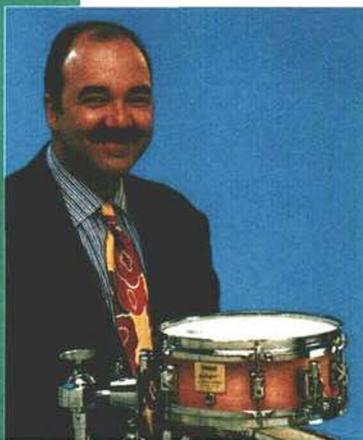
GF: Exactly. I've got two Tascam *DA88* DATs running the opening and the end of the show; I have to know if they are functioning properly throughout the show. "Is it on? Is it off?" While that's being cued, I've got the *MPC 3000* running different songs, and that has to work.

KM: What happens when they *don't* work?

GF: I've been lucky so far. The band is a *band*, even with all the machines that we use. But it can be weird to be in the middle of some crazy beat while I'm wearing headphones, and to hear some odd noise erupt from my system. Is it the samplers...the keyboards...Manson throwing something over my shoulder? I've got to think of twenty things in the same split second. It's all spur-of-the-moment.

KM: Is your live playing more extreme than the album?

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"Peter is one of the great cymbal players of all time."

Armand Zildjian on Peter Erskine



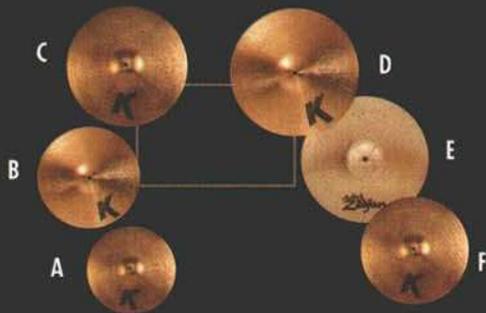
"Since I first heard him with Stan Kenton when he was 18 years old, I have enjoyed watching Peter grow into the mature, versatile musician that he is today. He is an exceptional drummer, and in my opinion, one of the great cymbal players of all time."



Photo: Shigeru Uchiyama

Peter's Set-up:

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Peter Erskine on Zildjian:

"A Zildjian cymbal to me, is like a Stradivarius. They are exquisite instruments and have multiple facets. I think of my K Pre-Aged Dry Ride just like a violin in a sense, it's not something I'm just going to clang away on."

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GF: Yes. When I first did rehearsals, they said, "Add a cymbal here, play full-on here with no dynamics, do full-on tom bashing." It was a little adjustment period. The new album was written with me around, it's written for songs. It's not about showoff parts. I think the drumming on the album is really good; I don't think it's extreme in any way. But it is extreme to pull it off live. I'm trying to play double bass drums at 186 bpm—while objects are flying over my shoulder. At the same time, I've got an Akai MPC 3000 sampler next to me that can be wrecked at any second.

KM: That must give your drumming an incredible edge.

GF: I play as hard as I can. I'm not worried about scratching my drums, obviously. I've got plenty of everything. Playing this music and this presentation is full-blown anarchy. When things start flying I get to a boiling point.

KM: Let's talk about your playing on *Antichrist Superstar*. On "Cryptorchid" you create this crunchy, distorted drum intro. Much of the drumming sounds simulated, or put through effects.

GF: The "Cryptorchid" drums are ran through the *Digitools*. They took one bar and looped it, and ran it through individual amps, which they miked. Drums that *sound* like drums are really a drum machine; drums that sound like a *machine* are really me. It's ridiculous. I played in a garage and the engineer miked a Porsche in there. They opened the car doors and used it like an echo chamber.

KM: "Deformography" sounds like a beatbox.

GF: I wasn't even a part of that. I did all my tracks and went back to Vegas. Then they finished the album with some new songs.

Trent Reznor and Chris Vrenna from Nine Inch Nails were there. Chris is on "Kinderfeld" and "Reflecting God." "Deformography" is programmed. On "Wormboy," I played drums and programmed, then they used both versions. They wanted a Devo-esque thing. The initial hi-hat is supposed to be longer and extended, but the programmed hi-hat was real short, which gave it a stiff, mechanical sound. It drove me insane at first, but then I realized where they were coming from. Trent Reznor doesn't make mistakes; he knows exactly what he wants.

KM: But it all sounds like you. You play funky patterns, drop beats, or displace rhythms. I think many drummers would've approached it with a straighter feel.

GF: The drum breaks in "Wormboy" are things I used to work on years ago. "Antichrist Superstar" began much busier, drum-wise, but it became simpler and simpler. I was thinking of Monster Magnet on that, because that was what we were listening to on the road bus. "Angel With The Scab Wings" was initially a busier song too. It began with a shuffling bass drum, then it got very straight and militant.

We had the songs done before we got to the studio, but we hadn't practiced them. As we ran song after song, we saw what would work. Some songs are played with a click, some aren't. Sometimes I play the verse to a song, but not the chorus, or vice versa. Sometimes I'm playing with a computer; they went for something totally different. So I'll be playing, then I'll drop out and the machine will pick up. I have to be note-perfect.

KM: You're very sharp on everything.

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GF: The typical person can't decipher what's happening, it's all just drums to them. I play everything live and [keyboardist] Pogo plays toms too. On a couple tunes I have the drum machine fattening up my toms. I have ddrum triggers on my snare and bass drum, but I'm not using them for anything special. And I have the sampler going. I'm running all that, *and* playing the drums, and also trying to read Manson's mind. He will change a part in a song, and I have to know what to cue. There has to be telepathy happening; I have to know what Manson's going to say, what he's thinking. If I miss a cue I'm liable to get a mic' stand thrown at my skull. The drums make a nice pretty mess when you wreck 'em. It could be a perfect night and I play my ass off, and I still get hit. [laughs]

KM: I hope you're well paid.

GF: I'm an equal member of the band. I made a deal when I came in. Though I made my contribution to the songs, I can't copyright a drum beat. I've learned a lot about the music business.

KM: What's your current drumkit setup?

GF: It's a maple-finish, eight-piece Premier *Signia* kit with 16x22 bass drums, a 7 1/2"-deep maple snare drum, 10", 12", and 13" rack toms, and 16" and 15" floor toms, one on either side. Premier is the only kit I've ever played, even when I was a little kid. I play Zildjian Z series cymbals, with one Meinl *Raker* over my hi-hat.

KM: What are your musical goals? Where would you like to be in ten years?

GF: I'd like to make a difference. There are only so many unique drummers. I love touring. I love when drummers come out On top,

'cause obviously drummers are the underdogs in every phase of the business. You don't get copyrights unless you're writing the music. I heard Dave Abbruzzese got fired from Pearl Jam simply because he had a good attitude. Eddie Vedder didn't like that Dave was out doing clinics and teaching students. He was just being positive about music and drumming.

KM: What does a night off involve for Marilyn Manson and band?

GF: Well, about a dozen people from the last four towns have been following the band and causing havoc and creating any act that might amuse us.

KM: What's been the most amusing?

GF: Full-on puking, pit diving, nudity, and everybody slam-dancing on the bus to where the bus was rocking back and forth going down the highway. About as rude as it gets with money flying in the air.

KM: So is this a comedy act or is Marilyn Manson as wild as it seems?

GF: We live it 24/7. Anything for amusement. On stage you're there to amuse people. Once you're off stage, people are there to amuse you. It creates a tainted view of the world. We've seen it all. If things don't get crazy we become bored. Last night, Manson set a table on fire in a club we were at. People thought it was insane, but I just thought it was a regular old night.



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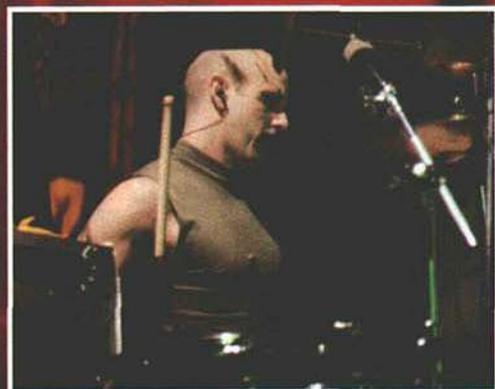
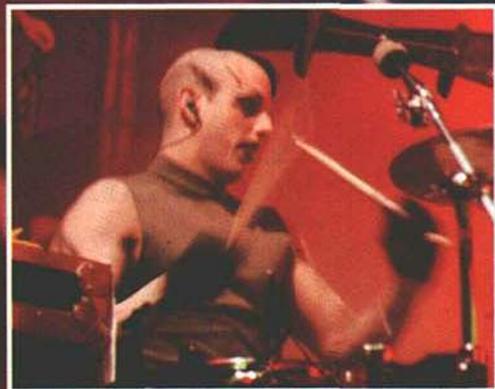
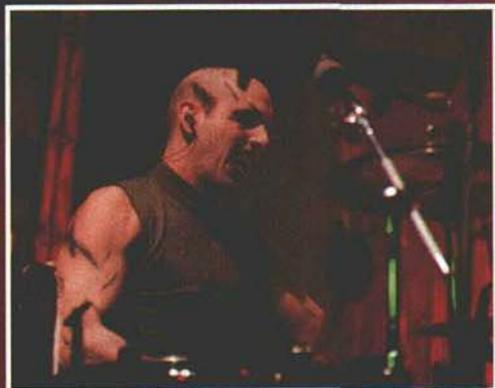
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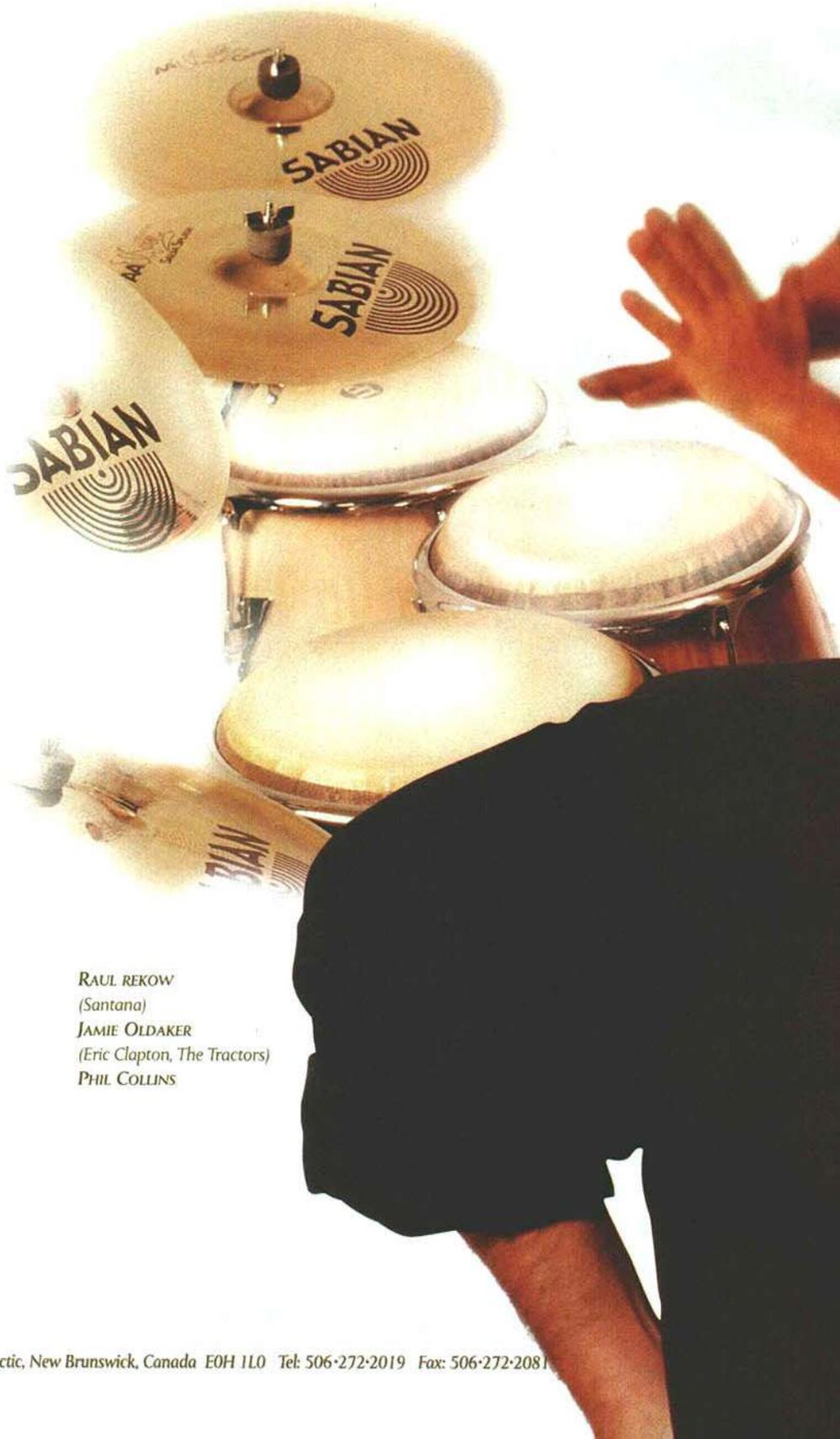
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Jon Fishman

Q I really enjoy your drumming and the music of Phish (especially the band's wacky sense of humor). I have three quick questions. First, how was your snare drum tuned on the live album *A Live One* (It sounds great!) Second, where was the song "You Enjoy Myself" on that album recorded? Third, can you offer any tips about drumming and singing? (I'm a drummer who wishes to do a fair amount of backup singing in my band.)

Mike Bell
Scottsdale, AZ

A Thanks for your questions and your interest in my drumming and our music. On *A Live One* my snare drum is a 7x14 15-ply birch Eames shell with Ludwig die-cast rims. It's really heavy and deep, with a soft wood sound, but it's tuned pretty high. My tech uses a tension-measuring device and then hones in by ear to a good tone. Generally the tension is the same on both top and bottom heads. We use coated Remo *Ambassador* batters and clear *Diplomat* snare-side heads.

To answer your second question, "You Enjoy Myself" was recorded from one of the two nights we played in San Diego, California. (I think it was the second night.) We didn't play it both nights, so it should be easy to figure out.

It's funny that you should ask about drumming and singing, as I had not had

Michael Shrieve

Q I've always enjoyed your wide range of musical colors. I really love the *Stiletto* album, and I'd like to know what cymbals you used—especially on "Bella Coola." What a beautiful ride! Also, where can I get a copy of your *In Suspect Terrain*?

Piro Mittig
El Cerrito, CA



Q I've been searching endlessly for two of your albums that are apparently out of print. They are your own *Stiletto* and Jonas Hellborg's *Octave Of The Holy Innocents*. How can I obtain them? Also, how did you achieve that "pitch shift" kick-drum effect on the latter album? Is the front head tuned *lower* than the batter? What about muffling?

James Fitzsimmons
Vancouver, BC, Canada

A Regrettably, both *In Suspect Terrain* and *Stiletto* are out of print. (I've sent Piro a personal copy of *In Suspect Terrain*, but even I don't have *Stiletto*.)

To answer Piro's question about the cymbals on "Bella Coola," I used all Sabian cymbals, including an 18" flat ride, an 18" AA crash, a 20" AA Chinese, and AA hi-hats. I found the flat ride to have a uniquely distinct attack that I liked for that record.

Regarding James' question: There was no special tuning used to get the "pitch-shift" sound you refer to. The bass drum used (which, by the way, was Anton Fier's drum) was a 24" drum. Jonas Hellborg employed some innovative production to get that open, breathy sound. Also, there are intermittent bass-drum sounds coming from my KAT pads. As far as muffling went, I must say that both Jonas and I both like to let drums breathe as much as possible, so there was no muffling used.

many singing parts in our group until this past year. I've been playing for twenty-three years, but never really had much desire to sing while playing. I opted to concentrate on the drumming instead. But

in 1996 we learned and performed the Talking Heads album *Remain In Light* for our annual Halloween concert "musical costume." Because there are so many vocal lines, we all had to take a full plate of both

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instrumental and vocal parts. I had the lead on two tunes and supporting parts on five others. It opened up a whole new world for me—giving me more confidence in both drumming *and* singing and helping me to see that they weren't such separate worlds as I thought they were. Since then I have enthusiastically taken on more vocal parts in our original music. Thus, something that used to intimidate me has become a welcome addition to my overall musical experience—and a new direction in which to expand my limitations.

It feels great to sing and even better to find that it's not as hard as you thought it would be to sing while playing the drums. Though I'm pretty new at it, here are the tips I can offer: To begin with, when starting out it helps to think of your voice as a fifth "limb" within your drumming, rather than as a separate entity. It's just a more flexible limb, able to sustain one sound over a series of beats. If you look at it as part of the whole picture rather than as a separate thing, it will help you to see how the lyrics fall in syncopation with your bodily movements. When you become familiar and comfortable with how the lyrics fall in line with the drum beat (as

part of the drum beat), then your voice will loosen up and you will be able to sing the lyrics *as* lyrics—with emotional value and inflection that mean something. In the end, the lyrics should not be stymied by bar lines and rhythmic notation. (Neither should the drum groove, for that matter, but that's a whole other can-o-worms.)

As an exercise, I suggest learning all the vocal parts on *Remain In Light* and practicing them while playing the drums along with the CD. Actually, you can do this with almost *any* CD or song that has a relatively straight, repetitive, hypnotic, or simple groove or drum-beat syncopation. Those qualities are what made *Remain In Light* a good choice for me. The drum parts remain the same throughout the songs, so I could concentrate on learning lyrics while not disturbing the beat I was playing. The drum beat became a good, solid reference point for leaning. It was kind of like "Singing And Drumming 101." It helped me build my confidence quickly and to realize that this craft wasn't as hard as I thought it would be. I started to have fun and to get inspired. So start simply, and enjoy it! Good luck.

Mike Bordin

Q I'd like to know about your cymbal setup for the recording of Faith No More's *King For A Day* album. The cymbals have a different sound than on your previous albums. I read about your setup on those earlier albums in a previous issue of *MD*. But I really dig this "different" sound, and I'd like to know what different cymbals you used.

Richard Boye
via Internet

A Well, Richard, the cymbal setup on *King For A Day* was exactly the same as I used on all previous FNM recordings (except for a single splash hit). So, believe it or not, the difference in sound must all be down to the recording engineer, the producer, recording techniques, etc. I'm sorry there's no magical "night and day"-type secret. I guess the lesson is to pay attention to mic' selection, miking positions, and other basics (such as tracking, room quality, and such). Thanks for asking, and best wishes!



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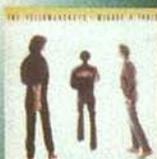
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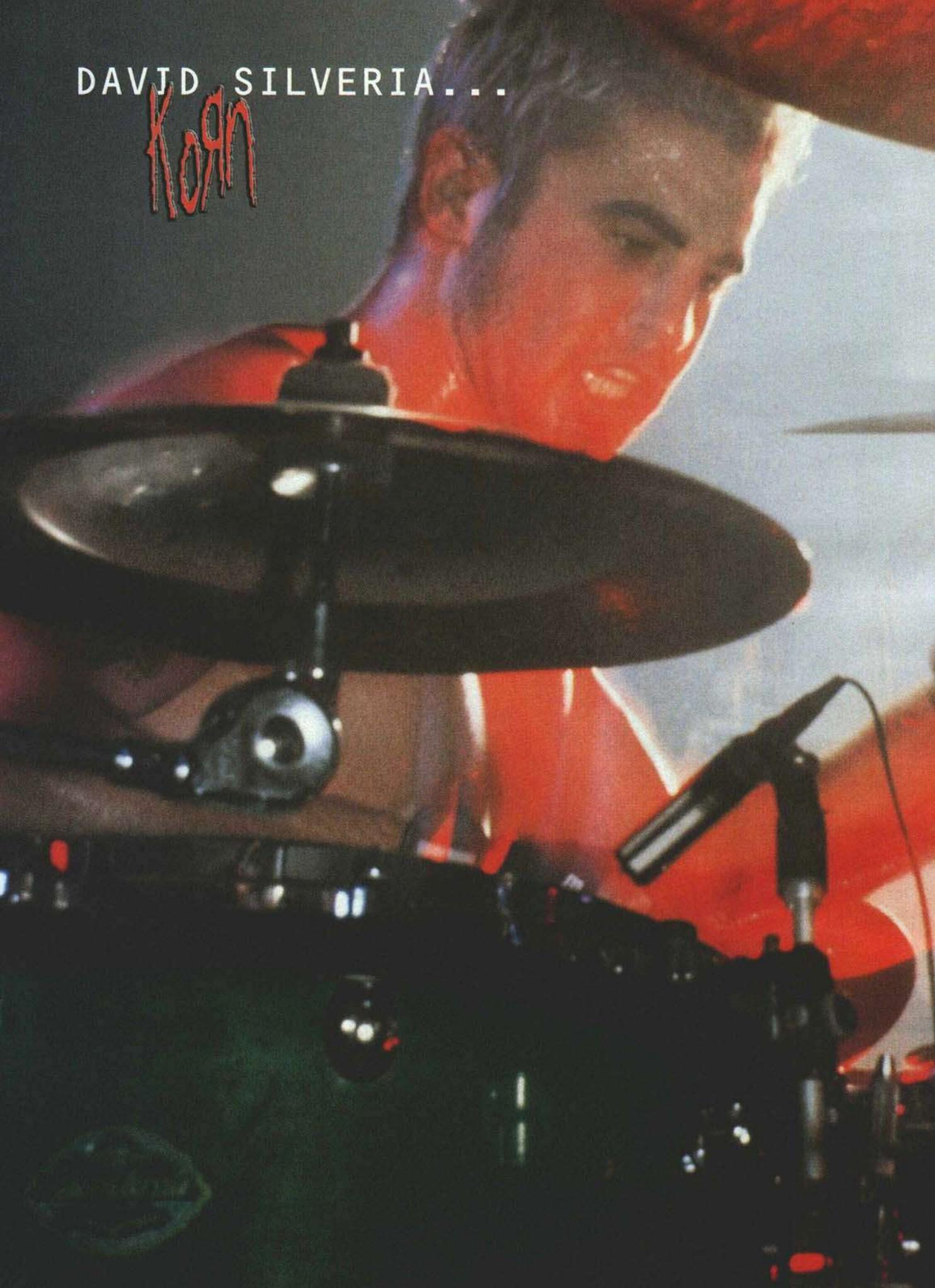
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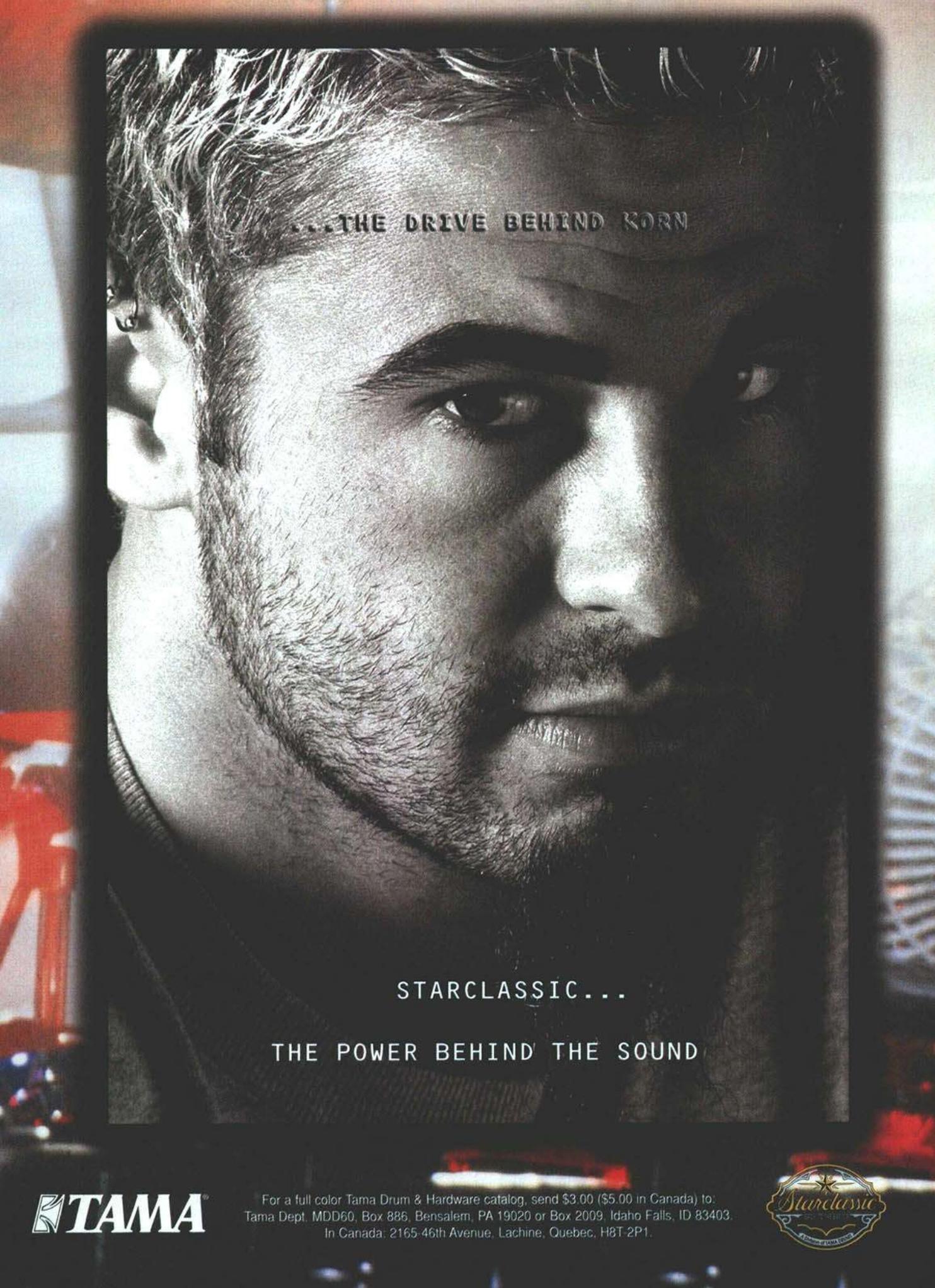
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Taming A Stainless Steel Drumkit

Q I own what I believe to be a 1970s Ludwig stainless-steel five-piece kit. The mounted toms are 12" and 13", with a 16" floor tom and a 22" bass drum. The toms all have Remo *Pinstripes* on the batter side and Evans *Resonants* on the bottom. The bass drum has a Remo *Fiberskyn* head on the batter side and a *CS* (black dot) head on the front with a 4"-diameter hole. I use minimal padding inside.

To put it simply, I'm having trouble getting a satisfactory sound out of these drums. I prefer a drum sound with some sustain, but not the ringing I get from these metal drums. The music I play ranges from jazz to light rock, and I am not a heavy hitter. Would I be able to achieve a warmer sound if I went with *Fiberskyns* on the batter sides of all of the toms? I removed all of the internal mufflers from the toms because all they did was produce an annoying rattle.

I understand the benefits of a wood drum

shell, but for sentimental reasons I'd like to keep this kit rather than invest in a new one. I've had these drums for eighteen years, and any information you can provide on improving their sound would be greatly appreciated.

David Gobert
via Internet

A First of all, it's important that you do realize that metal-shelled drums were designed to be more reflective, resonant, and "ringy" than wood-shelled drums. That's the nature of the beast, and there is only so much you can do to "tame" that beast. Here's what we suggest:

1. Yes, *Fiberskyn* heads will produce a warmer, mellower sound than any head made only of plastic film. (*Fiberskyn 3* heads combine plastic film with polyspun fibers for a calf-like sound.) The heads come in three weights; the thicker the head, the darker and more mellow the response.
2. Unfortunately, head selection alone is not likely to reduce the ringing quality that

is inherent in stainless-steel shells. You may need to muffle the resonance of the shells themselves. This can be achieved effectively by affixing sound-absorbing material to the insides of the shells. Try taping soft cotton diapers, thick terrycloth towels, or flannel blankets to the inside surface of each shell. Fold the "muffling" loosely to take advantage of air space in between the layers. You might also try self-adhesive feminine maxi-pads, which utilize thick cotton batting, are a convenient size, and are easy to install. The idea is to absorb some of the sound that is so actively bounced around within a stainless-steel drumshell.

Drum History Sources

Q I really enjoyed the January '97 *It's Questionable* with all the vintage drum questions answered by Harry Cangany. How can I learn more about the history of drums and the various manufacturers?

Chuck Coronato
Hillcrest, NJ

HISTORIC

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A great place to start is Harry's book *The Great American Drums And The Companies That Made Them, 1920-1969*, which is published by Modern Drummer Publications and distributed by Hal Leonard Corp. It's available in most music stores that carry books, and in many bookstores. It can also be ordered through the "MD Library" ads that frequently appear in issues of *Modern Drummer*.

Other drum history books include *Gretsch!*, by Chet Falzerano, *The Complete History Of The Leedy Drum Company*, by Rob Cook, and *History Of The Ludwig Drum Company*, by Paul Schmidt. If these are not available in your local music store, you can obtain them from Rebeats Vintage Drum Products, P.O. Box 6, Alma, MI 48801, (517) 463-4757.

Apollo Drums

Q I have a set of Apollo drums that I picked up in a trade. I like them very much, but I can't find any information on their origin. Can you help?

Jim Shields
via Internet

A Apollo drums are a budget brand manufactured in Taiwan by the Tafenglong Mfg. Co. They have been available through a variety of U.S. distributors over the years.

Drum Sounds In Different Rooms

Q My band practices in different places. I have found that when we practice in a smaller room, my drums get a small, tight sound that does not sound good. How would I make the sound of my drums better in a smaller room?

Patrick Laurin
via Internet

A The size of a given room affects the sound you hear from your drums because of the reflection of sound waves. A big room allows the sound to travel farther and develop more fully (especially in the lower frequencies, which have longer sound waves) before it is reflected back to you. (This is why drummers and engineers often put mic's far away from drums in the studio, to capture the "room sound.") Conversely, a smaller room bounces the

sound back at you more quickly—often before it has time to fully develop its resonance and low frequencies. Short of pushing the walls back, the best you can do to overcome this problem is to re-tune the drums for maximum low end, projection, and resonance. Be aware that when you do this, the tuning that works in the small room may sound overly "boomy" or "muddy" the next time you play in a large room. You'll need to adjust your tuning yet again. It's a never-ending problem that has plagued drummers since the invention of the drumset.

Left Hand Exercises

Q What is a good source of exercises for the left hand? I've been drumming for fifteen years, and my left is still not as strong as my right.

Paul Corio
via Internet

A Most drum instructors agree that the same exercises that strengthen one hand will work to strengthen the other. The problem is that most drummers *begin* with

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Toms Emperor Clear/Ambassador Clear	Ambassador & Emperor Clear/Ambassador Clear	Fiberskyn 3 FD/Ambassador Clear

one hand stronger than the other, and as they practice they work on both hands simultaneously—which develops both hands but perpetuates the dominant relationship of one over the other. What most drummers do *not* do is work on their weaker hand independently—and to a greater degree—than they do on their stronger hand.

We recommend taking any good drumming text that presents a variety of rhythmic patterns. (The late Ted Reed's *Synco-*

pation would be an excellent choice.) Play through the exercises using only your weaker hand. Initially, the concept is one of physical development, so you needn't be *too* concerned with flawless execution. You just want to be able to get through the exercises without that hand feeling like it's going to fall off. As the weaker hand becomes stronger, you can turn your attention to actually playing the exercises with precise execution of the timing, accents, etc.

Another thing you can do to strengthen

your weaker hand is to use it in your daily life in situations where you would normally use your dominant hand. Use it to pick things up, to brush your teeth, to operate the TV remote control—anything at all that will increase its strength, coordination, mobility, and sensitivity. This process takes time, so don't be impatient. But a dedicated campaign of "hand re-training" will ultimately achieve the balanced hand abilities that you seek.



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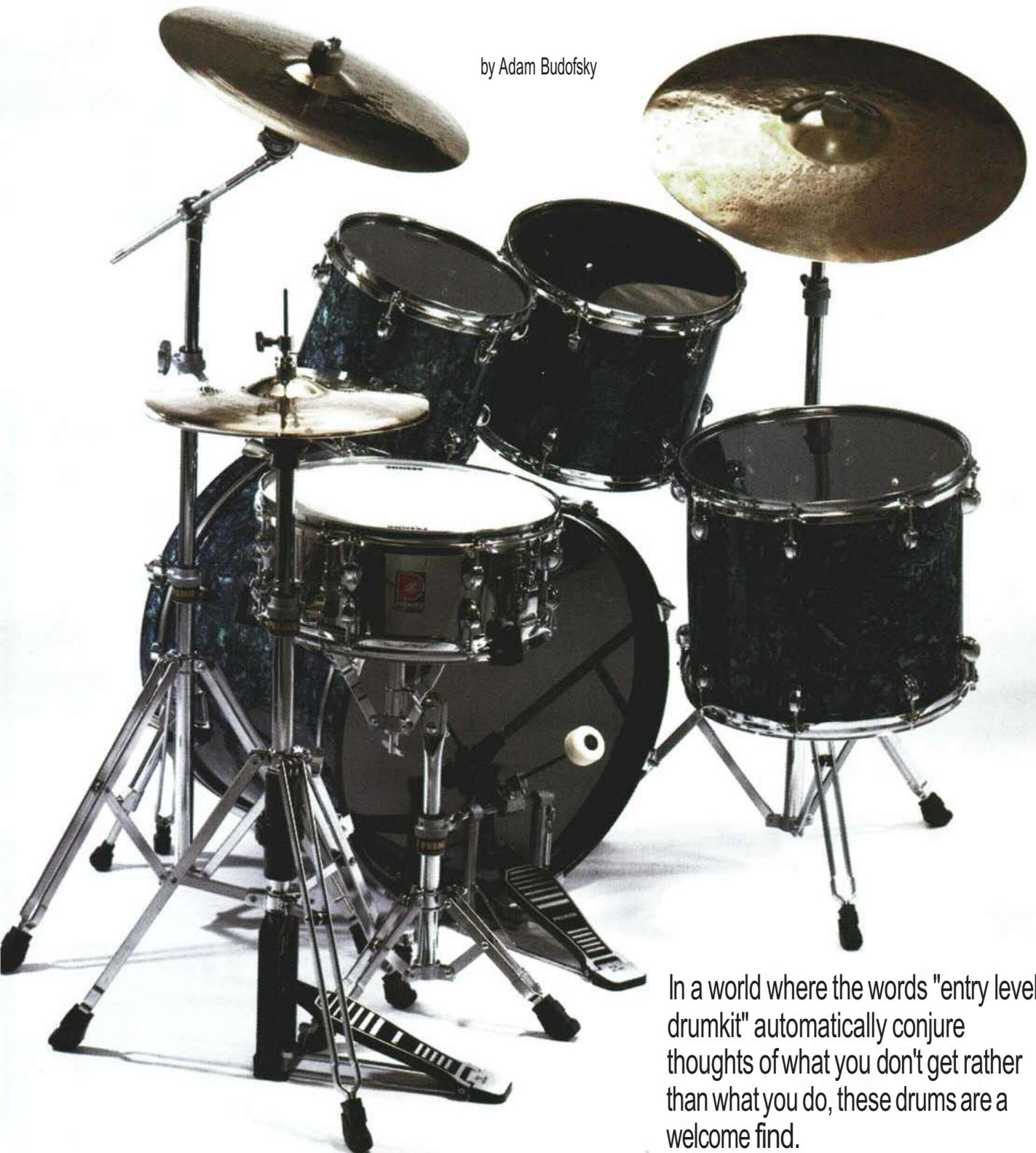
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Premier APK Drums

by Adam Budofsky



In a world where the words "entry level drumkit" automatically conjure thoughts of what you don't get rather than what you do, these drums are a welcome find.

Let's cut right to the chase: Despite the *APK* line's place at the bottom of Premier's drumkit hierarchy, no drummer in *any* situation should be embarrassed playing these drums. It seems that rather than starting with an existing line and subtracting features until a particular price point was met, Premier instead *began* with the features they feel every drummer should enjoy, skipped the frills, and came up with a sensible yet respectable package.

Actually...packages, plural. One of the nice things about the *APK* drums is that they are available in what Premier refers to as drum and hardware "packs," resulting in a reasonable variety of hardware, shell-size, and finish options. This allows drummers to feel like they've created a somewhat personal setup, rather than simply purchasing that same old kit found in every drum shop window. We'll look closer at those options in a minute, but first let's examine *APK*'s standard features.

Shells, Heads, And Snare

APK bass drum and tom shells are made of eucalyptus and meranti. No, this combination will not supply the warmth of maple, nor the unique projection and tone of birch. As a drummer, you might as well realize right now that you'll need to make a fairly serious investment for the benefits those woods will bring you. But you should also understand that depending on your purposes, maple or birch might be luxuries you could easily live without—at least for the time being, and possibly for a *long* time.

What *APK* shells offer is a good, strong, consistent starting point on which Premier places quality hardware, unique coverings, and professional heads. We'll talk hardware and finishes later, but now is a good time to discuss heads.

Premier shipped our *APK* kit with clear, single-ply *CL Extra* batter heads (roughly the equivalent of Remo *Ambassadors*) and *CL Response* bottom heads (a bit thinner) on the toms, and a *CL Extra* batter on the bass drum, with a black *CL Extra* logo head without a hole on the front. These are the same heads that came standard on a Premier *Genista* kit we tried out a while back, and they sounded great on those drums. Here, however, they made the toms sound a bit thin and left the bass drum lacking punch. So we thickened up the sound a notch by putting on some clear Remo *Emperors* on top (we left the bottoms alone), which resulted in a nice, round, controlled sound. It took slightly more effort to get the sound out of the drums with this combination, but it's nothing your average drummer couldn't provide.

On the bass drum we replaced the heads with an Evans *Genera EQ Resonant Ambient* on front and a Remo *Powerstroke 3* on back, which resulted in a very nice, punchy sound with a bit of crack as well—all without any holes being cut or muffling devices attached (per se; each head has its own built-in muffling properties). I'm sure none of these head manufacturers would suggest their products be used in conjunction with their competitors' in this manner, but, hey, experimentation results in strange bedfellows, and the ends should always justify the means in matters of sound. The end result here was a very strong overall kit sound.

The *APK* snare drum measures 5 1/2 x 14 and features a chrome-plated steel shell, eight lugs per side, Premier's simple but very usable 642 throw-off, *TR8* triple-flanged hoops, 20-strand snares, and an *SD Heavy* batter head. Nothing special here, but nothing cheesy, either. The batter head featured a white center dot, pre-

sumably to absorb a high amount of "battering," so to speak, but the drum seemed to behave better when we switched it with a coated *Ambassador*—more sensitive and less choked—and added the included muffling ring. As far as standard entry-level snare drums go, this drum should be well proud of itself.

Hardware And Drum Choices

As mentioned earlier, *APK* kits are available in four general configurations: a five-piece standard kit, a five-piece "fusion 20" kit (20" bass drum), a five-piece "fusion 22" kit (22" bass drum), and a six-piece fusion kit. Each of these is available in a basic setup, which includes a hi-hat stand, snare stand, cymbal stand, and bass drum pedal from Premier's single-braced 3000 series; an optional cymbal boom stand is also available. All configurations come with a *RokLok* double tom holder, which wisely includes a receptacle for an optional cymbal boom.

WHAT'S HOT

- top-quality hardware and appointments
- unique and attractive finishes
- competitive price
- several kit choices

WHAT'S NOT

- factory head choices mask potentially good tone

The standard five-piece shell pack includes 10x12 and 11x13 toms, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 16x22 bass drum. The five-piece fusion shell packs include 9x10, 10x12, and 12x14 toms (the latter with a multi-clamp and L-arm to attach it to the cymbal stand as a "hanging" floor tom), and either 20" or 22" bass drums. And the six-piece fusion shell pack includes 9x10 and 10x12 rack toms, 12x14 and 14x16 hanging floor toms, and a 16x22 bass drum (with an optional twin floor-tom stand).

The kit pictured here is a five-piece "fusion" setup with 5000 series double-braced hardware (which can be ordered a la carte), in Premier's "opalescent azure" covered finish. Our review kit was identical except that it included the standard 3000 series hardware pack without the optional cymbal boom. The first thing everybody who saw the kit noticed was the finish, which successfully walks the line between coolly outlandish and strangely classy. Other finishes (*APK* drums are only available in covered finishes) include the equally unusual and striking "indigo quartz," as well as the more conventional black, red, and white.

Our kit's 3000 hardware was more than tough enough to sustain some serious bashing. A good test in this department is to see how well a hanging floor tom stand stays put, and this one wasn't going anywhere, even when attacked with a sustained industrial Bo Diddley beat. The *RokLok* tom holder is the same item used on every Premier line, up to their top-rated *Signia* and *Genista* kits, and its strength and flexibility are admirable. *APK*'s bass drum spurs are likewise the same high-quality items found on other Premier models. The snare stand held its ground well, and the hi-hat and bass drum pedals, though no-frills, are very respectably constructed little machines. One could easily imagine this hard-

ware lasting for many years.

Other professional and well-thought-out appointments include drumkey-operated tension bolts on the bass drum (for easy pack-up), a snare basket that can accommodate even the smallest of snare drums (see the following review), Premier's famously beautiful chrome plating, lug receivers that suggest anything but entry-

level looks and quality, and inlaid bass drum hoops. All of these niceties are made even...nicer...by the *APK*'s more than competitive price. Our test kit lists at \$1,395; an optional cymbal boom stand adds \$120 to the total. Considering the high quality, flexibility, and unique appearance the *APK* line offers, this would have to be seen as an excellent deal on every level.

Premier Soprano, Mezzo Soprano, And Effex Snare Drums

by Adam Budofsky

Premier's literature doesn't make detailed claims for any of their new snare drums—which is not necessarily a bad thing. If you approach these unique instruments with an open mind, you'll find they reveal unusual sounds, and suggest unusual applications.

The 6x10 *Soprano* and 6x12 *Mezzo Soprano* drums continue a recent trend in drum-dom toward small, "auxiliary" snare drums. Downsizing in the opposite manner from the common piccolo-type drum, these snares feature tiny diameters and more conventional depths, which would normally suggest less snare sensitivity and a bit more body than, say, your average 4x14 or 4x13 piccolo. But the drums' shells, made from a combination of birch and eucalyptus, tend toward a "harder," less warm sound than the drums would probably deliver if they were made of maple. Again, as on the *APK* snare, I exchanged the factory-installed *SD* "white dot" heads with Remo white-coated *Ambassadors*, which brought out a little more warmth while retaining the drums' surprisingly good sensitivity.

Once you get over the strange effect the combination of depth and wood type creates, the resultant sound can be

quite fun to experiment with. Tuned up real high, these babies enter bongo land, and you begin to imagine the possibilities of incorporating *both* of them into your setup—perhaps working them, snares off, into linear patterns a la Stephen Perkins, Terry Bozzio, or Bobby Previte. Back down the tension a little, pop on some muffling rings, and turn the snares on, and thoughts of hip-hop breakdowns and strange and colorful bridge sections come to mind. (By the way, switching snares on and off is made very easy with Premier's 642 throw-off.)

I can't say I would recommend either one of these drums as an all-purpose snare, though the 12" model might sound pretty good to drummers who are already using piccolos regularly. And on a real funky gig that prompts a lot of ghost notes and ringy, away-from-center backbeats, either one of them could conceivably be used as a high-percentage target. Using them on 2 and 4 for slow ballads is pushing things a bit too far, though. And keep in mind that rim clicks on drums of these dimensions are just plain weird or impossible (depending on your open-mindedness, I suppose).

Soprano and *Mezzo Soprano* snare drums feature six pairs of low-mass tension fittings (the same as



Soprano (top) and *Mezzo Soprano* snare drums

those found on *APK* drums), triple-flanged hoops, and 16-strand snares, and come only in a natural finish. At \$329 for the *Soprano* and \$340 for the *Mezzo Soprano*, one or both would make an interesting addition to almost any drummer's arsenal.

I found Premier's 7x12 *Effex* snare drum somewhat misleadingly named. The drum does exhibit some of the same "special effect" qualities as the *Mezzo Soprano* and *Soprano* snares, but, perhaps because of its slightly deeper, all-maple shell, it works better as an all-purpose snare than either of those. Yet again, the standard head on this drum was a white-coated *SD*, which doesn't seem to be very sensitive to the *Effex* drum's potential, either. This



Effex snare drum

time I slapped on a Remo *FiberSkyn 3 FA* batter head, in hopes of attaining some warm, classic tones—and I was right! With a muffling ring in place, I got a real good pop with nice body, yet with the high pitch the 12" diameter naturally provides. Sensitivity was excellent, and the tuning range was wide.

Other features include six high-tension lug fittings, a beautiful natural "topaz" finish, triple-flange hoops, and Premier's *610* quick-release throwoff, which allows you to change the snare-side head without altering snare tension. As yet another option in the auxiliary category, or simply as a potential main snare, check out this unusual drum; you might be surprised at what you'll hear. The *Effex* snare lists at \$499.

DW Craviotto Exotic Snare Drums

by Rick Van Horn

Beauty is in the eye-and ear-of the beholder.
So behold!

Single-piece, steam-bent drumshells have been around since the "classic" days of drum manufacturing. (Probably the best-known example of the process is the Slingerland *Radio King*.) The principle behind this construction is that a single body resonates better than a composite body. (Think of marimba and xylophone bars, or Latin claves, and you get the idea.) Now, not everybody *agrees* with that principle, but it has enough proponents that several drum companies today offer "solid-shell" models. DW has offered *Craviotto* steam-bent maple-shell drums for some time; now they're offering custom-crafted 5 1/2x14 ten-lug drums in "exotic" woods: cherry, oak, and walnut, in addition to maple. (The maple version differs from the "standard" *Craviotto* maples in terms of size, hardware options, and finish.) We were sent one of each for testing.

WHAT'S HOT

- unparalleled quality and craftsmanship
- natural look of fine woodcrafting
- distinctive, individual sounds
- you get what you pay for

WHAT'S NOT

- you pay for what you get

Construction And Appearance

Each drum begins as a single plank of seasoned wood. Drum-builder Johnny Craviotto hand-selects these planks, cures and trues them, and then steam-bends them into drumshells. Matching reinforcing rings are added to help stabilize and strengthen the shell. Then Johnny precision-cuts the bearing edges and snare beds.

Each shell is sanded and sealed, then finished with a light coat of DW's natural satin oil. The object is to allow the look of the natural wood grain to show to best advantage. Owing to the organic nature of wood and the variety of its grain structure, no two drums will look alike (even within the same wood type).

Individuality in appearance is a major element of this line.

Once the shells are completed, the buyer has a choice of hardware. The "standard" hardware package includes DW's familiar round lugs and steel triple-flanged rims—all plated in gleaming brass. However, drums are also available in limited quantities with optional vintage-style solid-brass tube lugs and a choice of the brass-plated steel rims, brass-plated die-cast rims, or engraved solid-brass rims. (For the record, our test group included DW lugs and steel rims on the oak and walnut models, tube lugs and a die-cast rim on the maple model, and tube lugs and an engraved brass rim on the cherry model.)

All drums feature DW's drop-style snare throw-off and *TruePitch* tuning system (which utilizes finer threads than those of other major manufacturers). Tension rods and the throw-off are brass-plated. DW's *Coated/Controlled* batter heads and *Crystal/Clear* snare-side heads are standard.



From left: oak, maple, cherry, and walnut drums with standard DW lugs

When a drum is the work of someone reputed to be a master craftsman—as Johnny Craviotto is—it's fair to hold that work to a very high standard. So I disassembled each drum to really examine Johnny's craftsmanship. The only word I can use to describe it is "exquisite." Use any image you like to represent the finest in woodworking—cabinetmaker, luthier, sculptor—Johnny's work fits right in. Each drum we were sent was absolutely flawless.

The look of each drum was distinctive. The natural oil used on the drums doesn't provide any gloss or sheen; it just serves to intensify the beauty of the natural grain. You can actually feel the irregularities of the grain with your finger; there's no layer of lacquer or other material covering the wood. The cherry model, with its tube lugs and engraved brass hoop, had a particularly "vintage" look—very classy and rich. The oak and walnut drums, with their DW lugs and steel hoops, looked quite contemporary, with their darker grain beautifully offset by the brass-plated hardware. The maple drum had a more familiar look, since tube lugs are fairly common these days—but who doesn't love the natural beauty of blond maple wood and brass tube lugs?

Sound

Just as the *Craviotto Exotics* differ among themselves in terms of appearance, so do they differ in terms of sound. The nuances of grain patterns, density, and mass within each individual board create different nuances of sound. Again, that's one of the appeals of such high-end drums: They aren't going to sound like anyone else's drum. Of course, that same quality makes them a little hard to describe, and perhaps a little hard to market. Aren't there any *general* characteristics that *can* be described



This engraved solid-brass rim is optional on *Craviotto Exotics*, as are die-cast rims.

among the various models?

Yes, there are. And DW has already gone to a great deal of research to enable them to actually graph the performance that you might expect out of snare drums of each wood type in the *Exotic* line. (They actually include a graph of these performance parameters in the flyer for the series.)

In a nutshell, the parameters DW lists are: tone, pitch, decay, response, and sensitivity. Assuming that all other factors (head selection, tuning, stick impact, etc.) are equal, the cherry drum is described as being at the "upper end" of the graph, with a bright tone, high pitch, short decay, fast response, and great sensitivity. The walnut drum is at the lower end of the graph, with

a dark tone, low pitch, long decay, slow response, and less sensitivity. The maple drum is listed as having medium-bright tone, medium-low pitch, long decay, medium-slow response, and greater-than-medium sensitivity. The oak drum is shown with a medium-dark tone, medium-high pitch, short decay, medium-fast response, and less-than-medium sensitivity.

That's a pretty specific approach to describing drum sounds.



From left: maple, oak, walnut, and cherry drums with optional brass lugs

The question is, did my testing bear out DW's research? The answer is: yes and no.

I started by tuning each drum to get what I thought was the best possible sound out of it—without regard to any of the others. (This was made easier by DW's *TruePitch* tuning lugs, by the way.) Only after I was satisfied with each drum individually did I start to compare them as a group. I played them each with and without a *Zero-Ring*, in order to get a perception of the resonance and projection of each shell when the drum was unmuffled, versus the clarity and snare sensitivity of the drum when muffled. I made careful note of the optimum pitch range of each drum vis-a-vis the head tension. I tweaked...I torqued. And I came to the following conclusions:

DW is right on the money in terms of tone and pitch differentials. The cherry drum was high and bright, with lots of cut. The walnut drum was quite deep and dark (and remember, my head tensioning and general tuning was pretty much the same, drum to drum). In fact, the walnut drum was actually a little *too* deep for my taste, but it would probably thrill drummers who like a dark, warm sound (and it would unquestionably make a fabulous "fat-back" drum).

The oak and maple drums were my favorites, with perhaps a little lean towards the oak. Both were bright and crisp, with the oak being a little brighter than I expected, based on DW's graph. But it also had a mid- to low-end quality underlying that crispness that I especially liked. The maple was very clean and pure, with an excellent attack sound (that was, perhaps, enhanced by its die-cast rims). I'd favor the maple for more high-end, but I'd say that the oak drum had a little more overall character.

When it comes to some of DW's other parameters, the differences I found were subtle, if there at all. Decay time, response, and snare sensitivity tended to depend more on other factors than on what wood was used. (In other words, I could get the same decay, response, and sensitivity in any given drum by adjusting how the heads were tuned and how the snares were tensioned.) Actually, I see this as positive rather than negative. I might select a different wood shell for its tone, pitch range, and resonance, but I'd want *any* given drum to give me my preference in decay, response, and snare sensitivity. To my mind those are functional variables, rather than musical characteristics.

Conclusions And Prices

With all of their visual and aural aesthetic qualities, coupled with Johnny Craviotto's loving-care approach to their construction, it's not surprising that the DW *Craviotto Exotic* snares are pricey. But with the sound, beauty, and authentic individuality that they provide, it's hard to doubt that you're getting your money's worth. The maple *Exotic* lists for \$995; oak, walnut, or cherry drums are priced at \$1,270. Charges for options mentioned earlier include: \$120 extra for solid-brass vintage-style tube lugs, \$130 extra for brass-plated die-cast rims, and \$240 extra for engraved solid-brass rims.



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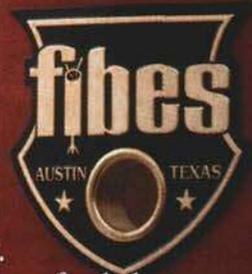
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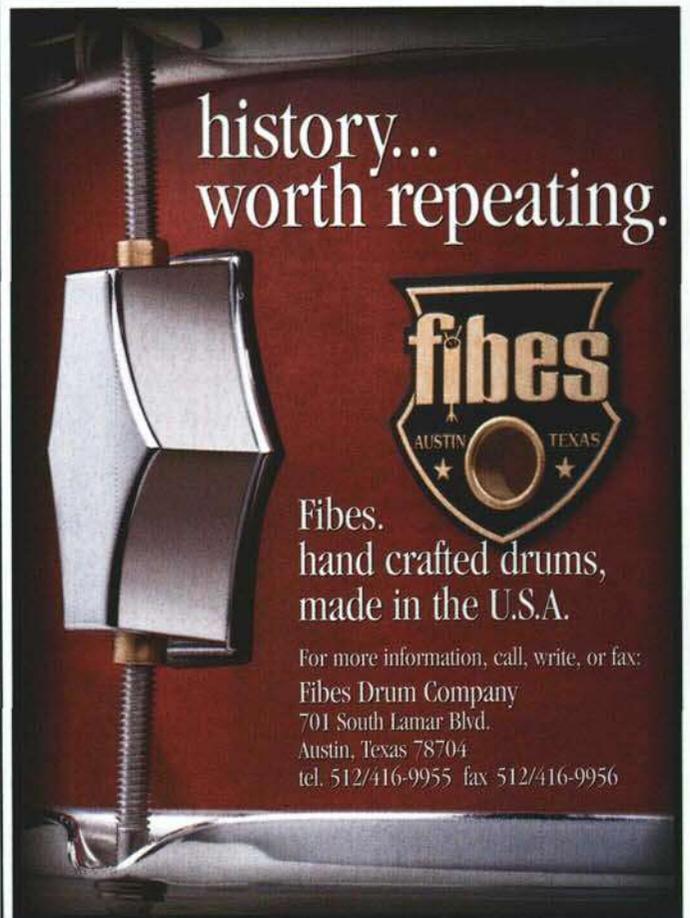
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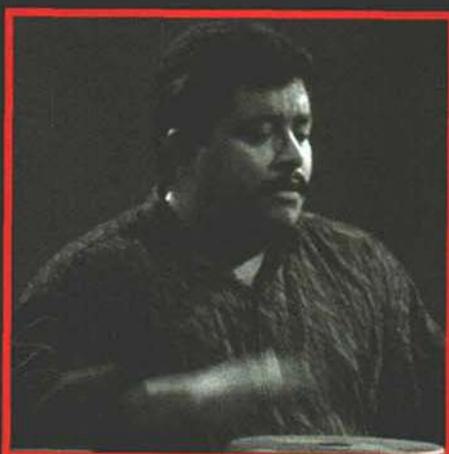
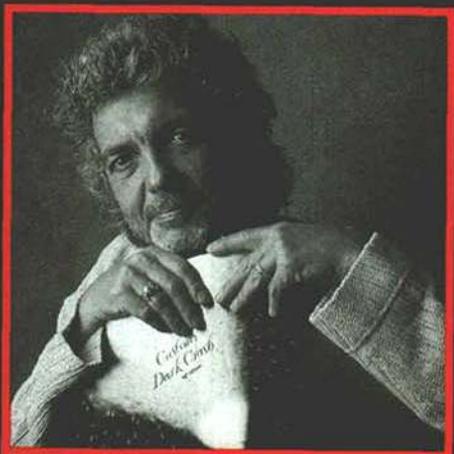
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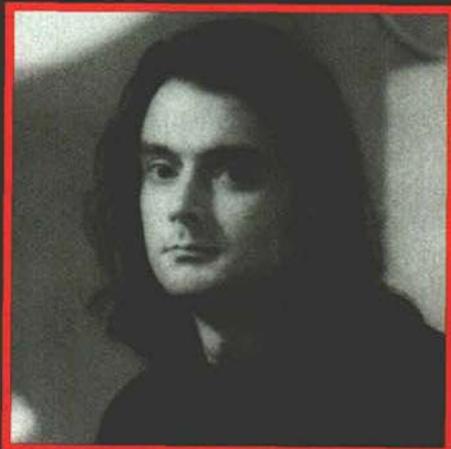
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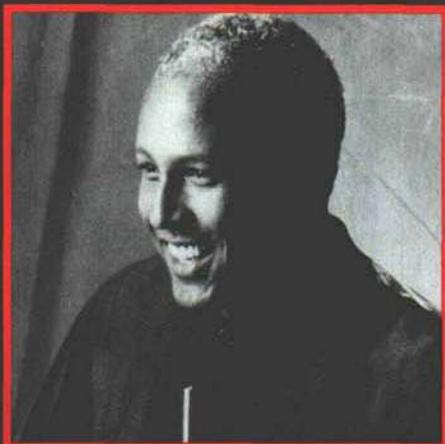
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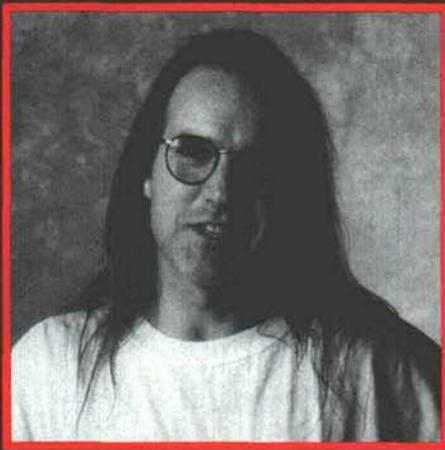
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Brian Blade

by Ken Micallef

"You're not up there playing music to glorify yourself; it should be for a much larger reason.

The music has been given to us, and you have to think of it as a gift."

photos by Michel Varisco

Knife Across The Rhythm

Anyone who has driven through the southern Badlands, against a deep night sky that looks like black coffee filtered through mud, knows that the states of Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana are one long stretch of skewed Americana. These broad expanses of flatlands and farm towns gave rise to jazz, rock 'n' roll, blues, zydeco, Dixieland, R&B, boogie woogie, and gospel, a cauldron of music borne from slave rhythms and gospel shouts.

Coming from Shreveport, Louisiana, twenty-six-year-old Brian Blade is the talented heir to many southern traditions. Soft-spoken and deeply gracious, he handles straight-ahead, R&B, Dixieland, and pop with equal ease and an individual voice. The son of a Baptist minister, Blade's journey from violinist to tennis pro to drummer with the phenom tenor saxophonist Joshua Redman has been one of faith, conviction, and abundant natural talent.

Nurtured under the watchful eyes of Ellis Marsalis and New Orleans Dixie-drum masters Johnny Vidacovich and Herlin Riley, Blade learned to find his "knit in the blanket" of sounds and styles. Speaking with Blade, you discover his turn of a phrase is not limited to drumming, that his way with words is equal to his gift of rhythm.

At a recent Village Vanguard performance with the Joshua Redman Quartet, Blade pounced on the groove, slapping his cymbals and snare with color and panache. Grinning widely or staring intently,



his love for the music was contagious. *Mood Swing*, *Freedom In The Groove*, *Spirit Of The Moment*—Blade's outstanding work with Redman is well documented.

But it's with the *other* saxophone titan of the era, altoist Kenny Garrett, that Blade seems to truly loosen up and find his voice, at least on recordings. On Garrett's *Black Hope*, Blade explores a variety of rhythms, while *Trilogy* and *Pursuance: The Music Of John Coltrane* are simply amazing performances of jazz intuition, inspiration, and improvisation. *Trilogy* opens with "Delfeayo's Dilemma," a Wynton

Marsalis tune that blisters with salty punctuations and explosions. Blade's debt to Elvin Jones results in cracking snare drum shots, swooping hi-hat fills, whirling triplet figures, and buzz rolls deep enough to sink Lars Ulrich's entire kit. Conversely, "A Time For Love" finds Blade sweeping the snare with lush brush strokes while his cymbals sizzle with colorful mallet strokes.

Brian also performed straight-ahead surgery on sensitive pianist Brad Meldhaus's debut, and swung mightily on Warner Jams, Vol. 1. And back in his New Orleans-groove bag-o-tricks, Blade maneuvers the Dixie press roll on the self-titled *New Orleans Collective*, kicks in a spooky, spacious back-beat on Daniel Lanois' *Sling Blade*, and even plays sweetly on Emmylou Harris's *Wrecking Ball*. And recently, while still working with both Redman and Garrett, Blade completed his dream project, recording what is virtually an album of duets with legendary singer-songwriter Joni Mitchell.

Changing these many hats—jazz, pop, swamp-thang boogie—would be a recipe for disaster on the drums of one less endowed. For Brian, it's just a flick of his switch...Blade.



KM: Seeing you live with Joshua Redman at the Village Vanguard last year reminded me of what a young Elvin Jones probably would have played like if he had been raised in New Orleans instead of Detroit.

BB: Elvin is probably the greatest musical influence on me in terms of expression through an instrument spiritually. The times I've seen him or listened to him on recordings or on films with John Coltrane, just from the first strike of the cymbal, I can't even think drums, it's transcendence. That is something that hopefully through life and blessings I will be able to achieve, that type of realization, that the music is much greater than we know.

It is possible to touch something much deeper inside of ourselves than just hip movement. I am so thankful to Elvin for that inspiration. It's the same with Levon Helm or Keith Moon, though. It's something indescribable and intangible. You don't know what it is, but it can move you to tears.

KM: On Kenny Garrett's *Trilogy*, you play some of the trademark things I associate with Elvin, the buzz rolls into the ride sizzle cymbal, the explosive fills, the hypnotic mallet work.

BB: I don't think it's something I want to avoid, his and Tony's [Williams] influence. They have such an impression beyond the drums. I wouldn't have vocabulary, I couldn't have begun without them. They were

my fathers in terms of the drums.

KM: Are there particular periods of Elvin's playing that you have focused on?

BB: Everything I could get my hands on—all of the Coltrane records, everything Elvin did on Original Jazz Recordings, even *On The Mountain*, which he did with Jan Hammer and Gene Perla—that's kind of a heavy fusion record—to a record he did with Oregon.

Besides Elvin, I listened to as much music as I could get my hands on, whether it had drums on it or not, if it was something I felt I needed to listen to. That was important in terms of education and communication. How can a simple note of music have so much meaning? How do you give a note meaning? Miles could make one note say so much. *That's* what I feel when I hear Elvin or Tony. It's not about a rudiment or having some great drums, it's something within the core.

KM: With Tony and Elvin, and especially Levon Helm, they all have that sense of space in their time feel. How did you get that?

BB: Well, thanks for the compliment. It's really just trying to find your space in the music. Even more than that, it's about moving one's self out of the way of the music so that the music can come forth. I think that is the thread you're trying to realize; it's not something academic.

Hopefully, when you're playing, you're free of thought. The



instrument in itself has so many physical demands. But hopefully, after you've learned those Max Roach solos, you'll be able to forget them and get a tone you can identify with—that you can hear—and try to develop a pulse that identifies you. A simple beat that reflects yourself.

KM: We interviewed Gary Novak recently for *MD*, and he spoke of the same thing, that getting one's self out of the way was something Chick Corea had taught him.

BB: That's also the beauty of my relationship with [Redman pianist] Peter Martin, [Redman bassist] Christopher Thomas, Joshua Redman, Kenny Garrett, and Daniel Lanois. It's such a close rapport that we know that no matter what chances we take, our net is there. I feel somewhat fearless being able to play with these people I love. It allows me to be free. I hope I allow them that same privilege.

KM: You sat down and learned Max Roach solos?

BB: Sure. Those Clifford Brown/Max Roach records, I tried my best. Maybe I should get with Kenny Washington to see how well I did! I went through a period of transcribing them. For Elvin, I did the solo from "All Or Nothing At All" from the Coltrane *Ballads* record. On the intro he achieves a multiplicity of tones. It's so incredible. And "Blueswalk" by Max Roach with Clifford Brown is another one I learned. That's one end of the spectrum. I checked out Levon Helm too. Just when you hear the tone of the Band's "Cripple Creek," when you hear Levon Helm hit that snare drum, it's something else. Like a sensitivity, it lifted my consciousness.

KM: Helm's drumming is very subtle.

BB: It's seemingly very simple, but the depth of what he does and the expression.... I'm also into a French drummer named Christian Vander. He leads a band called Magma, and he's a great composer. I really dig his musical concept. Of course I was also inspired by Johnny Vidacovich, Herlin Riley, Shannon Powell, and Ernie Eily, my heroes from down here in New Orleans. They have that freedom to play no matter what the music is. They can find that thread the music needs. When I heard Johnny Vidacovich in 1981, I knew I needed to be in New Orleans. When I moved here, Ellis Marsalis and others were so giving.

KM: On the *New Orleans Collective* album you sound like you're born and bred in New Orleans, but you're from Shreveport.

BB: I definitely didn't grow up with any Mardi Gras. Shreveport is right at the cusp of Arkansas and Texas, but I had great musicians in my hometown. I heard great bluesmen, and I

played a lot of R&B as well as music in church. My father is a Baptist minister. My first experience is playing with a congregation and choir, knowing that what everyone is singing is most important, not the drumming or the other instruments. We wanted the words to be illuminated, and that made us play that much better.

KM: With Elvin, did you play along with his drumming on records?

BB: I *listened* to the records, trying to isolate every part and portion of what was being played—how Elvin fit into the

Sharp Blades

Drumset: Ayotte Woodhoop

A: 7 x 14 wood snare

B: 9 x 12 tom

C: 14 x 14 floor tom

D: 16 x 16 bass drum

While Brian uses the above drums on jazz gigs with Joshua Redman and Kenny Garrett, he occasionally uses (most recently with Joni Mitchell) a 1970s-era Ludwig kit in white marine pearl finish, consisting of a 14 x 28 bass drum, a 9 x 13 tom, a 16 x 16 floor tom, and a 1940s-era Leedy 7 x 14 snare drum.

Cymbals: Zildjian

1. 16" A hi-hats
2. 20" K (Istanbul) with rivets
3. 24" A (from the '70s)

Sticks: Modern Drum Shop *Joe Cusatis* stick, Regal Tip wire brushes, Vic Firth *General* and Regal Tip *Saul Goodman* 7 model mallets

weave. I never wrote out his solos. I just learned them in an aural sense, physically trying to achieve a sound with that as a reference. The tone of Elvin's cymbals alone really touches something at your center. I just listened intently over and over, trying to sing it, almost like tabla playing.

Though I love Elvin, I'm not trying to replay what he has played. I want to be true to what I hear at the moment. He is going to come out of my playing, but a lot of musicians have had an impact on me.

KM: Do some gigs allow you more freedom than others?

BB: When I started working here, I tried to play the "traditional" gigs very simply, realizing that I wouldn't be able to take liberties—though I now see that there's a lot of freedom in that music. When I hear these brass bands, like Rebirth Brass Band, the beat just runs through you. It's beyond attraction, it's a *need*.

Coming from Shreveport—not having the history of street parades and the culture that New Orleans has—when I got here I became immersed in the community, which is built on the groove. As a drummer, you're at the core of what everyone follows and what your heart clings to—it's the pulse. By taking part in the parades and the Mardi Gras Indian culture, I was able to acclimate myself. The drumming is very mantra-like and hypnotic. Herlin Riley taught me a lot about the grooves.

KM: What *did* Herlin teach you?

BB: He showed me the basic New Orleans beats, and through that I was able to find my own interpretations, to find some semblance of my own voice. I realized I don't have to be so dependent on the hi-hat on 2 and 4; it freed my limbs.

KM: With Redman and Garrett, does one afford you more freedom than the other?

BB: Different people express their freedom differently. With Kenny we've been playing mostly as a quartet. We did a tour with Pat Metheny and Nat Reeves, and one week on tour it really happened for me. I felt everyone moved themselves and the music came through. I didn't want to leave that feeling. It wasn't a single moment, but set after set—I was almost in tears feeling that we were able to touch something. I've had that feeling with Joshua's band as well. It's been a privilege to play with friends.

KM: What struck you about Metheny?

BB: His diligence. He would practice constantly—in the dressing room, before the gig, after the gig. We would play tunes all the time before sound check. I was also struck by his melodic sense and sense of structure, plus he has a great sound. His record with Jaco Pastorius and Bob Moses, *Bright Size Life*,

Bitchin', Badass Blades~On Record

These are the albums Brian says most represent his playing...

Artist	Title	Label
Joshua Redman	Mood Swing	Warner Bros.
Kenny Garrett	Pursuance: The Music Of John Coltrane	Warner Bros.
Kenny Garrett	Black Hope	Warner Bros.
Kevin Hays	Seventh Sense	Blue Note
Emmylou Harris	Wrecking Ball	Asylum

...and these are they ones he listens to most for inspiration

Artist	Title	Drummer
The Band	The Band	Levon Helm
John Coltrane	A Love Supreme	Elvin Jones
Pat Metheny	Bright Size Life	Bob Moses
Magma	Magma Live	Christian Zander
Hank Mobley	Far Away Lands	Billy Higgins
Art Blakey	Ugetsu	Art Blakey
Miles Davis	My Funny Valentine	Tony Williams
Miles Davis	Bitches Brew	Jack DeJohnette, Lenny White, Don Alias
Paul Motian	It Should Have Happened A Long Time Ago	Paul Motian
Stevie Wonder	Innervisions	Stevie Wonder
Herbie Hancock	The Prisoner	Albert "Tootie" Heath

had such a big influence on me.

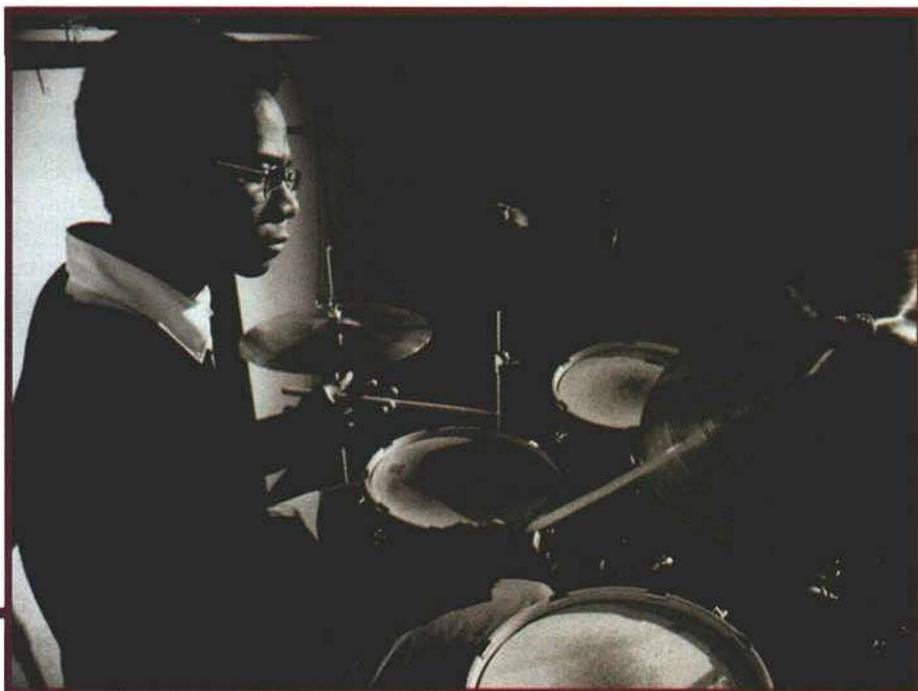
KM: You're working with the two most renowned saxophonists of the day. While Kenny is perceived as being more serious, does the hype and audience reaction given Redman ever bother you?

BB: I think Joshua understands that his audience consists largely of new listeners who are coming to the music, thankfully. Perhaps they haven't heard a lot of jazz. If they can come to the music, then great. Hopefully the "stardom" doesn't spill over into the music; he is aware of that balance. He still plays the horn incredibly, that is my main concern. I know what you mean, though. There are some funny moments with the audience on that live record [the Joshua Redman Quartet's *Spirit Of The Moment Live At The Village Vanguard*].

KM: That response must make you feel good as musicians.

BB: Sometimes you wonder what people are hearing or what they are responding to. Hopefully they experience something that will lift their consciousness, that it's not about hype or anything commercial. It boils down to the spirit. I'm just glad they come to listen.

KM: On Redman's *Freedom In The Groove* album, you play a solo on "Stream



"He's All About The Music"

Musicians On Blade

Of Consciousness" that is very propulsive over the changes. What were you thinking about there?

BB: I'm trying *not* to think so much as just respond to what is around me and make the structure of a piece build and release properly. I didn't feel great about my solo, but I've gotten better since playing the tune live. I've gotten to where I feel the piece with an overall view. It isn't just AABA; it's one melodic statement. I'm always trying to expound on what someone else has said in an earlier solo or what the melody of the piece is based around.

KM: That solo is very un-Elvin; it sounds more like Alex Acuna.

BB: I don't see myself as having a lot of facility. Sometimes just a rimshot on the tom can sum up something, so I'll lay on it if I feel that the tone says something right then. I'll stick with it. If that makes a cohesive statement from me, then I don't have to play a lot of stuff. For one thing, I can't! I'm trying to express myself clearly, and for me that may not involve a lot of words!

KM: How would you contrast Redman and Garrett's time feels?

BB: Both of them play so much saxophone. With Kenny Garrett, there is a certain articulation. He is actually quite a drummer. I've been playing with Joshua on the road so much, so maybe I've pulled him down into my beat conception. Kenny's beat is a little more aggressive.

KM: You're recording the new Joni Mitchell album.

BB: Yes, that is beyond dreams. I've been a fan of hers since I was sixteen. I can sit down with her

Joshua Redman

"When Brian and I played together in Delfeayo Marsalis's band," Joshua Redman says, "I realized he is not only one of the best young drummers I've heard, he's one of the best drummers I'm hearing today, *period*. He was younger than me, yet he already had total command of his instrument—and a great sense of jazz feel and phrasing, too. Now, even outside of jazz, he's one of the most in-demand drummers around. I never expected that he would be able to stay in our band as long as he has. That's a testament to his character and love of music. He could've made more money freelancing, but he's been committed to this band.

"Some great drummers have a tendency to be self-indulgent in their playing in that they use their prowess on the drums to the detriment of the music. Everything that Brian plays is there for a reason, for the sake of the music. That's a very rare quality among drummers. He can play with great intensity and fire, but never get in the way. He's always contributing to the sound of the band.

"On the song 'Streams Of Consciousness,' Brian takes a solo over a very strange time signature, it's 14/4 or 7/2, two bars of five and a bar of four. It's a polymetric song. He plays a solo on this shout chorus over and across all the rhythms we're playing. To hear him play with so much creativity and drive over that difficult time signature is amazing. It's no obstacle to him. Once he feels the groove, the technical problems disappear because he's in the groove. Once he's there, it all just flows.

"I don't know if he'd be happy with this description, but for me the best word to describe Brian is angelic. He's the most sincere, warm, honest, genuine person I've ever met. And though I've never known him to practice the drums, every day on the road the first thing he does when we get to the hotel is to play his guitar for hours. Brian is all about the music."



Eric Roberts

Pat Metheny

"The first time I heard Brian," the guitar great says, "was after Joshua Redman told me about him. 'I just heard the drummer of the future,' he said. When I heard Brian he was everything Josh had said and more. He has that same quality that all the greatest drummers have—he's very easy to play with. In his case, it's something beyond that; it's something only the really, really great guys have.

"It boils down to his listening skills, which are apparent not only in his musical skills but in his being, in his presence. He has the capacity to create a vibe. That is very rare in any kind of musician, and in rhythm section players it's the ultimate commodity.

"The whole vocabulary of jazz drumming is there to be heard in his playing. He has his own touch, especially his own touch. He uses a smaller kit; you could almost say it's a throwback to an earlier era, sound-wise. That's a specific choice on his part, because his playing is very modern. There's nothing about his concept that is retro, which is very welcome to me in an era where there are a lot of guys whose stylistic/political rap is equal to what they play. But with Brian the music speaks for itself."



Lissa Wales

Kenny Garrett

"I introduced Brian to the jazz world," boasts alto-phenom Kenny Garrett. "He was playing with Harry Connick down at the Village Vanguard, and something just told me to go in. I heard this little drummer, and he blew me away. We rapped the next day, and then Brian, Bob Hurst, and I did some playing. So I hired him for my *Black Hope* album, and after that everybody was looking for him!

"When I heard him that first time, his time and cymbal beat were so nice and his pulse was really beautiful. He listens to everything you're doing. He's a very versatile drummer, and no matter what the style is, he's right there with you. He never over-plays, and he knows exactly where I'm going. Brian has what I look for in a drummer: He has a sound, a pulse, and a strong cymbal beat, and he can play all the colorings.

"Brian's very spiritual, and that is reflected in his music. When you rap to him as a person you can feel that coming from him."

songs, and it's like literature to me. Hearing her music heals me.

My friend Daniel Lanois asked me to go to L.A. to hear her. He played her a tape of what we were working on, and she liked the tone of it. I got to New Orleans, she called me, and we talked about what she wanted to play. We talked on the phone on and off for almost a year. She was going to play her last gig at the New Orleans Jazz Festival two years ago, because she was fed up with the difficulties of live performance—her music has so many strange guitar tunings that it was too difficult to reproduce it live. But she got this Roland digital guitar, which makes tuning changes very easy. So because of that, and hopefully our relationship, she is inspired to play live again.

We've finished the record. The material is so wide and allows me so much freedom. I don't know how to describe it in terms of a particular style. Her feel is so happening. I'm able to hook up with her quite easily.

KM: Who else is in the the band?

BB: So far it's just Joni and me. I feel like



I can fly when I'm playing with her.

KM: Do you write out your parts?

BB: No, I memorize the songs. We work out phrasing together. Some of it is rock

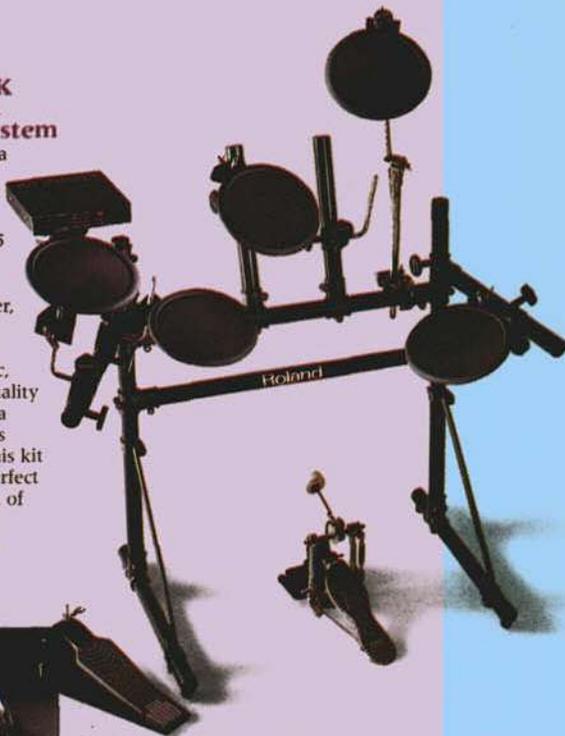
rhythms, and I use this old set of Ludwig drums with a huge 28" Ludwig bass drum that's tuned open. It works for me, and she trusts me to make that decision. I like reso-

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nance, and she does too—the biggest tone possible. I'm not playing loud, of course. It works as a soft drum. It creates a cushion and I can roll around on mallets or play brushes or sticks or just let the cymbal decay. She has given me that freedom.

There is one song that has a dirge quality to it; it is very southern. I play mallets and brushes on it. I make a lot of transitions in her music, I'll go from brushes to sticks to mallets within one song. I like that change of texture and the timbral differences to fit where the music is going, to create a landscape. And there are some rock 'n' roll things as well.

KM: What was playing on Daniel Lanois' *Sling Blade* like?

BB: From funky repetitive things to complete free pieces that were atmospheric. We've worked together for a number of years.

KM: On "Country Crescent," from the *New Orleans Collective* album [with Nicholas Payton, Wessell Anderson, Christopher Thomas, and Peter Martin], you play a march on the snare, 2 and 4 on the hi-hat, and that Bo Diddley beat on the

bass drum. It's so funky.

BB: That comes from that Earl Palmer school, where the lines are blurred. It's not swing, it's not rock 'n' roll. It incorporates rhythm & blues and the New Orleans street beat.

KM: What have you practiced to improve your fluency around the kit?

BB: I've developed things over time in my head, things I wanted to do but physically couldn't. I have worked through snare drum method books and rudiments and applied that stuff to the drums. A paradiddle, for instance, can help me execute a lot of different things on the drums, although when I'm playing I'm not thinking about a paradiddle. I want to use as little effort as possible to execute something quickly. I want to have that knowledge, of understanding all the stickings of a Philly Joe Jones part, for instance. You want to know the specifics.

KM: You play a funeral march for fifteen minutes straight on "He Was A Good Man" [*New Orleans Collective*]. That sounds challenging.

BB: It's like the snare drum part from

Ravel's "Bolero." I'm trying to keep the groove steady. I played a hotel house gig here in 1992 with two older gentlemen, and we were playing everything from country to R&B to Monk tunes. It was that *wide*. At the time I thought it was horrible; I only wanted to play jazz. But that summer gig took me to another plateau in terms of musical realization. Having a balance, knowing what each piece needed, was what did it for me.

That experience helped me develop the discipline to play that funeral march, that dirge. I learned what the drummer's function is and how to make it real. The practical application of being on a gig and knowing you sound horrible—that teaches you a lot. You go home and listen to the tape of the gig and work on correcting the problems.

KM: Have you found any keys to coming up with your own voice without leaning on sticking cliches or habits?

BB: For me it's mostly about mental space. Emotionally, I can be a mess, and that can affect my playing. I feel that my emotions are written on my face when I'm on the

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bandstand. It's especially apparent when I don't play well. I've been trying to get over that no matter how or when I play, or no matter if it's a dive or a concert hall. It's an honor to have the opportunity to play, and I have to remember that. I work on that by just trying to clear my mind of any negative vibrations and keep myself together.

KM: How do you deal with a bad night, when you're just not hitting it?

BB: This is not the end. Tonight is just one night; we have another chance at it. I'll

come again with a better outlook.

KM: We were talking about your influences before, and one drummer I can hear in your playing is Billy Higgins.

BB: Definitely. Billy Higgins' playing is very important to me. In fact, one of the first records I bought was Hank Mobley's *Far Away Lands* with Billy. And I bought several records he did with Ornette Coleman.

Billy always makes the drums have that light but rich and full tone; that's some-

thing I'm always trying to achieve. You don't have to bash to get a sound. You pull it out of the drums.

KM: You're good friends with [young New York jazz drummers] Clarence Penn and Greg Hutchinson. Are there stylistic things that you would play differently because you come from the south, as opposed to their northern roots?

BB: We do keep each other on our toes. There is a beat conception in my playing that's a regional dynamic, as opposed to the northeastern feel. Things move a little slower in the south. I think I play more around the center of the beat, or maybe just behind it. I don't even have a concept of what "on top" is. I just hope I'm pushing the band. Clarence and Greg have a wider view of the beat. Being from the northeast, there is a certain pace that comes from that. I don't quite have that. Maybe the pulse is different.

KM: Being from the New Orleans area, have you also investigated Zutty Singleton and Baby Dodds?

BB: Of course, and Sid Catlett too. I would mostly listen to the entire scope of what was happening, like with the Louis Armstrong sides with Baby Dodds. Because of the recording capability back then, Baby Dodds sounds like he's playing on trinkets. But his swing is so propelling.

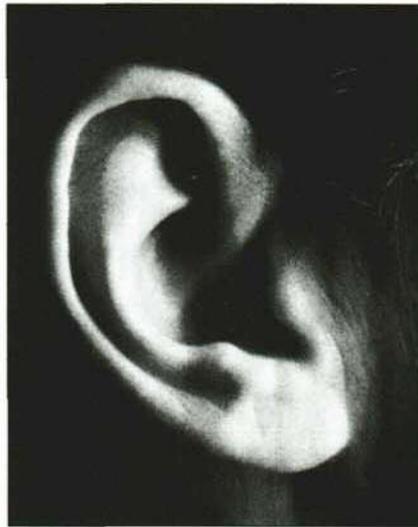
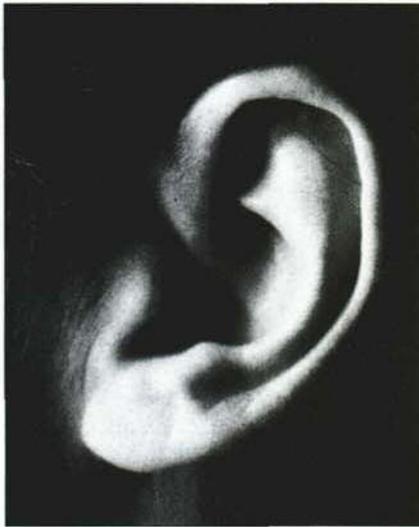
Roy Haynes and Sam Woodyard were also big influences. Paul Motian as well. And other musicians: Jimi Hendrix and Mitch Mitchell, Sonny Rollins, Billy Harper, Charlie Parker, Jimmy Garrison, the whole bass/drum relationship.

KM: What was your first recording?

BB: Wow. I recorded with saxophonist Victor Goines, then a record with Ellis Marsalis, and then King Midas & the Golden Touch, on which Yo-Yo Ma played cello. My first paying gigs were in Shreveport with my teachers. I was able to play with Jimmy Witherspoon, Martha Reeves, and I got to meet Al Green. I think I made fifty bucks on my first gig. I was elated.

KM: Were your parents supportive of your music?

BB: Yes, though for a while I was going to play tennis professionally. Bjorn Borg was my hero. I was ranked regionally and played tournaments, but then I started playing drums and dropped all that. Now I set up and tear down my drums to keep in



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shape!

KM: So how did your interest in music begin?

BB: I started out playing violin, but then picked up the drums in church when I was thirteen. I began playing snare drum in symphonic band in school then too. I couldn't read well, but I started listening to Mel Lewis and Sam Woodyard to see what was required of me. I got to Elvin later through Coltrane. I bought *Crescent, Ballads, A Love Supreme*, and *Giant Steps*

with Art Taylor. Once you get to that, there's no turning back!

I played in church from the age of thirteen to seventeen, when I left Shreveport. I began buying a lot of Blue Note records, getting more into jazz. And I was playing along with Jeff Porcaro, all those Toto records. I loved those grooves and the grooves Stevie Wonder played on *Innervisions*. In high school I took lessons on snare with a teacher. We studied the Morris Goldenberg book, and we played

duets. Then, in New Orleans, I heard all these guys playing jazz. I became immersed in the street scene. I played duets with John Vidacovich. I also went to school in New Orleans and began playing with Ellis Marsalis. He let me sit in on his gigs. I also sat in with Tony DaGradi and Steve Masakowski. Mr. Marsalis eventually took me to England, where we toured with Courtney Pine. Mr. Marsalis is like a father to me.

KM: What did playing in church give you?

BB: It taught me how to listen and how not to be selfish. It made me realize I was there to support. I was trying to accompany the best I could. You had to know where the singers were at all times.

KM: Were you ever rebellious towards church?

BB: No, it was fulfilling for me. It was rich. It felt as if everyone was my family, they all looked after me. Church has a bad reputation because of people who try to exploit matters of the spirit in a material way. That's when you run into trouble, because it's really not of this world. I was fulfilled by it, my folks never pressured me. It's the same with music; I felt I was led where I was supposed to go. All of a sudden six years have gone by, and I've been on the road for most of that time.

KM: Seeing you with Joshua Redman live, or Wynton Marsalis with his band, it's almost like a religious experience. It's so intense at times.

BB: Hopefully that is the focus. You're not up there playing music to glorify yourself; it should be for a much larger reason. The music has been given to us, and you have to think of it as a gift. You use it for what you think is right.

KM: From playing in church to studying in school to working on the level you are now—there's a major leap in there somewhere.

BB: Once I got to New Orleans in 1988, I began playing in coffee shops with Christopher Thomas and Nicholas Payton, and we were in each other's pockets. We would practice for hours, and then at night we would play for tips. We did that for a couple of years. We were poor, but we didn't need anything. Maybe we weren't poor; we were rich because there was so much discovery every day.

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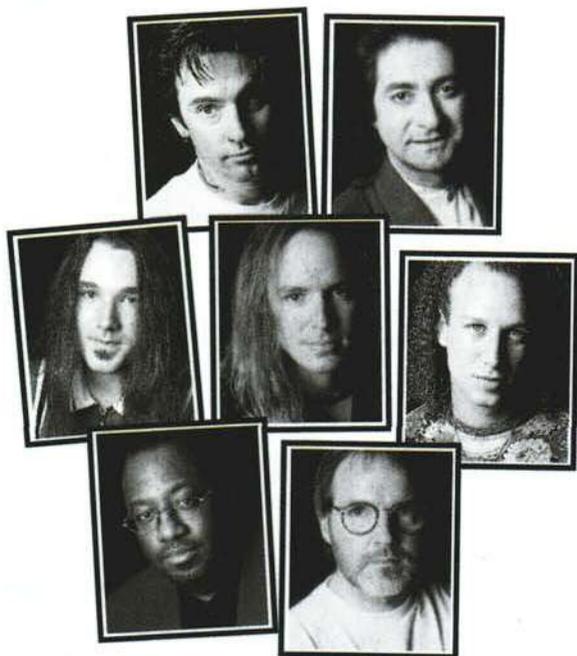
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DW Hardware Artists shown above (clockwise from top left): Tommy Lee (Mötley Crüe), Richie Garcia (Diana Ross), Stephen Perkins (Porno For Pyros), Paul Wertico (Pat Metheny), Carl Allen (independent) and Dave Abbruzzese (GRO). Center: Scott Crago (Eagles).

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Delfeayo Marsalis is where I met Joshua, because he was playing in Delfeayo's band, too. When Joshua started recording, he wanted to go on tour, and he called me. Now it's four years later, and I can't believe it.

KM: In the liner notes of his latest album, Joshua Redman talks about being as influenced by hip-hop as jazz. Do you feel the same way?

BB: I don't really know much hip-hop, except what my brother has played for me, like A Tribe Called Quest. I dug that. I really haven't heard much. I'm bad about listening to new music.

KM: Joshua doesn't play hip-hop on the road?

BB: Well, we're a family on the road, but it all breaks down to loneliness again once you're in your hotel room. On drives we listen to Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, Trane, Bird, the Isley Brothers....

KM: Can you give any tips on moving from sticks to mallets to brushes within a song?

BB: Don't drop them! [laughs] I developed a quickness to putting down the brushes,

and I have a little case next to me that I use to help me make the switch. Sometimes when the transition is happening, you want the sound to be continuous, so you work with your feet, or you use the cymbals to carry the tone. You might actually want the space, so you don't play anything.

KM: What direction do your brushes take on the snare head?

BB: In a ballad, my left hand usually moves in a counter-clockwise flow. The right hand goes from the nine o'clock position to three, depending on whether I'm sweeping on the snare drum or if I'm playing the swing beat more pronounced. On a fast tempo, I probably go more from the ten o'clock position to the five with the left hand, while playing the swing beat at eleven and one with the right hand.

KM: On the *New Orleans Collective* record, on one track you play the brushes with a stiffer feeling.

BB: I was trying to get more of a tautness, pulling the brushes in a bit like Vernell Fournier, to get a certain sound like he does on those Ahmad Jamal trio records. That's brilliant, that sound. It brings out the

tone of the drum, but you know it's a brush. And it's soft and seductive at the same time. Fournier was very influential. I liked *Portfolio* with Ahmad Jamal.

KM: What are you working on now?

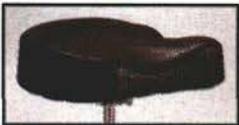
BB: Clarity, both in what I play and what I say on the drums, whether it be something simple or complex. I'm working on getting to that meeting place between the physical side of playing and the spirit, just trying to bridge that gap, because sometimes it can be a long way. I do a lot of mental practice. When I'm on a gig I'm trying to think differently about not falling into cliches.

KM: Why do you think musicians hire you?

BB: I hope they trust my interpretative ability as a drummer—that I will musically make a difference and make it right and make the music speak beyond the page. That's what I'm trying to do. That's got to be it, not because they're my buddies. Hopefully, it's because they respect my interpretation and that they know I respect their music.



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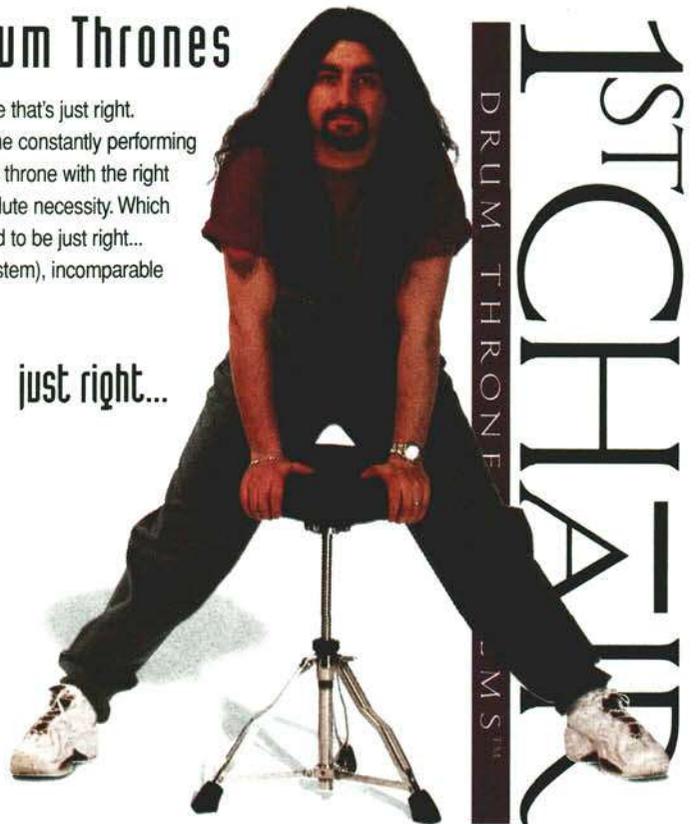
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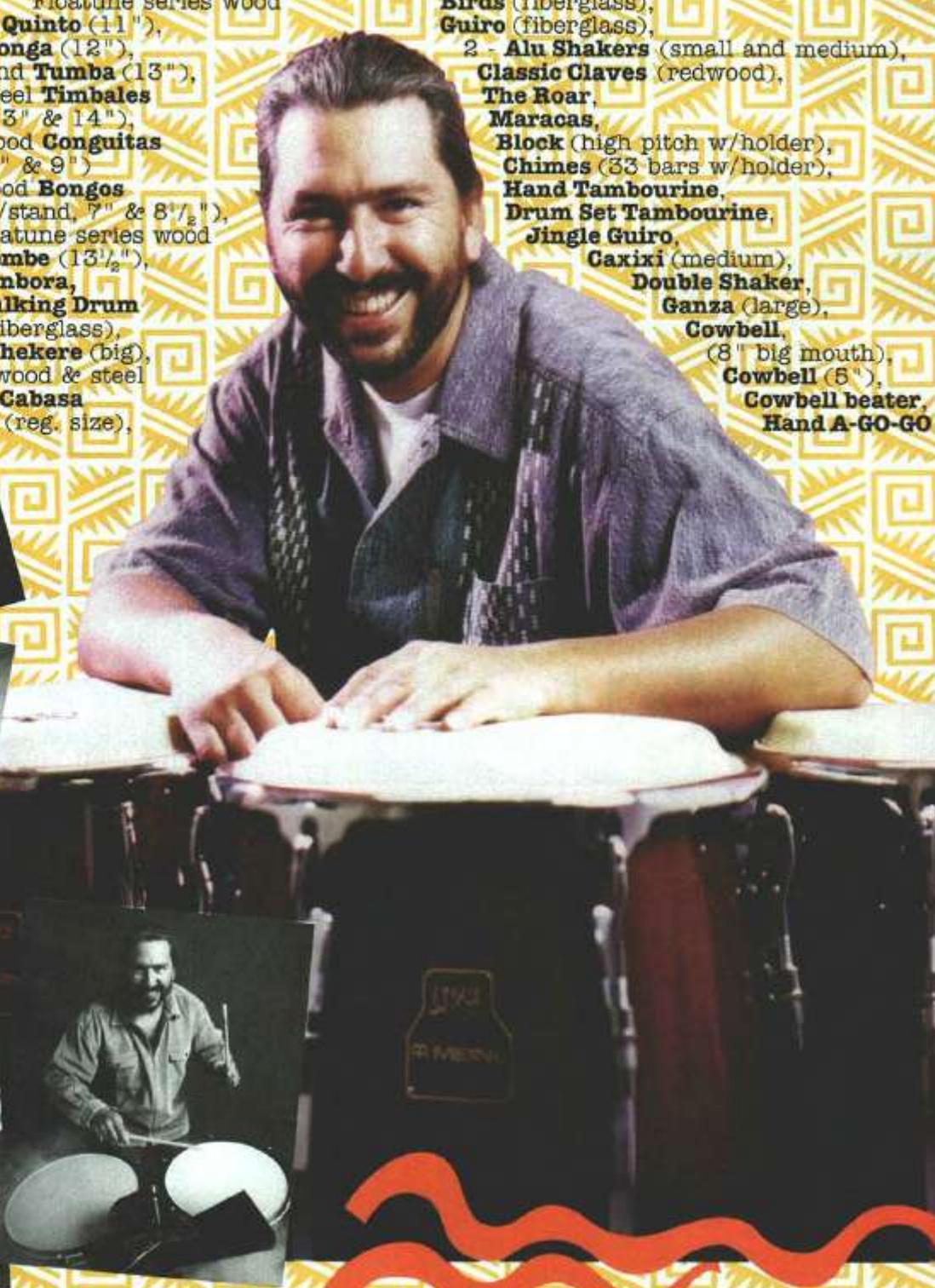
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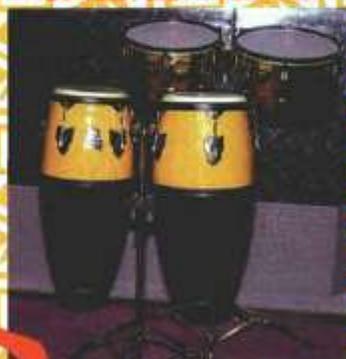
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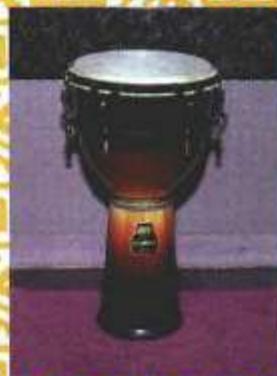
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Rusted Root's

JIM DONOVAN &

The Arizona moon is full and the air is cool, but Rusted Root quickly heats up the Mesa Amphitheatre stage, launching into "Laugh As The Sun," a song off *When I Woke*, their first Mercury release. Drumset player Jim Donovan's center of gravity seems to be just above the throne as his arms fly around the toms, feet move fast on the pedals, and long hair flies wildly: Donovan is clearly a full-body drummer. He then lays off the set for just a moment and, raising sticks high above his head, gets the crowd to put their hands together and help keep the time.

Just a few feet away, percussionist Jim DiSpirito is surrounded by a wealth of instruments, including nearly twenty different drums, plus cymbals, bells, tambourines, gongs, clappers, and more. DiSpirito starts the song on timbales, then moves to a talking drum, all the while reaching over the djembe that hangs down from a strap around his neck. Looking like a kid in a candy store as he energetically puts down one piece to grab another, DiSpirito combines a spirit of playfulness and joy with a look of intent and intensity.

Welcome to the highly percussive world of Rusted Root.

Fresh off the release of *Remember*, the band's second Mercury release, Pittsburgh's Rusted Root is again touring the country. At a time when "alternative" has lost all meaning.



JIM DISPIRITO



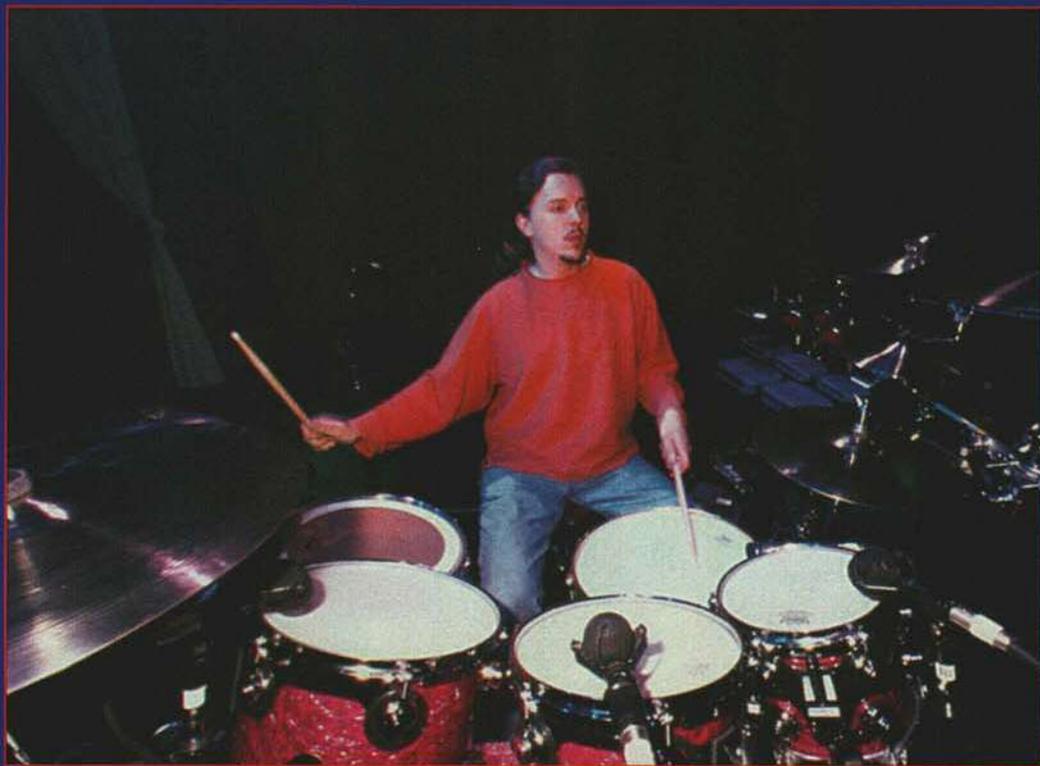
by Harriet L. Schwartz

photos by Paul La Raia

Rusted Root makes music that defies categorization. Combining a diversity of ethnic and world rhythms with a wide range of melodic instrumentation, which includes not only guitar and bass but mandolin, violin, and flute, Rusted Root offers a sweeping landscape of sonic experience. This variety is always ear-catching, from the highly energetic dance-rock of "Martyr" and "Virtual Reality" to more spacious and ethereal songs like "Sister Continue" and "Back To The Earth." And the interplay between Donovan's drumset playing and DiSpirito's hand percussion (not to mention the other percussion added to the mix by the rest of the band) often gives Rusted Root's music a sound of incredible rhythmic complexity.

Perhaps more than anything, Rusted Root's music is about celebration. The band's driving rhythmic force and melodic sensibilities combine for a primal sound that reaches deep into the soul.

Remembering The Spirit



"The drumset is a real simple foundation that sets the groove and pace," says the twenty-eight-year-old Jim Donovan. "It's kind of like the heartbeat of the band; it keeps everything centered in one place. Everyone else can go off and improvise, but I lay the foundation and stay solid."

"When Jim [DiSpirito] wasn't with us, I used to have to play a lot to fill more. I was busier. When Jim came in it allowed me to not have to focus so much on coloring everything, but just keep it simple and in more of a focused place."

When Donovan was asked to join Rusted Root as the band was forming in the late '80s, he knew *this* band experience would require a major shift from the classical training he had taken at the University of Pittsburgh. "Mike [Glabicki], our guitarist, is a very rhythm-oriented player," Donovan says, "and he

taught me a lot just from the way he played. I would imitate the rhythms he played on his guitar, and sort of mutate that into something different. That's where a lot of my ideas came from.

"A lot of times I ride on the toms," Donovan continues. "In fact, a lot of my grooves are based not on a kick-snare-hi-hat thing, but more on off-beat tom riding. I would hear the melody of the guitar and the rhythms that Mike would be playing and extend that into another groove on top of his groove. I sort of had to reinvent how I played drumset. It was the best thing I did, though, because it made what I did more unusual than what I was doing at first. It gave a direction to the sound of the group, and then we kept extending it."

DiSpirito joined Rusted Root in the early '90s, bringing new textural elements with his rich background in talking drum, tabla, djembe, and a range of other hand percussion. He says his role is to provide "accents and color against all the other things—bass guitar, Mike's guitar, drumset—to add texture to the situation and complement the groove, *and* to solo when appropriate.

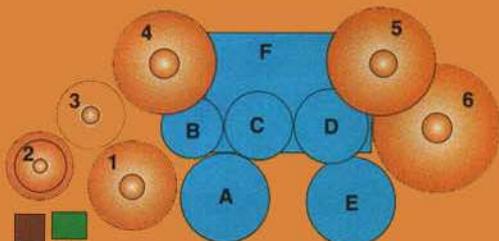
"We're both groove players," the thirty-six-year-old DiSpirito explains, "and Jim provides that whole rock-solid groove thing, which frees me up to experiment a little or find a pattern that fits in with the pattern he's doing. Even when I don't do a lot of fills, the patterns can complement each other—and you get a combined pattern that sounds kind of nice." "It's big monster groove on top of everything," Donovan adds.

"I think groove *is* the key," DiSpirito agrees. "We're a groove-oriented band. We're not really a band that stretches out and improvises like Phish.

"You can call it God, you can call it the universe, you can call it whatever you want, but I believe there's a force that comes through you and helps you be creative."

—Jim Donovan

DONOVAN'S DRUMSET



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Rusted Root is a dance-oriented band."

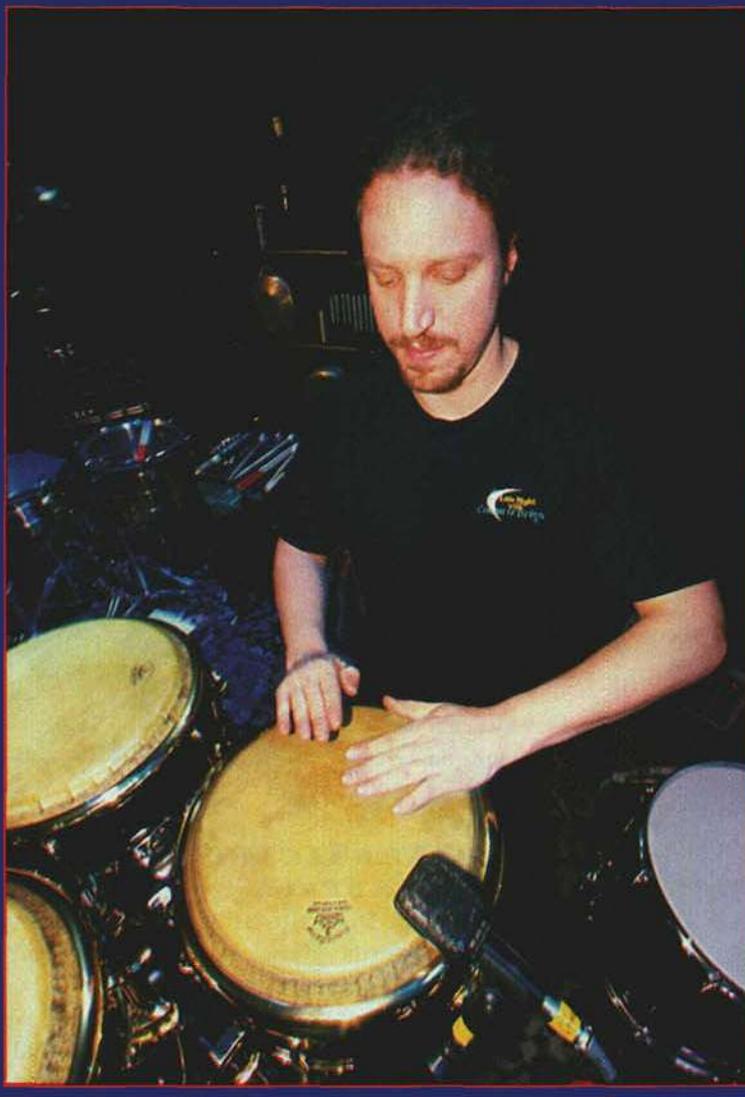
"The only thing that gets improvised on the drumset are the fills I'm playing," Donovan adds. "Sometimes that's good and sometimes it's not. I try to keep what I'm doing in a certain place so people can have a frame of reference—and to keep a structure happening. It's important for me to make the cues clear for the people who are improvising over the top of what I'm doing."

COMPOSITION & COLLABORATION

Donovan and DiSpirito agree that creating songs for *Remember* was a much different process than it was for *When I Woke*. The latter was recorded after the band had played live for years, so the goal was to capture the energy of live performance with songs that the band had shaped and improved over time. With *Remember*, most of the experimentation was done in the studio in a much shorter period of time. In addition, the songs that Glabicki wrote for the new record called for more subtle percussion.

For Donovan and DiSpirito, the songs that would form *Remember* called on their creativity and at times, restraint. Both found these sensibilities through their previous training. "It's an ensemble sense," DiSpirito says. "When I did my classical training I played in a lot of percussion ensembles, so I got used to hearing how parts work with other parts. My tabla teacher, Zakir Hussain, has done a number of percussion ensemble things, like what he did recently with Mickey Hart on the *Planet Drum* project.

"A lot of the pieces I did involved parts I had to come



"Not to get too 'new-agey, but I think there's power in every single instrument, and it's your relationship with the instrument that eventually allows you to unlock that power."

—Jim DiSpirito

want to run into them."

DiSpirito, who began his percussion career as a drumset player, points to the role that Donovan plays. "There is the compositional sense he or any percussionist has to bring," DiSpirito says. "Any song can take on a variety of different lives. Jim is a big determining factor in

how a song will go, especially as far as its energy. It could be laid-back, played very sparsely—or he can turn it into a highly energetic thing. Drummers always play a big part in how the composition of a song is realized, by being sensitive to the songwriter."

While DiSpirito makes the set player's role sound strategic,

DISPIRITO'S COLLECTION

As the percussionist in Rusted Root, Jim DiSpirito brings a lot of different sonic possibilities to the band's overall sound. He has a broad collection of instruments set up on stage. The following is a list of what you might see him play on a typical Rusted Root gig.

LP *Galaxy* congas (fiberglass) and bongos (oak), LP brass *Timbalitos* in 10", 12", 13", and 14" sizes, a Premier Signia series 16" floor tom, tabla, a Chinese opera gong, a Nepalese gong, Tibetan finger cymbals and meditation bowl, a Zildjian 18" *A Custom* crash, 20" *Oriental China Trash*, and 10" *Z splash*, various LP talking drums, shakers, cowbells, and wind chimes, and a Hohner harmonica and melodica.



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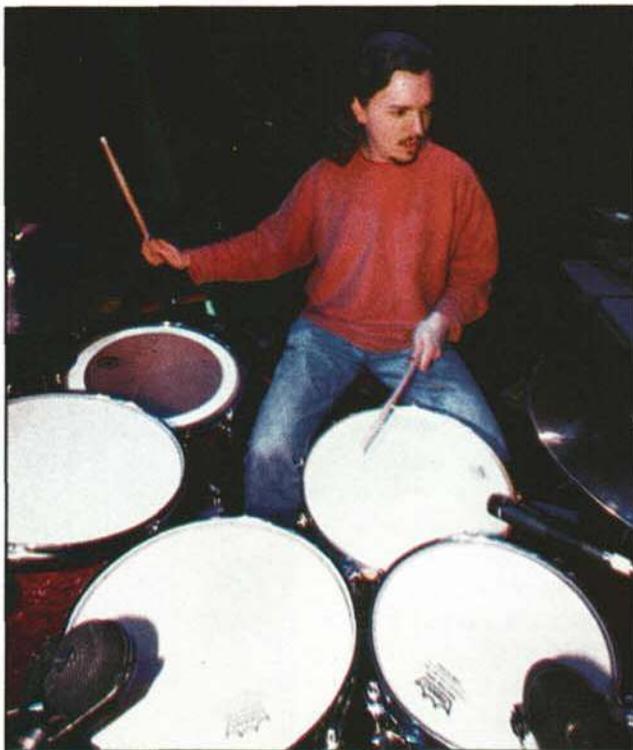
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Donovan reveals another aspect of his approach. "A completely different realm from actually playing," Donovan says, "is what you're feeling *inside* when you're playing. The place I've always strived to be at is a state of not thinking, *but feeling* how the music is going, and putting my energy into that specific place. "Like if we're playing a high-energy song, I want it to well up inside and be real happy—'playing your smile.' If it's a quiet song, I'll try to be calm inside and close my eyes and play from a soft place. That's when it's at its very best for me, in the emotion of the song."



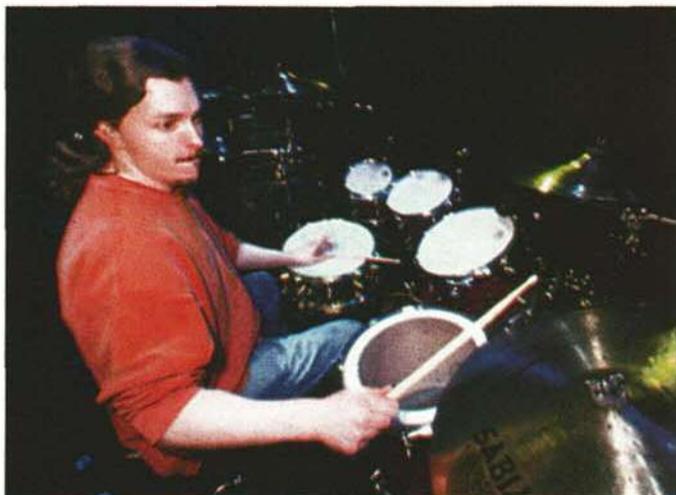
FROM THE STUDIO TO THE STAGE

Donovan and DiSpirito stress that Rusted Root is primarily a *performing* band, so they don't write or record parts that cannot be played live. However, the band does push this boundary. Unlike some bands, who won't perform a previously recorded song because live constraints prohibit exact replication of studio work, the Rusted Root musicians are willing to adapt. "So many times it ends up that you have to reinvent your groove live," Donovan says. "For instance, 'Voodoo' live is very different from 'Voodoo' on the album. It's still the same song structure, but to give the song the impact it needs live, we have to completely change what we're playing. In the studio I played a kick drum and tambourine and put a bunch of hand drums over the top of it. But live, if you want to keep the impact and the energy up, the drumset works better."

DiSpirito also has to work hard to re-

create some of his parts for live performance, given the tricky nature of capturing subtle hand percussion live. "Tabla is a good example of this," he says, "because it's such a sensitive instrument. It's really quiet, and our volume is normally very loud, except when no one is playing and I can find pockets in the music to play them in. So I'll use them in the beginning of a song before a lot of the other instruments come in."

According to DiSpirito, for years it's been a fight trying to find what microphones work for live situations. "Now I have these little AKG condenser mic's with goosenecks that just clip on. You can turn the gain up and it doesn't feed back."



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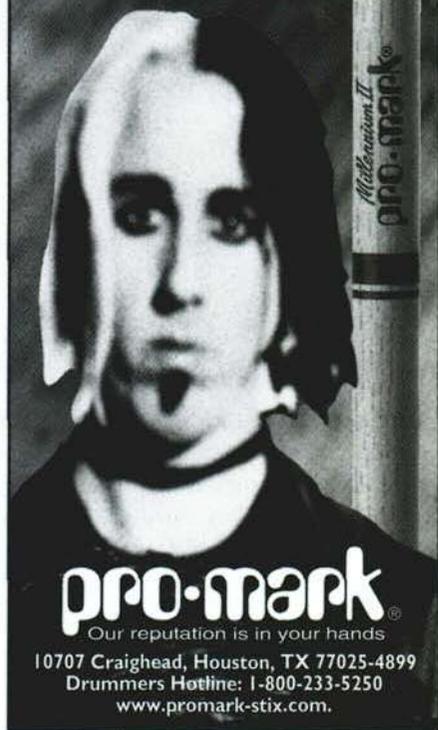
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They have been a big help. But even with them, sometimes the volume of the band is so high that I have to avoid some of the subtle sounds on certain instruments and play the strokes that I can get a loud sound with."

While working to reproduce one particular studio-played hand percussion part live and finding endless frustration, DiSpirito decided to switch to something more conventional: "I finally went out and bought a floor tom, because the part needed to have that really big sound. It was predictable that a floor tom would eventually work, and that the instrument I used in the studio—an Indian dolak—would not work live. Switching instruments caused me to have to work up a different pattern with Jim, and in the end it actually worked much better for the song."



LESSONS LEARNED

An accomplished drummer, Donovan is very clear on the strategies he has used to develop his technique and approach. He offers one lesson for newer drummers (albeit one that could help drummers at any stage), and another for more experienced drummers who may have trouble keeping their practicing and performing fresh. "When I started playing, I had a seven-piece drumkit," he says. "Month-by-month I would take a drum away. I ended up with a floor tom, a kick drum, and a snare drum, and I played that—along with a hi-hat and two cymbals—for about a year. As the years have gone by, I've added toms, and now I have a six-piece. But the lesson for me was that I had to simplify what I was doing to understand how I wanted to play. That's probably the best thing I could have done to improve.

"There may come a time when you might get bored with what you're doing. You might not need to change what you play, but if you change your point of reference in your head—if you focus on a different thing—you probably will find ways to stay inspired.

"Instead of focusing on the guitar, I might focus on what Jim is doing, or on a

different aspect of what I'm doing—like on the accents and trying to perfect them and make them stand out against whatever else is happening in the song at the time. That can really change how a night goes. Or try focusing on keeping your time exact—or on playing as hard as you can, trying to break stuff." [laughs]

DiSpirito and Donovan agree that drumset players and hand percussionists can learn from each other and from dabbling in each other's genres. "Drumset teaches you how to be sparse, how not to overplay," DiSpirito contends. "It forces you to listen. Being *around* a drumset player, you can hear all those things, as far as leaving space is concerned."

DiSpirito is inspired by drumset in other ways: "At times I'll try to mimic a drumset on a particular instrument, like on a tambourine. You actually can create a whole drumset sound on a tambourine. Get that low, bass drum sort of thing going with the thumb pop, shake the tambourine and hit the edge, and then hit the middle of the head, and all of a sudden you've got a drumset groove happening. And it's like, 'Wow man, I never knew a tambourine could be so much fun.'"

Donovan also believes that set players can benefit from learning to play hand

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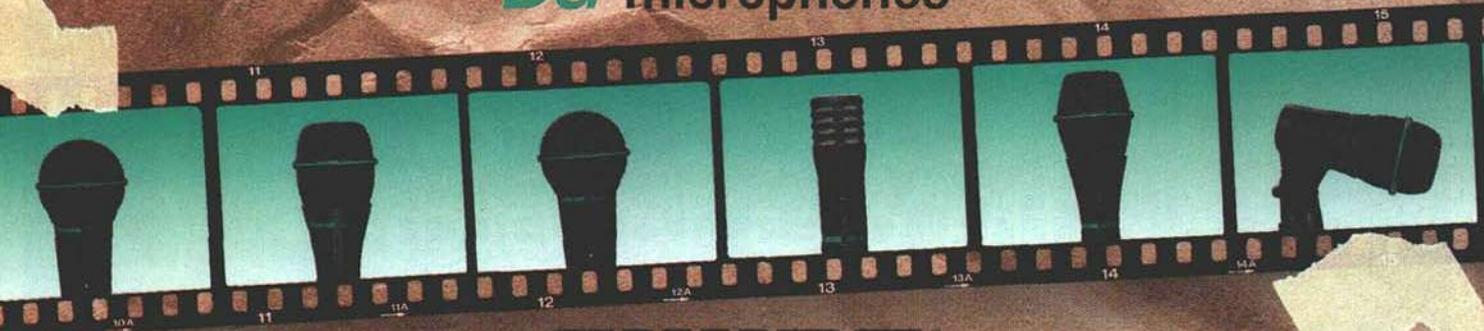


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DEEP ROOTS: THE DONOVAN TOM-TOM APPROACH

Jim Donovan often rides on his toms, moving Rusted Root away from a standard rock sound to a more tribal and primitive feel. Donovan's tom-ride patterns also provide a sonically rich foundation for Jim DiSpirito's hand percussion.

The following pattern is taken from the middle drum section of "Back To The Earth," the last song on Rusted Root's *When I Woke*. Donovan accents the 2 and 4, playing these beats on the snare drum with the snares turned off, giving the pattern a darker, more varied percussive sound. He also plays a couple of accented notes on the high tom to add a little syncopation to the feel. To add more sonic interest to the groove, Jim attaches a "jingle-ring" device to his hi-hat.



This type of groove is similar to those Donovan creates on a number of other Rusted Root songs including "Laugh As The Sun" and "Scattered." The resulting tribal effect is a big part of the band's sound. Donovan's tip for playing these types of grooves with the right feel? "The more relaxed you play this, the better."

drums. "For a drumset player," Jim says, "learning hand drums is probably one of the best things you can do. If there's an African drumming class, any kind of hand drumming class—or even a drum circle where you're only playing one drum—do it. It can really help your rhythmic focus. It helps you focus on the simplicity of rhythm. It helps you understand the concept of playing your rhythm to fit with another rhythm, to create that monster groove."

Donovan has taken his classical training and the creativity developed through his work with Rusted Root and developed an

CREATING THE MONSTER GROOVE

Jim Donovan and Jim DiSpirito work closely together in Rusted Root. They not only play complementary patterns that drive the rhythmic pulse of the songs, they add percussive color, texture, and, at times, sheer power to the music.

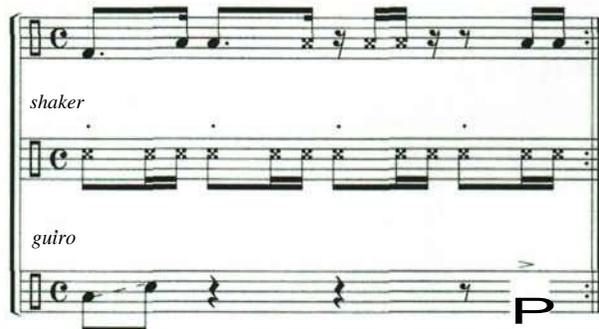
While Donovan and DiSpirito have plenty of chops to show off, they are both sensitive to the songs and the other musicians. They stay focused on developing compositions that work, rather than just displaying their chops. It's a good marriage of drumset, percussion, and band.

The following transcriptions provide examples of how drumset and hand percussion work together on Rusted Root's hit song "Send Me On My Way" (studio version). Whether it's this song or any Rusted Root tune, the Jims like to lay down a propelling feel—what Jim Donovan calls "the monster groove."

"Send Me On My Way"

DiSpirito's Percussion Part

djembe

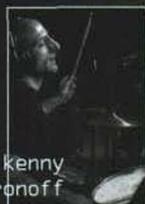


Donovan's Drumset Pattern



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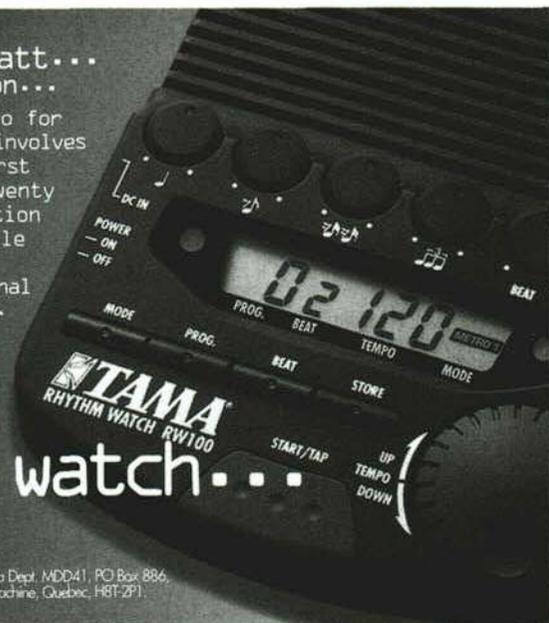


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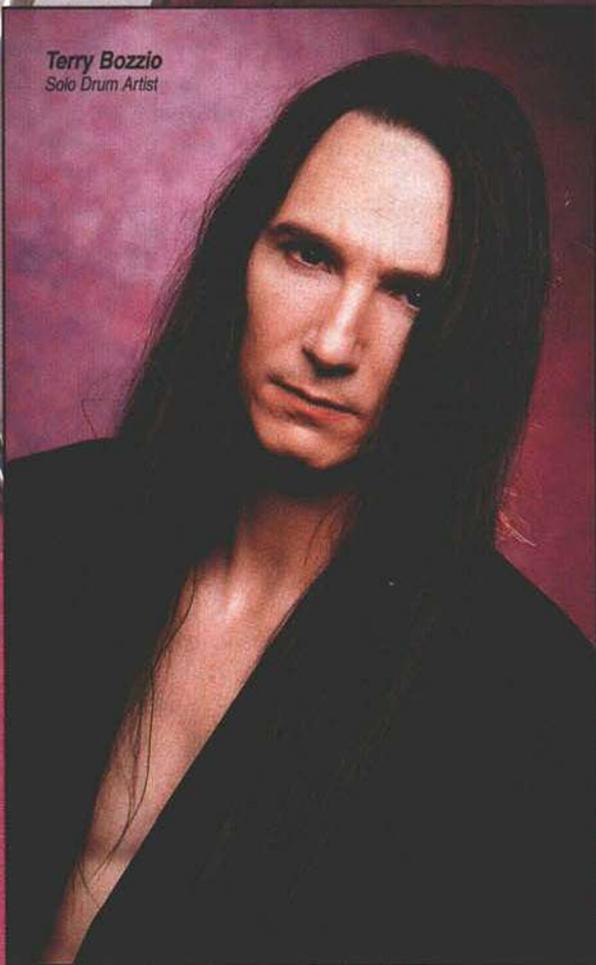
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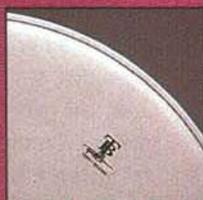
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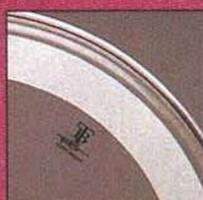
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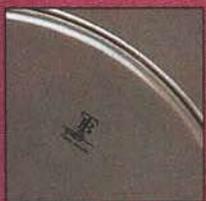
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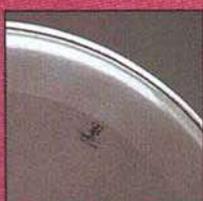
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instructional book, *Ten Fierce Etudes For Snare Drum Or Multiple Percussion*. "This is reflective of my classical training and composing," Donovan says. "The way it pertains to what I'm doing now is that I encourage the student to be creative with the instrumentation. They can then slow down some of the etudes I've written or speed them up. I want to inspire the student to be creative with them.

"When I was doing my classical training, I wish I had books that encouraged me to use both parts of my brain—my creativity as well as the discipline for keeping time and working with a metronome."

BRIDGES & PORTHOLES

Both their onstage energy and in-depth discussion reveal that Donovan and DiSpirito are passionate and spiritual about drumming. "I was talking earlier about how I had to reinvent how I was playing," Donovan says, "and that relies a lot on intuition. You can call it God, you can call it the universe, you can call it whatever you want, but I believe there's a force that comes through you and helps you be creative. And that's kind of the foundation of how I do my thing, whether it's drumming or anything else. You've got this connection to a higher source that will come through you if you want it to."

DiSpirito says that even as a child he "lost himself in music." Working with his sister, a music therapist, and studying religion expanded his ideas. "I always viewed music as that stream you got into that opened you up to other things," DiSpirito says. "A lot of Eastern religion deals with mantras and sound, and for me it was like, 'Whoa, it's all so much about this thing we call music, isn't it?'"

"The more I got interested in reading and studying different things, the more I became aware of this idea that music is

something bigger, and this was compounded by the wonderful teachers I've studied with. A lot of people who are incredible musicians, like Zakir Hussain and his father Ustad Alla Rakha, take what they do to heart; it's very much who they are. It's their yoga, in the truest sense. I saw the integrity with which they carried themselves and their love for their art.

"One's ability to tap into that creative river is very important. When you can get to the point where you can express yourself, then you've found the key. That's really what it's all about, because then things start moving through you—parts you may not have accessed before. It's a universal part of who you are. That was a porthole for me that my teachers made me aware of."

Both DiSpirito and Donovan emphasize that they don't do drugs, preferring to create and approach music free from their influence and effects. Seeming very at home in the discussion of the *spiritual* aspects of music, and revealing a true sense of reverence, Donovan and DiSpirito continue on that tack. Donovan says he believes that Rusted Root's music "gives people a bridge to

themselves," helping them get more connected with themselves and others. DiSpirito adds, "There's a power to the music, tonally and rhythmically. There is certainly a power to the rhythm, and a power to the drums. On a personal level, I think there's power in every single instrument, and it's your relationship with the instrument that eventually allows you to unlock that power."

"Not to get too 'new-agey,' but it's all very powerful stuff. Rhythm is very primal, and like Jim said, everybody has used rhythm for so long. The shamans knew how to manipulate rhythm, and in the Bible the beginning was the word and the word was God; the word is 'logos,' which in Latin means 'vibration.'"

"Shakti Hinduism is the first manifested form of reality, rhythm, and movement that

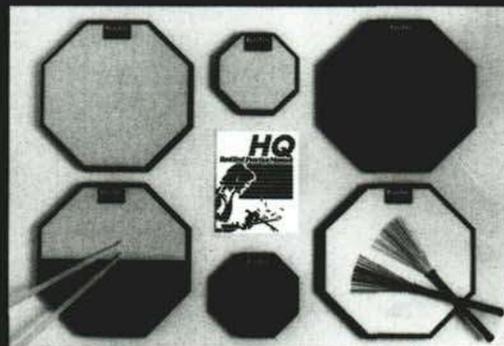


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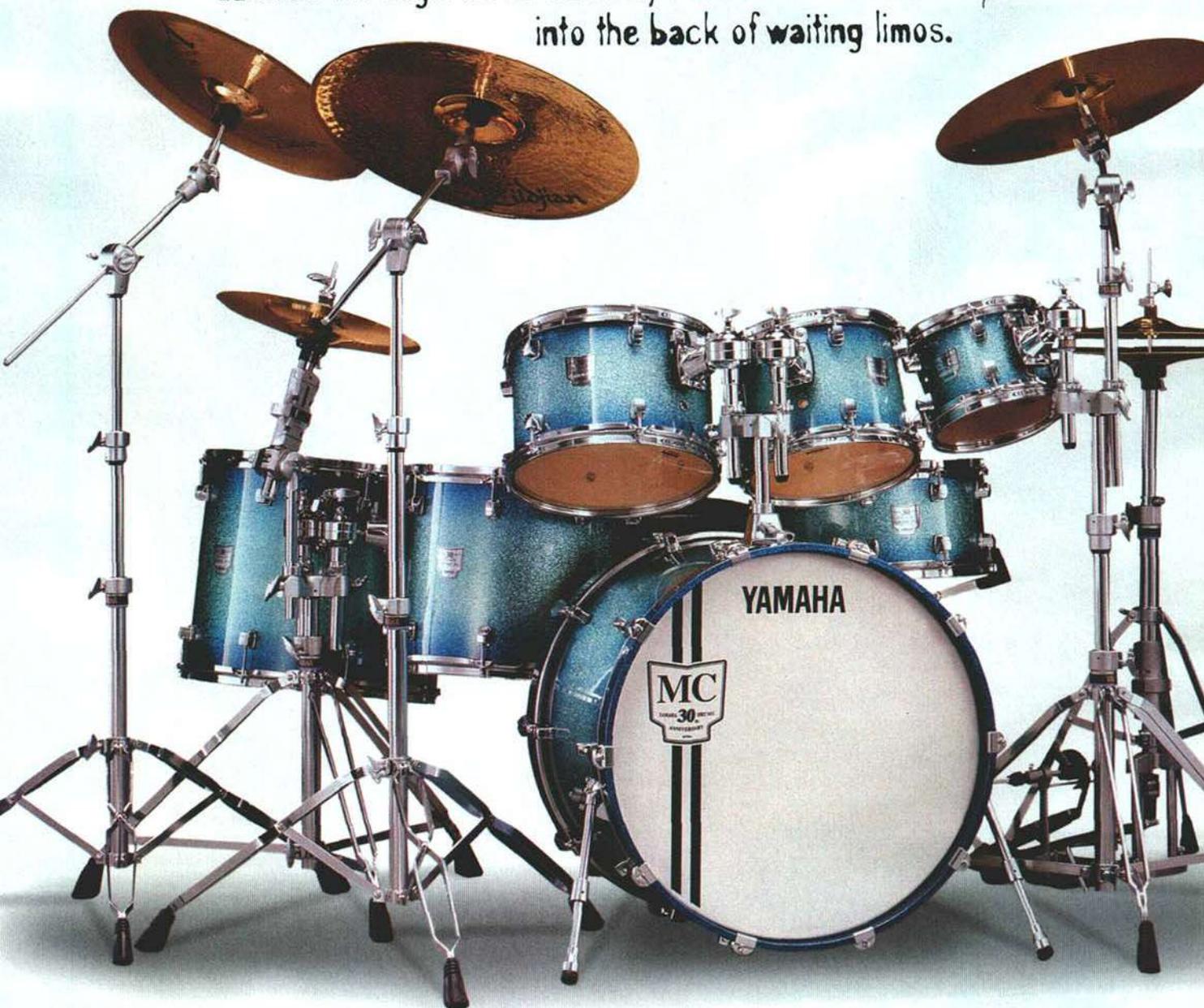


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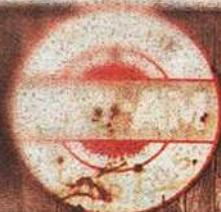


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came out of the void. There are many scriptures that point to the power that we all have in ourselves. There's a rhythm to life, there's a rhythm to the seasons, there's a rhythm to how your body functions...and there's a rhythm to music."

LETTING GO

Perhaps it is that spiritual sense, faith combined with creativity, that helps Donovan and DiSpirito translate their advanced knowledge and technique to the more free-flowing Rusted Root experience. "You have to give yourself up at some point to the situation," DiSpirito says. "The group aspect of playing music is that next step. You get in a room with a few people, you play something, and all of a sudden it starts to spin and you're creating something bigger than the sum of the parts. In jazz trios they refer to it as 'the fourth member'—that other thing that you've just created by you three being together, by locking in musically. And it's not totally based on technique, it's based on abstract intuitive space that you have to find when you play. I've always thought that letting go was a big part of it.

"There are so many things you can hang

onto that will keep you from that experience—'Where am I in the bar?' and that kind of thing. Eventually you get to the point where it's implied, where you know these things already and you're off jumping around on that musical landscape that's got colors and shapes to it, and the music really isn't about bar lines any more."

Revealing how they find some of their best musical sense, Donovan and DiSpirito discuss fundamentals and return to one of Donovan's most essential tenets—simplicity. "Whenever I start to get into that space where I can let go, that's when I start simplifying everything," Donovan says. "My biggest enemy used to be my brain. I would overplay and over-think everything. Coming from a classically trained background, I had a very analytical way of thinking."

Now Donovan suggests, "Don't think so much and don't try so hard. Lay back and relax, and if you're playing the rhythm, think about the most basic part of it. If you're playing time, just think about the backbeat, not all of the separate parts like the kick drum, the snare drum, and the hi-hat. Just lay into that backbeat. Don't immediately try to do any crazy Neil Peart

fills or anything too complex. Try to find that flow, because once you do, the fills become better because you're more relaxed—everything gets easier. I'm not saying that you shouldn't challenge yourself, but simplifying things is always the way to go at first. Then build on that. You'll always know where you're most comfortable."

"Bob Moses is an incredible jazz drummer," DiSpirito adds, "and he has always been an advocate of not doing anything unless you do it musically. Technique is important because it's the bridge, because if you don't have technique, you limit your world. There's no getting around really focusing on developing some discipline and control over your instrument, but technique is only part of the equation.

"For some musicians, it's *only* about having flow, but they don't know how to approach their instrument," DiSpirito goes on. "You can be a really groovy player, but if you don't have technique then you're limited. You have to do that disciplined training on technique, but you can and should do that by moving it to a musical space."

Donovan keeps stressing the simple approach: "Sometimes the simplest things

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are really beautiful. A really good example for me is John Bonham. He could do really technical stuff, but some of the most amazing rhythms he played were the really slow grooves that make you go, 'Wow, that's the *shit*. I don't believe that!' Something like 'When The Levee Breaks' is so popular; everyone knows that rhythm. Rappers loop it and use it in rap songs, they use it everywhere because it's such a perfect, basic rhythm. There's a lot of beauty in that. Once you understand that, you can go into any other realm that you want."

DiSpirito concludes, "It depends on what you want to get out of your music and what you intend to do with it. There is the shaman who leaves the planet on just one little beat, you know what I mean? He just gets it going and he's *gone*. That doesn't mean he can do a Neil Peart fill, but he doesn't want to. This kind of thought opens up huge areas of music, and they're all equally profound, they're all as spiritually deep as any other. So you have that responsibility as a musician to decide what you want to do with your music. What kind of player do you want to be?"



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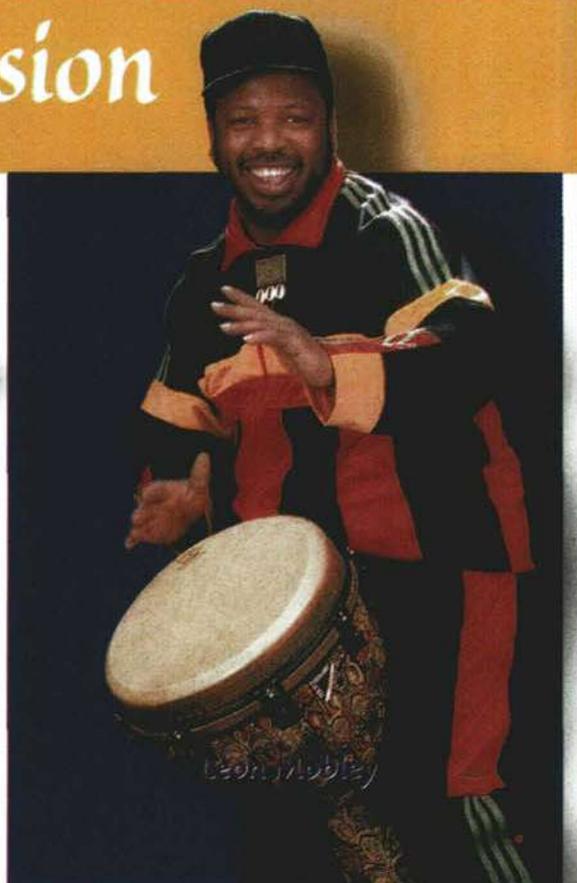
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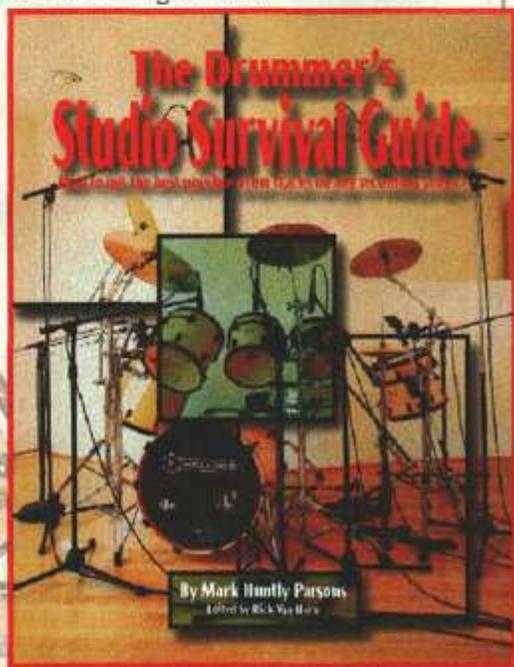
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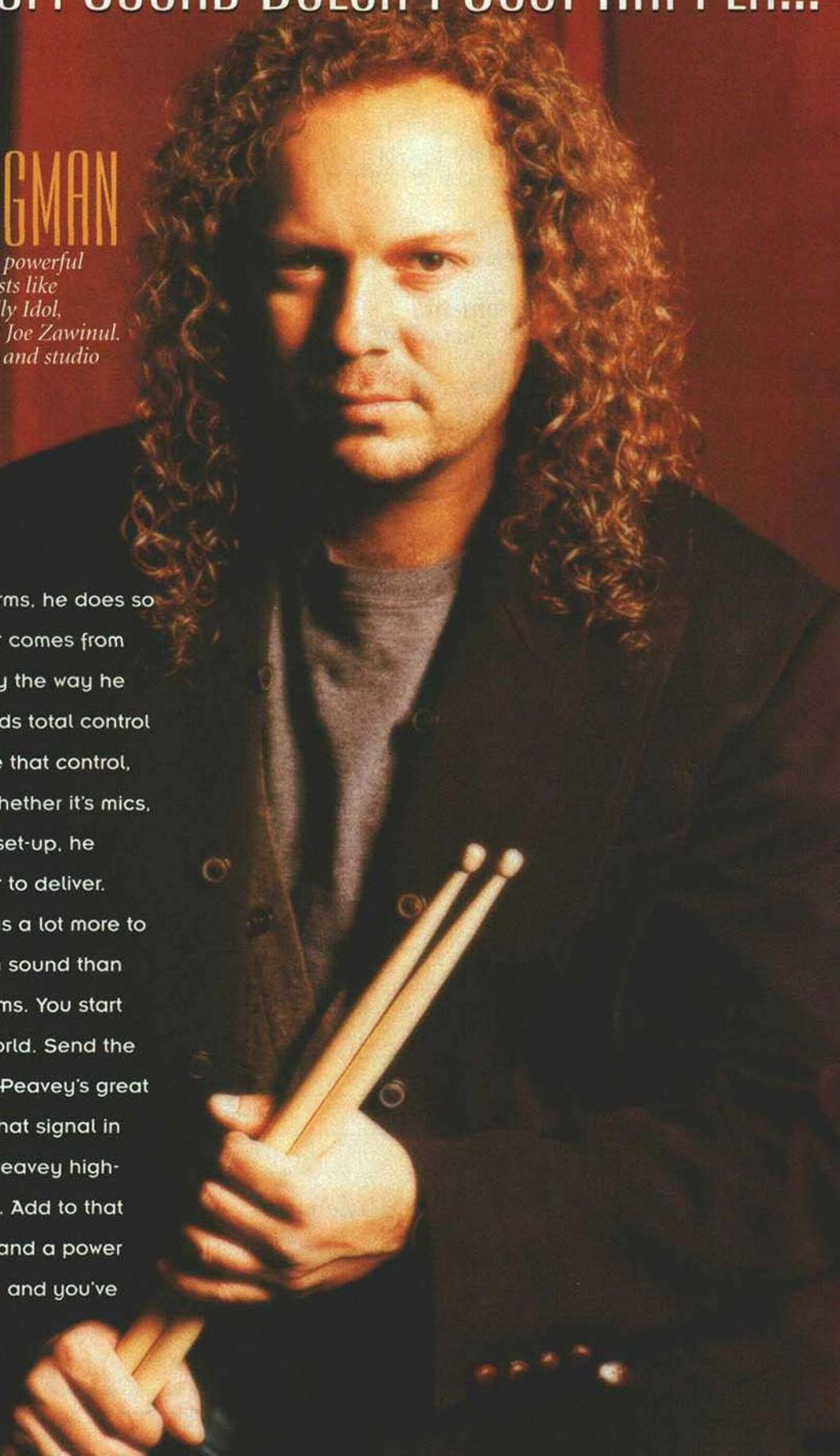
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The Spectrum Synth gives Tal 256 unique synth sounds at his beck and call. The Spectrum Synth features a powerful sound architecture that provides a wide range of tools for sound programming. Extensive parameters are provided for detailed editing.

The DPM SP Plus sample playback module allows Tal to add virtually any sound to his arsenal. With 16-bit



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Tal is able to create and control just

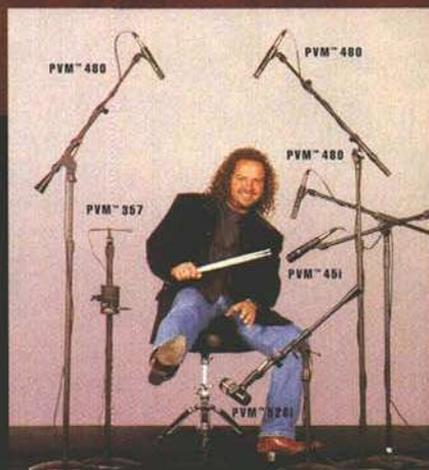
the DPM SP with an external sequencer, about anything his mind can conceive.

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PVM™ 520i

stand and stage noise. The PVM™ 520i is a high-performance mic that is unique in its ability to maintain superior off-axis rejection. The 520i maintains control of polar response down to and below 100Hz, making it ideal for kick drums, floor toms, and other instruments with very low frequency fundamentals.

PVM™ 357

The PVM™ 357 is an integrated system (mic and preamp) that effectively rejects "bleed" from other instruments. The preamp also features a "Trigger Out" connector for easy hook-up to a synthesizer or sequencer.



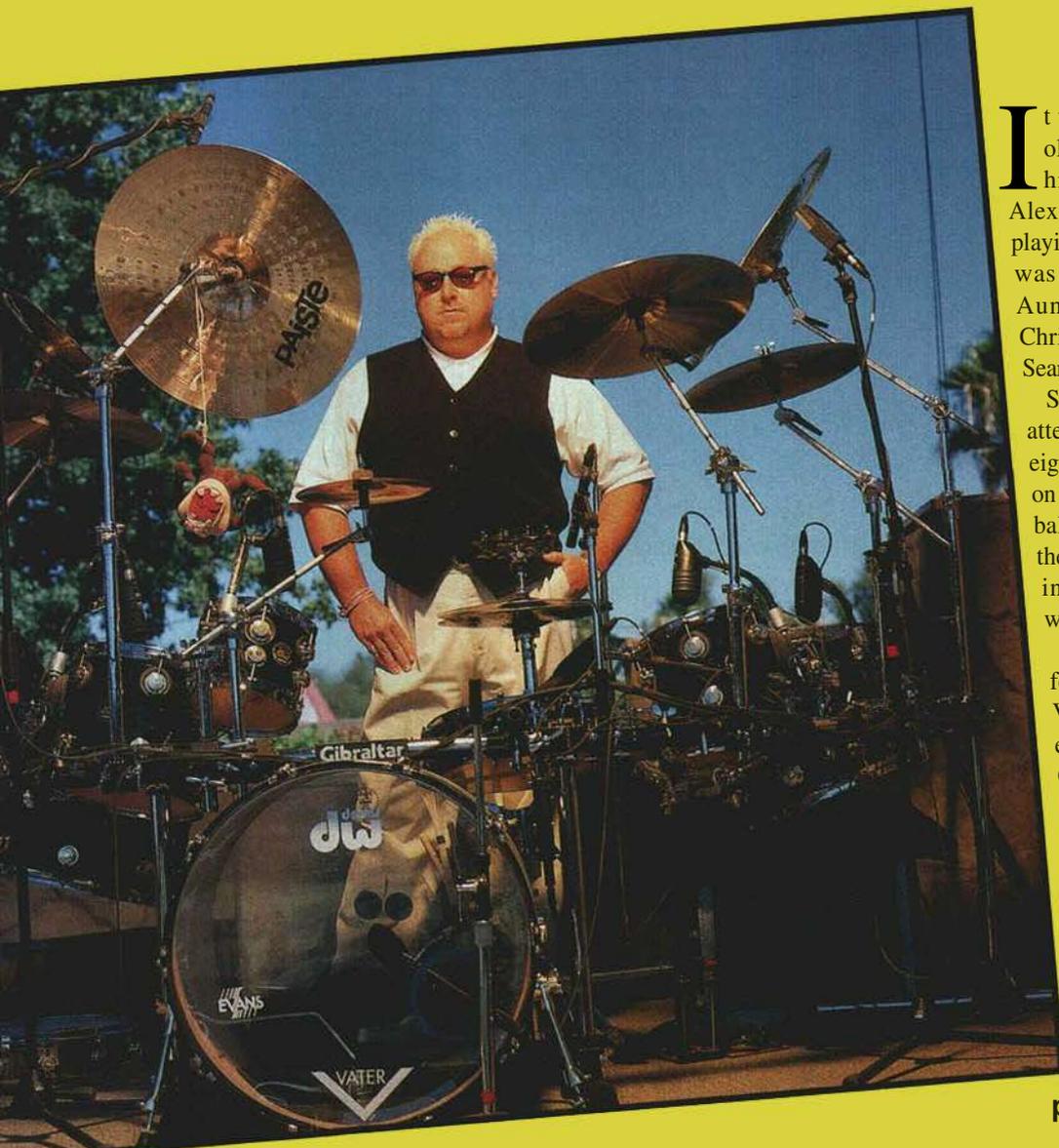
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Dony Wynn

Robert Palmer's hitmaker going country? Wynn's now laying down that deep pocket with country superstars Brooks & Dunn.



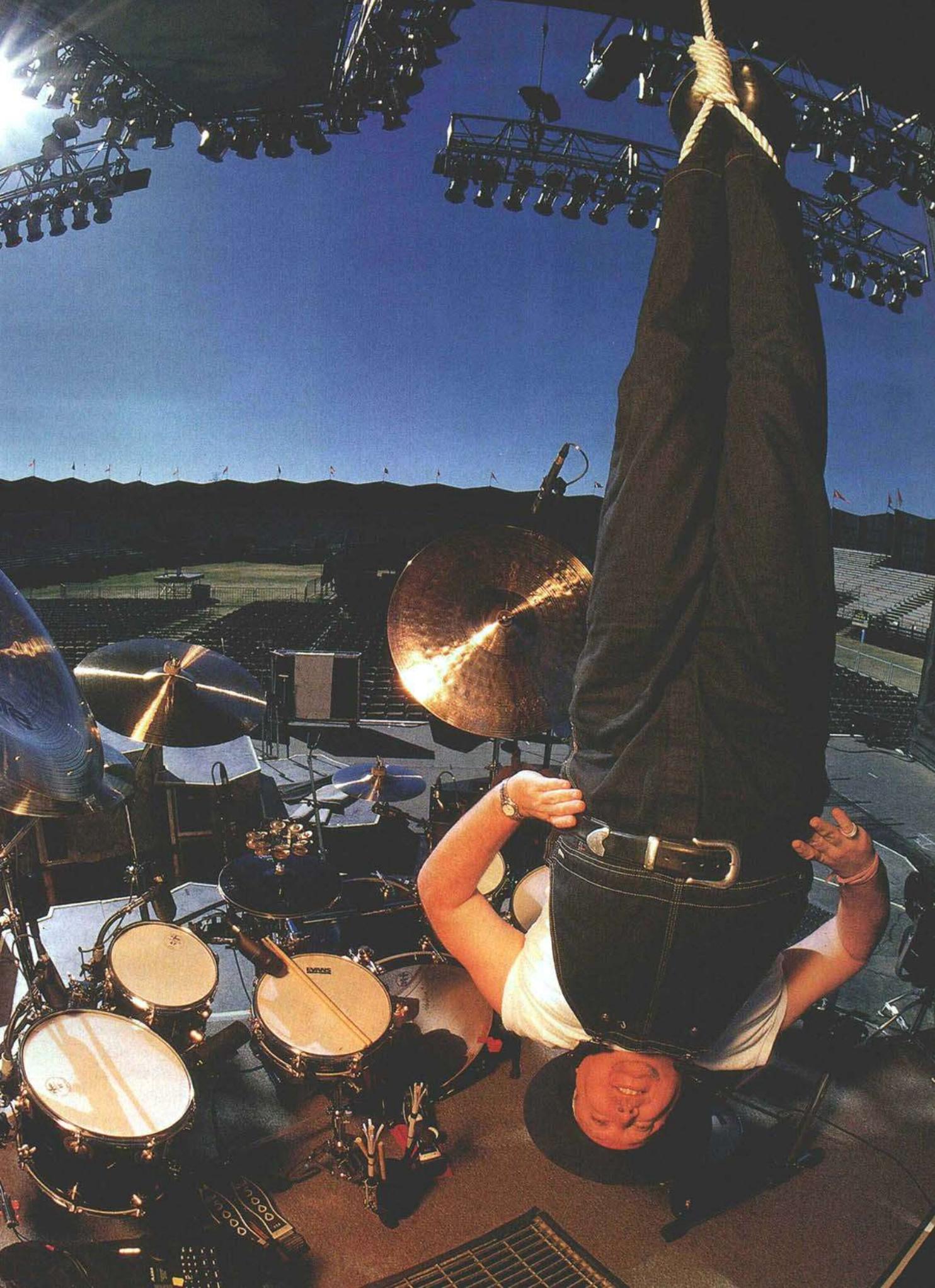
It was 1976, and a twenty-one-year-old Dony Wynn was working at his father's car dealership in Alexandria, Louisiana. He had been playing the drums on and off since he was three, first on toy drums his Aunt Margaret would send every Christmas, then on the blue sparkle Sears set his folks bought him.

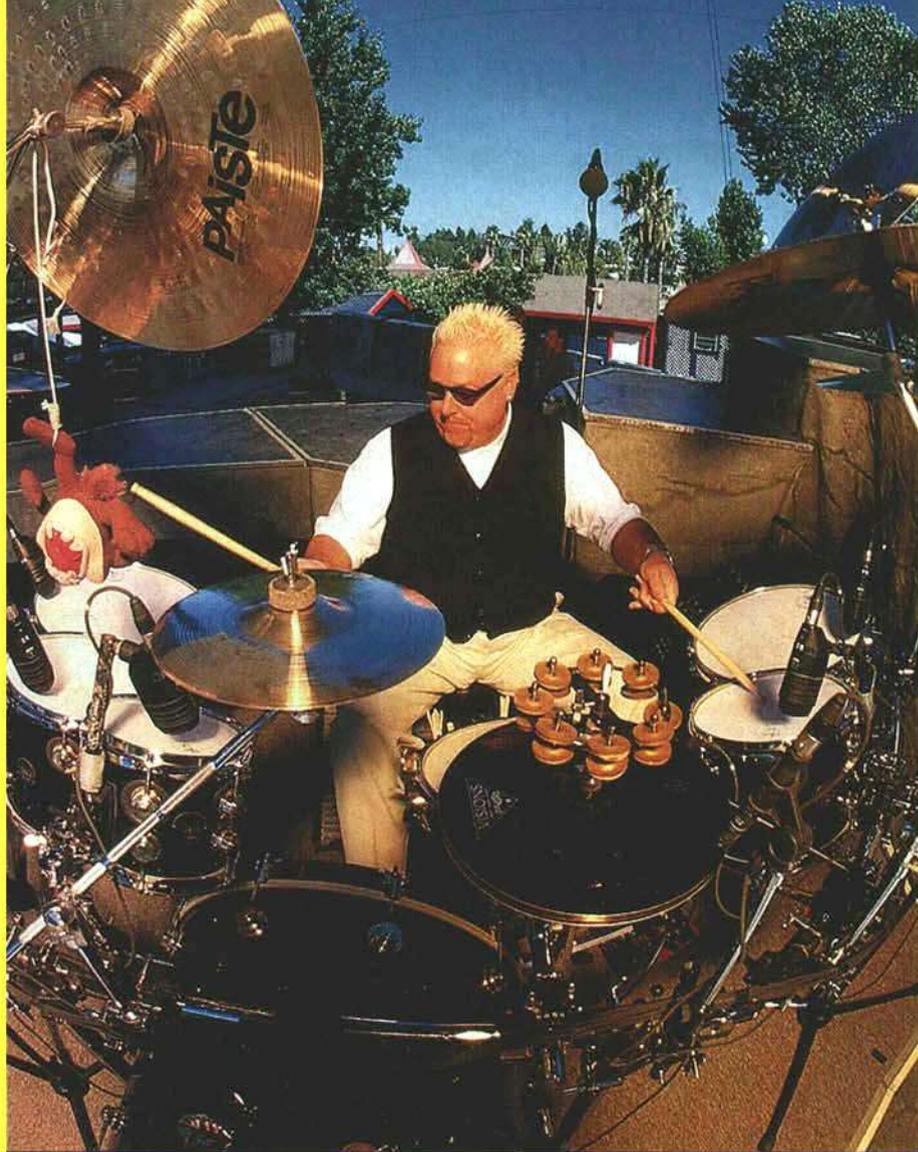
Sports and girls had grabbed his attention from grades three through eight, but when a friend turned him on to Jimi Hendrix, Dony quit football and track to immerse himself in the drums. He would actually sneak into clubs at that young age to watch other drummers.

Two local influences emerged for Dony during that time: Johnny Vidacovich, who was then just emerging as one of the great New Orleans groove merchants, and Big Johnny Thomasee, who was playing in a twelve-piece horn band fronted by singer Luther Kent.

by Robyn Flans

photos by Jay Blakesberg





"Thomasee made the most out of every note," Dony says. "He didn't play a lot, but when he'd hit a note, you knew it was important. He was the first one to show me how important it was to leave *out* some of what I was playing. His whole thing, of course, was working with the singer and popping the horns, which is something I adopted. The popping of the horns made me very conscious of all accents in music and how to bring the nuances out of the rhythm track. He was also very respectful of the singer, knowing how to get behind him and do a fill that would kick the singer in the butt. All he ever played was one ride cymbal, a bass drum, one tom, a snare drum, and a hi-hat, but he could do more with that than most people could do with a billion drums. That became my credo: If I can't do it on a snare drum, hi-hat, and bass drum, then I don't need to do it."

As all that was beginning to sink in, however, Dony's playing was still a product of his fusion influence. Simplicity in playing was still just a concept when, out of the blue, Dony got a call asking him to play a session with some of the heavyweights in Louisiana at Bogaloo's Studio.

"It was all these great old groove

BOSS TALK

Wynn's current and former employers were more than happy to weigh in on what Dony brings to their music.

ROBERT PALMER

"A good drummer plays songs, and when I heard Dony play, he just sat in the right place for the song. It's been a journey with him ever since, investigating all kinds of syncopations, things that I was very interested in finding out how to interpret and incorporate into songs. Sometimes we ended up doing crazy things in order to achieve that.

"I cut a song in the mid-'80s in Paris, and Dony was using a Simmons kit. He had the pads, but nothing else—no stands. We had to gaffer-tape the pads to the back of the console, and Dony played the whole thing laying on his back under the console using a pair of pencils! He didn't have any sticks. If you listen to the recording, it's really funky.

"A lot of the reason we've worked

together so well is his willingness to experiment. Dony's background in the New Orleans second-line approach to drumming is full of cross-rhythms and syncopations. When it comes to playing 4/4, Dony is a backbeat player. A lot of players will lead with their hi-hat or play off the foot, but Dony is more focused on his snare, so for him it's not that difficult to work around the backbeat. You end up having a lot of confidence in a player

like that. I think it was Keith Richards who said, 'A lot of drummers start off going down the runway, but they never take off.' Dony has a short take-off run."

As for the long musical relationship between Dony and Robert, Palmer says, "It's a very different thing making music with a player you've known for years. There's all this stuff that's just unspoken

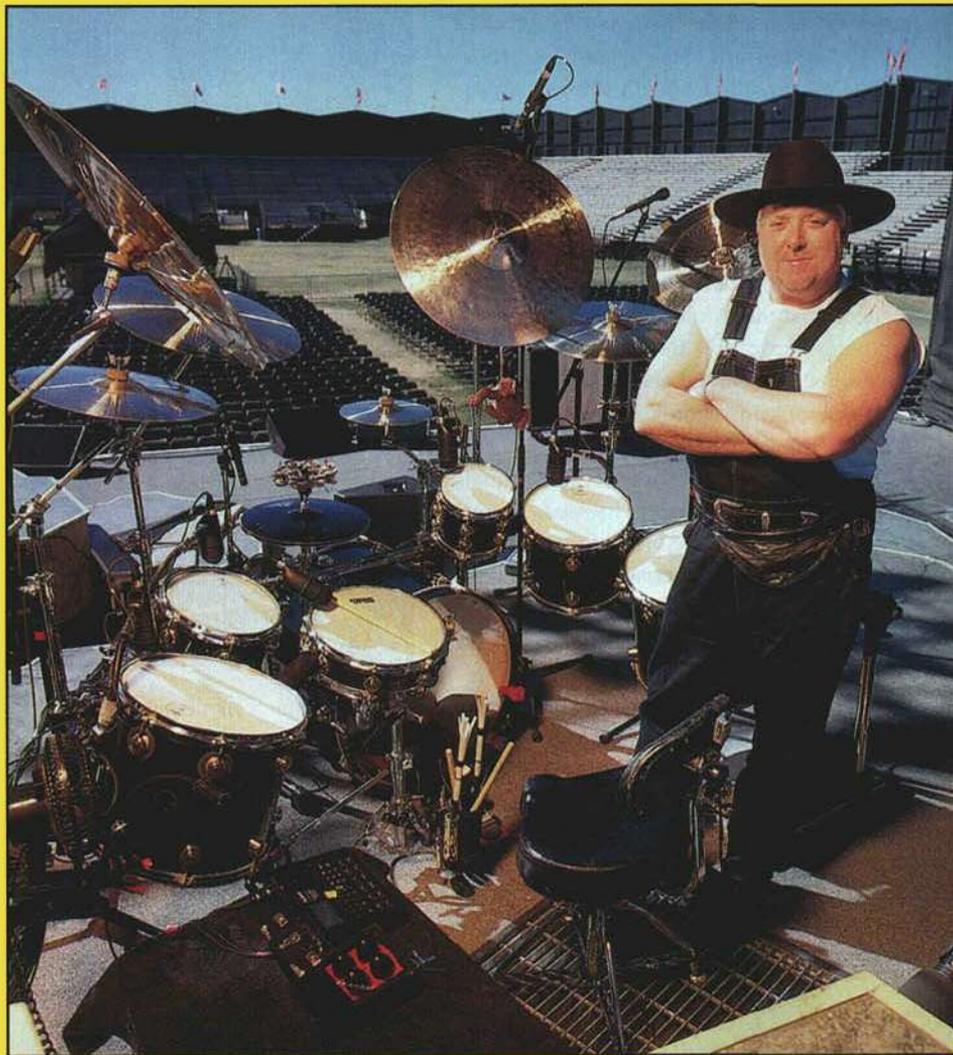


Eber Roberts

players, and I was kinda into fusion then," Dony recalls. "I was into Billy Cobham and I was playing with Julius Farmer, who was Ron Carter's student, doing a jazz-fusion thing. I went to this session where they had songs, and I discovered I had terrible time. I had chops for days, but these guys had a *pocket*—the real deal, and I could not do it. Cy Frost was the producer; he tried to put me on a metronome and I could not play with it. We tried for two days, and finally it was, 'Sorry, this is not working out.'

"The night I got fired, I was in this little back room where they were making some tapes, when all of a sudden there was this old country-sounding thing coming out of the speakers. The drums were gorgeous—the sounds, the way the guy played. The feel was this big, wide expanse. He was playing so simple, and I thought, '*That's* the guy I want to sound and feel like.' I asked someone who it was, and they told me it was Larrie Londin.

"I went home devastated and quit playing live for four years. I bought *The Last Record Album* by Little Feat, and for the next two years, I played that record over and over with headphones on, because I loved Richie Hayward's



because of the experiences you've had. You can have a lot of fun making music rather than having to tutor somebody. If a friendship survives the road and all of the ups and downs, it's very unusual. We have survived. Besides, I always enjoy seeing Dony in any kind of circumstance. He's one of the few house guests I can put up with for more than three days. It's like having a big English sheep dog in the house. He can cook, so he's great great in the kitchen, and we both like to experiment in taste and in entertainment - and we like to make music together. He's an extremely rare breed."

And as for working with Dony again, Robert has a quick reply. "Try to stop us!"

Ronnie Dunn of Brooks & Dunn

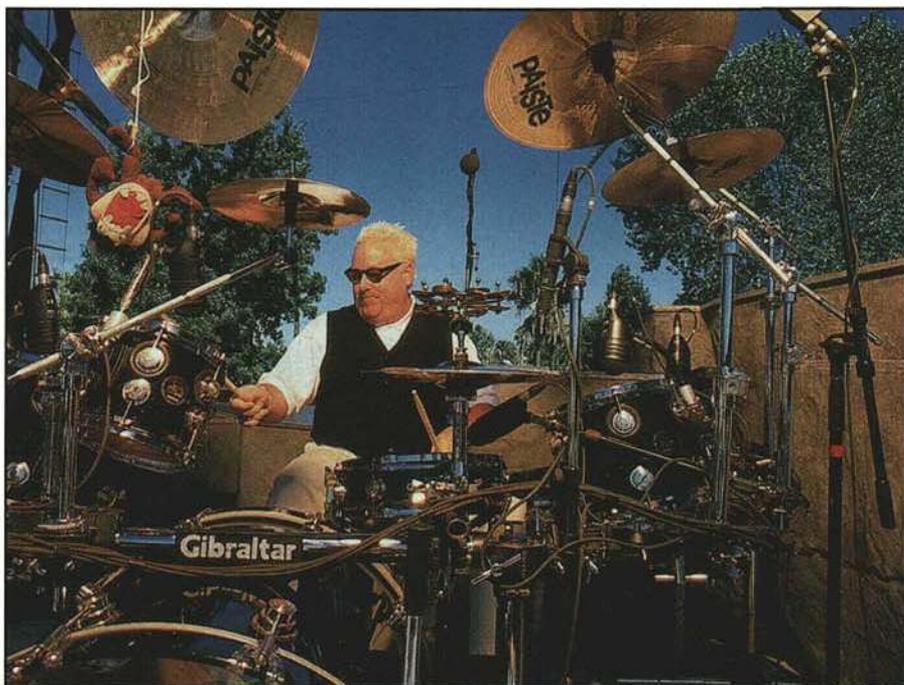
"We had been hearing about Dony Forever. Dony was a friend of our bass player from down in Louisiana, and kept telling us about this drummer who had been out with Robert Palmer and all these other people. For the first couple of years our band was together, we never thought we could get Dony—he's such a *big*

dawg. Well, when our other drummer was getting ready to get off the road, we asked Dony if he would work with us." What was it like playing with Dony at the first rehearsal? "It freaked us all out," Ronnie says. "He hits the drums so hard. We thought the previous drummers had played hard, and we had really tried to punch the music up to almost a rock level on the rhythm end—but Dony was at rock plus ten! He brought that power to the table. He also brought in dynamics, which brought the band to a new musical level, and he really brought the band together as a unit—it had never been that tight before.

"He makes the band attentive to what's going on. Sometimes he'll drop a beat just to make sure they're listening. And he'll mess with me on stage when I'm singing. There are a couple places where I hold notes over breaks in the music, and I have to count. Dony will come in with a syncopated fill and just completely throw me off. You gotta know he's going to play with you, man, but it keeps us on our toes, and he keeps it fresh. We don't change our set that much over the course of a year because of the production necessities, so you gotta do something to keep it fresh. He's been a real good addition."

groove. I realized the song and the groove are the important things, and I started schooling myself. I bought things Larrie, Richie, and Bernard Purdie played on. Purdie had a way of exploding around the toms and keeping things moving, even when there were syncopations and stuff. I remember Cat Stevens did a live show; I hated Cat Stevens, but all of a sudden I realized that these folk songs I hated were grooving like crazy. Bernard was playing the drums! So I started getting all of the old Aretha Franklin records, and I loved the way he made things pulse and move. Keltner was also an influence, and I love Bonham's power and dexterity—but Larrie had the pocket! I started pulling stuff from all of those guys. I just concentrated on trying to find *my* pocket."

Back at his father's car dealership, Dony continued the 9-to-5 life, until one day he wandered into a recording studio that a friend of his owned. Guitarist Leo Nocentelli from the Meters had been cutting there, and something about that music grabbed hold of Dony so strongly that he asked his friend if he could play on some tracks.



"I did a bunch of drum stuff, and Leo called me up a couple of days later and said, 'Wow, I really appreciate what you did.' He came down to the dealership and said, 'You know, God has given you a gift. I know you're working for your dad, but I'm sitting here telling you you've got a gift

and you should do something with it.' That's all I needed to hear. Two weeks later, I walked into my dad's office, sat down, and said, 'This is going to come as quite a shock, but I'm quitting today and going to California tomorrow.' He stood up and shook my hand and said, 'Son, congrats-

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tions. Go out there and be the best you can be.' He said if at the end of the year I hadn't done it, I had a place back there."

So Dony made the trip, rooming with the one person in L.A. he knew, Bobby Kimball, who was just forming a group called Toto with some young L.A. players. Jeff Porcaro set Dony up on a couple of auditions, but Dony admits now he was just not ready for the caliber of those gigs.

"I did an audition with Larry Carlton, and he was nice enough to say, 'I think you've got a lot of potential, but you're just not there yet.' I appreciated his honesty. I did an audition with Rufus, and we had a great time, playing for about four or five hours. To be able to play with them was a gas, but they ended up getting John Robinson."

Dony's year was coming to an end, and the dealership was beginning to look like the only sure thing he had. To lift his spirits, some friends of Dony's offered to pay for him to visit New Orleans, and while there, they all went to a Robert Palmer concert.

Today Palmer recalls the first time he heard Dony's playing. "The majority of the first album I recorded in '74 was cut with

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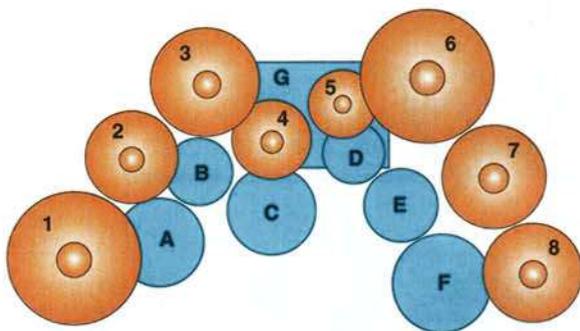
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- 3. 18" Paiste medium crash
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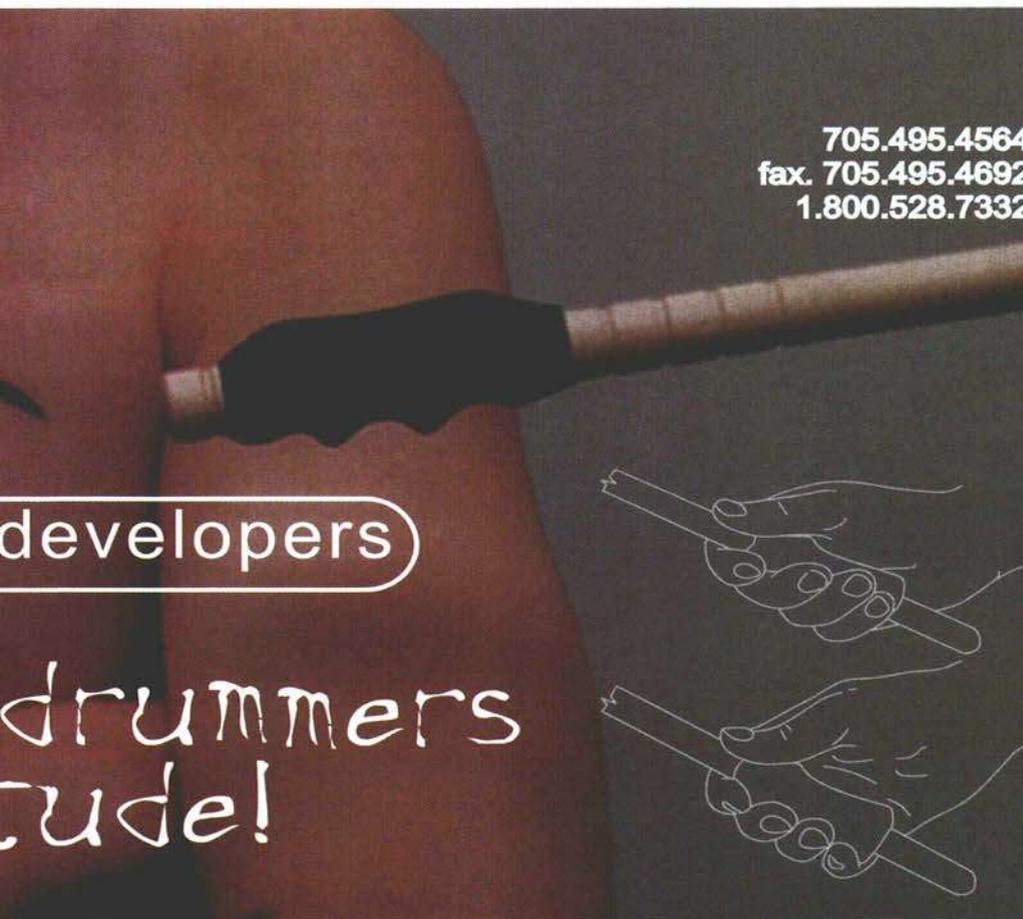
Sticks: Vater Fusion model



the Meters from New Orleans. The drummer in the band was, and is, the legendary Zigaboo Modeliste. About a year after the release of my album, I was in the embarrassing situation of having the Meters open for me in New Orleans. But they didn't mind, and afterwards we went over to Leo Nocentelli's house to listen to some things

they were working on. I was listening to the stuff and I said, 'Wow, Zig sounds great on the stuff.' Leo said, 'It's not Zigaboo, it's this guy Dony Wynn,' and I turned around, and there's this preppie-looking nineteen-year-old."

"Robert looked over at me and said, 'But you're white,'" Dony adds with a laugh. "I



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laughed and said, 'Yeah,' and that's all he said to me." Nothing immediately came of that meeting, and Dony went back to L.A. Well, it wasn't long before he found himself packing his bags, ready to return home to the car business. And of course, just at that moment, the phone rang.

"It was David Harper, Robert Palmer's manager, and he said, 'What are you doing today?' I said, 'I'm packing my bags. I'm getting ready to go back to Louisiana.' He said, 'Can you catch the next flight to Nassau, Bahamas?' 'Uh, well, I guess so. What's up?' He said, 'Well, we're doing a record, but the drummer we were using has left to pursue another project. Robert wants you to do this record.' I said, 'Man, I'm flattered as hell, because Robert always uses the greatest drummers—Jeff Porcaro, Allan Schwartzberg—but I'm not really in that class.' He said, 'Well, I don't know what to tell you, but Robert wants you.' I said, 'Well, okay, I just don't want to disappoint you guys.' He said, 'Come on down here. If it works, great. If it doesn't, then hang out for a few days in the sun and then go back home.'

"So I got a flight to Nassau—but I was panicking. I had some big shoes to fill. I got there and went to Robert's house, and we were all having cocktails. Then he played us a lot of the stuff he was going to cut, and it was very cool. I was still nervous, though. I walked into the studio, and the drums were already set up. The first song he wanted to do was 'In Walks Love Again,' with a second-line feel. I was in my element! We started playing, and he and I looked at each other and realized there was a chemistry there. Needless to say, I didn't go back to the car business."

Dony cut all of the subsequent album, *Secrets*, from which Palmer had a smash with "Bad Case Of Loving You." Palmer kept Dony Wynn busy for the next fifteen years. "Working with this guy was like going to college," Dony says. "He put me through some paces, but I understood that in order to support all these polyrhythms Robert had going on, I had to make a really massive groove. That's why on a lot of the tracks there aren't a lot of fills and stuff going on. The fills are only there as a form of expression and to motivate *him* to do things. Larrie's teaching helped provide that for me. I eventually got to meet Larrie. He was my mentor. He and Jeff Porcaro both took me under their wings; they were

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both so wonderful. It was so hard to lose them both in such a short span."

During the European tour supporting *Secrets*, Palmer and Wynn discovered Gary Numan. Every night for a week they would listen to Numan's new wave hit "Cars" for hours. The concept of sequencers began to enter their consciousness. "As we began to understand the role of sequencers, the band grew apart," Wynn recalls. "There's an old way of playing where you play so far on the back of the beat that it almost seems to slow down, and it *does* slow down. Of course, with the advent of drum machines and sequencers, that went out the window. Robert, our keyboard player, Jack Waldman, and I grabbed onto this new feel. We felt music changing, but the rest of the band didn't. So we had a real division on that first tour, and it was a horrible tour. We were trying to make it work, but we were feeling things differently.

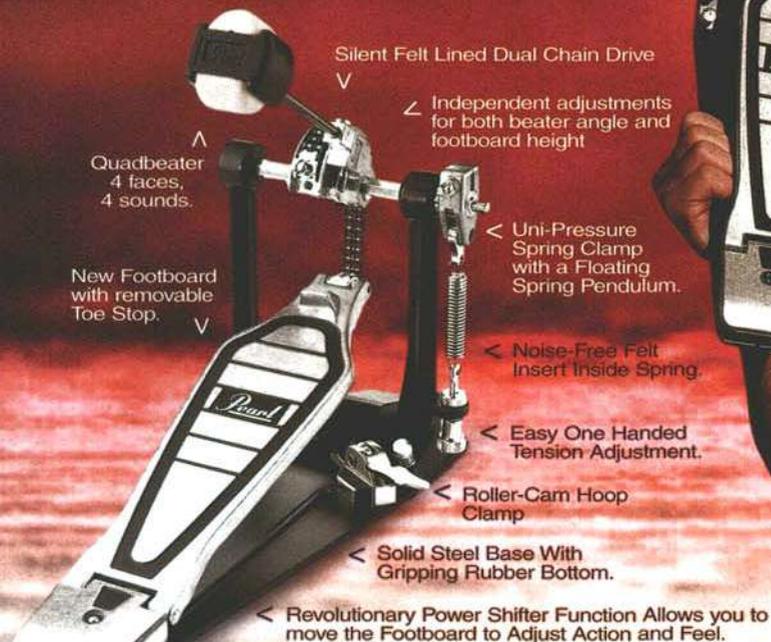
"Before I went in to do my second record with him, *Clues*, Robert went to Japan and bought a sequencer and a little drum machine, items that were very new at the time. When we got ready to cut the tunes, he had set all these bass sequences up, and that's what I played along to. He

hadn't finished the songs, and hadn't brought anyone else down there to play, so I played only to bass sequences. If you listen to "Looking For Clues," which became a very popular track, there's a break where the sequencer plays, and then I play. What happened was there was a huge hole in the sequence and Robert said, 'Play something.' So I did and he ended up writing a song around that. That's what he did with a lot of that record.

"Gary Numan stopped in while we were making the record, and we did one of his songs," Dony continues. "It was a truly cool record, I must admit. But it was weird for me. I was playing to blips and beeps. There was nothing musical about it; it was robotic. But during that process, I established what I truly consider to be my time. The whole process made me become very aware that the groove is like a big slice of pie, which is one groove. You can put the snare over here, the bass drum up here, and the hi-hat right here—or any variation thereof—and you do that so that you're the boss. You're controlling the perception of the time, not the sequencer. I can actually make a sequence sound like it's slowing down. If it's telling you to play a certain

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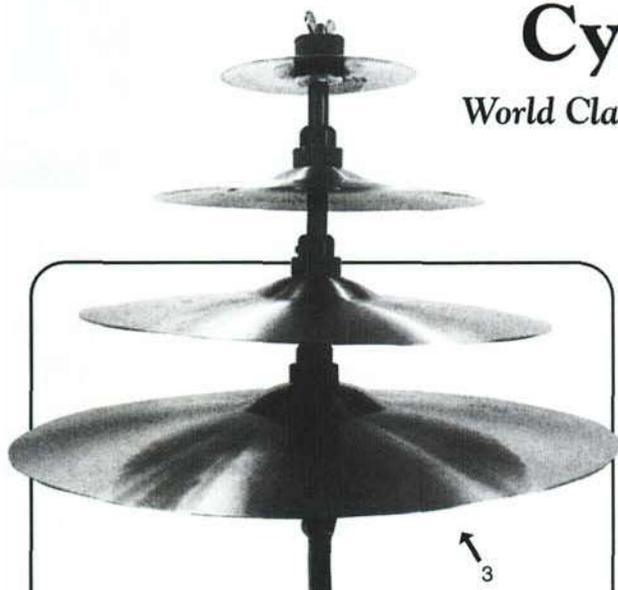


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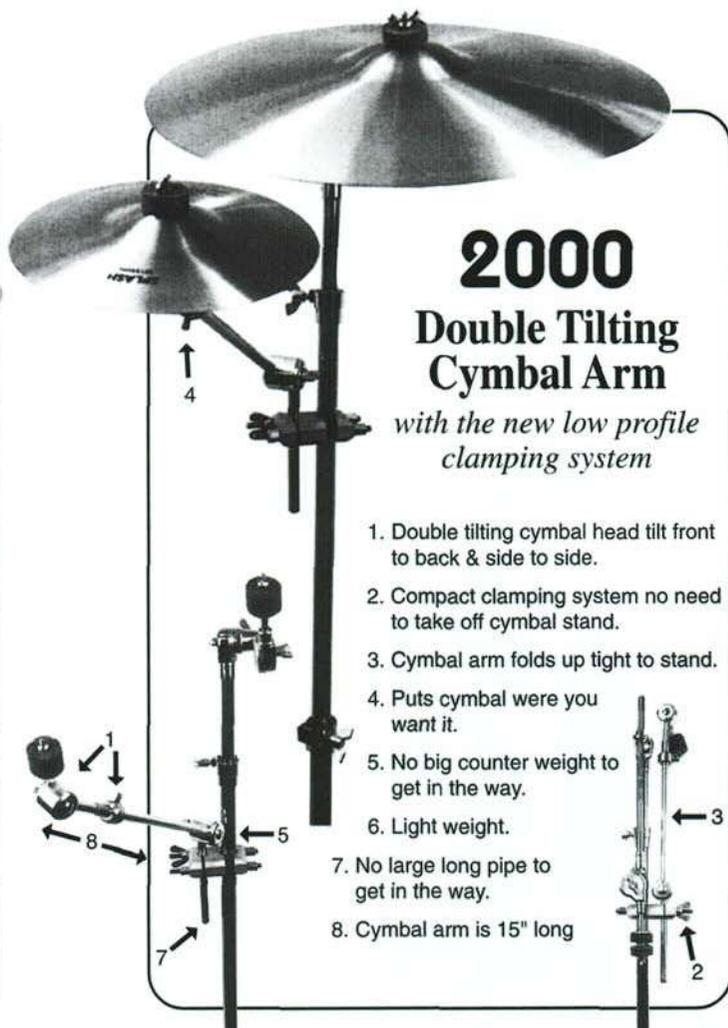
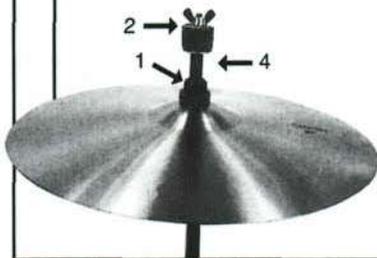
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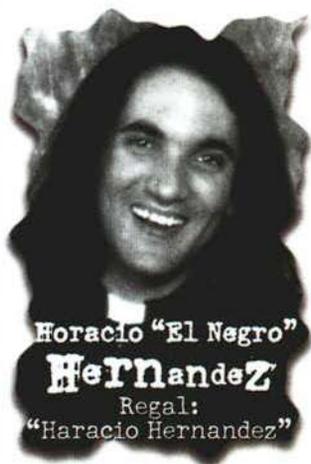
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way, that's bull. You've got to assume control and tell *it* what to do.

"I can be playing with a sequence and make the verse drop down, the chorus pick back up, or the bridge lift up even further and then drop down again. You can wind your way around it, too, and it was during the making of that record that I figured that out. That's one of the first records I can recall that used sequences, so, to me, it was real revolutionary. We even used old Frank Sinatra loops played backwards; I believe that was on 'Found You Now.'

"We had embraced sequencers, drum machines, looping—all these things. Of course with that, the band broke up. Suddenly there were all these new gadgets available. I remember one time Robert wanted to do this weird song for some foreign film. He wanted to do it in Paris, and I got there and realized I had no drums. I hadn't even brought drumsticks with me. It was the middle of the night and we were in Pigalle, which is a very degenerate place, and there were no drumsticks anywhere. Luckily, there were Simmons drums, so we turned up the sensitivity and I played them with pencils, and it worked out really well."

A year and a half after *Clues*, Palmer released *Pride*. "I think that was probably our most experimental record," Dony suggests, "and it's still one of my favorites. There were a lot of different styles of music. We'd have one blistering funk track, and then 'I Want You More' had all those voodoo drums. Robert, to me, was always like a science-fiction character, pushing the envelope. The album didn't do squat over here in the States; most of our success was over in Japan and Europe, so that's where we toured—which was fine. I got to live in Paris for several months, and I can think of worse things happening."

In 1984, Dony was on the way to a session on his bicycle, when he was hit by a car. His broken hip put him on crutches for eight months, during which time Palmer went off with the Power Station project. For his next record, Palmer decided to work with Power Station producer Bernard Edwards, who began the record with *his* standard crew, including drummer Tony Thompson. Thompson was on about half of the mega-successful *Riptide*, including the single "Addicted," at which point Palmer called for Dony. Wynn recorded the remainder of the project, then returned to



"When people ask me what it's like playing country, I ask, 'What country?' We're playing big venues, and people are paying big money to come in and get their butts rocked."

L.A., where he began to develop his rather unconventional drumkit with John Good and Don Lombardi of Drum Workshop.

"I'm ambidextrous, and I'm built with a large upper body," Dony explains, "so when I play a normal kit you can see that all of my muscles are constricted. I hate it. I had been talking to John for years about this, and I think NASA developed some cabling for the space shuttle that made some kit ideas we had possible. The DW guys found out about it, got it in there, and a truly efficient remote hi-hat was born. Before that, I would try all kinds of remote hats that people would make for me, and it was awful. I placed DW's remote hi-hat in the middle of the kit, directly in front of me. It's so natural now.

"I hated setting up like everybody else. Drummers always set up like someone they've seen before, without regard to their individual needs. I'm not going to be able to sit down and play Omar Hakim's drumset. So I wanted to establish something that was uniquely mine and something that

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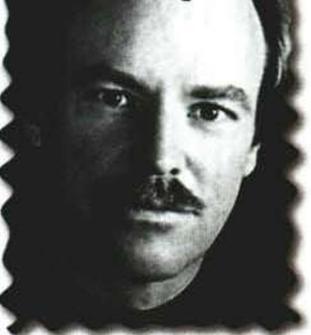
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would enable me to express myself. Instead of setting up the toms from left to right or right to left, I stagger them, positioning them on the sides of the kit.

"Zigaboo was living close by at the time, and he and I were messing around with the prototype drumset DW had sent, with the remote hi-hat and the toms positioned on the sides. He's such a natural. I watched him play and realized he wasn't trying to play like he normally would on a regular drumset. It was totally random, and what was coming out was weird and exotic. Instead of hitting standard fills, where the toms went sequentially down, he'd do a fill where it would be a low tom and then a high tom. I realized I had to throw convention out of the window. Instead of doing a fill that goes around the toms from left to right, I'd start at a 10:00 position with my left hand and a 2:00 position with my right, and I'd move further apart from there. It took a bit of physical adjustment to play this way, but once I did, it was total freedom. If I want to play a salsa beat, I can access a tom to my left or a tom to my right, and I never have to cross over. I'd play stuff, hear it back, and it wouldn't have any conformity to it, which was neat."

Easter Sunday 1986, a year after his recovery, Dony realized his L.A. chapter had come to an end. He threw all his possessions on his front lawn, knocked on the neighbors' doors, and said, "Come and get it."

"I packed two suitcases and got on a flight to Nassau that night. I joined Robert there, and it was the start of a really fruitful period for us," Dony recalls. "'Addicted' was just getting ready to come out, and we did a bunch of film scores. He and I co-wrote 'Sweet Lies,' and it was the beginning of another journey for us. The *Riptide* record went through the roof, and we had a great tour behind it, which began another seven-year stretch for us.

"I was a gypsy for the next four years. I lived in Italy for a while, I lived in London for a while, picking up sessions. Robert has a very prestigious reputation in Europe. I did a couple of different records at Jimmy Page's studio in England, and I kept myself busy, but I was a total vagabond—no stress, no bills, no nothing. It was wonderful. In the meantime, I was doing these huge tours with Robert. The one in '88 was a year and a half and went to Australia, the Far East, the Philippines, Thailand,

Europe—everywhere."

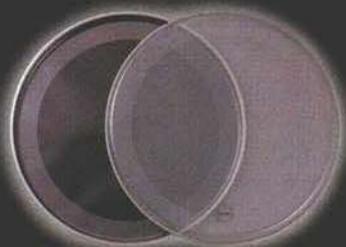
In 1987, Dony's new setup was fully conceived, right in time for the recording of *Heavy Nova*, which contains Palmer's big hit "Simply Irresistible." Soon thereafter, Dony began to consider making Nashville his next home. For the previous fifteen years he hadn't seen much of his parents, and as he put it, "Mortality creeps in as you get older, and I realized they're only going to be here so long." They were living eighty-five miles northeast of Nashville, so Dony settled in Music City, even though many players tried to discourage him.

"There's a pecking order in Nashville. It's not engraved in stone, but it's there. What I've always told people who have asked about Nashville is to come here and prepare to create your own niche. Don't come here to try to become what is going on here; you'll beat your head against the wall. It won't happen and you'll leave disappointed. The downside is that people say you have to stay in town to crack it, but what are you going to do, stay there and starve? I had to keep working with Robert. We would go out on tours and I'd come back. And all the time I was finding writers and artists that I would be able to do something with later on down the road, which is hopefully coming to pass now."

In 1991 some personal problems overtook Dony, and he quit playing for a year. "I just said to myself, 'I'm not supposed to play music right now,' so I quit. I locked all my stuff in storage, leased my place out to Pepsi Cola for a year, and Booda, my dog, and I went to my parents' ranch. I decided to take a year off and do nothing with music—don't listen, don't play it, don't talk about it. I took care of the ranch and worked my butt off, but interestingly enough, time slowed down. Remember when you were a kid and you had the summer off and it felt like forever? Time slowed down and it was a really spiritual time for me. I reconnected with my family, which is a very important thing, I found God again in my life, and Booda and I really locked up and she became my child. I take her to sessions; she loves bass players. She'll curl up under the bass player's feet—I think she likes the low end on her tummy.

"Anyway, I lived out there and took a writing course at a nearby college. I've always been an avid reader, and people

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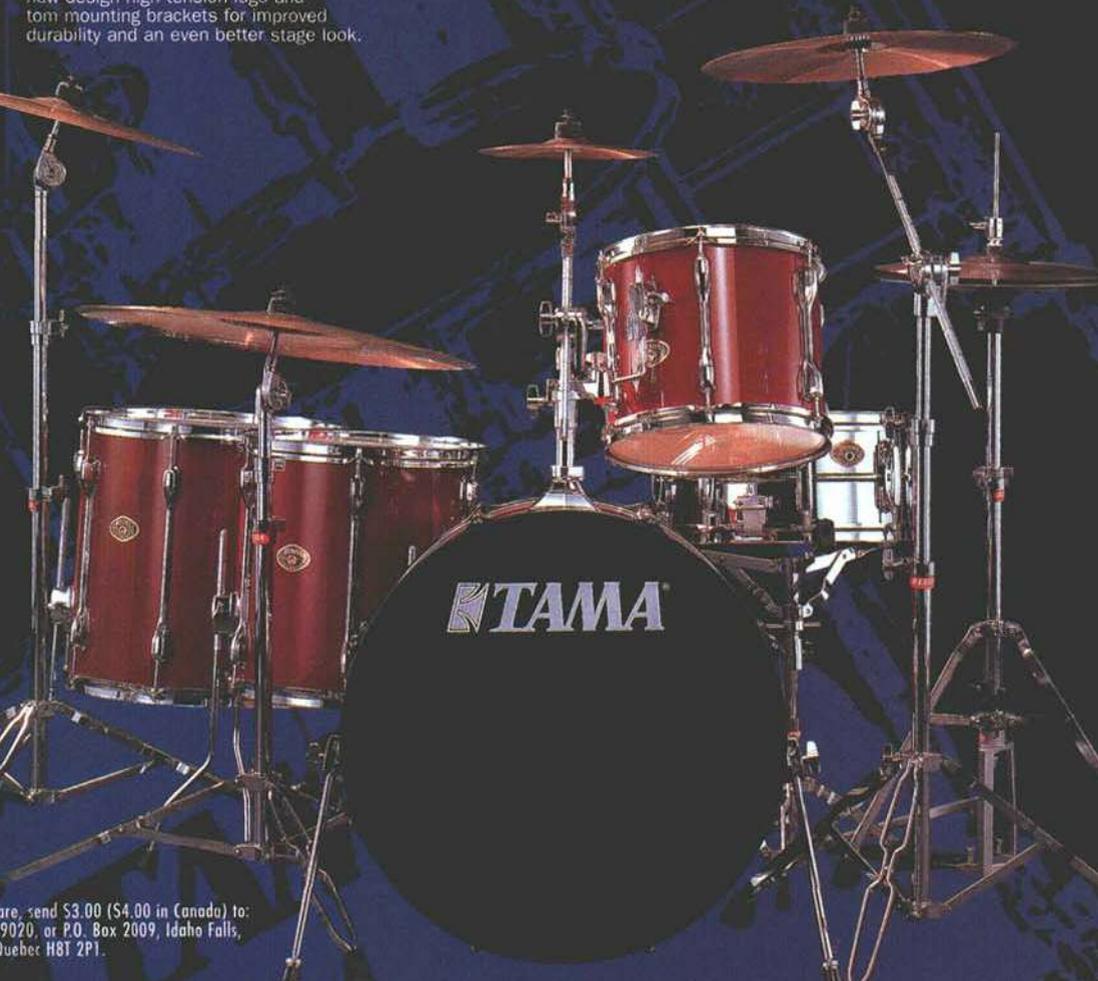
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have always said I should write. I did a few different things. I opened a restaurant, and when that went sour, something told me to go back to Nashville. A lot of things had happened that year that were great and that needed to happen. I needed to change as a person, and it affected my playing as well."

In 1993, Dony returned with a vengeance. He made his last album with Palmer, *Honey*, a project he describes as a culmination of creativity and knowledge. "I'm immensely proud of that record," he says. "That was when my playing was the most free, whatever the style. I had the luxury with Robert of setting up completely new and different kits for each song. We would just stop and break the last kit down, I'd listen to the song and decide on what I wanted, and then I'd tailor-make the kit for the song. We really pushed things to the edge on that record."

That year Dony also worked with Deborah Allen and Patti LaBelle. Then in the summer of '95, just three days before Dony was to leave on a tour with Patti LaBelle, he got an offer he couldn't refuse. Danny Ray Milliner, the bass player Dony had worked with in Pineville, Louisiana during his high school years, had moved to

Nashville when Dony had moved to L.A. early on. Danny was working with Brooks & Dunn, and phoned Dony to tell him the team wanted to hire him *immediately*.

"I went to their office the next day, and the offer looked fantastic," Dony says. "With Robert it had always been freelance. He always paid me well, and I'd earn great money for three years, but then maybe there'd be a year when I didn't make anything. With Brooks & Dunn, I'm on salary. I get paid all through the year, every two weeks. It's the first time in my life I've ever had that.

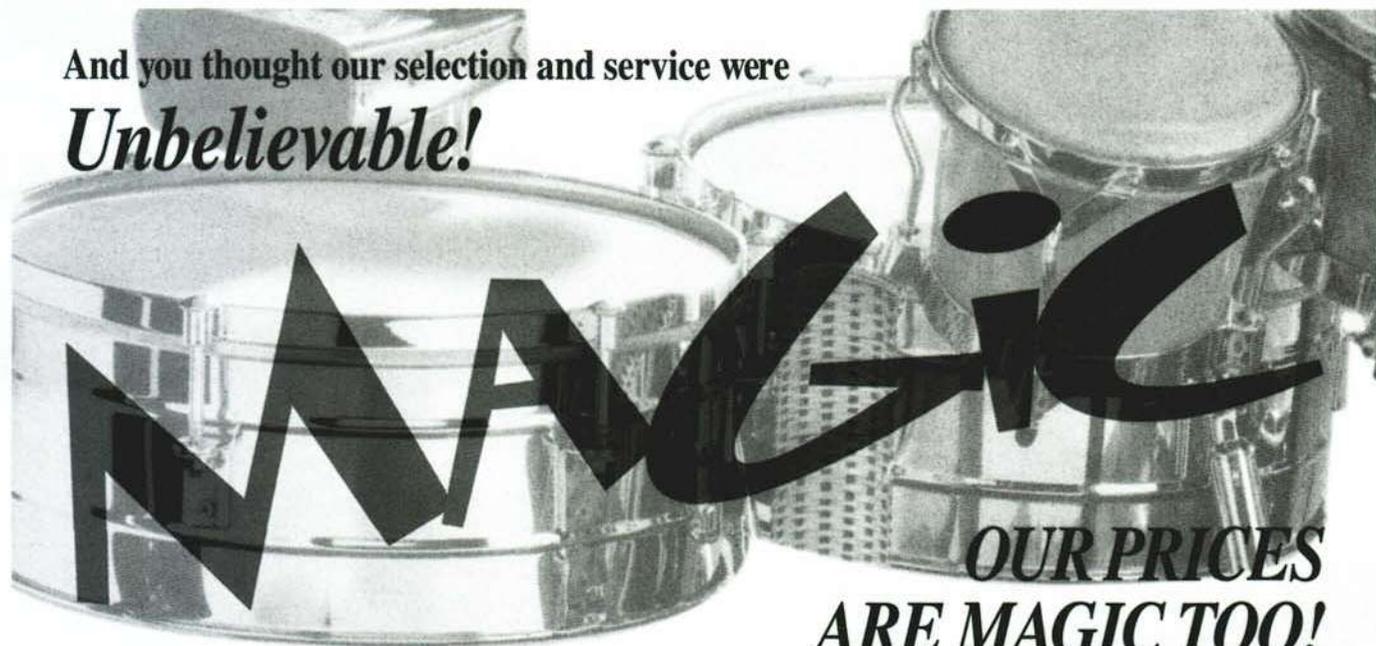
"I saw all the plusses of the gig, but as I was driving home I realized I wasn't familiar with their music at all. I suddenly wondered if I had sold myself down the river. Danny was in the car, and I guess he recognized it on my face and said, 'Are you okay with this?' I said, 'I don't know. It suddenly hit me: no offense, but what if I hate it? There will be no amount of money in the world that will make it worth it.' So Danny said, 'Just go to the rehearsals and tell me what you think. If you don't want to do it, don't do it.'

"I went to rehearsal with Kix [Brooks] and Ronnie [Dunn] a couple of days later,

and by the second song I looked at Danny and said, 'Oh, I get it—ZZ Top with country instruments. Okay, no problem!' I was really worried about letting Patti down, though. I love her, she's like my road mama. I called her husband and said, 'I've got some really bad news. It's good for me, but bad for you. This is not the way I like to do business, but I've been offered something I literally cannot turn down. I asked them to let me finish my obligation with you and let me join them later, but they want to make this move now.' He said, 'That's not bad news, that's good news. Congratulations.' My mom and dad were happy because Brooks & Dunn was this huge act in Nashville, and they equated that with the first time I played the *Tonight Show*—it made what I do legitimate in their eyes. And they were big fans of Brooks & Dunn; I called them as soon as we had made the deal, and my mom started crying she was so happy.

"The organization is so cool," Dony enthuses. "Everyone gets along, and if there's a problem you talk about it and fix it. If you need something, you get it. There's absolutely zero stress, except for the fact that I'm playing for 15,000 people a

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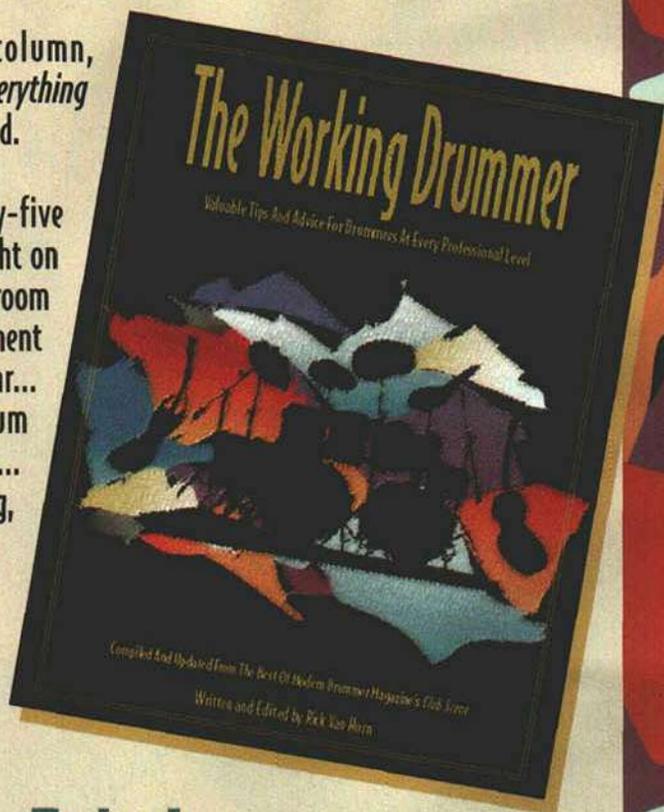
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night and it's all resting on my shoulders. Let's face it, the guitar player can quit playing, the keyboard player can quit playing, but if the drummer quits, it's all over. I'm enjoying it so much, though. They're a great group of folks."

Dony's already gotten the opportunity to record "I Ain't Singin' That Song No More," Brooks & Dunn's contribution to the *Peace In The Valley* country/gospel project, and he's hoping to record with them in the future. But he says he has a blast every night he's on stage with them, too.

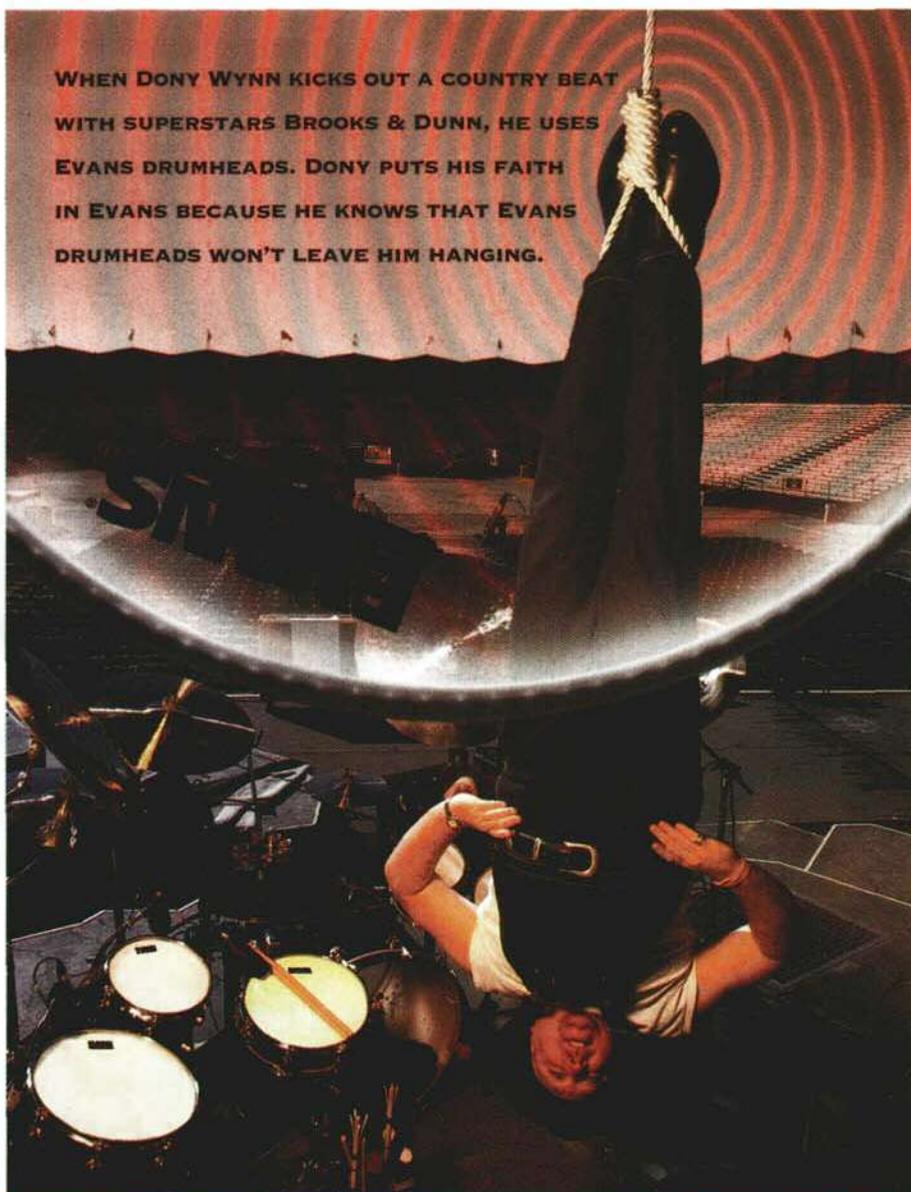
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he comments. "We're using a lot of technology out there. We're using the *Future Sonics* ear monitors, which eliminate all need for amplification. We're using a fiberoptic PA, one of two in existence, so there's total isolation of everything. I've got things panned, I've got gates and reverbs on things. I've got a big 18" woofer underneath me, so I still have the feeling of the air moving around me, which a lot of people who use the ear monitors say they miss.

"After a while I was having trouble, because it sounded like everything was right

up in my face. When you hit a drum, you hear the sound of the room fly out, and I wasn't able to hear the ambience. But one day they put up this big, \$4,000 mic' behind my head, and suddenly I got to hear the room and the crowd, which is important for pacing the show. I listen to the crowd, and when I can tell they need to clap a little bit, I'll wait before I count off the next song. If I feel they're a little dead, I'll get into it quicker."

How does Dony feel about playing country music? "When people ask me that, I ask, 'What country?' When I'm playing 'Mama Don't Get Dressed Up For Nothin',' it feels like I'm playing 'Addicted To Love.' I feel that's why Ronnie and Kix brought me in. We're playing these big venues, and you can't make the people in the back of the audience move if you're playing tentatively. These people are paying big money to come in and get their butts rocked. I'm not playing to the people in the first ten rows; I'm playing to the guy who is in the very back of the arena. If I can get him moving, everybody else is going to follow."



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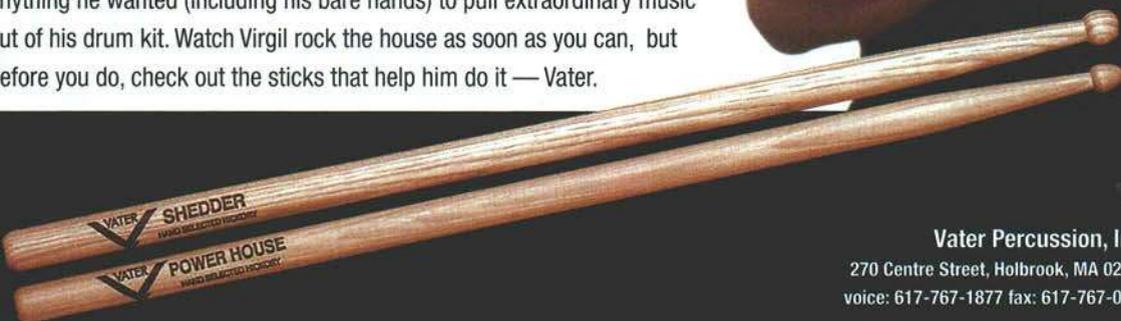
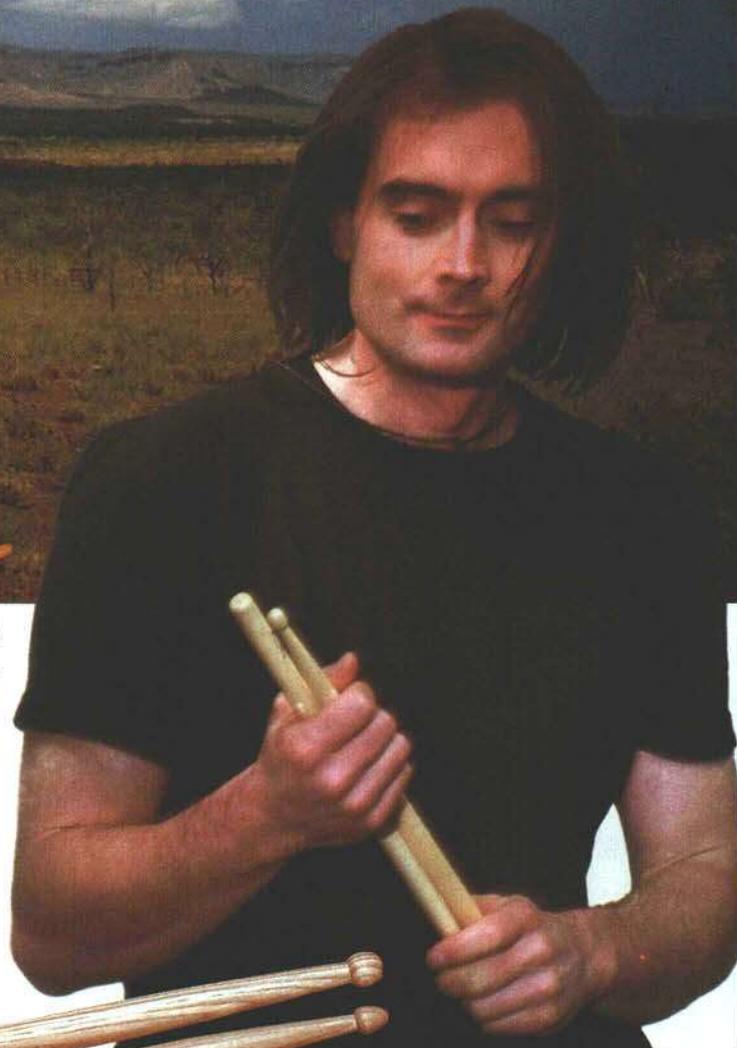
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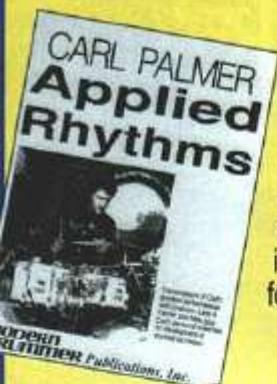
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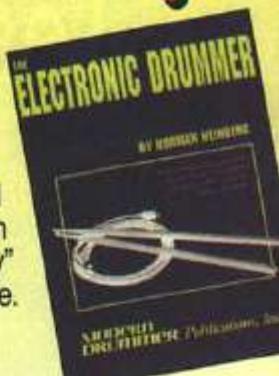


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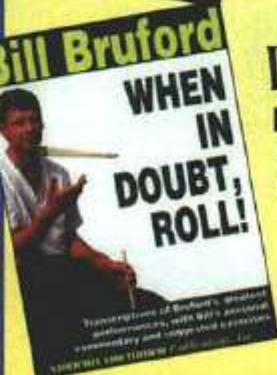
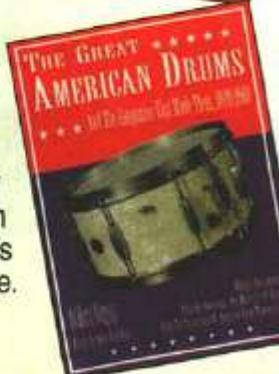
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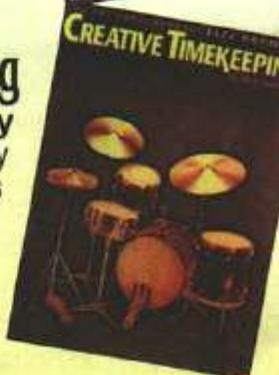
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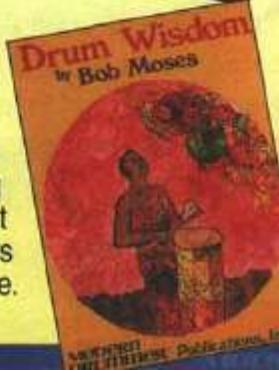
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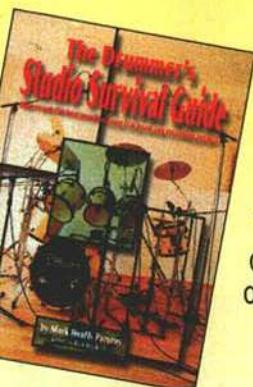
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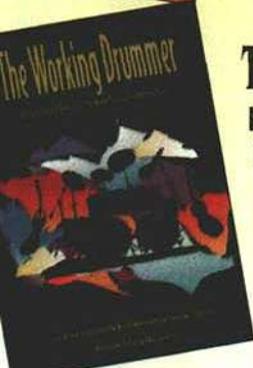




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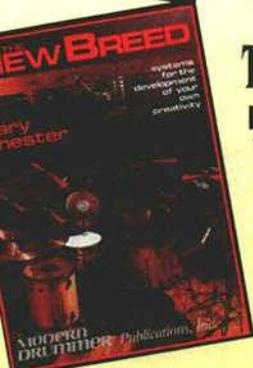
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	Creative Timekeeping (06621764)	\$8.95	
	The Cymbal Book (06621763)	\$24.95	
	The Best Of Concepts (06621766)	\$9.95	
	The Great American Drums (06620010)	\$19.95	
	Studio Survival Guide (00330257)	\$12.95	
	The Working Drummer (00330264)	\$14.95	

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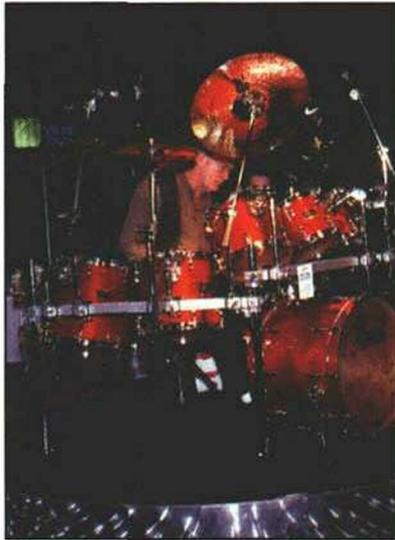
MOD5

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1997

The 1997 National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) show was—for the umpteenth consecutive year—the biggest ever in terms of exhibitor participation. And the drum and percussion industry was certainly not lacking in representation. In addition to all of the well-known "regulars," a bevy of new manufacturers was on hand to display a wide variety of innovative products. Here's a look at what was hot at NAMM '97.



Yamaha debuted *Anton Fig* and *Akira Jimbo* signature snare drums, which feature 19-ply wooden hoops. Also new: the limited-edition *30th Anniversary Maple Custom* drumkit and the new *Beech Custom* series, said to be a high-end kit "priced lower than either birch or maple sets."



Pearl's limited-edition *Masters Mahogany Custom* kit attracted a lot of attention. The company was showing brass and steel *Sens/Tone Custom Alloy* snare drums, improved versions of *Prestige Session*, *Session*, and *Export Select* kits, and a new *DR-500* height-adjustable drum rack.



P.J.L. drums highlighted their custom-created finishes and mached hardware.



The new *S-Class* kit from Sonor combines maple and birch plies for both brightness and warmth. The kit also features newly designed tom mounts, bass drum tom mounts, bass drum hoops, and other hardware improvements.



A new brand, but a familiar name: snare drums made of Australian jarrah or brown mallet by **Chris Brady & Craftsmen**. These drums feature ply shells and *Dry Timbre Series* wooden lugs. The company also makes solid, block-construction, and aluminum-shell drums.



The *Rocker* series from Ludwig now offers "affordable" kits with stained natural-wood finishes and new mini-lugs. Also new: 10" and 12" brass timbalitos, improved hardware, stick, and cymbal bags, and a totally re-structured line of drumsticks.



Slingerland's *Studio King* series is now sold as package kits that include all stands and pedals. In addition, the *Tempo King* pedal now features a "retro" pedal board that harks back to the early days of the company.



Noble & Cooley's first metal-shelled snare drum, the *Alloy Classic*, is created through a high-tech casting process that ensures tolerances to within thousandths of an inch. Also new: a variety of new custom drumkit finishes.

Along with their composite drums, **Grover Pro Percussion** offers all-maple drumkits. A free 5x10 *Performance Series* snare drum is now included with all four-piece (or larger) kits.



photos by Alex Solca

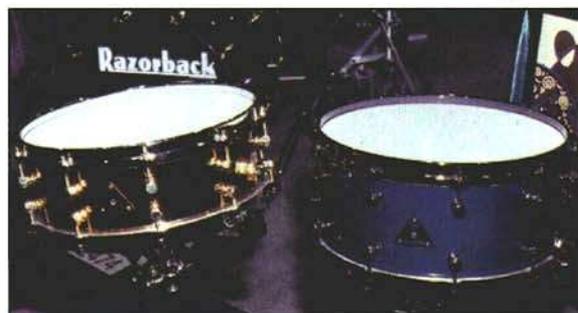
NAMM WINTER MARKET

DRUMS



Peavey now offers their "Radial Bridge" design in two affordable versions to complement their original high-end line. The *RadialPro 750* series shown here utilizes composite materials for the bridges and features lacquer finishes. The *RadialPro 500* series features covered finishes.

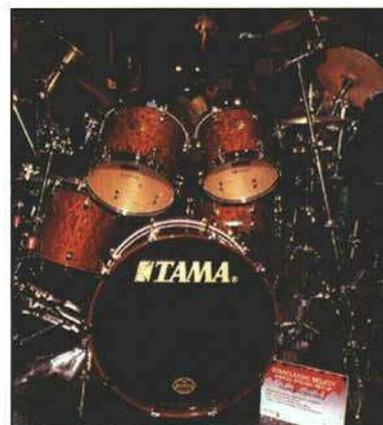
New from **Ayotte** are *drumSmith* drums, which feature all-maple shells, lacquer finishes, *TuneLock* tension systems, and *Suspension Bridge* mounting systems, but are manufactured in Taiwan in order to make them more affordable. Also new: stainless-steel snare drums built in conjunction with famed drum designer Gregg Keplinger.



HCS (High Carbon Steel) snare drums and custom-crafted all-maple kits were shown under the **Razorback** name, but are now available as **Road King** drums.



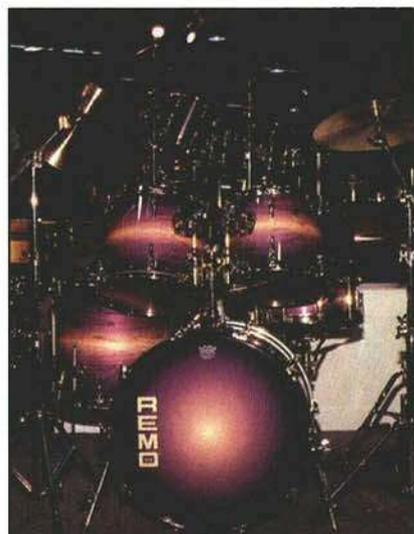
PureCussion now offers a line of high-quality yet affordable all-maple drums with either lacquer finishes (as shown here) or *Tour II* wrapped finishes. Also new: brass and wood 10" snare drums.



Along with this new quilted maple *Starclassic* finish, **Tama** introduced a re-designed *Starclassic Performer* kit for the intermediate price range. Also new: an improved *Rockstar* kit with many pro features.



GMS is celebrating its tenth anniversary with a limited-edition snare drum. The 5 1/2x14 drum features a shell made of solid bird's-eye maple, clear-coated and fitted with brass-plated hardware, die-cast hoops, and a tension-adjustable butt plate. The company also introduced the *Essential* bass drum beater, with a sliding head and adjustable weight.



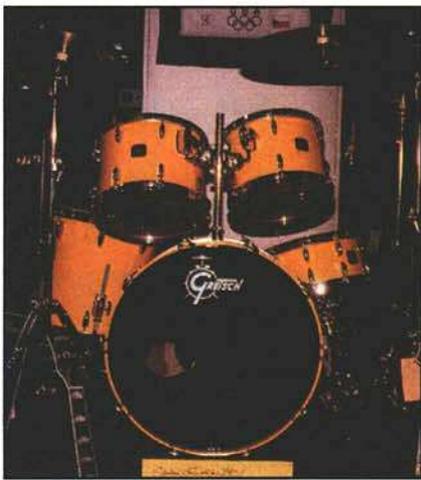
Remo now offers two versions of their *MasterTouch* drums. The *Quadura* series (shown here) features 5/16"-thick shells and *Quadura* wrapped coverings (now available with custom graphics). New *PowerEdge* drums feature thin (3/16") shells and *VenWood* maple veneer coverings.



Composite-shell drums of carbon-fiber and graphite were shown by **Rocket Shells**, who introduced their new *Road Series* kit. It included 8" and 10" *Johnny Rabb Signature* accessory snare drums.

The creativity of **Pork Pie's** Bill Detamore shines through on this *Uptown Pig* 8-ply maple snare drum with custom graphics and 24k gold-plated hardware. Also new: bronze, stainless-steel, and brass snare drums, with brushed or patina finishes.





Although not new, this **Gretsch** kit was the focus of that company's exhibit. Drummer Alvino Bennett was playing it on the Centennial Olympic Park stage when that venue was bombed at last summer's Olympics. (Drums and drummer were both uninjured.) Gretsch displayed the kit to draw attention to their return to lacquer finishes.

Mapex is back with a vengeance—under new management and offering a completely new selection of snare drums called the *Black Panther* series along with its full line of drumkits.



Premier was celebrating its seventy-fifth anniversary with special limited-edition kits. This *Signia* kit features wooden hoops, claw lugs, a classic script logo, and a dark green mirage finish. A *Genista* kit is available with white marine pearl finish. Also new: several snare drum models, 2000 Series hardware, and a selection of *APK* finishes.



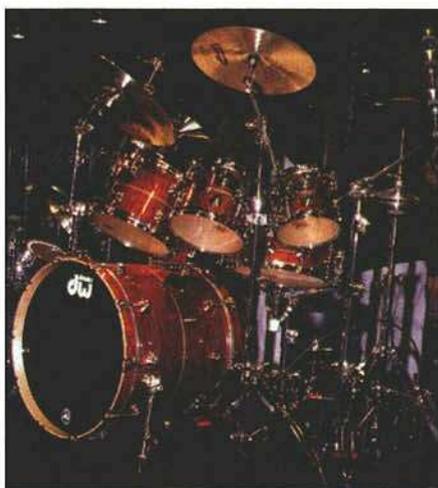
For those who love small bass drums, **Trick Percussion Products** offers a special adapter (the *Jazz Drummer's Dream*), making it possible to comfortably play the 16" bass drum on this all-aluminum kit.



Monolithnow offers custom auto-paint colors on their *Stratus* series carbon-fiber drums. Also new: ultra-light marching drums.



After making a splash last year with the re-introduction of *Crystalite* clear acrylic drums, **Fibes** brought back two classic covered finishes on their wood drums this year: 3-D moire (shown here) and black & white crunch.



Yet another anniversary kit was featured at the **Drum Workshop** booth, where this tobacco-finish fiddleback maple kit with custom inlay was proudly displayed. Also new: *Short Toms*, which can be used as add-ons or to create a super-compact kit, totally re-designed tom mounts on all drums, and new bearing hinges on high-end pedals.



A new custom-crafted drum line is **Spaun**, whose goal is to offer "premium-quality drums at an affordable price." Their maple drums feature solid brass lugs and hand-rubbed satin finishes.

ADDITIONAL DRUMS

Impact offered new sparkle finishes on their fiber-glass drums, **Page Drums** were back with rope-tensioned models, **ADM** displayed both block and ply snare drums and **Sleishman** complete drumkits (all from Australia), **Sunlite** offered improved entry-level kits, and **Various Artists Percussion** demonstrated their *Quick Change Artist* snare drum with interchangeable shells.



Among **Zildjian's** new offerings are *Oriental Classic Chinas*, with extra-wide upturned lips for a look and sound unlike any other Chinas in Zildjian's line. Also new: A *Custom Projection* ride and hi-hats, A *Custom Chinas*, *Oriental Trash* splashes, a 14" K *Custom Dark* crash, an 18" *Azuka Salsa* Timbale cymbal, and high and low *Earth Plates*.



Sabian debuted three new models in its *Hand Hammered* series: the *Vintage* ride, *Raw Dry* ride, and *Bright Hats*. Also new: *AAX Dark* crashes, *AA Fast* crash and *Mini Fusion Hats*, and *Pro Stage* crashes.

ADDITIONAL CYMBALS

A wide variety of esoteric cymbals was displayed by **Istanbul**, *Bionic* cymbals were offered by **UFIP**, Oriental-style **Rancan** cymbals were displayed by **LP**, and **Camber**, **Pearl**, and **Sunlite** offered a selection of affordable models.

CYMBALS



Meinl continues to expand its cymbal presence in the U.S. market. This year a new line of *Classics* general-purpose drumkit cymbals was added.

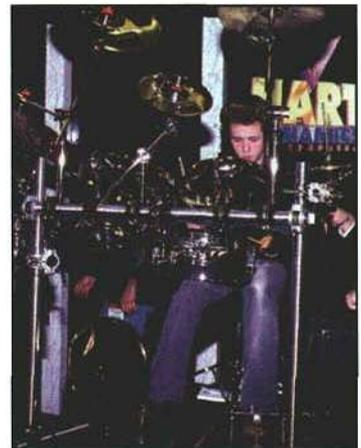
ELECTRONICS



Roland debuted their new professional-level *V-Drum* system, which features totally new pads, an extremely user-friendly concept for programming, and an expanded library of sounds.



Ddrum's *ddrum 4* has been completely redesigned, with a new percussion brain and new *Cast Precision Series* drum pads. The unit offers a large sound capacity, innovative playback features—and a more affordable price.



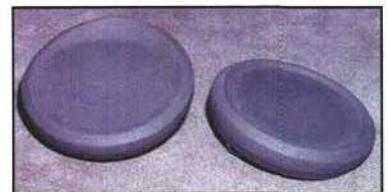
Hart Dynamics has added a 3 1/2x13 *Acusnarelo* its line of *Acupad* trigger pads. The dual-trigger snare can be mounted on a standard 78" arm or in a snare stand.



Concept One Percussion's *XJ12* is a multi-pad trigger unit designed to accommodate a single-rack-space sound module (such as the *Alesis D4* shown here) within the pad unit itself for ultra-compactness and convenience.



An upgraded "brain" with new sounds, improved sound balance, optional simultaneous surface/rim play, and a headphone signal only for the click is just part of **Yamaha's** *DTX-2 Electronic Percussion System*. Also new are an independent cymbal-bell trigger pad and a two-zone bar pad.

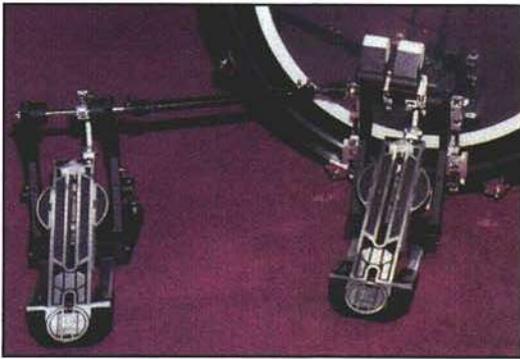


Dual-zone drum and cymbal trigger pads were shown by **Drum Tech**. The cymbal pad has a raised rear area to simulate a cymbal bell. Also new: a thicker, more resilient kick-drum pad designed to offer a more natural pedal response.

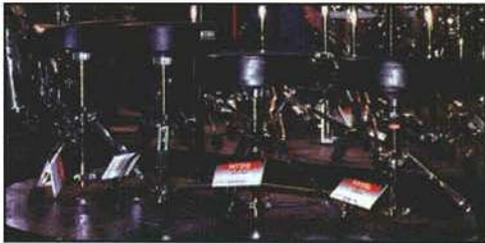
ADDITIONAL ELECTRONICS

Electronic percussion at the show included the **Zendrum Z-Series** hand percussion controller, head- and shell-mount triggers from **Trigger Perfect** and **K&K Sound Systems**, *Visu-Lite* cymbal, percussion, and pad triggers from **Electronic Percussion Systems**, a new hoop-mount kick-drum pad from **Layon Drum Triggers**, the *Mark V Series* pad system from **Rok Blox** (with wrapped coverings of designer fabrics and custom colors), and a variety of user-wearable mobile MIDI systems (including keyboards, percussion pads, and electronic cymbals) from **Walkabout, Inc.**

HARDWARE & ACCESSORIES



A truly original double-pedal design was introduced by **Premier**. Among other innovative features, it's powered not by a spring, but by an aerospace-material "rubber band."



Tama's First Chair throne series offers a new approach to an often-overlooked element of a drummer's equipment.



Hard-plastic cases in "tie-dyed" colors were introduced by **Humes & Berg**.

Airlogic Percussion replaces the spring assembly of a bass drum pedal with a pneumatic cylinder. The revised version introduced at this show provides an on-board "pump" to allow the user to adjust the pedal's feel "on the spot."



An eye-catching series of **Mud Cloth** drum and percussion bags were displayed by **Impact**.

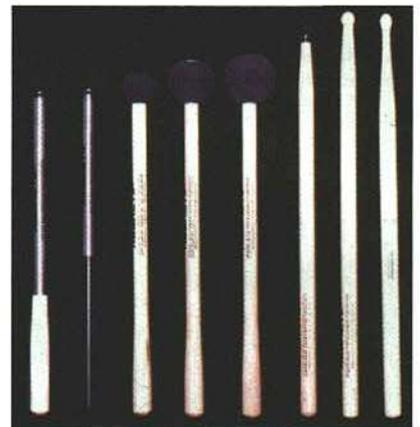


Aquarian debuted *Modern Vintage* drumheads, in response to demand from drummers who wanted the sound of the company's *American Vintage* heads for their contemporary drums.

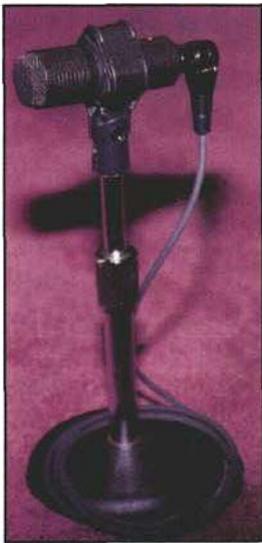


From **Engineered Percussion** (known for their Ms pedals) comes this lightweight snare stand with universal tilting and rotational adjustment.

Evans now offers its popular *Genera* one- and two-ply heads with a new coating, said to create a warmer sound.



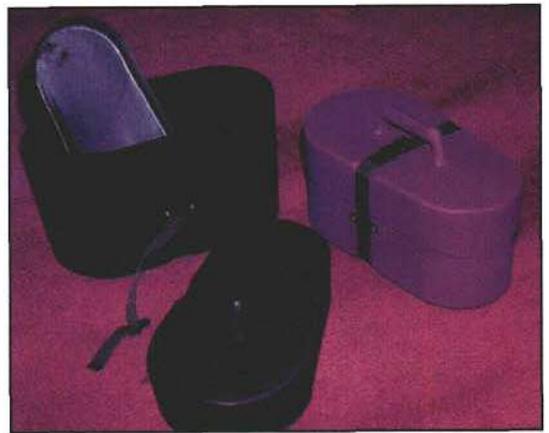
Regal Tip introduced *Regal Corps 2000* mallets, which feature heads made not of felt but of a waterproof synthetic material. Also new: the *Clayton Cameron Brush Wallet*, which features a magnet within a leather pad to secure and protect non-retractable brushes.



The *Dyna B 07* bass drum mic' completes the microphone line offered by **K&K Sound Systems**.



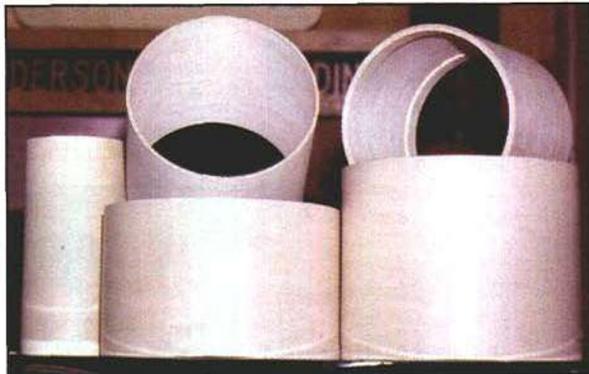
From **Roc-N-Soc** comes the first hard-shell case designed specifically for a drum throne. It features a special insert (shown at right) to create a "shelf" within the case so that none of the components (tripod, seat, back) contact each other. Also available: a case for just the seat itself.



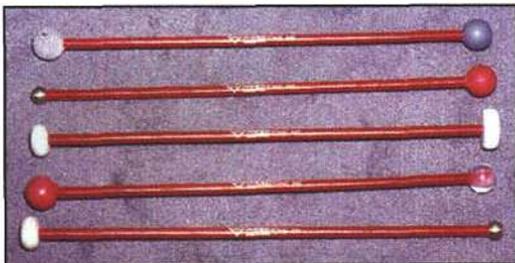
XL Specialty Percussion now includes molded plastic bongo cases in its *Protecthor* case line.



Gray-West offers the *Cymbal Buddy*, a complete cymbal-cleaning system that includes an adjustable belt that supports cymbals from 6" to 22" without their touching the work surface.



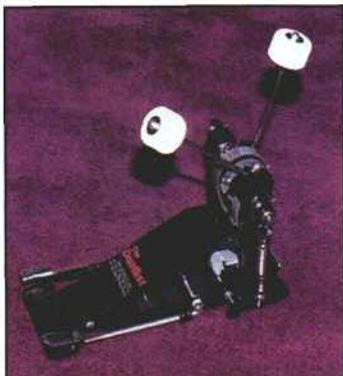
Anderson International Trading is the Western U.S. distributor of Keller drumshells to individuals wishing to build their own drums.



Multi-Tone Mallets designed in conjunction with Richie Gajate Garcia were debuted by **Vater Percussion**. Also new: *Cymbal Sticks*, a selection of maple drumsticks with "classic" tip shapes to bring out various tones from a ride cymbal.



Pro-Mark's special-effects series now includes *TUBZ*, which are large plastic tubes that may be used on drums, cymbals, or percussion for unusual effects. Also new are *SP-1F Future Pro* student drumsticks, sized for smaller hands.



The Dualist, distributed by **Big Bang Distribution**, features single- or double-pedal action from the single footboard. The action is selectable by means of heel-operated levers.



Air Stix weighted warm-up sticks from **Drummer's Helpers** are shown here atop a *Drum Mute* from **Quiet-Tone**.



Attack Heads has expanded their line of *Terry Bozzio Signature* drumheads.



The CS-11 ultra-miniature clip-on cymbal microphone was introduced by **Applied Microphone Technology**. It's sold in groups of four with a mini-mixing box, so as to use only one P.A. channel.



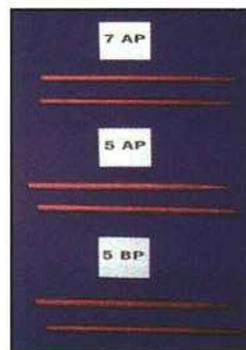
A complete start-up kit for the drum student, appropriately called the *Launch Pad*, is available from **Vic Firth**. It includes a pair of 5/4 sticks, a practice pad, and an elementary instruction book. Also new: a *Peter Erskine Ride* stick (designed to bring out the best qualities of a ride cymbal), *Extreme 5A*, *Extreme 58*, and *1A American Classic* hickory sticks, *Corpsmaster* marching keyboard mallets, and *American Custom Soloist* keyboard mallets.



Among their many accessories, **Starsmith** offers the *Sweet Seat/Stick Bag*, a combination device that slips over the drummer's seat for added comfort and stick accessibility.



Trueline drumsticks added three signature models to their *Original TG* series, including *Danny Carey* and *MycKale Thomas* drumset sticks and *The Professor* (Dwight Baldwin) timbale sticks.



Mainline synthetic sticks are now available with plastic tips.

ADDITIONAL HARDWARE & ELECTRONICS

Gibraltar introduced new components to its *Road Series* rack system that allow racks to be collapsed together, rather than disassembled. Studio drum legend **Joe Porcaro** displayed his *Porcaro Covers* and *Diamond Tip Drumsticks*. *Shell Shocks*, foam drumcase inserts designed to isolate drums within the case, were debuted by **H.Q. Percussion Products**. *Hardcase* molded cases added student snare kit cases to its line, while soft, colorful percussion bags were shown by **JP Percussion Cases** by **Nikolai**.

Drumsticks included synthetic models from **Easton** and **Players Duratech**, hickory and maple sticks from *Ayotte*, and *Tim Alexander* and *Hal Blaine* models from **Zildjian**. Drum microphones were introduced by **Shure**, **Beyerdynamic**, **Electro-Voice**, **Audio-Technica**, **AKG**, and **Sennheiser**. Bass drumhead-hole protectors were offered by **Holz Drum Specialties**, while virtually every drum part and small accessory imaginable was displayed by **Danmar Percussion**.

The **Audix D4** was designed as a bass drum mic, but has proven useful in a variety of drum-miking applications.

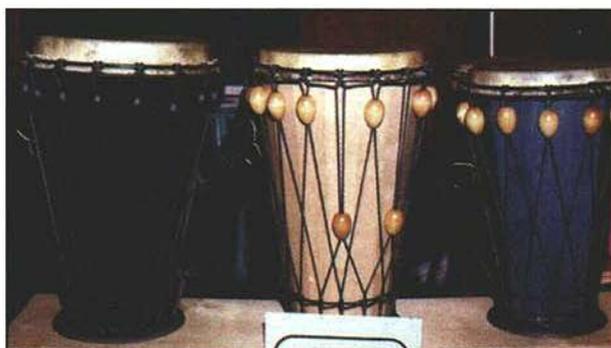


PERCUSSION

Ashikos equipped with an instant slide-tuning system are available from **Traditional Rhythms**.



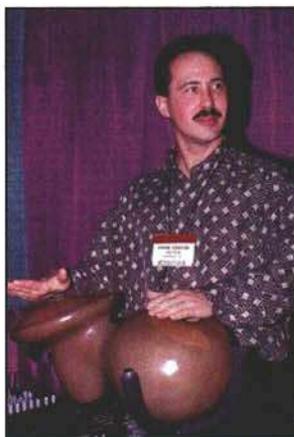
Custom Deluxe congas in honey amber finish represent the professional level of **Toca's** line. The company also introduced the *Synergy* series of conga-like *Circle Drums*, pre-stretched and tunable frame drums, and bongos—all specifically for drum circle enthusiasts. Also new are a selection of small drums for children, called *Percussion For Little Hands*.



Poncho Sanchez model conga drums are now featured in **Remo's** extensive world percussion line.



Unique hand-crafted djembes (along with ashikos) are offered by **Mountain Rhythm** of Canada.



Udu Drums designer Frank Giorgini demonstrated his new *Udongo*.



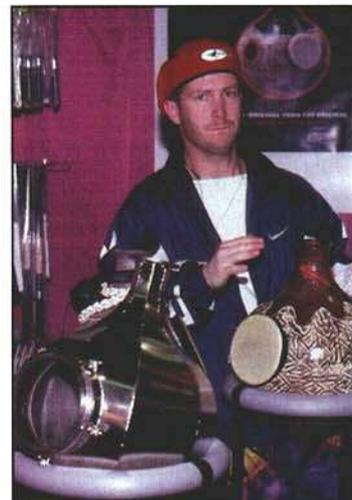
Hand-made West-African drums were displayed by **Afena Akoma**.



Meinl Percussion displayed the mother of all djembes—surrounded by her brood.



An entry-level series of congas and bongos, called *Primo*, was launched by **Afro Percussion**.



Rhythms displayed traditional udu drums, and a very non-traditional metal udu that looked a little like Captain Nemo's diving helmet.



In honor of premier conguero Giovanni Hidalgo, **LP Music Group** has created the *Giovanni* high-end series of congas.



Taos Drums has combined Native American drum-making techniques with contemporary drum design to create a unique drumkit, complete with snare drums, bass drum, and "rack" toms.



Gon Bops added wooden cajons (Spanish for "boxes") to their extensive Latin percussion line.

ADDITIONAL PERCUSSION

Diverse ethnic and original hand percussion instruments were offered by **Bridgeport Export, Caribbean Rhythms, Final Chants Music Co., Inter-American Trading, Maru Lawton Percussion, Overseas Connection, Plugs-Perc, Rhythm Fusion, Rhythm Tech, Sol Drums & Percussion, and Trinidad & Tobago Instruments.**





Learning To Be Creative, Part I

by Gary Chaffee

MUSIC KEY

H.H.	X	R.C.	X
T.T.	●		
S.D.	●		
F.T.	●		
B.D.	●		

In this article we're going to talk about something I call the "Using Things Up" syndrome. Many times when students learn a new idea, they tend to use it only in one way. However, my experience has been that almost everything you learn has more than one function, and by understanding this, you can get a lot more mileage out of the things that you know.

As an example of this, let's look at three different ways of using a certain sticking. In these examples, the sticking we'll use is one of the five-note patterns from my system. The basic sticking is as follows:

R L R L L

First Application—Jazz Soloing

As a way of making this sticking work in a jazz triplet situation, we're going to add a bass drum note to the pattern to make it a six-note sequence.

R L R L L R L R L L

Here are some examples of how you might move this to the drums.

R L R L L R L R L L

R L R L L R L R L L

R L R L L R L R L L

These are only a few of the ways this pattern could be moved around the drums. Experiment with other possibilities. Also, try combining some of them to make a longer phrase.

Second Application—Half-Time Shuffle

Now let's look at how we might use this same sticking to set up a half-time shuffle. The first step is to put the right hand on the hi-hat.

R L R L L R L R L L

To get the half-time accent, bring the right hand over to the snare drum on beat 3.

R L R L L R L R L L

Now we'll add a couple of three-note linear figures to complete the feel.

R L R L

RRL R L RRL R L

Third Application—Rock Fills

To use the five-note sticking in this situation, we're going to set up a phrase where three of the fives will be used, followed by one note in the bass drum.

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

Here are some examples of how this phrase might be organized on the drums.

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



The kinds of procedures that we have been using here can be applied to many different types of material, so whenever you learn a new figure or phrase, make sure to try it out in a variety of situations. You'll be surprised at how many ideas you'll be able to create!

Gary Chaffee is the author of six drum books, including his highly popular four-volume Patterns series, Linear Time Playing, and The Independent Drummer. He has recently released two videos for DCI that detail his unique concepts and ideas. A popular clinician throughout the United States and Europe, Gary currently lives and teaches privately in the Boston area.



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A Warm-Up Exercise

by Joe Morello

Transcribed by Marvin Burck

The following exercise is one that I have often used to warm up before concerts. I also try to incorporate it into my daily practice routine. This exercise is best executed by using a slight forearm motion while playing the accented notes and using the wrist to play the unaccented notes. As you become more proficient and begin playing the exercise faster, start to use the wrist to play

the accented notes and the fingers to play the unaccented notes.

I have found this exercise excellent for developing the single-stroke roll as well as the ability to play accents. Start out slowly and repeat each line twenty times. With practice, you should be able to play this exercise at 250 beats per minute. Good luck!

Warm-Up Exercise In Triplets

1 $\text{R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L}$

2 $\text{R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L}$

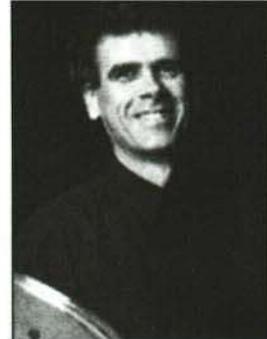
3 $\text{R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L}$

4 $\text{R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L}$

5 $\text{R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L}$

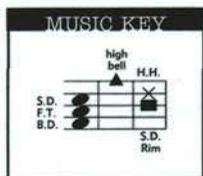
6 $\text{R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L}$

7 $\text{R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L}$



Groove For Percussion Trio

by David Garibaldi
with Jesus Diaz and Michael Spiro



When building drumset vocabulary, it's important to understand that you aren't going to use all you know in every situation. When conversing with someone, the words that are selected are based upon the vocabulary that the speaker possesses and is inspired to use at that moment. You don't say

every word you know in every conversation.

The same is true with musical vocabulary. We learn more because we want to express ourselves in the most powerful way that we can. If we see that a certain subject has a relevance to what we do, then we learn it and more than likely we find a use for it over time. Sometimes this means adding to one's vocabulary without the thought of where a word or a phrase might be used. You just know that the thing you're learning is enjoyable and contributes positively toward the vision that you have for yourself. I view learning in this way.

All of the subjects that I've shared with you over the years are the things that I study. One discovery that I've made in my search is that all music is related in some way and that things that can appear to be unrelated to anything can turn out totally related to everything.

When I was a teenager I wanted to become a funk drummer, but I loved jazz and many other kinds of music. In my musical journey I've played many styles of music, but I still consider myself a funk drummer. I label it that way because that's what I see in myself, and funk is the base upon which I build.

The whole process of learning for me is "a work in progress." When I began really studying this music I had no idea that it would affect my ability to hear rhythm as it has. Rhythm is one of drumming's fundamental concepts. To be a better drummer one has to understand rhythm. The end result of studying any rhythm is that your rhythmic concepts for all music become strengthened. I learned long ago never to say that I don't need a particular concept just because I don't need it right now.

For me, very few musical concepts have been throwaways. My course of study is always determined by my interests. If I don't see a particular thing fitting in with the overall picture that I have for myself, then I don't use it. This helps me to not waste time on things that won't take me where I want to go. Because of this, everything that I've studied has been useful. Even though my basic vision is the same, it keeps evolving as I mature as a person and a player.

The groove that is presented here is based upon Afro-Cuban folkloric music—specifically the style called rumba. When I began looking at Afro-Cuban music I could picture myself playing it in the same way I pictured myself playing funk when I attended my first James Brown concert in 1965. I can relate to Afro-Cuban music because I hear funk in it.

This idea started with the stick part that often accompanies rumba. Example 1A shows that stick part plus two other stickings (B and C) that can be used. As you can see, it is very simple.

1 ♩ = 106
sticks on rim

A) R L L R L R L R L R L R L R L R
B) L R R L R R L R L R L R L R L R
C) R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R

In looking at example 2, notice how I took the basic rhythm from example 1 and then applied it to the drumset. To do this effectively I had to design a new sticking as I began adding more sounds. Jesus Diaz and Michael Spiro [David's partners in the innovative percussion trio Talking Drums] then came up with parts to fit with me. This groove is in a "songo-fied" rumba style and works at many different tempos.

[Notation remarks: For the drumset part, the left hand plays the bell (notated on the fourth line), hi-hat, and snare drum; the right hand plays on the rims of the snare drum (notated as a square on the third line) and floor tom. For the timbales, the top note (square above staff) should be played on the side of the timbale or on a block, and the triangle indicates a mid- or low-pitch bell part. For the conga part, O = open, B = bass tone, T = tip or end of fingers, and S = slap.]

2

Drumset
Timbales
Congas
O B T S O H T O O O O

When playing these basic stickings, I can see some of the songo sticking concepts of Cuban master Changuito. Remember, to articulate what you hear you must have a vocabulary. The more sophisticated your vocabulary is, the more eloquently you can communicate your thoughts. Enjoy!



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Guitar Center National Drum-Off Winner

Tony Johnson

Throughout the latter part of 1996 the Guitar Center music-store chain sponsored its second annual National Drum-Off competition. The largest competition of its kind in America, the Drum-Off is a four-month search for the best amateur drummer in the country. Signups began in August of '96, leading to preliminary local competitions in September and October. Those preliminaries culminated in regional finals held in mid-October, with the regional winners meeting on Saturday, November 9 for the Grand Finals at the House Of Blues in Hollywood, California. The contest is deliberately held at that time to coincide with the percussion industry's International Drum Month promotional efforts.

The regional finalists this year included Charles Haynes, Darrell Green, David Hill, Chris Novicki, and Tony Johnson—each of whom was presented with drum and percussion prizes for their efforts from such companies as Premier, Yamaha, DW, Pearl, Tama, Zildjian, and Sabian. When they met for the Grand Final, each was given four minutes in which to perform. Criteria for judging the winner included originality, technique, dynamics, timing, groove, feel, continuity, stage presence, audience response, and overall performance.

As if competing at this level were not daunting enough, the contestants had to face an all-star panel of celebrity judges. That panel included Simon Phillips, Chad Smith, Eric Singer, Carmine Appice, Paul Wertico, Herman Matthews, John Tempesta, Tris Imboden, and Zoro.

When the playing was done and the votes were tabulated, Tony Johnson of Citrus Heights, California was named the winner. The twenty-seven-year-old Northern California regional winner, Tony has been playing drums for fifteen years. "I taught myself how to play," he says, "after watching Edith Martinez, who was the house drummer at First Church South Bay in Terrance, California. Then I started playing in the Carson High School jazz band. I also joined the marching band, which is where I developed most of my chops." Along with those chops, Tony also developed an impressive personal style by incorporating the influences of such drum-



mers as John "JR" Robinson, Vinnie Colaiuta, Paul Leim, Dennis Chambers, Omar Hakim, Chris McHugh, Mark Hammond, and Dave Weckl.

Tony's goal is simple: "I want to change from sitting behind my desk at AT&T Wireless to sitting behind my kit in a studio. I'm looking forward to a career in recording—hopefully for some of the best producers and artists in contemporary Christian music, like Brown Bannister, Mark Heimermann, Charlie Peacock, and Wayne Kirkpatrick. I have played and can play jazz. However, if it's the Lord's will for me to play on any

jazz recordings, I know he'll open all the doors.

"Winning the regional finals of the Guitar Center Drum-Off in San Francisco was a dream come true," Tony continues. "As far as winning the national finals in Hollywood, there aren't any words to describe the gratitude that I have—first of all to the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom all things are possible, and then to the Guitar Center, all of the judges, Yamaha, Sabian, Roland, and *Modern Drummer* for giving me the means to give up my day job for a career in professional recording."

In recognition of his win, Tony was presented with a complete electronic drumkit package from Roland, the opportunity to appear (and perform) on the Mark & Brian morning radio program on KLOS in Los Angeles, and this story in *MD*.

(At rear, left to right):
Chad Smith, Herman
Matthews.
(Standing, left to right):
Paul Wertico, Tris
Imboden, Eric Singer,
John Tempesta, Simon
Phillips, Carmine
Appice, Craig Goebbert
(of Guitar Center), Tony
Johnson, Zoro.
(Kneeling, left to right):
Regional finalists
Charles Haynes, Darrell
Green, David Hill, and
Chris Novicki.



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you do and how you do it, and a list of the equipment you use regularly. Send your material to On The Move, Modern Drummer Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Material **cannot** be returned, so please **do not** send original tapes or photos.





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Kenny Aronoff

by Robyn Flans

Talking with Kenny Aronoff about the drummers he would discuss for this month's Reflections was great fun. In fact, Kenny's enthusiasm for the players he admires—that boundless enthusiasm that came across with former boss John Mellencamp and now explodes off the stage with Melissa Etheridge—is obvious here. Kenny was just bubbling over as he reflected about drummers who inspired him, their work, their influence on him—and some of the personal interaction he's had with them over the years. He summed it up pretty well: "It's been like Christmas whenever I've gotten to meet them."

Rod Morgenstein

"I was in a fusion band in 1977 in Bloomington, Indiana before I got with John Mellencamp. We opened up for the Dixie Dregs three times. I had a black double bass drumset, close to a mirror image of what Rod had. We hung out. I was a nobody, but I remember how kind he was to me. That's a real important thing to me. We became friends.

"His playing speaks for itself. Rod is one of those guys who is



not just a drummer, he's a musician. I used to watch him at sound checks, and he'd be playing the shit out of not only the drums, but the piano as well. He's a great jazz piano player.

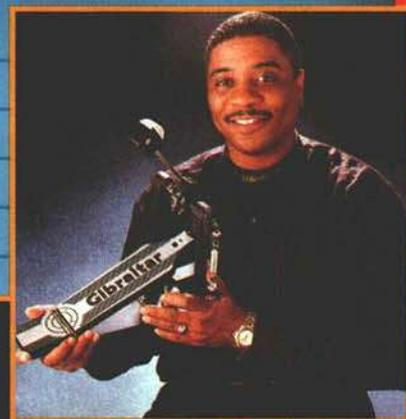
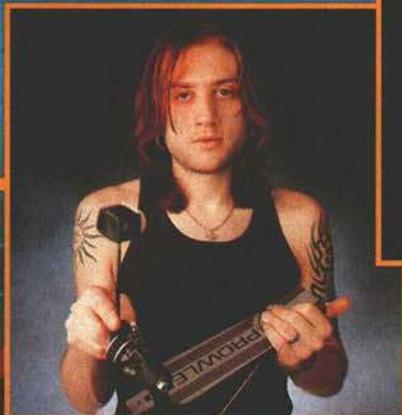
"About a year ago, I played with the Buddy Rich Big Band in Atlantic City, and Rod was one of the other drummers on the bill, so it was very nostalgic to play on the same stage with him again. From the technical standpoint, if anybody wants to learn anything about Rod, listen to the old Dixie Dregs, because there you're looking at his roots."

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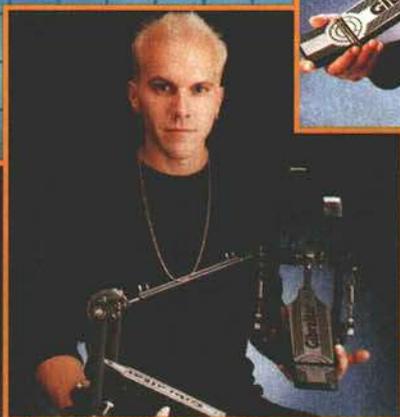
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Jeff Porcaro

"There are a lot of great drummers, but there are only a few who have magical hands with a sweet feel. Steve Gadd has that. Jim Keltner has that. Jeff Porcaro had that. Jeff was special. His feel was a combination of a true gift and an old soul. He was *deep*. At age seventeen he was further along than most people get in their entire life, as far as balance and wisdom on the drumset.

"Jeff influenced me by the maturity and wisdom in his playing—on what *not* to play, how to play simple things so brilliantly and intelligently. Anything he did with Steely Dan was a big influence on me. His reinterpretation of Bernard Purdie's type of shuffle does Purdie great justice. I used to see Jeff a lot in the L.A. studios when we were both working, and he was always gracious."

Harvey Mason

"Harvey Mason is a big influence on me. I studied classical music for five years, spending a million hours a day playing timpani, mallets, and percussion. Harvey did that too, but I didn't know it at the time. One of the main records I was listening to then was Herbie Hancock's *Headhunters*, and Harvey was the drummer. He just blew all of us away. Harvey introduced a new sound, that sort of muffled, fat drum sound. He introduced that globally. He's also a total musician—a composer, an arranger, a writer."

David Garibaldi

"Another influence. When I graduated from college, I went home and started studying drumset with Alan Dawson and Gary Chester,

who gave me my first formal lessons on drumset. After all that classical training, I realized I wanted to play drumset full-time, which was very heavy because I had invested a lot of time in wanting to be an orchestral player.

"I started listening to Tower Of Power around that time, and after hearing their tune "What Is Hip," I started transcribing Garibaldi, and I was already really into Harvey Mason at that point. I was feeling totally inferior, like, 'How am I going to play like that?' Those guys had spent a lot of time learning to play drumset, and there I was, after graduating as a percussionist, feeling way behind. And you know what? I never really could play like them—and I don't play like that—but the positive message in all of this is that I learned something from *trying* to play like that, and I came up with my own style."

Dave Abbruzzese

"I just recently met Dave. What a nice guy. When I was a young kid, I had pictures of Jimi Hendrix on my wall. If Jimi Hendrix had told me to leave home and follow him, I would have. He was my idol. Therefore, Mitch Mitchell and that whole vibe of playing—Hendrix, Cream, the Doors, that soulful rock 'n' roll with other influences—was *it* for me. I think Dave Abbruzzese is one of those types of drummers who is doing what those guys were doing back then, but in a '90s sort of way."

Tony Williams

"The summer of 1968 on the lawn of Tanglewood, the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. It's a big lawn that

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holds 17,000 people. I went to see Santana play, and I can remember that I didn't have a shirt on, I had a fringe jacket that I got in Mexico, moccasins, no hair on my chest but lots of hair on my head—down to my shoulders! And opening up for Santana was Miles Davis with this young kid, Tony Williams, on drums. Wow! I still remember walking along the lawn in a sea of people, and just being blown away.

"My dad had a huge jazz collection, so he gave me all of Miles' records, and I started listening. Nobody can dispute that Tony is a legend. Listen to all the old Miles records, and the Tony Williams Lifetime, too."

Carter Beauford

"Fantastic drummer. At the last Farm Aid the Dave Matthews Band played and so did Mellencamp. I got to watch Carter from the side of the stage; he's a phenomenal talent. Everybody compares him to Dennis Chambers, and he may sound like Dennis, but he's got his own style and he's a very accomplished drummer. He plays right-handed, left-handed, he's got a great feel,

great technique. I'm excited to see how his career modulates and what he comes up with."

Vinnie Colaiuta

"I was listening to Vinnie when he was playing on *Joe's Garage* with Zappa—great stuff. I was always a big Zappa fan, because [Zappa percussionist] Ed Mann and I went to high school together. I had heard about this kid, Vinnie Colaiuta, and I was trying to play along with those records, too. Then I went to Boston for some clinic, and Vinnie was wild. I walked in and Vinnie said, 'Hey, are you that guy...' and he proceeded to sing the drum break I played on Mellencamp's 'Jack And Diane.'

"Vinnie has a unique style. He's not just about technique. The guy is about feel. Look what he's doing now with Sting. When we're young, we want to show off everything we can do, but it's so cool when you have two guns loaded and you don't have to use them. It's the same with martial arts, where you have the weapons but you don't use them, which makes you even more powerful. You take all that knowledge and information and place it into the center of your energy, which is just laying down a beat and making it feel good. It's an art form to do that, and Vinnie's figured that out."

Richie Hayward

"Thinking about Richie makes me smile. He's great. Now *there's* a guy with a definite style. He's unique. He's got a great feel, a great energy, a great vibe, and a great smile. Listen to anything by Little Feat—he's great."

Eddie Bayers

"I was a musical snob when I was studying music in the university, and then I became the drummer I used to make fun of—the guy who can lay it down, groove, and play simple. Now let's take it to another level. You go to Nashville with guys like Eddie Bayers, Paul Leim, or Larrie Londin when he was alive; I have tremendous respect for what they do.

"If you're a drummer who only admires technique and flash, you need to realize one of the most difficult things to do as a drummer is to have to wait for the intro, first verse, and first chorus to go by before

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you come in. Then all you play is beat 1 with your bass drum every other measure, and you have to nail it exactly the same way every time with the bass player. That is so difficult that it makes you understand that playing with chops and technique is a lot easier; it's a lot more forgiving. Eddie Bayers is brilliant at it. Plus, he's a great person. He's very uplifting and special."

Elvin Jones

"By the time I was a senior in high school, I was playing along with the *Love Supreme* record by John Coltrane, and I was trying to emulate Elvin Jones. And could I do it? No, but I tried. Elvin is the kind of guy who holds his sticks a special way, hits things a special way, plays his drums a special way. He plays the opposite of the obvious. He is like the grease on the bottom of a frying pan, dripping all over. He slides all over everything, but he's defining the time.

"Anybody who wants to learn how to play like Elvin Jones should really go back and listen to the early jazz stuff where he played straight time. He played simply and grooved, and he did that for so long that

when he did start to take it out, he already had an incredible foundation. He didn't just wake up and start playing outside. You don't put a roof on a house without putting in the footers, the blocks, the floor beams, the walls, and the supports. You build from the foundation up, and that's what he did. People may think, 'Whoa, Elvin is out.' Yeah, he is, but he started by playing *in*."

Mitch Mitchell

"I told you what Jimi Hendrix meant to me. He was a bigger influence than any drummer. I got *Are You Experienced?* for Christmas when I was thirteen, thirty years ago, and I remember playing that record for the entire Christmas break while I made model airplanes. I'd go to my drumset every so often and try to play it. Then I got into a band that did Hendrix and James Brown. I tried to emulate Mitch Mitchell. I couldn't figure it out because it was too amazing back then. He was one of the first guys to put jazz and rock together, and he did it to such a great extent that nobody can do it that way even to this day.

"I feel I have some of Mitch Mitchell in

me sometimes, because I played that music night and day. I used to put these huge sound columns on my parents' living room floor, have them facing each other, and lay between them with Jimi Hendrix on. He was a huge influence on me."

Steve Gadd

Kenny insisted on adding Steve Gadd to our list: "The reason I insist on Steve Gadd is because he is one of those guys who to me is just special. I said it right to his face outside Electric Ladyland studios in Manhattan about three years ago, when I was doing a session with Slash. When I was looking for some way to tell Steve how special he was, all I said was, 'You have the sweetest hands in drumming.' There is a special place for him in my heart. He is so focused, he is so attuned in a way that nobody else is. He's almost like a little kid who is enamored by everything he sees, and he sucks in every piece of light, every piece of color; his playing is so alive."



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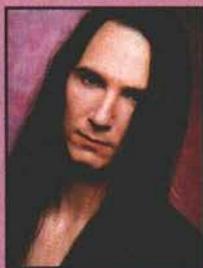
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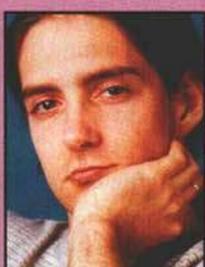
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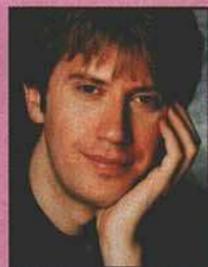
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Jimmy Crawford

One of the most exciting and dynamic big bands to come out of Kansas City during the swing era was the Jimmy Lunceford band. Drummer Jimmy Crawford, a high-spirited, supportive player, was the driving force behind the Lunceford band for nearly fourteen years.

Throughout the years of Lunceford's great popularity, Crawford played with a strong, solid pulsation—a classic trademark of the Lunceford sound—and was a key factor in establishing the unique Lunceford beat. Yet, like Dave Tough, his drumming was unobtrusive and always felt more than heard. Crawford could hold the

band together with authority by playing heavily when the arrangement required it, yet softly and delicately when the band needed a more sensitive approach. Though never known as a particularly flashy drummer, Crawford was as solid as the Rock of Gibraltar and as reliable a drummer as any band could wish for.

Jimmy Crawford was born in 1910 in Memphis, Tennessee, and was initially influenced by Memphis drummer Booker Washington. A self-taught player, Crawford was discovered by Lunceford when the drummer was eighteen, and Lunceford put him in the drum chair of his hot young band in 1928. After leaving the Lunceford band in '42, Crawford worked with small groups led by Ben Webster and clarinetist Edmond Hall at New York's Cafe Society. He also played with the bands of Fletcher Henderson, Harry James, and Stan Kenton.

By the early '50s, after the majority of big bands had faded from the scene, Crawford maintained a career as a fine Broadway pit drummer. For years he remained active in such Broadway hits as *Golden Boy*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Mr. Wonderful*, and *Pal Joey*, among others. Always in demand, Crawford also went on to record with Count Basie, Sy Oliver, Bing Crosby, Benny Goodman, Dizzy Gillespie, and Frank Sinatra.

Jimmy Crawford died in 1980 at the age of seventy after a successful career as one of the most versatile drummers to ever grace the music scene.

Text excerpted from The Great Jazz Drummers by Ron Spagnardi, published by Modern Drummer Publications.

"Craw had great spirit. He consistently picked the band up. He was the driving force."

—Trummy Young



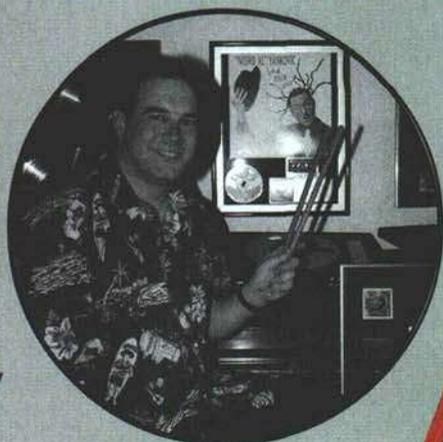
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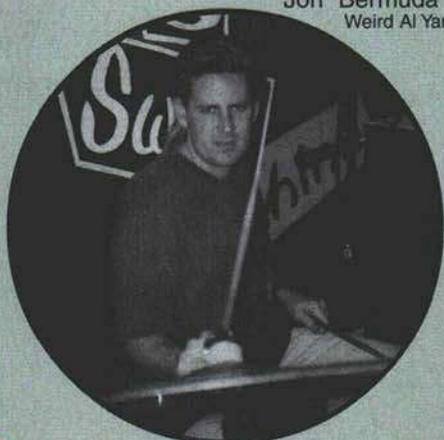
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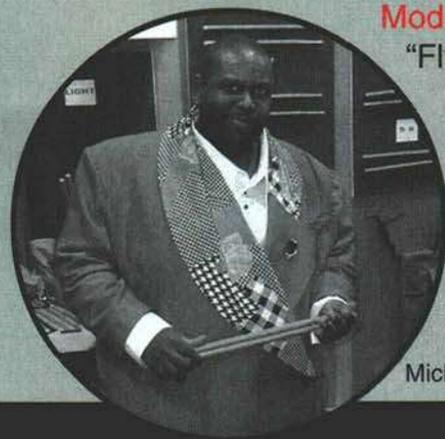
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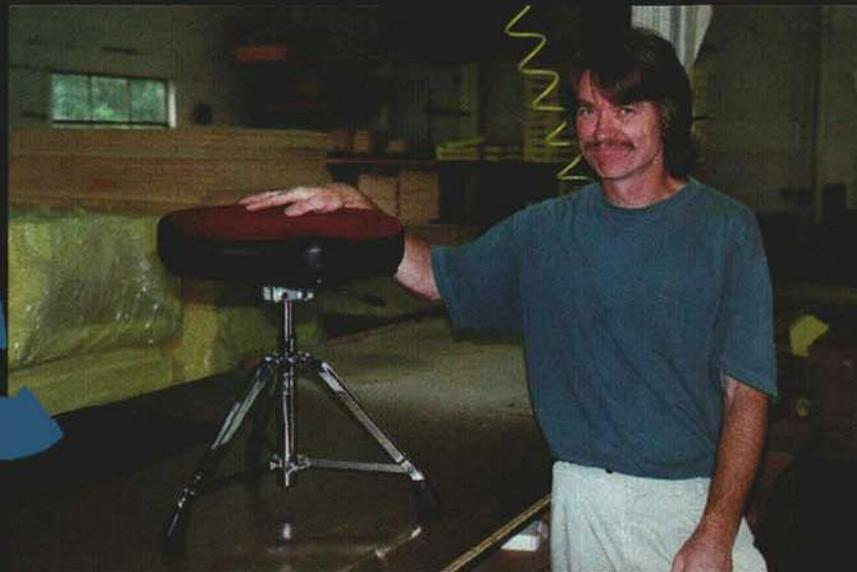
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Roc-N-Soc

by Robin Tolleson

There are two ways of thinking about drum thrones. There's the notion that your rear end just isn't worth spending money on, so you put your cash into cymbals and other sound-makers and pay as little for the throne as possible. The other way is to see that a throne affects your posture, comfort, and circulation, and so is as important to your playing as, say, your snare and sticks. If you lean towards the latter, the Roc-N-Soc company has some interesting options that might make you look twice at the throne you are currently using.

Located in the western North Carolina town of Waynesville, Roc-N-Soc is the brainchild of Steve McIntosh. In 1986, a drummer was complaining to McIntosh (who is also a drummer, as well as a keyboardist and auto upholsterer) about the lack of stability of drum thrones. McIntosh took it to task and returned soon with a stool using a reversed swivel rocker box and an un-tippable five-legged base. "My problem with thrones had always been that I'd start kicking real hard and push myself off the throne," he says. "We used the rocker box backwards on the throne for the tension we needed. Instead of rocking back it pushes you forward. I tried the drum throne and began thinking there was really something to it—it does make a difference. So from there I started selling them to musicians who would see it and want one."

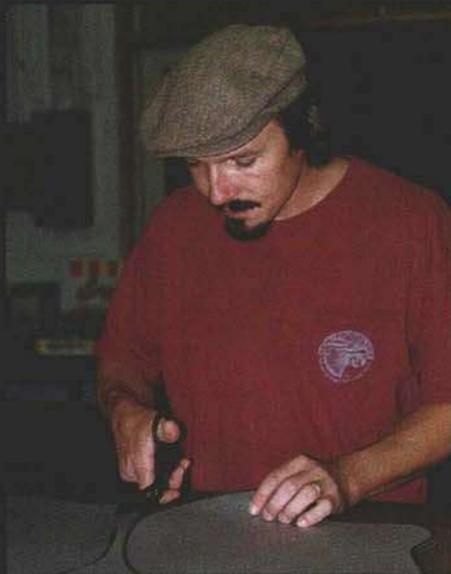


Roc-N-Soc founder Steve McIntosh with a *Nitro* model throne

With a slumping local economy, McIntosh began thinking more seriously about doing something that didn't involve his county and so developed the Motion Throne idea. "We just started putting together various hardware, and it evolved from there." In addition to the *Motion Throne*, Roc-N-Soc now offers several base options on their custom thrones, including five-legged and compact three-legged designs, each with either a "spin-down" spindle or "hydraulic" gas-lift height adjustment, as well as a bar-stool height model. "We were always a seat manufacturer, and we kind of grew into figuring out how to do [the base] hardware," says McIntosh. "That wasn't what we were best at. We got lucky on the *Motion Throne* and made the strongest thing on the market, but it was also bulky and a little weird to some people."

Roc-N-Soc's most popular throne is now the gas-lift model, called the Nitro. "Everybody has just realized this thing is good and it doesn't wear out." The com-

photos by Steve Simpson



Cutting upholstery material...



...welding hardware...

pany warranties everything they sell for one year, and the gas shock for two years. After that, any gas cartridge can be replaced easily for \$28. "[The warranty] is what made a lot of dealers think there's something to this," McIntosh explains. "We not only warranty it, we can replace the part. We haven't had to replace any yet, so I guess the warranty's holding up pretty well.

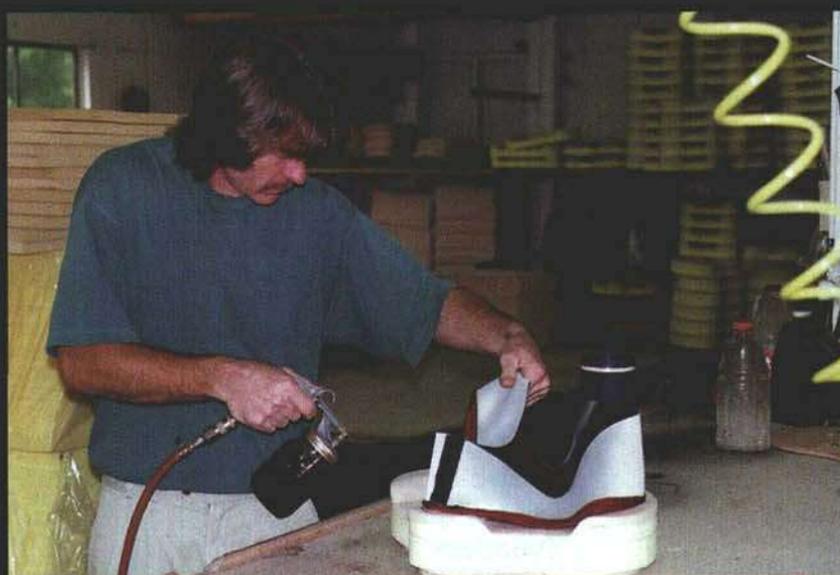
"What I'm hearing about the gas-lift thrones," he says, "is that drummers play country music one way and rock a little differently, so it allows them to adjust their height or get re-situated in the middle of a song. That's one of the biggest successes of the gas-lift throne. Then there's the spin. When a typical throne spins, you get a little play in the hub, because the hub is spinning on top of the shaft and starts to get a little warped. But our gas-lift throne spins inside the shaft on a ball bearing at the bottom, so it's a perfect, smooth spin, and you never feel any wobble."

Suggested retail price of the *Nitro* gas-lift throne is \$199.95, the same price as both the *Lunar* five-legged gas-lift series thrones and the *Motion Throne*. Says Steve, "I don't want you buying a certain throne because it's cheaper; I want you buying the one you want. By keeping the price the same, we make sure you're going to buy the one you want." Back rests, arm rests, foot rests,

and other options are available.

Customers certainly appreciate the solid hardware, but Roc-N-Soc's sculptured seats can win converts in an instant. They have four different seat styles—Original (large saddle seat), Hugger (small saddle seat). Round, and Square—built to fit onto any make of base. Each can be bought separately for a suggested retail price of \$79.95.

All Roc-N-Soc seats are made by carving, then gluing and shaping several thicknesses and densities of foam onto a plywood base. "I could have our seat molded, pre-made, and ready to go," McIntosh says, "but if we did there's no way you'd get both the softness of the surface and the firmness. A seat can get too hard with foam density variances, so we have to laminate the top. That gives us the initial touch and texture quality that we want." The ridge along the back of the saddle seat is provided for support, similar to Harley Davidson's cycle saddle, sculptured up in the back to eliminate slide. "The front hump does essentially the same thing," McIntosh adds. "It kind of gives you a center. And that's also an advantage of the round seat. The hole gives you a center. Even though you don't feel it that much, you do feel a lack of pressure, which lets you know where center is at all times. If you're



...and gluing a seat

always subconsciously trying to stay on top of a throne, that takes energy away from your playing."

McIntosh has spent a lot of time and study on perfecting the feel of Roc-N-Soc throne seats. "The foam rubber we use has evolved through trial and error over the past seven years," he says. "We've narrowed it down to what actually feels good. We have access to various types of foam in North Carolina,

and the thick piece on the bottom is a high-density foam that prevents you from ever actually 'hitting bottom.' For comfort, movement is the key. As long as you've got a little bit of foam density there, you've still got someplace to lean into to get a little more 'crush' on it. I'm particular, and the guys I buy the foam from hate me for it, because they know if it varies a little bit I'm on their case. And it does vary, whether it's cold, humid, hot—all the ele-



Back row: Steve McIntosh, Les Jones, and Chris Minick; front row: Josh Landt and Keith Distasio

ments play into pouring the foam. I think one of our real successes is in making sure the grade of foam is high."

With clients like Letterman Show band leader Paul Shaffer and drummer Anton Fig. and Def Leppard drummer Rick Allen, it's clear that the company's success can also be attributed to some of McIntosh's original seat designs, whose differences offer specific advantages for different

needs and preferences. "Rick does a lot of intensive footwork," McIntosh points out. "so he especially benefits from his Lunar throne [with an Original seat] with a back. The one Paul keeps on stage is the round seat, in black, with the casters on it. The round seat, with the doughnut appearance, is catching on. although it's really still about ten-to-one in favor of the Original seats." According to McIntosh, he now sells one back for every

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three seats. (Any back sold with a three-legged folding base comes with a warning sticker, advising the user to keep one stand leg directly in back to avoid tipping over backward.)

In response to many customer requests, the Roc-N-Soc line will soon be expanded to include a hard plastic case for Roc-N-Soc seats. McIntosh points out, "Demand doesn't warrant making a case for the big five-legged throne; we're selling more of the compact *Nitro's* and *Mac Saddles*, which people can throw in their trap case anyway. But we're going to make a case for the seat."

To the occasional angst of anyone placing a big order, Roc-N-Soc runs on a two-week production schedule, and they don't keep a huge inventory on hand. "We keep an inventory of raw materials," McIntosh explains, "but we offer so many models, colors, and seat sizes, it would be impractical to stockpile a lot of finished thrones." This practice also facilitates efficient quality control. "If we run into a problem, we don't have fifty thrones made [with the problem]. An order comes in, and we run it through the whole cycle. That way, everything is current and fresh."

Roc-N-Soc's operation is centered in a 3,500-square-foot main warehouse where the foam, wood, and vinyl is cut and seats are assembled. Seat mounts and certain other hardware parts are fabricated in a welding shed, and final assembly of the hardware takes place in the main warehouse. All products and parts are inspected prior to being packed for shipping.

Product quality is clearly an important issue to McIntosh. "We say we have a one-year warranty," he says, "but we seldom charge

anybody for anything we've fixed, or for any part we've replaced. I don't care how old it is. If it's something we do better now than we were doing [on an older product], then I upgrade it for them."

With pride, Macintosh notes that his seats have made a life-changing difference for some musicians with back and circulation ailments. "People tell us that our seat is what got them playing again," he says. After playing six gigs on a Roc-N-Soc *Nitro*. I know what he means. It's nice not worrying about sliding off, and to stand up at the end of each set with no pain in the back of the thigh, and not feeling like your butt is asleep. With a short period of adjustment to the bounce and the super-smooth spin, it was easy to concentrate totally on hands and feet and just "enjoy the ride."

It would appear that a growing number of musicians are recognizing that their rear end is worth spending money on. According to McIntosh, sales of Roc-N-Soc thrones have increased by 50% for each of the past three years. (It doesn't look like he'll be getting back into auto upholstery anytime soon.) And his market is broader than drummers alone, since each design tends to appeal to different musicians. "Keyboard players like the *Lunars* because you can put casters on them. Guitar players like the *Tower*," he says, "and a lot of stores buy them just for people to sit on while trying out their guitars. And for drum shop owners, if a guy comes in to play a set of drums, and he sits down and is locked in and real comfortable, then those drums and pedals feel a lot better. Everything's going to feel better from there up."



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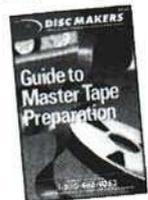
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Tony Williams

As we went to press with this issue, we learned of the death of Tony Williams. Tony passed away on Sunday, February 23 at the Seton Medical Center in Daly City, California after suffering a major heart attack. He had entered the hospital the previous Thursday for minor gall bladder surgery and was in the process of recovery when his heart failed. Williams was fifty-one years old.

Tony Williams was a pivotal figure in jazz history. As a drummer, he is considered one of the best players of all time. *Modern Drummer* will feature a special tribute to Tony in the August issue (out in June).

Williams is survived by wife, Colleen, and his mother, Alyse Janez. Our sincerest condolences to his family, friends, and fans.



Ted Reed

Ted Reed, one of drumming's premier educators, passed away on December 20, 1996 in Clearwater, Florida. He was eighty-eight years old.

Although he had a lengthy and successful playing career among the society bands of New York City (including those of Lester Lanin, Meyer Davis, and Bill Carroll), it was as a teacher that Ted made his greatest impression on the drumming world. While in New York he maintained a schedule of up to eighty-five lessons per week. Many of Ted's students went on to illustrious drumming careers of their own—all the while crediting Ted for his inspiration and guidance. Ted continued to teach and perform after relocating to Florida in 1970, and remained active at both pursuits until only a few years ago.

Ted's single greatest achievement, however, was the publication of his monumental drumming instruction book *Progressive Steps To Syncopation For The Modern Drummer* (invariably shortened to just *Syncopation* by the teachers and drummers who employed

it). Though originally introduced in the mid-1950s, in August of 1993 Ted's text was ranked #2 on *Modern Drummer's* list of the twenty-five greatest drum books of all time (second only to George L. Stone's *Stick Control*). In that listing, *Syncopation* was cited as being "one of the most versatile and practical works ever written for drums." The piece went on, "The exercises contained within its pages can be used in a multitude of ways, and good teachers throughout the years have developed many of their own examples from it."

Based on his influence on generations of drummers as an author and a teacher, Ted Reed was recognized with an Editors' Achievement Award by *Modern Drummer* in July of 1994. In October of that same year he was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the promoters and sponsors of the Thoroughbred Florida Drum Expo. A courteous and courtly gentleman—and a lifelong supporter of drumming and drummers—Ted will be sorely missed.



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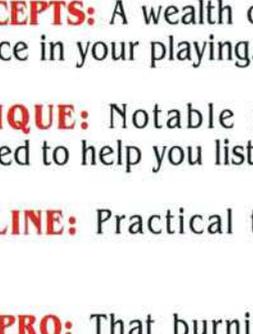
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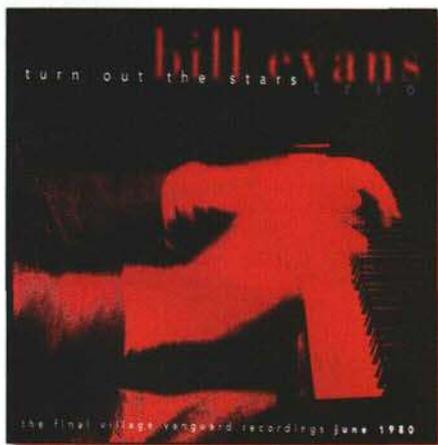
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drummer: Joe LaBarbera

with Bill Evans (pno), Marc Johnson (bs)

Although pianist Bill Evans stated in interviews that he considered his trio with bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Joe LaBarbera to be the best he'd had since his original trio with Scott LaFaro and Paul Motian, Evans' untimely death at age fifty-one brought the group to a premature end. For many years *The Paris Concerts* served as the only recordings of the final trio, but now comes the release of a boxed set of live recordings made at New York's Village Vanguard just three months before Evans' death. These recordings confirm eyewitness accounts that *The Paris Concerts*, recorded a year earlier, only hinted at the level of interplay these three musicians went on to attain.



If for no other reason, this collection is valuable for its documentation of LaBarbera, who has been seriously under-recorded in light of his status among drummers—much of it earned during his tenure with Evans. Because this set (available from Warners on six CDs, from Mosaic on ten LPs) includes some of the same tunes recorded on consecutive nights, one can compare what LaBarbera played the same way each time and what he did differently. His solos on each of the four versions of "Nardis" are

excellent examples of how to use similar vocabulary to tell different stories, and the variations between different versions of the same composition keep each one sounding very "in the moment," even as a consistency of approach is revealed.

Overall, the set serves as a graduate course in how to be a jazz drummer. (Mosaic recordings are available solely through Mosaic Records, 35 Melrose Place, Stamford, CT 06902, [203] 327-7111.)

Rick Mattingly

Orange 9mm

Tragic (Atlantic)



drummer: Matthew Cross

with Chaka Malik (vcl, perc), Chris Traynor (gtr), Taylor McLam (bs)

As you move into the nether-reaches of this disc, don't be surprised if your hands get a bit jittery and tiny beads of sweat begin trickling from your brow. It's a natural reaction to anything that teases your senses for a while, and if Orange 9mm are good at anything, it's the setup. Follow-through is another story, and (not necessarily in a negative way) you never quite know when—or even *if*—this band is going to deliver it.

Matthew Cross seems to bathe in the band's pool of sonic suspense. He moves easily from short shuffles and subtle snare-play to bottom-heavy slamming, often playing along solely to bassist Taylor McLam before guitarist Chris Traynor, inevitably, enters the fray.

On the tune "Gun To Your Head," Cross lays down the most underplayed, unwavering, and unnerving 2-and-4 imaginable. It makes Phil Rudd sound like Mike Portnoy in comparison, but it's all part of Orange 9mm's game plan, and the dynamic payoff at the end is so brief that the listener barely has time to exhale before the tune ends.

Cross is most often content to settle into the bottom register, but there are subtle distinctions



SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

JOHN STANIER provides immovable vertical and horizontal hold on Helmet's new *Aftertaste* (Interscope), never letting up on the washy hats, unflinching afterbeats, and fierce *fortissimo* sections.

GARY HUSBAND breathes life into each rich and complex setting on Gongzilla's *Thrive* (Lolo), which also features the mallet percussion flavorings of original Gong member Benoit Moerlen.

JOHN RILEY joins the welcome reappearance of John Serry on *Enchantress* (Telarc). Much evolved from his oblique and angular fusion writing of yore, Serry's sophisticated piano playing gently shines, and Riley's subtle and elegant accompaniment lays just right.

Mandrill was a big ol' funky psychedelic/Latin/rock/70s conglomeration out of 70s New York that's been sadly overlooked by critics and fans in lieu of Santana, War, and P-Funk. Hopefully *Fencewalk: The Anthology* (Polygram's Chronicles series) will set the record straight and have people groovin' to the traps of **CHARLIE PADRO** and **NEFTALI SANTIAGO** all over again.

As David Bowie takes a turn toward man/machine mixing on his new *Earthling* (Virgin), drummer ZACH ALFORD seizes the opportunity to add power, feel, and flashy fills to the often drum & bass-influenced material.

Rating Scale

- ◆◆◆◆◆ Excellent
- ◆◆◆◆ Very Good
- ◆◆◆ Good
- ◆◆ Fair
- ◆ Poor

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Mike Portnoy

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bass and Derek Sherinian on keyboards to illustrate Portnoy's points. Produced by Rittor Music.



Neil Peart

A Work in Progress
(VH0293) 2-Video box set \$59.95

On this two-video, limited-edition box set, Neil Peart documents the "work in progress" of recording Rush's new album, *Test for Echo*, as well as the work in progress of Neil himself and his endless apprenticeship to the art of drumming. On

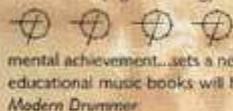
these history-making tapes, he uses the songs from *Test for Echo* as examples to demonstrate concepts such as constructing a drum part, selecting rhythmic approaches, technique, odd times, the drummer's role in a band, drum set orchestration, and creative timekeeping. A DCI music video.

DIS IS DA FUNK

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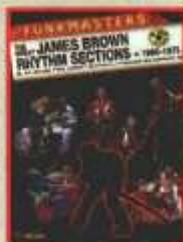
Five Drums (highest rating)



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of tone from song to song. He achieves some of Bonham's sonic splendor on "Kiss It Goodbye," while his snare hand adds attractive bursts of color to the title track.

Through it all, Orange 9mm delivers riff-oriented rock that, more for better than worse, keeps you on the edge of your seat.

Matt Peiken

Branford Marsalis Trio

The Dark Keyes (Columbia)

⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ½

drummer: Jeff "Tain" Watts

with Branford Marsalis (tn, sp sx), Reginald Veal (bs), and guests Joe Lovano (tn sx), Kenny Garrett (al sx)

Ever wonder why a musician would quit a high-profile, high-paying steady like *The Tonight Show*? This CD is why. Always the most risk-taking soloist of the Marsalis clan, Branford takes wing on this purist disc. The bare-bones bass/sax/drums format allows the saxman to stretch his limits—and stretch he does, turning out an imaginative, spontaneous sax tour-de-force.

The open, "chordless" format and minimal arrangements likewise offer drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts maximum freedom, resulting in some breathtaking performances. Watts delivers driving, expressive, explosive kit work, and on non-time pieces like "Lykeif," conjures up colorful impressionistic layers.

It's no secret that Watts is a major, but this recording ranks as an apex session for Tain-watchers.

Jeff Potter

Tony Williams

Wilderness (ARK 21)

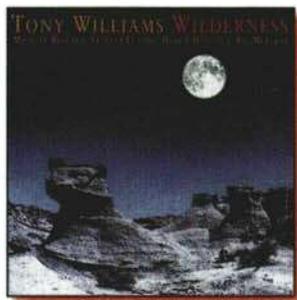
⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ½

drummer: Tony Williams

with Michael Brecker (tn sx), Stanley Clarke (bs), Herbie Hancock (pno), Pat Metheny (gtr), thirty-piece orchestra

Tony Williams charted new frontiers in drumming throughout his work with Miles Davis in the '60s and his fiery "Lifetime" groups of the '70s. Tony exercises his rights as composer on *Wilderness*, a thematic collection of straight-ahead jazz, fusion, and orchestral pieces mostly written and produced by the drummer. The thirteen compositions are accompanied by a thirty-piece orchestra and speak tastefully through the talents of fusion elites Hancock, Brecker, Metheny, and Clarke (whose compositional contribution, "Harlem Mist '55," along with guitarist Pat Metheny's "The Night You Were Born," come off as the most emotionally stirring tunes on *Wilderness*).

Stylistic changes from one song to another lend themselves to a more cinematic soundtrack collection. "China Town," "Gambia," "China Road," and "China Moon" rekindle the Lifetime era as Tony stretches a bit, throwing out some



cymbal/bass to tom/snare combinations.

Tony fans will focus on the similar-sounding "China Moon" and "China Road," with their funky, Lifetime grooves and loose, broken-up, over-the-bar-line fills, which have influenced virtually every drummer from Gadd to Colaiuta. Unfortunately neither tune is long enough for this type of improvisational environment; "Road" (2:46) and "Moon" (3:24) just begin to get interesting when all at once the moment of ecstasy is gone. "Wilderness Island," on the other hand, stands out as a soloistic piece accompanying orchestral changes. Flam-laden tom rhythms, brash cymbal work, tom-and-bass combination fills, and open single-stroke rolls around the set sound as fresh and vibrant as the "live" drum mix that trademarks Williams' unmistakable sound.

Tony's compositional skills cannot go overlooked. The *Wilderness* pieces (six in all) are beautifully orchestrated and arranged, well suited for a project all its own. There may not be enough "Tony" on *Wilderness* to please his fans, but one must appreciate the beauty of his compositions, the interplay between musicians, and the understanding of the drumset that Williams has captured through his many years of creation, exploration, and dedication as one of the world's finest musicians.

Mike Haid

Medeski, Martin & Wood

Shack-Man (Gramavision)

⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕

drums and perc; Billy Martin

with Chris Wood (acdn, el bs), John Medeski (kybd)



For New York-based trio MMW, groove is everything. That's why they retreated to their beloved rehearsal shack in Hawaii to record this, their aptly titled fourth album. Apparently the tiny building helps to foster the tight-but-loose groove that is essential to the group's sound.

These guys began in more or less jazz circles, and they still swing, but their evolution has led them into the realm of funk and hip-hop. Billy Martin seems concerned first and foremost with getting us to dance, slathering fatback all over everything in his path. But MMW are a band of improvisers, and this album is a collection of funky riffs that the group stretches and builds upon, akin to their live performances.

Martin, who has played both kit and percussion with such diverse artists as Chuck Mangione and the Lounge Lizards, brings a depth of world drumming influences to the mix. His penchant for picking up a gourd or shekere from a vast array of hand-held instruments and integrating it into the drumset sound (as on "Henduck") is just one of Billy's many virtues. His ghost-note-laden funk beats (check out "Jelly Belly") are worthy of Jabo or Stubblefield, while his minimal but syncopated ride patterns ("Is There Anybody Here That Love My Jesus") recall Zigaboo Modeliste of the Meters. And on "Spy Kiss," he gets to stretch out a bit and weave some snaky rhythms around an upright bass ostinato.

So for a band whose name sounds more like a law firm than a funk trio, the celebratory concept of danceable groove is always right in the foreground. These men are powerhouse players, but rather than flaunt their chops, they tastefully distill them into an undeniable groove that just makes you wanna move.

Michael Parillo

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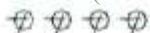
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Gregory James

Ananda (Moo.)



drummer: Paul Van Wageningen

percussionist: Peter Michael Escovedo

with Gregory James (gtr), Marc Van Wageningen (bs),
Ron Miles (trp), Paul McCandless (sp sx, bs dr)



As soon as Paul Van Wageningen brings his gangly, second-line samba to open *Ananda*, with Peter Michael Escovedo adding the spice on agogo, it's obvious that this musical marriage is on solid ground. You've got a rhythm section confident enough to leave space for the groove to percolate, and you've got soloists like McCandless (Oregon), Miles

(Bill Frisell), and James, who know what to do with the space. The Van Wageningens have played with Pete Escovedo, John Santos, Ray Obiedo, and others on the Bay Area's estimable Latin-jazz scene, and percussionist Peter Michael has often been part of the area's musical mix.

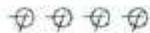
"Turandot" is a wide-open Latin funk groove on which the drummer stays slightly behind the beat, while the percussion keeps it leaning forward with cowbells and tambourine. "Hisayo" is more of a loping samba, with Van Wageningen and Escovedo doing some hot playing, making it sound very cool. Paul gets all he can out of his cymbals on "Antares," painting a whispering ECM-ish picture before giving them a grand bashing. His approach to the drums is similarly wide-open; he'll lay into the middle of the head one moment, then play rimshots, then the rims. In fact, this is a band full of players concerned not only with performance, but with tone, and that makes for good—and fresh—listening. (*Moo Records*, 19725 Sherman Way, Ste. 220, Winnetka, CA 91306, [818] 349-9792.)

Robin Tolleson

VIDEOS

Glen Velez

Handance Method, Steps 1 & 2
(Interworld Music/Warner Bros.)



level: beginner to intermediate
\$19.95, 60 minutes

On *Handance Method*, Glen Velez, the world's leading frame drummer, takes us through a step-by-step process of learning to play the North African tar, a type of frame drum. The video integrates rhythmical "visualization" concepts with vocalization and physical timekeeping, and its lesson focuses on the utilization of vocalization and "stepping" in the process of learning to play. Velez explains that the vocalization of syllables activates a sense of breathing and helps in remembering rhythms. The "stepping" process internalizes pulse sense through large body movement. In turn, the simple method of walking with a "step out" delin-

eates a cycle. As explained by Glen, the use of vocalization is an ancient practice used in many cultures.

The instructional section of *Step 1* begins with the proper technique of holding the drum, and introduces the three basic tones. Glen then explains the stepping process with a "step out" on every third beat. This establishes a cycle of three. A one-to-one correspondence establishes playing and "stepping" while vocalizing the assigned syllables. Glen then systematically goes through every step, clearly explaining and demonstrating all the examples. The lesson culminates with the integration of the various exercises in Glen's Handance group, which includes Eva Atsalis and Yousif Sheronick.

A major plus here is an extended five- to six-minute play-along section at the end of the video, giving the student the opportunity to work out with Glen's Handance group. *Handance Method Step 2* follows the same methodical approach, focusing on five beat patterns. It also ends with an excellent extended group play-along Workout.

The process in which Glen walks the viewer through every step up to the group playing section is clear, methodical, and effective. It is a "no-nonsense" approach that, though possibly a little overbearing to the "not so serious" viewer, is nonetheless extremely advantageous to the dedicated student.

Victor Rendon

60-Minute Introduction To Drums

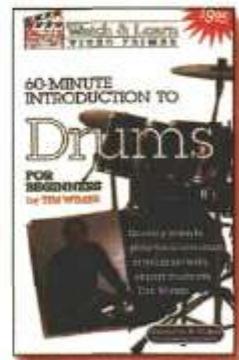
by Tim Wimer

(Cassette & Video Learning Systems)



level: beginner
\$9.95, 60 minutes

In this no-frills yet professionally produced video, drummer Tim Wimer presents a drumming lesson that assumes no prior rhythmic abilities on the part of the viewer. Expected topics include how to hold the sticks, basic rudiments, the parts of a drumkit, drum notation, and applying a few simple beat and fill ideas to the set. No fireworks, no flashy playing, no big names—just the ABCs. Of course this is hardly the first time this information has been presented on video, nor is it the most sophisticated approach to the subject matter available. Nonetheless, Wimer's are time-tested methods, likely to enable even musically naive individuals to put a beat together in relatively little time. And if the presentation and suggestions may seem a bit old-fashioned and unimaginative, the tape's very reasonable retail price goes a long way toward making it a great buy for beginners.



Adam Budofsky



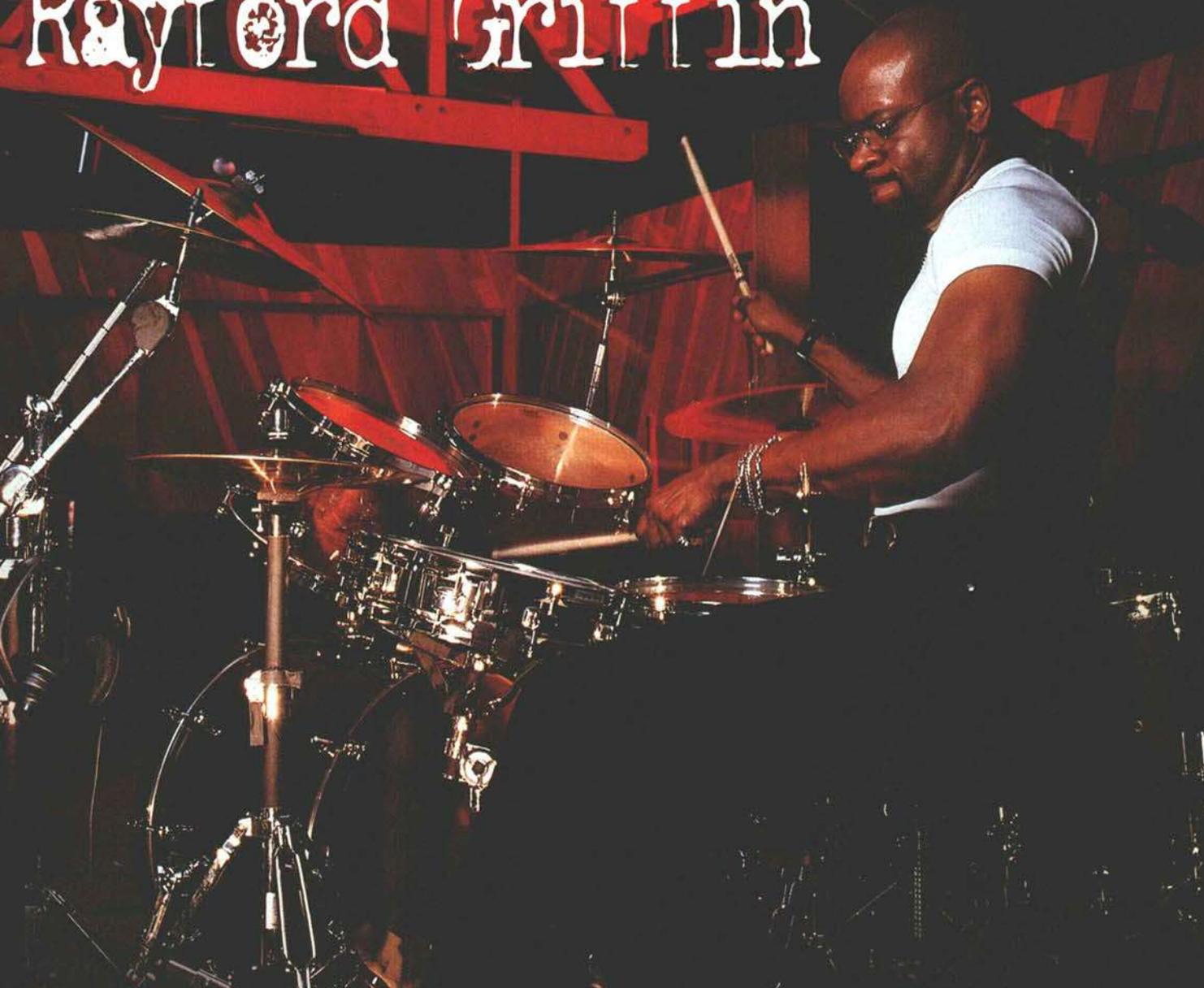
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Rayford Griffin

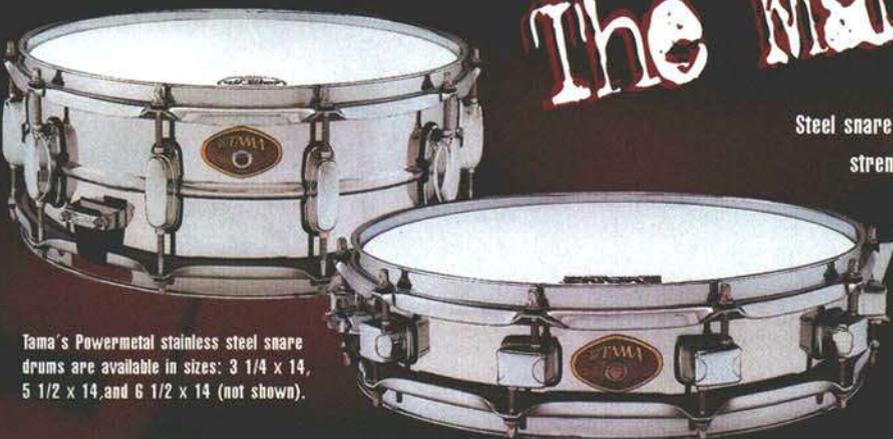


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Tama's Powermetal stainless steel snare drums are available in sizes: 3 1/4 x 14, 5 1/2 x 14, and 6 1/2 x 14 (not shown).



Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste

by Mark Griffith

Past installments of *Artist On Track* have focused on long lists of different recordings made by various drummers throughout their respective careers. This article will be slightly different.

Many times during the history of music, a musician (or group of musicians) has defined a musical concept so precisely as to establish a model for all future musicians to follow. Along with James Brown, legendary New Orleans band the Meters did this for the concept of funk. At the heart of this band was a drummer named Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste.

Up until recently, most of the Meters' music was unavailable on CD; fortunately, this has changed. Thanks to two different CD reissue anthologies, we now have access to a great deal of Ziggy's best playing with the band. Each reissue is a two-CD set, and the two sets combined offer fifty-eight different tunes from the Meters. Because of the importance of this music, I'm going to present an analysis of many songs (as opposed to many recordings, as I have done in the past). Later, we will also explore other Meters recordings and a few of the freelance projects on which Modeliste has appeared.

As with any truly great drummer, Zigaboo has an identifiable "sound." When you hear Ziggy play one bar of music, you *know* it's him. Let's begin by examining the way that Zigaboo plays his snare drum, using the different parts of the head to his benefit. If you listen closely to Ziggy's backbeats on the songs "Ease Back" and "Look-Ka Py Py," you can hear how his normally very resonant snare drum almost chokes itself. This is because it's being played at the exact center of the drum. (This choking phenomenon is why timpanists don't play anywhere near the middle of the drum.) However, when Zigaboo is playing busier snare drum patterns—as on "Pungee" and "Little Old Money Maker"—he plays toward the edge of the drum, getting a much more resonant and legato sound.

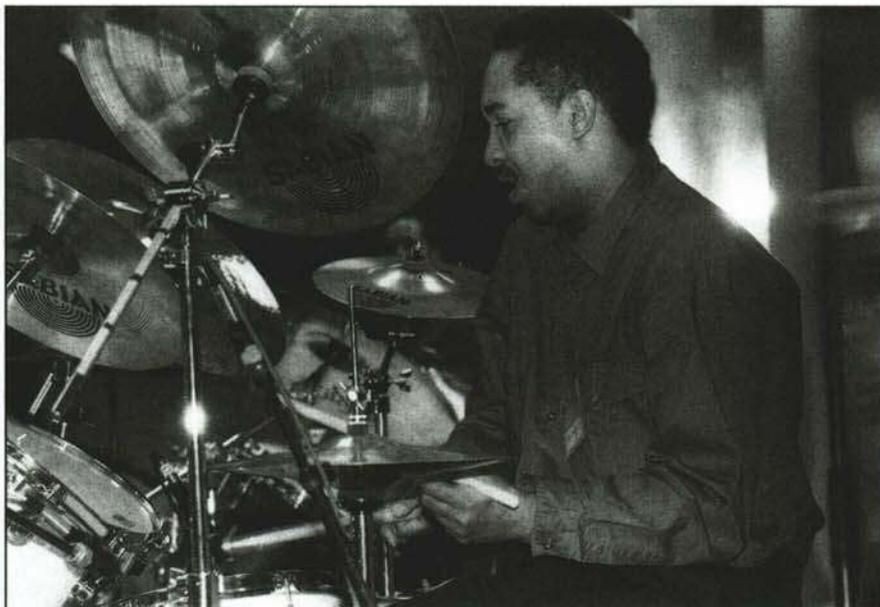
Another recurring element of Modeliste's sound is his use of an open hi-hat "bark" sound, combined with the snare drum, for accents. Listen to his extensive use of this sound on "Ride Your Pony." All of these techniques (along with flat-sounding tom-toms, a punchy bass drum, an ambient snare drum, and trashy-but-classic-sounding cymbals) give Ziggy an identifiable sound on the drums.

Another aspect of Modeliste's sound (or

style) comes forth every time he has the chance to take a drum solo. When Ziggy solos, it almost always consists of his playing the groove of the tune: He modifies and alters it, making it even funkier than it already is, but still he always keeps the groove at the core. Examples are the "solos" that Zigaboo takes on the songs "Here Come The Metermen" and "Stay Away."

Zigaboo has often added a twist to yet another musical tradition. At the beginning of an instrumental solo, there is sometimes what musicians call a solo break, when the whole band stops playing to let the soloist begin his solo without any accompaniment. When the Meters have done this, Zigaboo has often played through the soloist's break. Though I don't know if this was accidental, it frequently spurred the soloists to a more interesting beginning to their solos. Listen to this technique on "Thinking" and "Look-Ka Py Py."

Before further delving into Modeliste's busier and denser drumming, it is very important to mention that he often played very simply. There were many times when he found the pocket and *stayed* there, without any unnecessary notes. Listen to this in "Stormy," "This Is My Last Affair," and "Darling Darling Darling." Probably the best example of Zigaboo sounding like he's playing more than he actually plays is the song "Cabbage Alley." Neither Modeliste nor the percussionist is playing many notes—but the feel and the groove are perfect. Notice that when Zigaboo plays the hits near the beginning of the song, he doesn't complicate the matter by trying to set them up. And when the song is at its climax, instead of altering the groove, he double-times it. This



Lissa Wales



matt cameron soundgarden



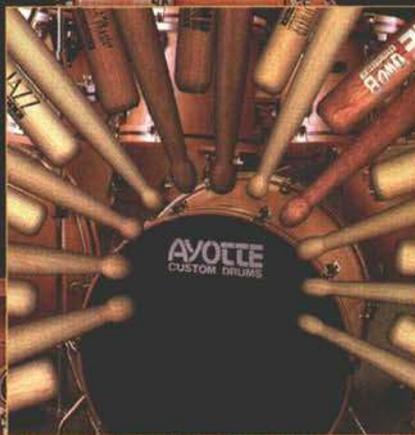
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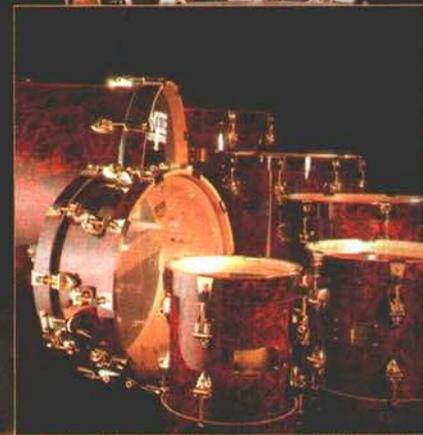
johnny fay the tragically hip



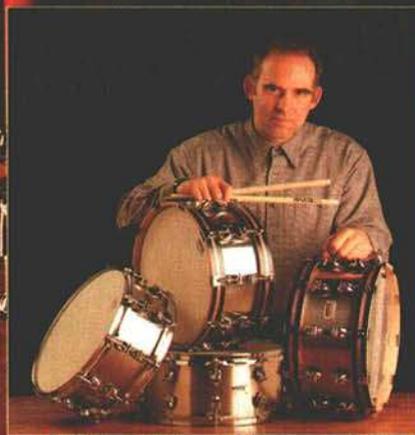
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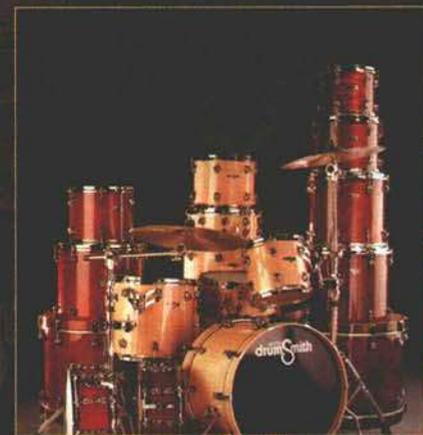
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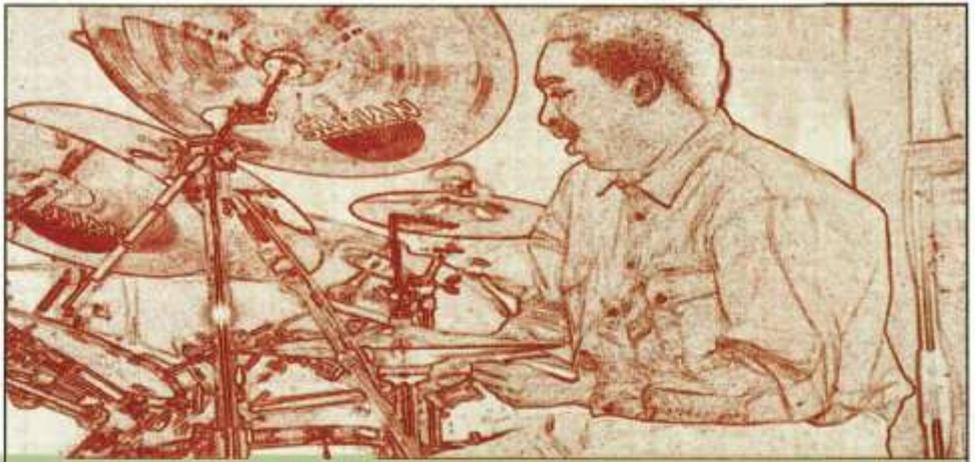
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song is a good example of the fact that if you play simply and tastefully, you can often give the illusion that you are playing more than you actually are. The Meters always proved that funk is not based on the quantity of notes, but on simplicity, space, and repetition.

Latin musicians also know about repetition. Latin music uses two forms of a repetitious rhythm called "clave." One form, the 3/2 clave, is also found in a lot of New Orleans music, including that of the Meters. In fact, it is the key to many of Zigaboo's funkier grooves. Try clapping the 3/2 clave to "Cabbage Alley," "Cissy Strut," and "Hey Pocky-A-Way." At the core of the second-line beat is a shuffling, repetitive snare-drum rhythm played near the edge of the snare drum. (Sound familiar?) Modeliste plays a version of this on the above-mentioned three songs. In "Hey Pocky-A-Way" he plays it on the snare drum in a fairly basic form. In "Cabbage Alley" he effectively breaks it up between the snare drum and bass drum. In "Cissy Strut" Zigaboo breaks it up between



Tracking Them Down

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

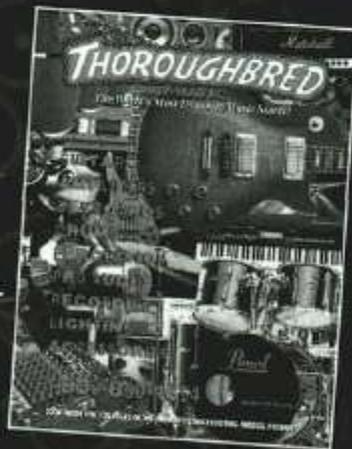
The Meters: *The Meters*, Josie 4010; *Look-Ka Py Py*, Josie 4011; *Struttin'*, Josie 4012; *Cabbage Alley*, Reprise 2076; *Rejuvenation*, Reprise 2200; *Fire On The Bayou*, Reprise 2228; *Trick Bag*, Reprise 2252; *New Directions*, Reprise 3042; *Funkify Your Life: The Meters Anthology*, Rhino R271869; *Funky Miracle Anthology*, Charly CD NEV 2; *Uptown Rulers: The Meters Live On The Queen Mary*, Rhino R2 70376. **Dr. John:** *In The Right Place*, Atco 7018-2. **Allen Toussaint:** *Life Love And Faith*, Charly CPCD 8032; *Southern Nights*, Reprise MS 2186. **Video:** *Soundstage: Dr. John New Orleans Stomp*, Rhino Home Video RNVD 2076.

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.

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the snare drum, bass drum, and hi-hat, while adding another accent pattern, answering the 3/2 clave.

There are many Meters songs that include vocal scatting sections or chants. Zigaboo would often play behind these sections with just his hi-hats and bass drum, creating a hypnotic and infectious groove—while leaving enough musical and dynamic space for the group's unique, funky vocalizations to be heard. Listen to "Look-Ka Py Py" and "Same Old Thing" and hear how funky Modeliste was, using just his hi-hats and bass drum.

Another way that Ziggy would approach this "vocal breakdown" section of a song would be to keep the groove he was playing exactly the same, while just digging in a little deeper. For musical examples of this, listen again to Zigaboo's playing on "Cabbage Alley" and "Hey Pocky-A-Way."

Another type of groove that Zigaboo often played was built on a heavily syncopated bass drum pattern with a very minimal or basic hand accompaniment, sometimes consisting of only a snare and hi-hat

note on the backbeats. He employed this technique when performing with a percussionist who was playing a dense accompanying tambourine part. There are many examples of this: "Here Come The Metermen," "Message From The Meters," "Ride That Pony," "Ease Back," "Pungee," "Rubber Band," "I Need More Time," "Good Old Funky Music," and "Zony Mash." While listening to these examples, notice how this style of beat focuses the listener on the bass drum at the bottom of the beat, which doesn't clutter up the backbeats.

Many beats and grooves created by the Meters have reappeared in the songs of other artists. As a result, Zigaboo's playing has been, in different forms, a major influence on many famous drummers and their trademark grooves. For example, when Terry Bozzio first put the linear drum beat to Missing Persons' "U.S. Drag," I remember it being transcribed by many drummers. Listen to the intro of the Meters' "Sophisticated Cissy," and you'll hear amazing similarities. We are all familiar with the beat-shifting technique that every-

body asks Vinnie Colaiuta and Dave Weckl about. Now listen to just about any Meters song (especially "People Say" and "Stay Away"), and you hear Zigaboo shifting the beat all over the place.

Zigaboo Modeliste's influence didn't start with today's masters. The classic rockers also dug Ziggy's drumming with the Meters. Listen to the Meters' "Fire On The Bayou," and remember that the Rolling Stones chose the Meters as an opening act for a few of their tours. All of the Stones had a great deal of respect for Ziggy and the Meters (enough so that Keith Richards and Ron Wood hired Zigaboo for their *New Barbarians* tour in 1979).

Think about the classic effect achieved by the Grateful Dead and the Allman Brothers with two drummers playing different but interlocking drumset parts. This was also done by the Meters on "Do The Dirt." Zigaboo played *both* parts—overdubbed (obviously) and panned hard right and left in the mix.

Many all-time drumming legends were also influenced by Zigaboo. We've all heard Bernard Purdie play an 8th- or 16th-

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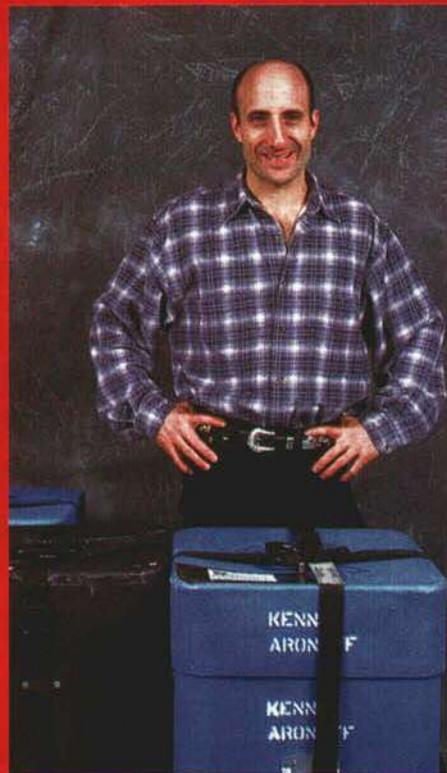


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note groove and drop in a triplet fill idea—always getting masterful results. Tune in to Zigaboo on "Ease Back," "Sophisticated Cissy," and "Pungee" for this same very effective idea (with the same result). Now try comparing Steve Gadd's drumming on Paul Simon's "50 Ways To Leave Your Lover" to Zigaboo's on "Africa." Finally, compare David Garibaldi's drumming on the Tower Of Power songs "Can't You See" and "Just When We Start Making It" to Modeliste's drumming on "Live Wire" and "Be My Lady." All of these great drummers (as well as Richie Hayward, Steve Jordan, and Dennis Chambers, among many others) have been influenced greatly by Zigaboo Modeliste. Even more recently, "Ease Back" has been sampled or copied countless times for modern hip-hop songs.

All of the above examples have been taken from the double-CD compilations *Funkify Your Life* and *Funky Miracle*. However, much of the Meters' music has been released on other recordings. Check out the wonderful live recording called *Uptown Rulers: The Meters Live On The Queen Mary*. It contains many of the Meters' best music, and also offers a good example of what they were like when they played live. For another wonderful example of this group live, check out the commercially available videotape *Soundstage: Dr. John New Orleans Stomp*. On it, the Meters back up New Orleans legends Professor Longhair and Earl King (as well as play a few tunes by themselves). Dr. John then plays with his own group of musicians. This video is priceless.

The Meters were often used as a backup band, usually at the request of producer/performer Allen Toussaint. Many of these recordings are, unfortunately, unavailable. However, Dr. John's *In The Right Place* is available, as is Allen Toussaint's *Life Love And Faith*. Both are quite good, and they're full of Zigaboo playing memorable grooves. Also worth looking for is Toussaint's *Southern Nights*. The Meters also guested on many recordings by artists looking for that "New Orleans sound." But none of those ever captured the fire that the original Meters recordings produced.

There are only eight of those original recordings: *The Meters*, *Look-Ka Py Py*, *Struttin*, *Cabbage Alley*, *Rejuvenation*, *Fire On The Bayou*, *Trick Bag*, and *New Directions* (nine if you include *Uptown Rulers*). Of special note are *Rejuvenation* and *Fire On The Bayou*. *Rejuvenation* is the best of the later Meters recordings (1972-77), while *Look-Ka Py Py* deservedly remains the classic from the early Meters (1969-71). If you can find it, examine *Rejuvenation* very closely. If you can't, you'll find three of the songs on the *Funkify Your Life* anthology, and three on *Uptown Rulers*. Those who *do* find the record will be rewarded by the astounding (and lengthy) drum solo during the twelve-minute "It Ain't No Use," and by the snakey swamp grooves on "Just Kissed My Baby" and "Jungle Man." (For those needing further validation, this record is also listed in Vinnie Colaiuta's Required Listening list [Oct. '93 *MD*]. But this record is so good, it doesn't need anybody's approval.) Once you've found *Rejuvenation*, track down *Fire On The Bayou*. It's not quite as good as *Rejuvenation*, but then again, nothing is.

Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste hasn't been on as many recordings as Steve Gadd, as innovative as Tony Williams, and isn't as flashy as "Philly" Joe Jones. But a good groove and a lot of heart goes a long way toward genius. Ziggy deserves to be considered one of the greats.



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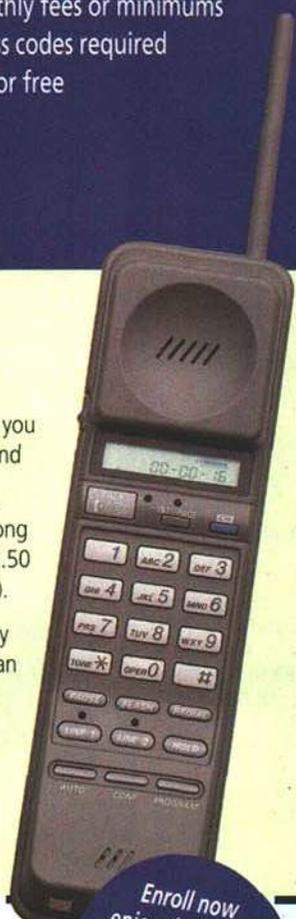
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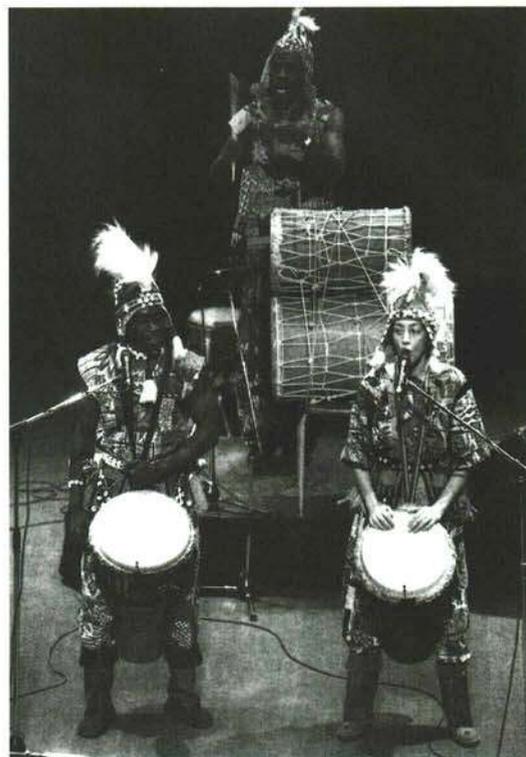
Montreal Drum Fest '96

Exciting performers, good pacing, and fabulous acoustics were the hallmarks of Drum Fest '96, held November 9 and 10, 1996 in the Pierre-Mercure Hall in downtown Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Produced by *Le Musicien* magazine's Ralph Angellilo and Serge Gamache, this fourth annual drumming festival in the heart of French Canada featured a bilingual program that catered to a growing audience of Canadians and Americans.



Alain Tremblay

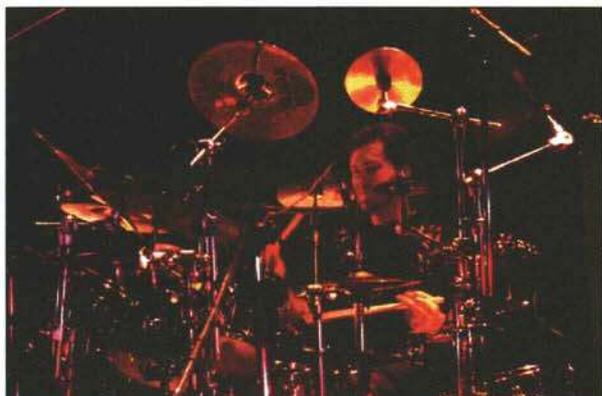
Audible "wows" rose from the house in response to Montreal composer Sylvain Grenier's use of "found" objects like hockey sticks as viable percussion instruments.



Alain Tremblay

Takadja entertained the crowd with flashes of world percussion textures, joyful dance, and colorful costumes.

Author/clinician Frank Belluci worked the crowd with a tasteful show of force, then dissected some of his chops-builders.



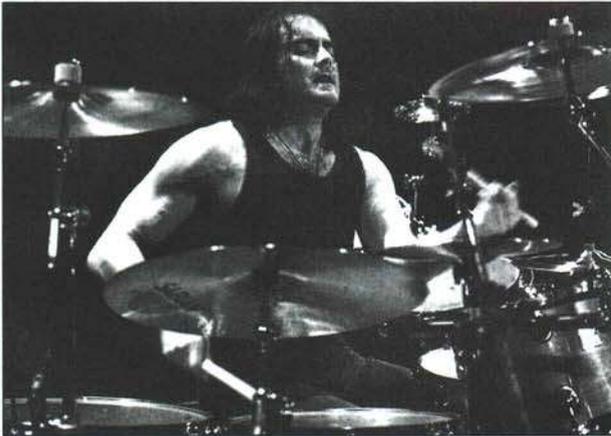
Versatile Montreal fusion drummer Ron Thaler brought a tight band that touched on jazz, funk, and European influences.



Anton Fig put the crowd at ease with the secret of his success ("my good looks") and antidotes to nervousness ("if it was good enough for Miles...") before pulling off some muscular grooves to a DAT of his own compositions.



Latin drumming's father figure, Ignacio Berroa, was popping with energy and sharing tips with other performers. With percussionist Michael Spiro, he breezed from Latin to bebop with palpable authenticity.



Alain Tremblay

Virgil Donati's flawless chops, thunderous flurries from drums to cymbals, and darn-near indecipherable grooves swept the theater to its feet in a wave of awe and admiration.



Tim "Herb" Alexander closed the first night of the Fest with his band, Laundry. The former Primus drummer pulled off a sensitive solo played mostly snares-off in the Max Roach tradition.



Chuck Silverman (along with percussionist Alain Labrosse) balanced education with blistering performances in the Afro-Cuban tradition, and earned heavy applause from Montreal's cosmopolitan audience.



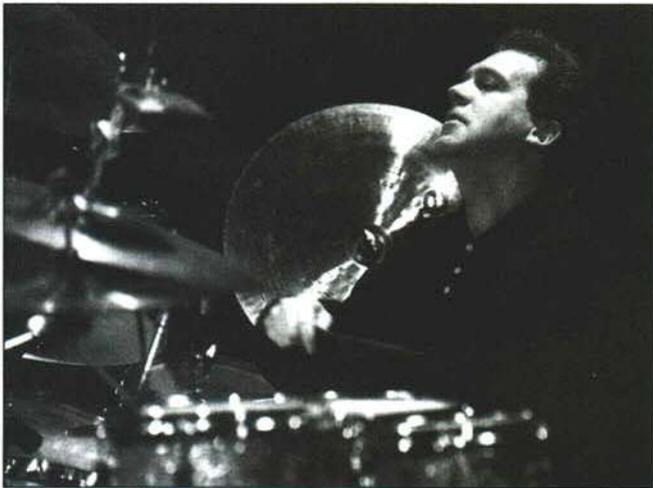
Thrilled by the audience's standing ovation midway through his spot, young Tony Royster, Jr. demonstrated both chops and musicality (and scared his elders back to the woodshed).



By merging Scottish drumming with various contemporary drumset rhythms, Scotland's Drums Of Black Bottle proved that pipe band music swings.



California jazz drummer Jeff Hamilton spoke, joked, and tutored his audience—and they ate up his every word. (He even did a little playing!) The atmosphere was one of hushed respect.



Alain Tremblay

Formerly of Montreal fusion group UZEB, Paul Brochu stroked the drums and cymbals with great poise and finesse, accompanied by two local musicians.

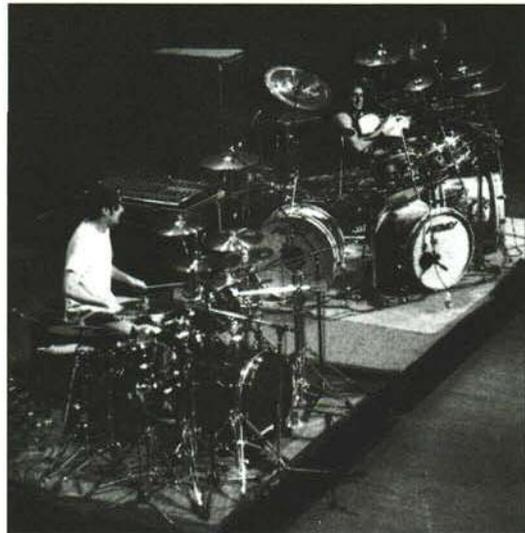


Alain Tremblay

JoJo Mayer, of New York's Screaming Headless Torsos, came out of left field, tying spectators in knots with his unique grooves.



Dennis Chambers closed the Fest as only he can, obviously enjoying a rapport with Quebecer Alain Caron and band.



Alain Tremblay

Robin DiMaggio (left) and Bobby Rock gave a stirring performance on the cutting edge of drum grooves, design, and electronics.

Drum Fest '96 sponsors included Vic Firth, Yamaha, Evans, Pearl, Zildjian, Premier, Sabian, Vater, Tama, SG Pro, LP, Drum Workshop, Obelisk Drums, Remo, Sonor, Ayotte, Toca, Peavey, Moperc Percussion, Trueline Drumsticks, and Groove Drums.

T. Bruce Wittet

A Fiesta Of Drummers

A crowd of over 70,000 people (and a large television audience as well) were treated to a rousing performance by eight of the world's leading drummers and percussionists at the 26th annual *Tostitos* Fiesta Bowl football game on January 1 of this year. The performance was presented as part of pre-game ceremonies.



Simon Phillips



from left: Billy Cobham, Dave Weckl, Gregg Bissonette

Kodo's Earth Celebration

Kodo, one of the world's premier taiko drumming troupes, held their annual Earth Celebration in 1996 on Sado Island off the coast of Japan. The celebration is an annual gathering of musicians and music lovers held since 1988. For Kodo, it is a realization of their dream to invite international musicians to their home for cultural exchange, casual jams, and memorable concerts.

In 1996 the event was a week-long percussion and arts festival, featuring workshops, exhibits, and concerts in a variety of ethnic and musical styles. And behind it all is Kodo, who have given more than 1,900 performances on five continents since their debut in 1981. Not for the faint of heart, membership in Kodo involves a two-year apprenticeship living and training together in an unheated school-house. Selected apprentices become probationary members for one year. If successful, they are then accepted as equal members of the group. They then go on to spend years refining the physical, martial discipline that taiko requires.

Taiko rhythms are intricate layers of 8th- and 16th-note *Ostinatos*—often with a touch of swing—over which seemingly irregular accent patterns are played. Flams and double strokes are also an integral part of taiko technique. Dynamics are essential, but at root these drums are about power, and about coaxing sound from drums that range from the size of large marching drums up to the massive *Odaiko*, which can be the size of a small truck! Warlords in feudal Japan used taiko drumming to heat the blood of loyal samurai for impending battle.

Although rooted in the Japanese tradition, Kodo also mix multinational elements, including African, Latin, Korean, and Okinawan influences. The group spends a third of the year touring overseas, another third touring Japan, and the other third preparing new material on Sado Island. Their performance at Earth Celebration '96 combined visceral power and haunting intimacy. The intensity and precision crafted into each piece rivaled that of any drum corps. After three encores, Kodo proceeded to the ferry docks on the island for a farewell "jam" for audience members returning to the mainland on the midnight ferry. They did the same for those who left the next morning.

Earth Celebrations are planned to repeat annually as part of Kodo's regular performance schedule. For information write to Kodo Village, 148-1 Kanetashinden, Ogi, Sado Island 952-06, Japan. Or you can phone or fax 0259-86-3630 or 0259-86-3631.

Dan Frio
(with thanks to Nobuko Yamada)

The original percussion piece, titled "Meridian," was composed expressly for this event by **Simon Phillips**. Taking part in the performance along with Simon were **Gregg Bissonette, Terri Lyne Carrington, Lenny Castro, Billy Cobham, Luis Conte, Chris Trujillo, and Dave Weckl**.

In Memoriam

Harold "Sticks" McDonald died January 11, 1997 after a battle with cancer. Born September 2, 1923, "Sticks" was a pioneer of country & western music. Among his many accomplishments over his extensive recording and performing career, "Sticks" was the first drummer to appear on stage at the Grand OF Opry. *Modern Drummer* profiled "Sticks" McDonald in the December 1996 issue.

Hal Rees, one of the busiest timpanists in the Los Angeles recording scene, died on December 15, 1996. Hal worked at the 20th Century Fox studios (along with several others) for many years, and can be heard on the soundtracks for such films as *How The West Was Won*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, and *Planet Of The Apes*. He is also credited with performing most, if not all, of the percussion on the Disney classic *Fantasia*.

Ed "Eddie Montana" Montano, a well-known and respected drummer and teacher in the southern New England area, died in November of 1996 at the age of 69. Eddie was a contemporary and friend of Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, and Joe Porcaro. A veteran of the U.S. Navy band during World War II, Eddie continued to play (in his own jazz and Dixieland band) and teach until his death. His students have gone on to play successfully throughout the world.

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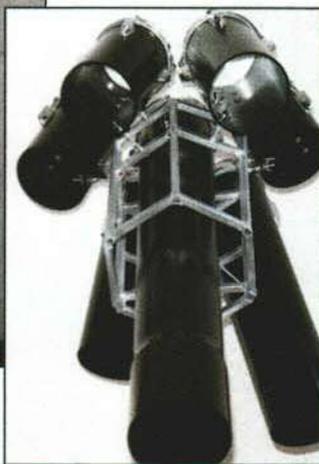
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In a slight departure from our normal format, this month's highlighted "kit" is actually only part of Marceline, Missouri drummer Andrew Finke's complete drumkit. But it's a novel approach to adding melodic elements in the most compact manner possible.

Andrew (and his drum tech father Peter) mounted seven melodic toms (based on Tama's *Octobans*) in an "easy-to-play" hexagonal arrangement. The drums are created from 6"-diameter PVC tubes fitted with lugs and Remo heads. The "Septabons" are of 6", 8", 10 1/2", 13 1/2", 17", 24", and 32" depths. Each drum is attached to a hexagonal steel frame via two rubber-shielded mounts. The six outside drums are tilted in towards the center drum to facilitate faster stick work between the different sounds. Andrew uses the toms "for straight-ahead rhythms as well as the occasional freelance fill."

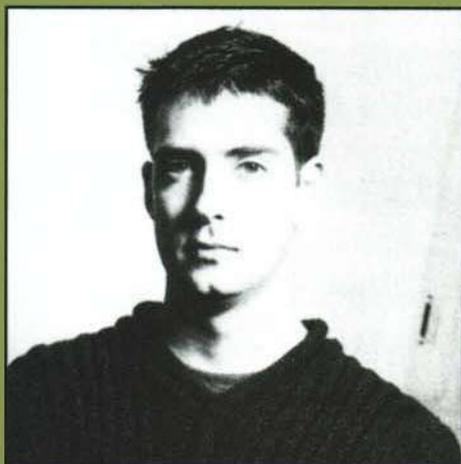
PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

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.



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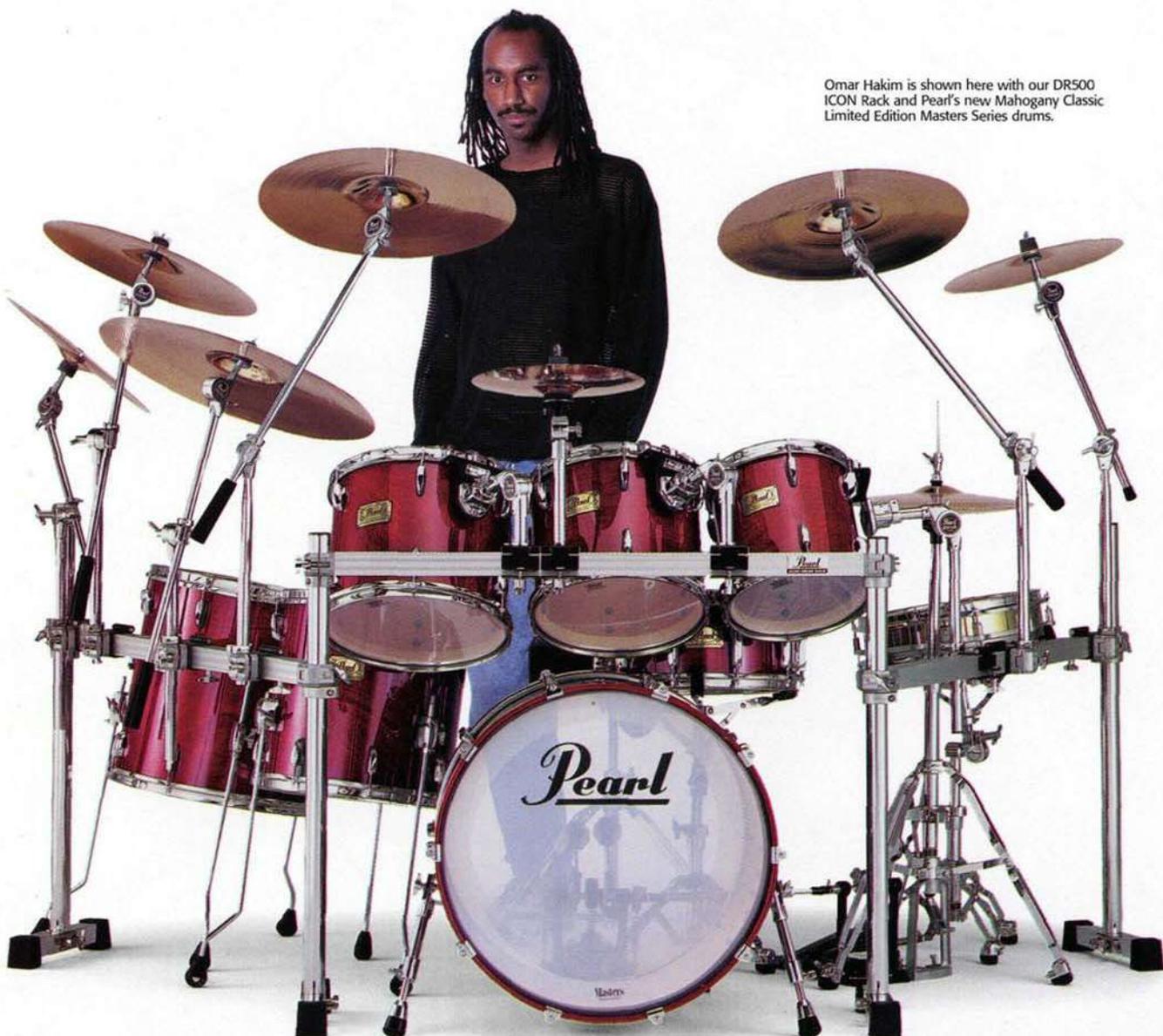
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"A big change has happened in my playing."

Tim Alexander talks about his Zildjian Drumsticks:

"Over the past few years my playing has been changing. I wanted to get to a different dynamic level and to explore new directions. I wanted my drumsticks to move with me and to respond to the change. Zildjian sticks have become an integral part of the change and are helping me move forward with my playing."



**Brand New
Tim Alexander
Artist Series Drumsticks**
See your local retailer.

Zildjian uses Select U.S. Hickory, state-of-the-art technology and design input from the world's top drummers to create the finest, most consistent drumsticks available today. Every pair of our sticks will feel like a natural extension of your hand, helping you to move forward with your playing....like Tim. Join the long list of top drummers that have made the move to Zildjian Drumsticks.



Adrian Young
5B & Super 5A
Nylon Tip
No Doubt



William Goldsmith
5B & 2B Wood Tip
Foo Fighters



Kirk Covington
5B Wood Tip
Tribal Tech



Lonnie Wilson
2B Wood Tip
Nashville Session Great