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MODERN

DRUMMER

The World's Most Widely Read Drum Magazine

July '97

W LUIS CONTE'S
I PERCUSSION SETUP
N FROM MEINL

Ringo Starr

Zak Starkey
Rising Son
With The Who

New York Jazzer

Billy Drummond

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APPLYING POLYRHYTHMS TO THE DRUMSET
BEN GILLIES OF SILVERCHAIR**



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2 Unsurpassed Quality and Consistency.

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A brand new automated coating system is now in place at Evans. The system has pneumatically controlled metering nozzles which regulate coating tolerances to plus or minus .00025" to provide remarkable consistency.

• **A Better, Safer Coating**

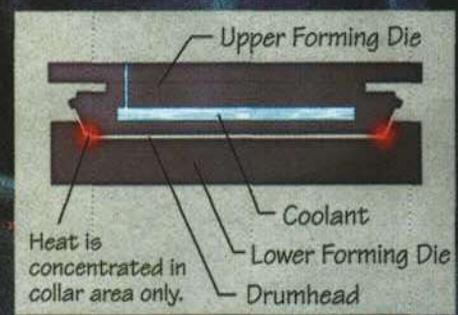
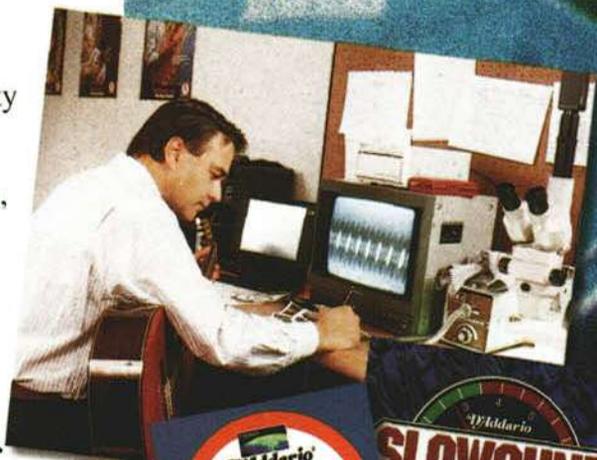
All Evans coated drumheads are now sprayed with a new water-based coating that is extremely durable, but also safe for the environment—something we take very seriously. In fact, the New York State Senate recognized D'Addario's commitment to the environment by presenting us with the Award for Environmental Excellence.

• **A Perfect Hoop**

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• **Guaranteed Against Pullout**

A new space-age resin ensures an inseparable bond between our film and hoops. This resin, combined with hundreds of resin-locking holes and our patented bent-over tom and snare hoop profile, enable us to unconditionally guarantee that our heads will never pull out.





3 Forty Years of Drumhead History.

We didn't invent Evans drumheads. In fact, Evans began to commercially market drumheads using Dupont® Mylar back in early 1958. Chick Evans was considered a rebel when he hit the road with the first Evans All-Weather polyester drumheads. Many of our older Evans dealers recall his road show, in which he would pour a glass of water on his snare head to demonstrate how this new plastic substitute for calf skin would not be affected by climatic changes.

Despite their creativity, Evans always remained a small innovative maker of quality drumheads. Over the course of their forty year history they would introduce many new technologies, including Hydraulic heads, CAD/CAM hoop design, the Genera line, and the famous EQ bass drum system. Robert Beals, the former owner of Evans, was very careful in selecting who would acquire his company. He wanted the new owners to have extensive experience in marketing music products, he wanted the company to be a family run business, and he wanted them to be passionate about his Evans drumheads. They had to make a lifetime commitment like he had to the product line. The marriage to D'Addario was perfect.

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4 Nine Generations of Excellence.

Genealogical records from Salle, Italy show that D'Addario family members were string makers as far back as 1700. The art of making music strings was handed down from generation to generation, and today the ninth generation of the D'Addario family is intimately involved with the management of the company.

Of course, throughout the 20th century, D'Addario's focus has always been musical instrument strings, but when Charles D'Addario began producing gut strings in Astoria, N.Y. in 1917, he frequently supplied drum makers with quality gut snares. Now, with the acquisition of Evans, our commitment to the drum business is serious.

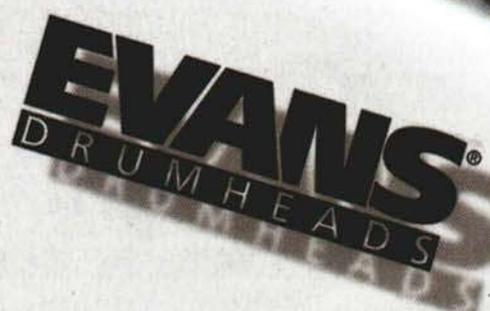
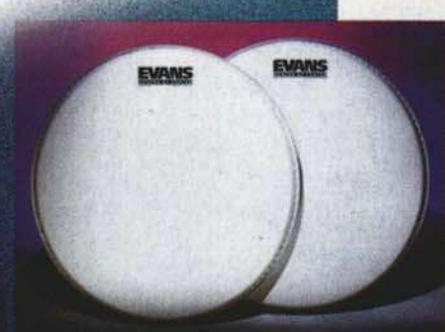
What does that mean for Evans? It means that you can expect every drumhead we make to get the same attention to detail and pride of workmanship that our ancestors put into their stringmaking back in Salle, Italy...not to mention our unprecedented dedication to consumer and dealer satisfaction.

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5 A Few Words from the Pros.

The list of drummers who use Evans heads is an all-star lineup, and new players join the ranks each day. Here's what a few of them have to say:

"[Evans] Generas sound great and they tune well. They have a very pure tone, but a real nice attack, and they don't sound like plastic."

--Paul Wertico

"I love using Evans heads—they're easy to tune, they make my drums sound good, and they make me sound good. D'Addario has found a way that with perseverance and ingenuity, you're going to get a perfect head every time. They have taken a great drumhead and made it excellent."

--Peter Erskine

"Dependability is a must for me, so I use Evans drumheads. If you want great sound and great feel, choose Evans. They just keep getting better all the time."

--Dennis Chambers

"Reliability, consistency, and attention to detail: Evans products have everything you need."

--Bill Bruford

"Drumheads are the link between your rhythmic ideas and your drums. With Evans drumheads I never have a shortage of inspiration. I love them; they make my drums sound great."

--Will Kennedy

"I'm so impressed with the ongoing commitment to improvement. In many companies, they get complacent about their products. Complacency is not an option at Evans. One of the things that's most critical is consistency. I know that my Evans heads will all be consistent and they'll all be perfect."

--Carl Allen

"The end product is the deciding factor, and I'm totally happy with the performance and sound of Evans products. The drumheads are just great. But the most important part is that Evans puts forth an effort. You know you're working with a company that's excited about their product."

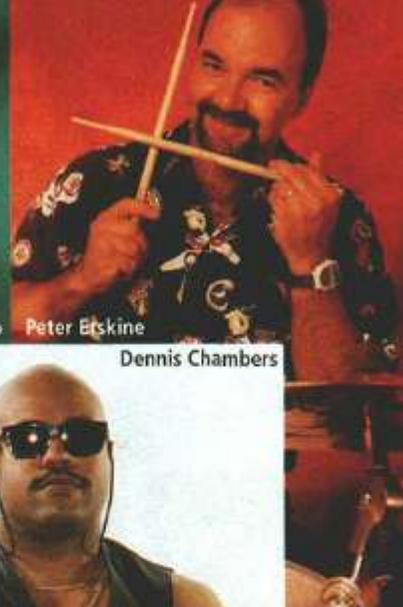
--Michael Baker

"Evans heads are extremely consistent, and they have a very musical tone. You know when you put a head on that it's going to be cool."

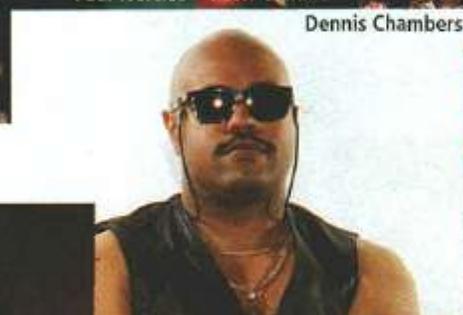
--Adam Nussbaum



Paul Wertico



Peter Erskine



Dennis Chambers



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The 1997/98 MD Buyer's Guide

The new *MD Buyer's Guide*, which we publish every other year, has recently been released. Filled, as usual, with in-depth information on products of highest importance to drummers, the *Guide* contains detailed specifications and prices on nearly every brand and model of drumkits, cymbals, hardware, heads, sticks & brushes, electronic items, ethnic percussion, and accessories. The thousands of items included in the 1997/98 *Buyer's Guide* make it the single most thorough reference source on drum gear available.

There's no doubting the fact that we drummers have more choices in equipment today than we've ever had before. The percussion industry has become increasingly sensitive to our needs and requirements over the years, offering us an incredibly wide assortment of options in just about every area. Having all these choices can certainly be a plus—yet the

confusion that often results from having so much to select from can be perplexing, to say the least. Hopefully the *Buyer's Guide* will help alleviate some of that confusion by allowing you to compare differences in construction methods, materials, and prices in one handy place, before heading out to your local dealer to spend those hard-earned dollars.

The *MD Buyer's Guide* also features our Manufacturers Directory, which will help you locate every manufacturer listed in the *Guide*. And if it's further information you require, the convenient Reader Service Cards are the simplest way to have catalogs or brochures sent directly to you from the manufacturers—without having to contact each one individually. I'm also happy to report that we've expanded the *Buyer's Guide* this year with a wider array of product photos and a series of valuable tips to aid you in making sound purchasing decisions.

Compiling the *Guide* is a group effort if ever there was one. First, it would be impossible to complete the task without the cooperation of the manufacturers who supply us with the raw information. All of that data then falls into the hands of project supervisor Rick Van Horn, who's faced with the task of updating and organizing the listings. From there it's on to the art department for design and layout, and then past the eyes of every *MD* editor for careful proofreading. My congratulations to all the *MD* staffers who do such a great job on this highly complex project.

Details on how to order your copy of the 1997/98 *MD Buyer's Guide* are presented elsewhere in this issue.

Jon Spagnardi

MODERN DRUMMER

The World's Most Widely Read Drum Magazine



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MODERN DRUMMER magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published monthly by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.**, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. PERIODICALS MAIL POSTAGE paid at Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 1997 by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.** All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES: **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.** 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Tel: (201) 239-4140. Fax: (201) 239-7139. E-mail: moddrum@intac.com.

MODERN DRUMMER ONLINE: www.moderndrummer.com

MODERN DRUMMER welcomes manuscripts and photographic material, however, cannot assume responsibility for them. Such items must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Printed in The United States

SUBSCRIPTIONS: U.S., Canada, and Mexico \$34.97 per year; \$56.97, two years. Other international \$41.97 per year, \$63.97, two years. Single copies \$4.95.

SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE: Modern Drummer, P.O. Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054-0480. **Change of address:** Allow at least six weeks for a change. Please provide both old and new address. Toll free tel: (800) 551-3786.

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INTERNATIONAL LICENSING REPRESENTATIVE: Robert Abramson & Associates, Inc. Libby Abramson, President, 720 Post Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Modern Drummer, P.O. Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

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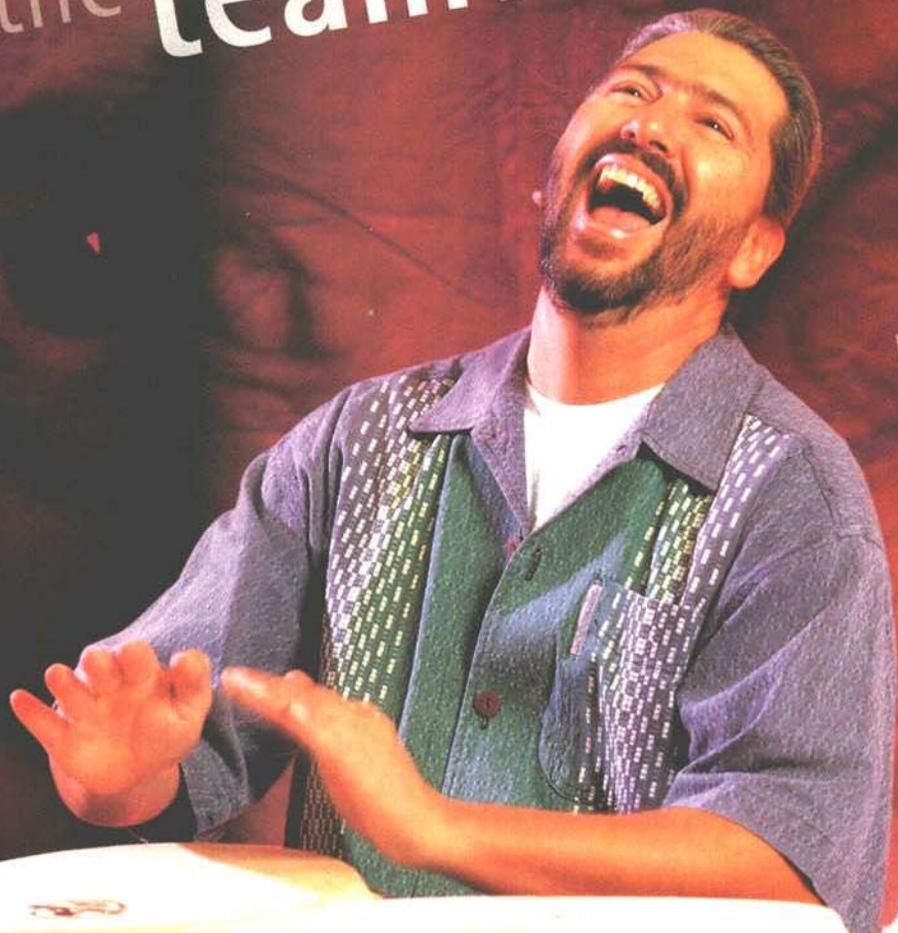
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STEVE SMITH



Steve Smith has got to be the most versatile drummer walking the face of the planet. True, studio drummers are called on to play in a lot of different styles, but they generally have that "tai-

lored to fit" approach: One drummer plays all, which means no single thing really stands out.

Steve, on the other hand, actually *performs* in all styles. He plays in front of people—including the world's most discriminating audiences: drummers at clinics—doing jazz, doing pop, and now doing rock (again!) with Journey. And he does each and everything *exceedingly well*. I know—I've seen him in clinic, I've heard him on his own Vital Info projects, I've heard the *Burning For Buddy* CD, and I'm a Journey fan from way back. The fact that Steve is also a thoughtful and articulate man who appreciates the importance of drumming history (along with vagaries of the contemporary drum business) makes him all the more a legitimate role model for young drummers to emulate. (I'd stop short of the pirate look, though.)

My hat is off to Steve, and also to *MD* for the fine April cover story.

Tom French
Minneapolis, MN

The Steve Smith and Gary Novak stories sparked my interest to check out CDs that both these players referenced in their interviews. I listened to Journey's *Trial By Fire* and Chick Corea's *Paint The World*. Man, there is some great playing on both of these albums—and both recordings are a contrast to each other. There's the straight-ahead (but by no means ordinary) execution of "power pop" by Steve, and the flowing,

intelligent stylings of Gary. Thanks, *MD*, for opening my ears as well as my eyes.

Sal D'Amato
via Internet

GARY NOVAK

Long, long, *long* overdue story on Gary Novak [April '97 *MD*]. Gary's been driving Chick Corea's band projects for over four years, and has certainly grown out of the "who is this guy who replaced Dave Weckl" stigma. Gary plays great in his own right (as his work with other major artists demonstrates), and he should be recognized as one of the leading figures in contemporary jazz drumming. Your story should help illuminate drummers about Gary, and establish him in his rightful position.

Andy Wallington
Corpus Christi, TX

NON-LATIN CONGA DRUMMING

In response to the *It's Questionable* inquiry from Charlie Shobe about instructional materials covering non-Latin conga-drumming [April '97 *MD*], I'd like to offer a suggestion. I just completed a book (with a play-along CD) called *Modern Percussion Grooves*. The book deals with contemporary styles for conga, bongos, "toys," etc. The CD contains six grooves (medium funk, funk shuffle, Afro-Cuban 6/8, pop ballad, jazz/fusion, and cha-cha pop), all containing ideas that I demonstrate. Then there's a play-along section for the reader to work with. Everything is pictured, charted, and explained thoroughly in the text of the book. It should be available soon through Centerstream Publishing, distributed exclusively by Hal Leonard.

Additionally, I have a video out (Hal Leonard) called *The Contemporary Percussionist* that combines elements of both "traditional" and "modern" percussion playing.

Glen Caruba
percussionist with Jimmy Buffett
Nashville, TN

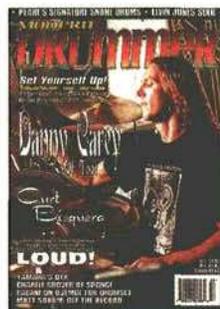
HAUGHTY HAL

Hal Howland is back with a vengeance. Who else but the king of imposters would concoct such a learned review of Mode Plagal, and would include a Beethoven piano concerto in his list of most inspiring 1996 albums just to let us know how well he appreciates classical percussion?

As an avid reader of *MD*, let me suggest that you establish a section on drum snobbery and put Mr. Howland in charge of it.

Ricardo Moraes-Pinto
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

ADVERTISING PREJUDICE?



To say that the Yamaha advertisement on page 77 of the February '97 issue of *MD* ["Jazz History—Black History"] is blatantly racist would be something of an understatement. To even consider print-

ing an ad of this nature is a gross misunderstanding of basic ethics to the point that I cannot believe such a well-respected company as Yamaha would do it—let alone that *Modern Drummer* would agree to print it.

I'm not objecting on any musical grounds. My main concern is that one section of the community is being singled out over another. What would happen if Yamaha printed an ad with the theme of "Rock History—White History," coupled with photos of Steve Gadd, Anton Fig, Tommy Aldridge, etc? Imagine the response you would soon receive from the black community.

Printed advertising should be acceptable to all. This ad was detrimental to approximately 50% of the population, not to say 50% of drummers internationally.

Paul Young
Winmarleigh, Preston, Great Britain

Editor's note: We appreciate your sensitivity toward a potentially racist impression created by the ad you mention. However,

POCKET GROOVES - RIGHT IN YOUR FACE!

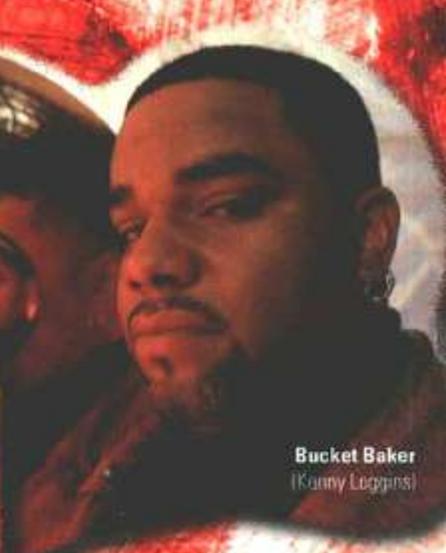
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Rick Latham
(Studio & Session,
Educational Videos/Books)



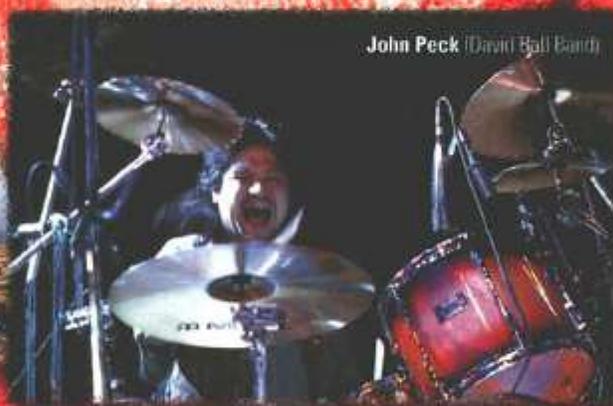
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(L.A. Studio)



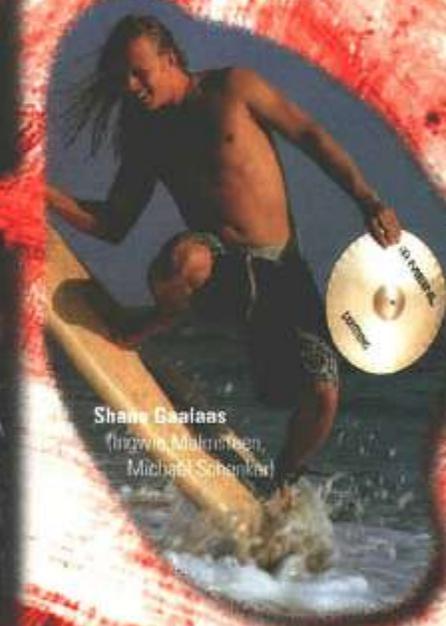
Bucket Baker
(Kenny Loggins)



Shannon Larkin
(Phil Collins)



John Peck (David Hall Band)



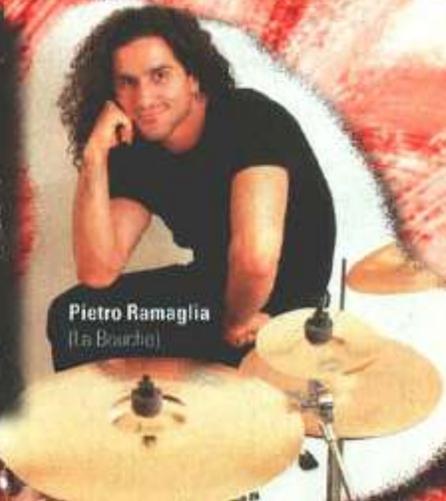
Shane Gaalaas
(Travis, Mark Wess,
Michael Schenker)



Tony St. James (Jazz Crusaders, Natalie Cole)



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since you live in Great Britain it may be that you are not aware of the context in which the ad was presented.

In the US, the entire month of February is officially designated "Black History Month." Our various broadcast and print media are filled with programs, articles, special reports—and ads—celebrating the events that are significant in the history of America's African-American population. Further, those same items often celebrate the contribution of black Americans to the nation's overall history.

It was in that context that the Yamaha ad was created, expressly for our February issue. The idea was certainly not to say that "jazz history" is "black history," but rather to point out some of the black drummers who have contributed significantly to the history of jazz. Understandably, because the ad was for Yamaha drums, it featured Yamaha drummers. However, it would be hard to dispute the past and current contributions of the individuals included. But in any case, no implication that only these black drummers (or black drummers in general) are important to jazz his-

tory was intended, either by Yamaha or by Modern Drummer.

ENDORSER ALTERNATIVES

I wonder if the "powers that be" have enough faith in the quality of their products to advertise them on their own, without having some "big-name" drummers endorse them. I've been a drummer for over twenty years, and when I buy something, I want quality for my money. I'm not going to buy something just because some big-name drummer endorses it.

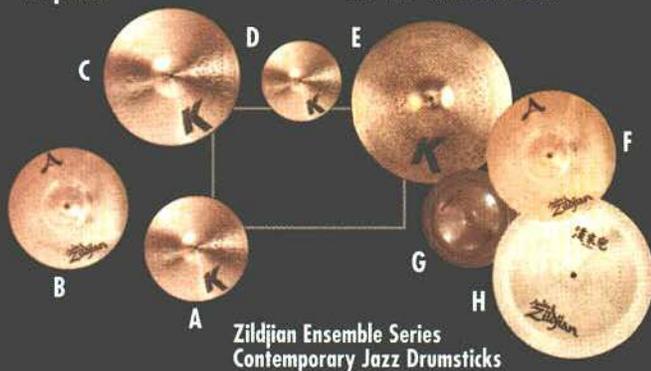
I'm sure most endorsers get paid for lending their name to a product—or at least get that product for free. I read once in your magazine that one drummer changes his snare head three times a night. That's great if you can afford to do that, or if the heads are free. I've been using the same heads for the past ten years. I can't afford new ones—not with all the other bills I have to pay to live.

Why don't some of these companies hire no-name drummers to endorse their prod-

Set Yourself up Like Tommy Igoe

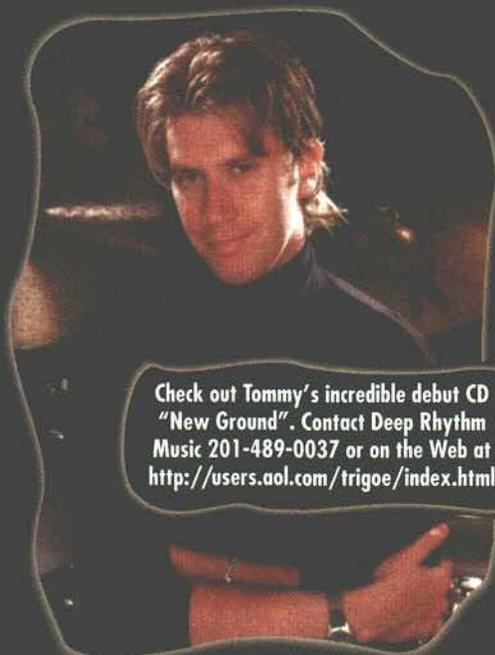
Tommy's Set-up:

- A. 13" K HiHats
- B. 15" A Custom Crash
- C. 17" K Dark Crash Thin Brilliant
- D. 10" K Splash
- E. 20" K Custom Dark Ride
- F. 16" A Custom Crash
- G. 10/12" Oriental Trash Hats
- H. 20" A China Low



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Armand Zildjian on Peter Erskine



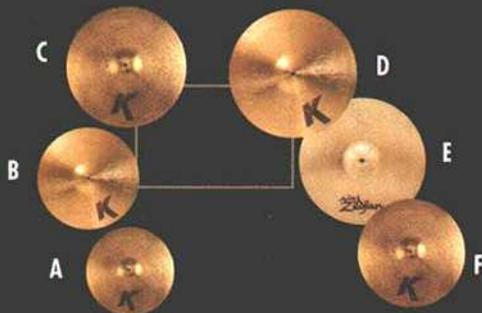
"Since I first heard him with Stan Kenton when he was 18 years old, I have enjoyed watching Peter grow into the mature, versatile musician that he is today. He is an exceptional drummer, and in my opinion, one of the great cymbal players of all time."



Photo: Shigeru Uchiyama

Peter's Set-up:

- A. 14" K Custom Dark HiHats
- B. 16" K Dark Crash Thin
- C. 20" K Custom Medium Ride
- D. 22" K Pre-Aged Dry Light Ride
- E. 22" A Swish Knocker
- F. 17" K Custom Dark Crash



Peter Erskine on Zildjian:

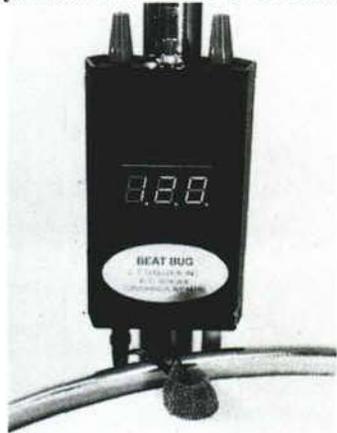
"A Zildjian cymbal to me, is like a Stradivarius. They are exquisite instruments and have multiple facets. I think of my K Pre-Aged Dry Ride just like a violin in a sense, it's not something I'm just going to clang away on."

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ucts? I'm sure there are many drummers who, like me, must stretch their equipment to the limit (and beyond), and thus who really know how well it stands up. These are the drummers who *buy* the equipment; I think other drummers might be more inclined to relate to *their* endorsement than to that of a big-name artist whose opinion may be suspect based on the fact that he's getting the gear for free.

Greg Rose
Flowers Cove, Newfoundland, Canada

For the time and expense it probably takes to shoot a lot of the artist-oriented photo ads presented by most of the major drum and cymbal companies, something else *really* worthwhile might be accomplished. How about including a fifteen-minute CD of that artist doing what he or she does: *playing drums*. Package that in MD, and give us subscribers a treat.

A quoted endorsement by an artist really means very little—who knows if he or she *really* said it or even thinks it? And who will care, twenty years down the road,

which artist was photographed wearing torn jeans and snoozing behind a set of cymbals? The only thing that counts is whether that artist can really *play*, and what the product he or she is endorsing really *sounds like*. I'm sure the large companies could support at least their highest-profile endorsers with a free CD occasionally—if they really want the world to hear and appreciate their products. Wouldn't everyone love to hear Neil Peart crash those cymbals, or Kenny Aronoff slam that snare for a few minutes of solo product sound? Heck—put 'em on the same disk and share the cost!

Leroy Lamis
Terre Haute, IN

PRICE PAIN

I don't normally write to a magazine, but I believe there's a topic that desperately needs to be addressed. The prices of drums and related equipment have gone through the roof!

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DAN MUELLER / PHUNK JUNKEEZ

JOHN PESSONI / THE URGE

JAMIE NUNN / GUTTERMOUTH

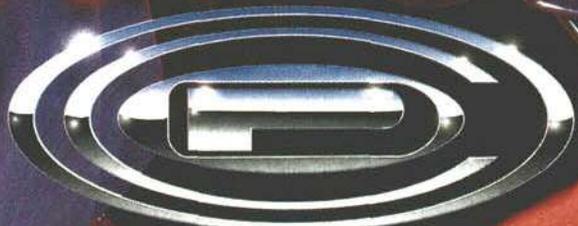
ERIK SANDIN / NOFX

ABE CUNNINGHAM / DEFTONES

ADRIAN YOUNG / NO DOUBT

ORANGE COUNTY DRUM & PERCUSSION

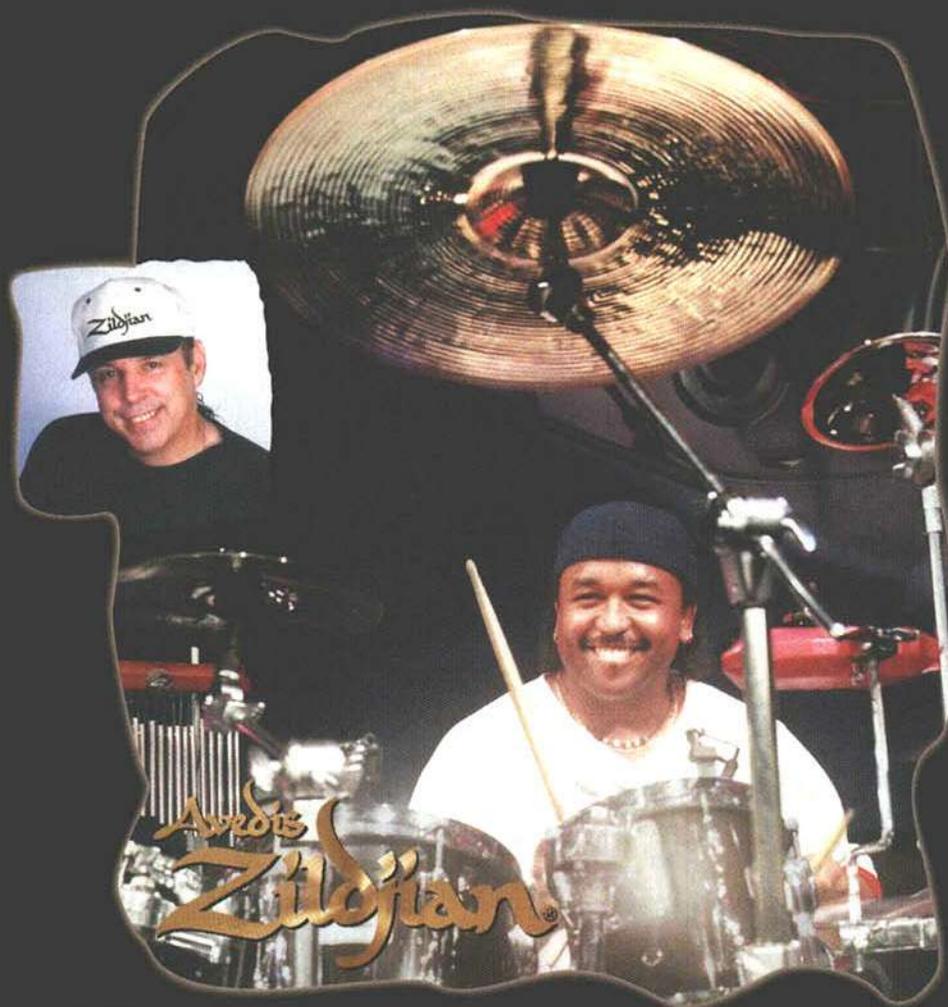
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"When I first heard Carter, it literally stopped me in my tracks."

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:

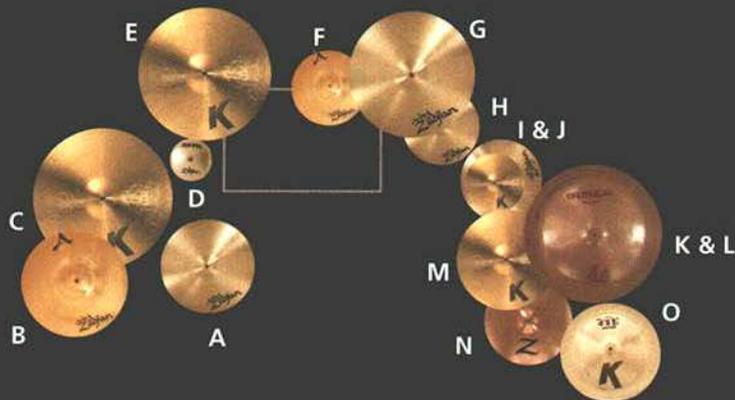
"My cymbals have voices that reflect the unique musical influences that make up this band."

"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:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| A. 14" A New Beat HiHats | F. 10" A Custom Splash | K. 20" Oriental China Trash |
| B. 16" A Custom Crash | G. 18" A Medium Crash | L. 18" Oriental China Trash on top of K |
| C. 20" K Ride Brilliant | H. 10" A Splash Brilliant | M. 14" K Dark Crash Thin Brilliant |
| D. 6" ZIL-BEL | I. 12" A Splash | N. 13" Z Dyno Beat HiHats |
| E. 19" K Dark Crash Thin | J. 8" K Splash Brilliant | O. 14" K Mini China with rivets |

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I realize that in our highly specialized field, we demand quality equipment. On the other hand, how can we afford to pay for these products if the manufacturers keep raising prices on us? I'd like to invite all drummers to contact their favorite manufacturers and voice their opinions about high prices. Maybe if we all speak as one, we can encourage the manufacturers to re-examine their positions before any other price increases occur.

Danny Ditto
via Internet



GROOVE GRIPE

I'm a twenty-four-year-old drummer who's been reading your magazine since I was in high school. I've had a nagging question for a while now. It seems that a lot of drummers you interview talk about "laying down a groove," "less is more," "not covering up a song with fills," and so forth. My question is: Have producers scared drummers into not playing what they want to play? It makes me sick to hear of a

drummer in a band who is replaced on an album project by a studio drummer because the producer didn't like the way the band's drummer played.

Consider this scenario: It's 1971, and the Who are recording "Won't Get Fooled Again." The producer says, "I really think we should get Charlie Watts to do this, because *your* drummer is overplaying." Or it's 1975, and Rush is in the studio about to record "Anthem." The producer says: "Wow, this guy is really overplaying the intro. And he's just not laying down a groove."

Seriously—think about it. Nobody ever told Eddie Van Halen to back off. I'm really scared about going into a studio situation, because Keith Moon and Neil Peart are my two biggest influences. Am I going to get replaced for doing too many fills?

Matt French
Pt. Mugu, CA



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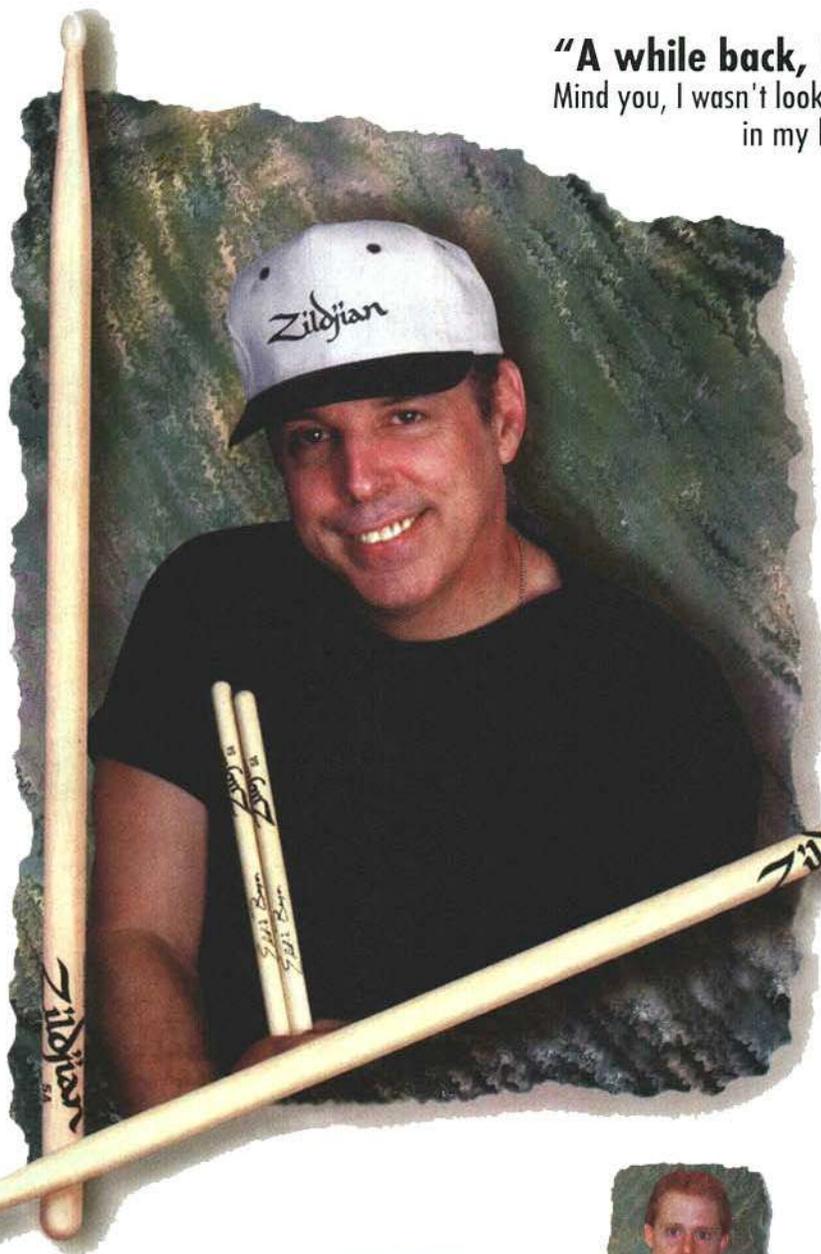
Eddie Bayers talks about his Zildjian Drumsticks:

"A while back, I tried Zildjian 5A nylon tips. Mind you, I wasn't looking for a new stick. When I put these sticks in my hands, the feel hit me immediately, it was like they were made for me. Superb balance and quality too. I know I can always count on my sticks to see the session through. As long as I'm playing the drums, I'm using Zildjian sticks."

Eddie Bayers, 5-time Academy of Country Music Drummer of the Year.

Zildjian Drumsticks have a superior feel and balance that make them the stick of choice for top drummers like Eddie Bayers.

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5B Wood Tip
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BILLY HIGGINS

The Master Is Back!

Twelve months have passed since legendary jazz drummer Billy Higgins underwent two liver transplant operations. In that time, Higgins has had occasion to count his blessings in triplets. First, his health is on the rebound. Second, at a San Francisco Bay area tribute concert held in the drummer's honor, a who's who of West Coast jazz turned out in force to honor the man and his music. And third, Higgins just received the country's most prestigious jazz award, the National Endowment for the Arts' 1997 American Jazz Master's Fellowship, in recognition of the drummer's "lifetime contributions, artistic excellence, and overall impact on jazz."

In his fifty-year career Billy Higgins has appeared on over five hundred albums and has performed with such legendary players as Dexter Gordon, Sonny Rollins, and Lee Morgan. As a teen, Higgins played with Bo Diddley, and with Maya Angelou, the best-selling writer who was then a singer. When the Ornette Coleman Quartet made its memorable New York City debut in 1959, the drummer was the twenty-two-year-old Higgins. The following year he worked with Thelonious Monk. And an archival photo of the John Coltrane Trio performing at the 1962 Monterey Jazz Festival reveals a smiling Higgins behind the drumkit.

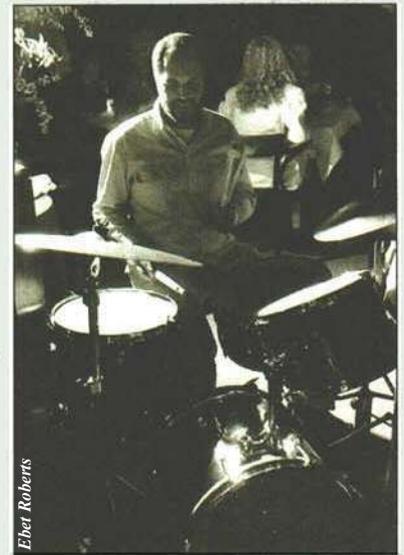
And the man has never stopped.

While his strength returns following the double surgeries, Billy stays busy directing the operations of the World Stage Cultural Center in Los Angeles, which he founded two decades ago as a performance venue and recording label. Today the World Stage remains the creative hub for countless young West Coast musicians.

"Jazz is a family," Higgins once said. "It's a blessing just to be a part of it, because there are so many—it's a big family." With the drummer's recent Jazz Master's Award from the N.E.A., his "family" now numbers in the hundreds of millions.

"They say many are called, but few are chosen," remarks the drummer's longtime friend and collaborator Abbey Lincoln. "Well, Billy Higgins is one. I mean, you *have* to be like that. When you are chosen, no matter what happens, this is what you do!"

Bill Kiely



Eber Roberts

Mikkey Dee

Sore Hands, Fast Feet

Mikkey Dee says Motorhead's recent *Overnight Sensation* is a record that he is really proud of. "I think this record has better songs," says Mikkey, who collaborated with the other members on the writing of the material. "Motorhead doesn't really have a plan; we just write what feels right at the moment. This time I guess we felt the same kind of vibe."

Among Dee's favorites are the title track and "I Don't Believe A Word." "That's a very different song for

Motorhead," suggests Mikkey. "It's kind of a power ballad, and Lem's singing very differently on it." Surprisingly, though, Mikkey actually recorded the drums to this tune (and several other tunes on the album) without the rest of the band. "I sing the music in my head," he explains. "I've always done that. I suppose it's hard if you're not used to it, but I've always done that, even when I was in King Diamond. And it takes me less time to record that way." Mikkey reports that it took him about a day and a half to record all of his parts for the album.

Still, Motorhead is essentially a road band, and they're currently in the middle of a tour that started last year and will be going until the end of the summer. They know how to deliver a powerful show. "It's extremely tough in the beginning of a tour," Mikkey admits. "It

can take quite a few shows to get physically and mentally prepared, and it's nothing you can practice for. And my hands are a never-ending problem. Blisters and cuts can make the constant gigging tough. I can be hurting for a couple of weeks and then I'm fine. I've tried everything, but I've found that putting electrical tape on certain areas of my fingers—very thin and not very much—protects my hands. I'd rather take a little bit of a beating and have my hands free than wear gloves."

Robyn Flans



Allen Kai

Local H's

Joe Daniels

Any twenty-six-year-old drummer would find the prospect of performing at Madison Square Garden for the first time daunting, but for Joe Daniels, the stakes were even higher. Local H was only the fourth band on Island Records to play the legendary arena. Opening for the Stone Temple Pilots, Daniels was joining the company of Ziggy Marley, U2, and Melissa Etheridge—and he was doing it with only himself on drums and Scott Lucas on guitar and vocals.

"The thing about the two-man lineup is that there's no room to screw up," Daniels says, laughing. "When I do, it's definitely out there. You can hear it."

Not that Daniels screws up often. He made it through the Garden gig just fine, and his energetic playing has been powering Local H to the top of the modern rock charts with hits such as "Bound For The Floor" and "Eddie Vedder" from *As Good As Dead*, the band's second album. What's more, with smart lyrics, killer hooks, and their

unique two-man lineup, Local H is one of the few Nirvana-inspired grunge bands taking the music someplace new.

Daniels grew up in Zion, Illinois. He started playing the drums at age three, and he was sitting in with his dad's blues band by age seven. During his junior year in high school he met Lucas, and the two have been bandmates ever since. A third pal originally played bass, but he was afraid to commit to a career in music and he quit the band shortly before it was signed to Island.

"We had to come up with a way to get signed and go on with our career," Daniels says. "A friend of ours who's a gearhead came up with the idea that we wouldn't need a bass player if we put an extra bass pickup on Scott's guitar under the low E and A strings, run it through an *Octapedal* to lower it even more, and then feed it into a bass amp as well as a regular amp."

As for Daniels' drumming, he plays spare, simple parts. "I'm pretty much a basic drummer," he says. "I just play what the part needs. I work off lyrics a lot, accenting parts. If Scott screams, I'm doing something to bring that out, and if he's mellow, I follow him there. 'Bound For The Floor' is so basic, but that was the hardest song to write on the record. We thought it was too boring, because it's repetitive. But I guess we got away with it."

Jim DeRogatis

Republica Gets The Bow Wow Wow Beat

Dave Barborossa

"Scuse me, you won't be needing these." Sex Pistols architect Malcolm McLaren, having reinvented Adam Ant's backing band as Bow Wow Wow with fifteen-year-old singer Annabella Lwin, is setting some rules for drummer Dave Barborossa. "Malcolm took the hi-hat and the snare drum away, and refused to let me play them," Barborossa matter-of-factly recalls. "For the next two years all I had was tom-toms."

Now wait just a minute. You don't just dismember a drummer's kit and expect him to... "No, it was

great" Dave insists. "I'm very into that in my career. I'm not a 'specialist drummer'; I love the drums because it's an expression of music. So I like working with people like Malcolm, and then with a techno band, because it sort of pushes the envelope a little bit."

The techno band Dave refers to is Republica, who've recently hit very big with "Ready To Go" and "Drop Dead Gorgeous." Fans might not immediately see the connections between Republica's dance-y percussion sequences and the faux tribal attack the drum-

mer plied on songs like Bow Wow Wow's '82 hit "I Want Candy." But Barborossa insists it's all about new challenges: "It's like drumming on a higher plane; the more disciplined the sequences are, the more I want to make them groove. Whereas without a click, I'd probably try to play like some kind of robot."

Well, you might be able to take the drummer out of the jungle, but.... Barborossa recently recorded live drums on Republica's "Get Off," which, like the rest of their debut album, was originally done with drum machines. "So," Dave quietly suggests, "it's a real triumph for our side."

Adam Budofsky

Danny Zeringue is on Jo-EI Sonnier's new release, *Cajun Pride*.

Jon Hazilla, co-leader of the Consuelo-Jon Quintet, is on their recent disk, *Last Sunday Morning*.

Ron Welty is on tour with the Offspring in support of their album, *Ignay On The Hombre*.

Bohdan Hluszko is now with Prairie Oyster.

Jody Seifert is on Cake Like's debut album, *Bruiser Queen*.

Dave Triebwasser is on Pond's *Rock Collection*. The group is about to hit the road again.

Guy Hoffman on the Violent Femmes' re-recording of "Blister In The Sun" to be used in the upcoming film *Grosse Pointe Blank*.

Mykale R. Thomas is touring with the Commodores. He

recently recorded a live music video and CD.

Tommy Aldridge, Carmine Appice, Jay Schellen, Eric Singer, and Jason Ian appear on the Queen tribute album *Dragon Attack*.

Rick Latham is touring with Edgar Winter.

Sim Cain is on the new Rollins Band release, *Come In And Burn*.

Mark Schulman's current gigs include Billy Idol, Steve Stevens, Sons Of Vivian, and Walter Davis. He's also been teaching at the Los Angeles Music Academy and producing acts for his production company, Jammin Planet.

Paul Sarni is now working with Wayne Newton.

Magnet's new PC Music release, *Don't Be A Penguin*, fea-

tures Velvet Underground drummer **Moe Tucker's** first full-length studio performance in twenty-five years. Moe is currently taking her unique Velvets drumset on the road with the band.

Jon Dette is out and **Paul Bostaph** is back in as a member of Slayer. Paul's currently working with the band on a new album.

Paul Buckley is on Orbit's *Libido Speedway*.

Kevin March is on Shudder To Think's new release, *50,000 B.C.*

David Rokeach is currently on tour with Charlie Musselwhite.

Special EFX co-founder/percussionist **George Jinda** has been hospitalized in New York City with an illness that has left him barely able to communicate. Jinda's hospitalization is due to a condition

known as anoxia, in which the central breathing system closes down and is unable to provide sufficient oxygen flow to the brain. In spite of the debilitating nature of his illness, George has expressed his strong desire to return to work as soon as possible. Cards and wishes for his recovery may be sent to George c/o New York Hospital, 535 E. 68th St., 6th Floor, New York, NY 10021.

John Miceli recently toured with Meat Loaf in South Africa, Japan, and Australia, and is on the recently released double live album, *Live Around The World*.

Andy James and Tyann Smith are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Indiana Elizabeth. Congratulations also to Kim and **Frank Bellucci** on the birth of their daughter, Kelly Rose.



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Left to Right
Prestige Session Select in hand stained Amber Burnish.
Prestige Session in Wine Red High Gloss Lacquer.
Session Series in Light Burlwood DuraPly.

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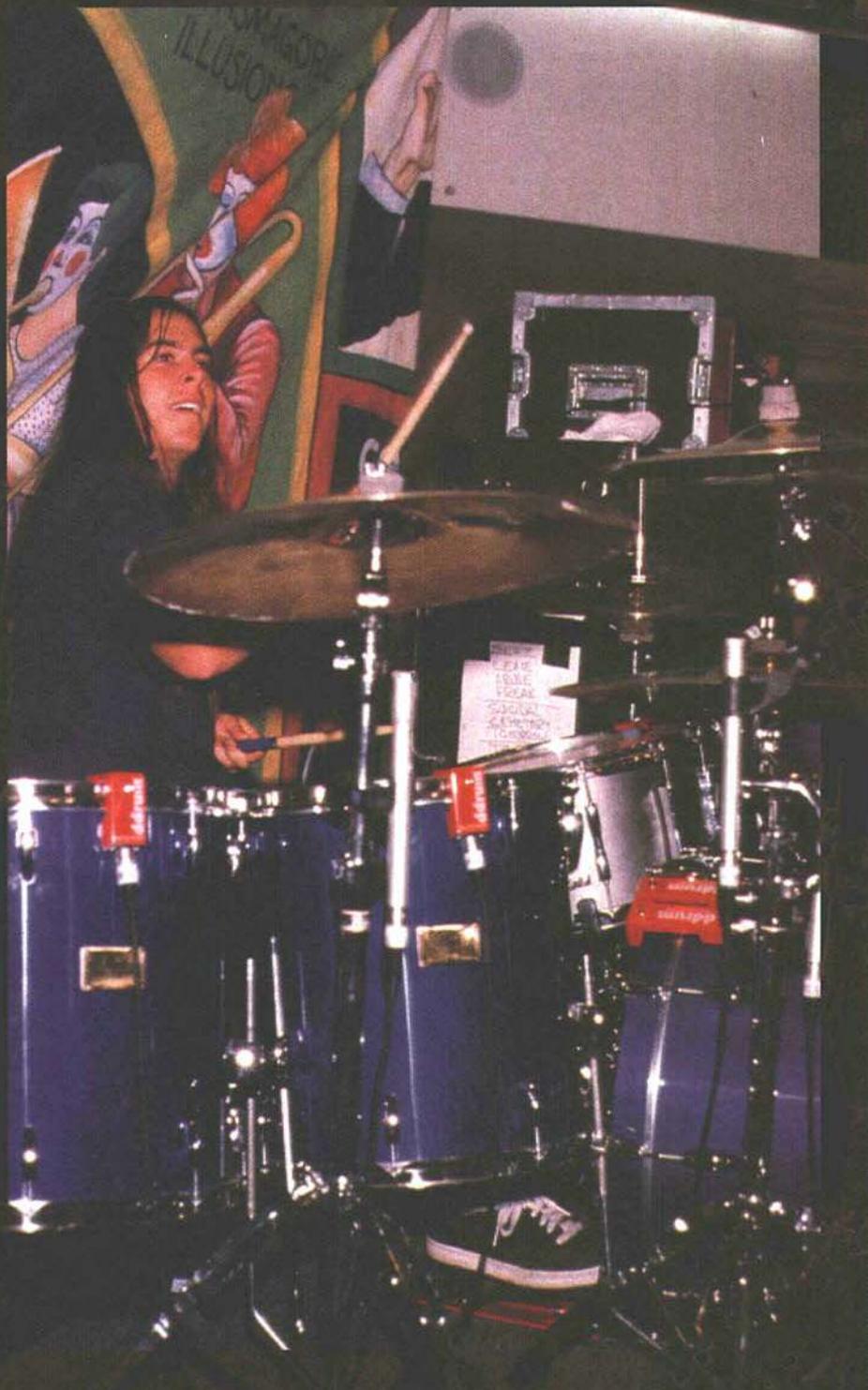
Scott Rockenfield can be heard on the newest release by Queensryche, "HEAR IN THE NOW FRONTIER". Available now from EMI.



BEN GILLIES

OF Silverchair

by Matt Peiken



Like a lot of other teenage rockers, Ben Gillies can air-drum with the best of them. Slap on Led Zeppelin's "Moby Dick," and Gillies will work up a Bonhamesque sweat. Not one to discriminate, he's just as quick to articulate a Jimmy Page guitar lead. Gillies, though, is unlike most others his age in two distinct ways: First, he's more likely to correctly mimic Zep's legendary licks, and second, while he's doing so, countless other drummers are undoubtedly at home somewhere air-drumming to *his* performances.

Silverchair's story is enough to keep every teenage rocker fantasizing about their own chances at stardom. Gillies, guitarist Daniel Johns, and bassist Chris Joannou were just high school freshman, jamming in each other's garages in Newcastle, Australia, when their demo for the song "Tomorrow" fell into the right hands. A talent show crown led to studio airtime, leading to national airplay, leading to a show-stealing slot on Australia's Big Day Out festival tour, leading to recording deals, leading to MTV's *Buzz Bin*, leading to international touring, and, eventually, leading to triple-platinum American sales of their debut album, *Frogstomp*.

For his part, Gillies was simply excited to have a good seat from which to view the mosh pit. "Shows are the coolest thing, definitely," he says in a deep Australian accent. "I don't really care too much or even think much about the business side of things. We're still just: three guys who get off on rockin' out, and it's cool that we can get other people to rock out with us now."

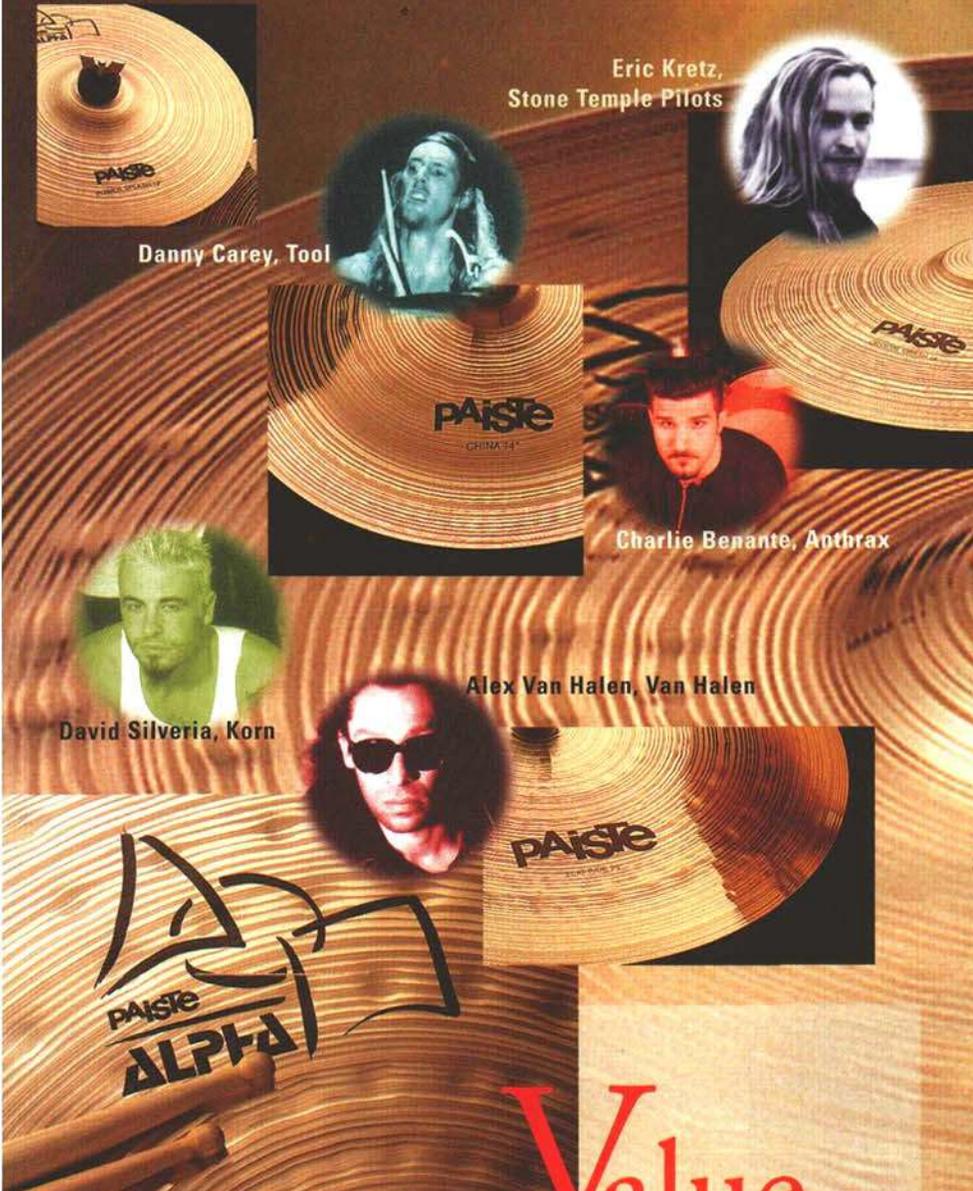
Silverchair certainly lifted its headbanging factor up a notch or two with *Freakshow*, the group's new disc of mid-tempo, de-tuned, straight-time, riff-riddled rock. As with *Frogstomp*, Gillies and his bandmates still proudly flash their influences throughout the new disc: You can hear unabashed nods to Zeppelin, Nirvana, and, for that matter, the entire grunge movement. And much of Gillies' style is reminiscent of another heavy-handed Australian, 2-and-4 king Phil Rudd.

"I didn't realize it at the time, but on 'No Association,' I'm playing almost the same drum beat that's on Zeppelin's 'When The Levee Breaks,'" Gillies says. "Petrol & Chlorine' also sounds like something Bonham would have done. I didn't try to make it like that at all, but I would kill to play like Bonham—just his time and style. So if I sound like him, it's just because I'm a huge fan of his. Hopefully, I have my own style, too."

Still, at only seventeen, Gillies is already showing musical maturity and dexterity, playing with more confident attack on the band's explosive tunes, showing greater comfort with the more dynamically sensitive passages, and, through it all, keeping time more consistently. "I had to cut tape a lot on the first record, but I really didn't do that so much on the new one," Gillies says of the after-recording editing process. "I hit pretty hard live, but I didn't hit as hard on the new record. I still play pretty hard, but I think I was a lot more confident and in control of what I wanted to do. And I think we ended up making a tougher-sounding record than the first one."

That should come as little surprise to anyone who knows where the band comes from stylistically. It wasn't long ago that Silverchair, then known as Innocent Criminals, was pumping out covers of Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, Rainbow, and other heavy '70s-era bands. Before that, Gillies and Johns wrote their own songs—vocals only—and performed them under the name Short Elvis. Soon after his voice changed, Gillies stopped singing and began playing on a kit he picked up for \$75 from an older teenager across the street.

"I took some lessons and learned some rudiments, but I never really gave 'em much use," Gillies says. "Flams do come in handy a bit, because I use 'em to go from a verse to a chorus and to kick a song right



Eric Kretz,
Stone Temple Pilots

Danny Carey, Tool

Charlie Benante, Anthrax

David Silveria, Korn

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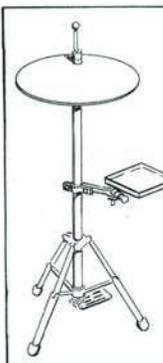
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up the ass. But I don't do the paradiddles and things like that too much because there's no place for them in what we do. Someday, maybe, but not now."

By the time the sessions for *Frogstomp* rolled around, Gillies already had experience cutting his parts at various 8-track studios around Newcastle. Still, he says, he didn't begin to appreciate his growth as a drummer until listening to the mixes for *Freakshow*.

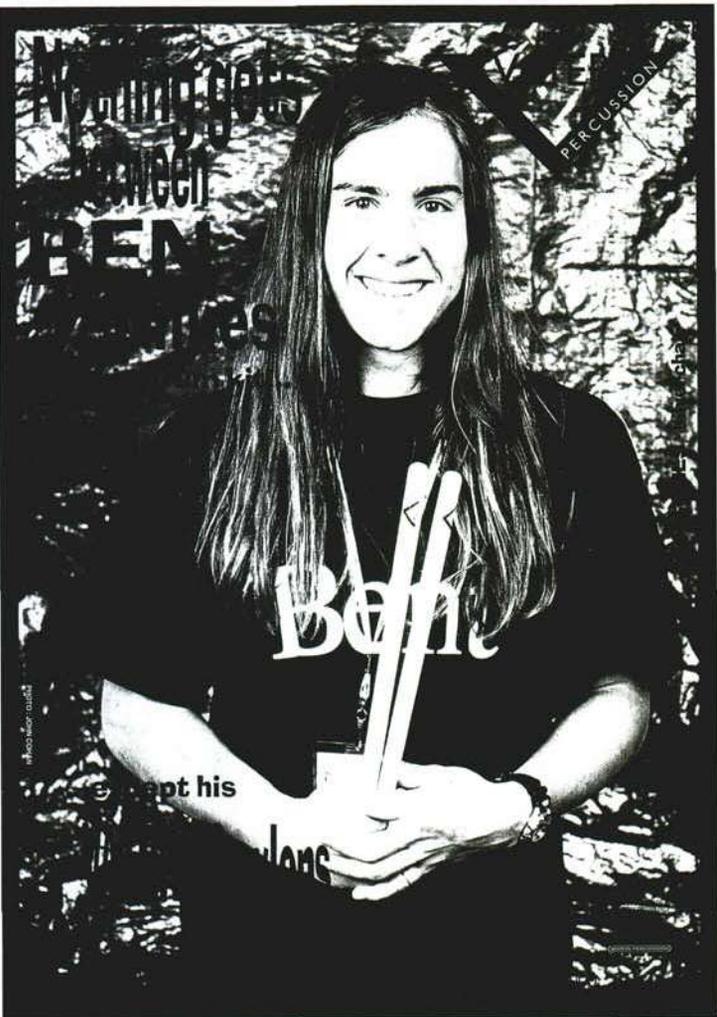
"At fourteen or fifteen, you think you're all right," says Gillies. "Now I look back and see how bad I was. I didn't hear how much I was messing up before. But when you do so many shows, it really straightens you out and makes you sharper. I learned some things by watching Chad Smith when we toured with the Chili Peppers. He's just the coolest. I got to play on his kit one night and it just blew me away, because I play with these tree-trunk sticks and he uses something like 55s. It felt like I was playing with pencils."

During the sessions for *Freakshow*, Gillies says he not only felt more aggressive and confident for the heavier parts, but also more creative, citing the song

"I told my dad I wanted to play in a band and make lots of money. He told me I should get out of my fantasy world because it was a million-to-one chance."

"Cemetery," in which he adds timpani rolls, as a sign of his musical maturity. "It's not a very complicated part, but I think it really adds something to the song," he says. "I just made it up in the studio and went for it. We cut it a couple of times, trying different things. But I don't think I would even have thought to put something like that in there a few years ago."

For the new record, Silverchair experimented with different recording environments inside Festival Studios in Sydney, Australia. The results were mixed (the "dead" room worked out best, the bathroom was a bust), but Gillies happily



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reports that at least his tempo was far less a concern this time around. "I'll either just count it in my head or keep track on the kick drum," says Ben, who shuns the mere mention of a click track. "Johnsy might give me a look or something if it gets too fast. Maybe it sounds better that way, maybe it doesn't. But I always want it to sound natural."

Gillies' kit has remained relatively unchanged, though he's now playing a Gregg Keplinger steel snare drum and, as a result, breaking fewer drums. "I've been

looking for a real heavy-duty, hardcore snare, because I hit really hard and I seem to just trash 'em," he says. "So I ended up getting an 8x14 barrel of a drum. Someone told me it's a Matt Cameron reject, but I just love it. It's so loud. It sounds best with *Ambassadors*, but they dent up real bad. So I gotta use those *Kevlar* heads on it."

Gillies foresees a large investment in *Kevlar*, because with no school to return to after the spring, he and his bandmates expect to spend much of 1997 and 1998 on the road. And they hope to be able to take

another young Australian band out as the supporting act.

"There's a good scene over there right now," Gillies says, "with bands like Magic Dirt, Spider Bait, Tumbleweed, and Powder Finger. The only difference between us and them is that we had the one song that got attention. But they'll get theirs in time if they stick with it."

Beyond his involvement in Silverchair, Gillies has interests in playing guitar, possibly singing in another musical project, and, someday, taking the producer's role in the studio. "Music has pretty much taken over my life," he says. "When we started at twelve or thirteen, we were going on no brains and all attitude. I told my dad I wanted to play in a band and make lots of money. He told me I should get out of my fantasy world because it was a million-to-one chance. Now when I'm playing guitar or drums and he tells me to go do my studies, I tell him I can't—because I'm working. He just looks at me, shakes his head, laughs, and says, 'You lucky bastard.'"



ERIC KRETZ
Stone Temple Pilots

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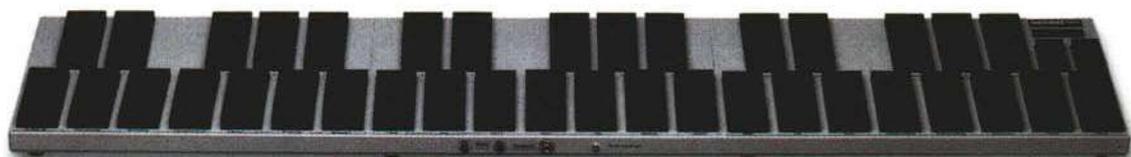
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Bill Bruford

Q I recently acquired a copy of King Crimson's *Thrak*, which has made a permanent home in my CD player for the last week. It's just *amazing*. But I have a question about the track called "People." It features a really cool, bass-y groove—but where, exactly, does it *start!* The first notes of music are three 16th notes (or 32nd notes if you're counting it in a slow 4/4) played unison on somebody's bass drum(s) and the bass. I have a feeling that *that* is 1. But I just can't get my head to think of it like that until after the first chorus, where the band adds an extra 8th note in there. That extra note switches it up on me and locks it in so I can hear the groove in the way (I think) it's supposed to be heard. I'm just curious as to what the band was thinking when you wrote this. Was it meant to screw with my head like that?

Ben Laussade
Las Vegas, NV

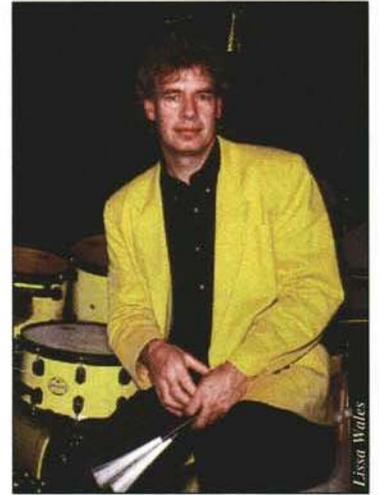
A Thanks for your question. The answer to where "People" starts is: It starts at the beginning! Counting in four at the faster tempo (of the chorus), the two-bar bass rhythm is:



It's the same after the chorus. I don't think there are any extra 8th notes in there, unless one wriggled in by mistake. (You can never be sure these days.) Anyway, I suspect it's Pat Mastelotto's cunningly placed snare on the "&" of beat 2 that's throwing you off. I'll pass on your comments to Crimson quality control.

I'm sure no one means to "screw with your head," but moving accents around and displacing rhythms is all part of the fun, isn't it? It's Pat's drumming; I had nothing to do with it—but this sort of stuff is contagious in the Crimson rhythm section. The main thing in any music is to find the big, central pulse that goes through all or most of the piece, locate that firmly in your hips, and never let it go.

To get a bit of variety into the playing of the rhythmic figure, try playing the bass drum on all four beats of the bar, and play Tony Levin's bass part on the snare drum. Next, play the bass drum on beats 1 and 3. Then go back and forth between the two bass drum patterns. You will feel the pulse double and halve, while the top rhythm remains the same.



Marc Quinones

Q Do you have any suggestions for something I can rub on my conga heads to keep them soft?

Brian Applestein
via Internet

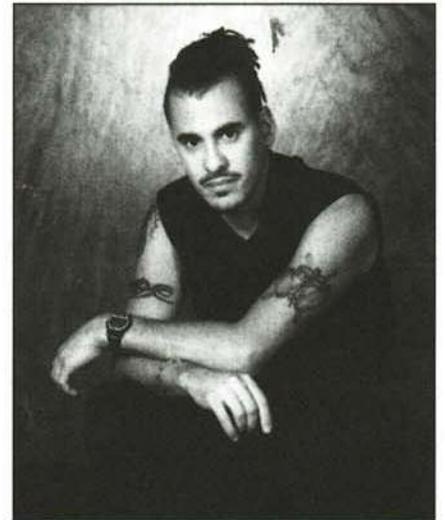
Q After about an hour of conga playing, my hands start to hurt. I've been encouraged to tape my hands or to wear gloves. What do you suggest?

Mike Howard Jr.
via Internet

A Brian, if you're a purist and prefer to use natural hide heads, there is a grease called "Manteca de Corrojo" that you can find at Spanish religious stores (botanicas). You need to apply it

lightly, and be aware that it can stain your clothes if you get it on them. Otherwise, you may want to try the new Remo *Mondo* conga heads, which don't require such maintenance. Also, since they're made of synthetic materials, they'll last longer than natural heads, and you can use them in any type of extreme weather with minimal tuning adjustment.

Mike, if you do a *lot* of playing, I suggest that on your days off you file down your calluses with an emery board. Also, always keep your hands well-moisturized, with a good, penetrating hand lotion. While you're actually working, try taking an ibuprofen pain medication about an hour before you perform. This will thin your blood enough that you will feel minimal pain in your hands while you play. Finally, again I'd suggest trying the Remo



Mondo heads—in this case because I find them easier on the hands than natural hide heads.

John Riley

I bought your book *The Art Of Bop Drumming* some months ago. My improvement in this difficult but passionate art since then has been enormous. The book is excellent. However, I've had a minor problem with it. In the book's extensive discography, there is no mention of CDs that can be useful to learn about brushes. I have *Oscar Peterson Plays The Cole Porter Book*, where most of the songs are played with brushes. I'm looking for more material of that sort. Can you offer any recommendations?

Gustavo Basualdo
Bogota, Colombia

I'm glad you found my book helpful. Regarding brush CDs, another Oscar Peterson recording, with the master, Ed Thigpen, on brushes all the way, is *We Get Requests* (Verve 810 047-2). Check out the *Jo Jones Trio* on Everest FSR-CD-40. Papa Jo plays great brushes and great "hand drums" on this one. Vernell Fournier plays some unique grooves with the brushes on Ahmad Jamal's *But Not For Me, Live At The Pershing* (Chess CHD 9108). The early Bill Evans trio recordings, with Paul Motian on drums, will give you some different ideas about phrasing and space while playing with brushes. I think their *Waltz For Debbie* (Riverside OJCCD 210-2) is special. Among more recent recordings, Tommy Flanagan's *Jazz Poet* (Timeless CD SJP 301) shows Kenny Washington swinging with the brushes at *all* tempos. Lastly, though not predominantly a brush CD like the previous one, Jeff Hamilton's *It's Hamilton Time* (Lake Street) does feature some great brushwork by Jeff. (Sorry, I loaned that one out so I don't have the number.) I hope that these CDs inspire you as much as they've inspired me. Thanks for the inquiry, and good luck.



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Drum Processing Gear

Q From reading your magazine I've come to realize that those "wonderful cymbals" and "awesome drums" I hear on recordings are not natural, but have been put through some processing unit or other. I'd like some information on the effects units available for studio as well as live performance. I also need information on how best to set up and use such equipment.

WBOSMAN

South Africa, via Internet

A We suggest you obtain a copy of Mark Parsons' *The Studio Drummer's Survival Guide*. If it isn't at a music shop or bookstore near you, you can order it through the *Modern Drummer* library. The book includes detailed information on processing gear and techniques (which can apply equally well for live performances as for recording). As far as sources go, it will be most practical for you first to learn the *type* of equipment you need, and then do a little research locally as to what is available to

you. It's possible that some of the equipment mentioned by name in Mark's book may not be distributed in South Africa. On the other hand, equipment from other manufacturers that Mark was unaware of may very well be the standard in your area. Check with a good pro-audio supplier for either direct help or leads to manufacturers you can contact.

Second-Line Drumming

Q I've just hooked up with a blues band featuring a guitar player from Louisiana, and I want my playing to sound authentic. I'd like to know what back issue of *MD* has an article on second-line drumming. Also, can you recommend any other sources of information?

Bob Kunkel
Pittsburgh, PA

A *MD* hasn't done an article on second-line drumming per se. However, in the July 1992 issue Rick Mattingly did an excellent "Style & Analysis" piece on the

playing of Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste. "Zig" is the drummer for the Meters, and is largely responsible for the incorporation of "second-line" playing into popular music. There are many good examples transcribed in that article; hopefully you'll find them instructive.

For insight into the minds of New Orleans-style drummers, read our October '90 feature on "The Drummers Of New Orleans." There isn't any musical instruction, but a lot of good background, with comments by Frank Bua, Herman Ernest, Willie Green, and Johnny Vidacovich.

For additional information, we suggest you check out DCI Music Video's "New Orleans Drumming" series, featuring Herlin Riley, Johnny Vidacovich, Earl Palmer, and Herman Ernest. They're full of excellent playing and discussion.

Bass Drum Bounce

Q I just bought a set of Pearl *Masters Custom* drums. I love the sound, but I have one complaint. The bass drum feels

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incredibly weird. I have a double bass drum pedal hooked up to it, and I cannot get a clean, even roll. The pedals bounce off the head to the point that it throws my roll off. This is frustrating, since it doesn't happen on other bass drums—just this one. I have had other drummers try it out, and they agree with me. I've also tried different double pedals—with the same result. The drum has no toms mounted on it, and there is no hole in the front head. What could I do to stop this weird bounce?

Daniel Meehan
Ridley Park, PA

A Although anything is possible, it's doubtful that your problem lies with the make and model of the bass drum. It's much more likely the result of your choice of batter head, the head tension you're using, and the fact that there is no hole in the front head. A bass drum without such a hole in the head has only the air vent in the shell to provide air escape. Typically, that hole is very small, so air gets "trapped" within the shell when the drum is struck. That trapped air provides resistance to the heads, which, in . . . resist the impact of

the bass drum beater. This is what creates the "bouncy-ness" that you refer to.

Since you say you love the sound of the drum, you probably won't want to take measures that are too drastic in order to achieve the feel that you seek. We suggest that you cut a small hole (no more than 3" in diameter) in the front head, at about the 5:00 or 7:00 position, and 3" to 4" in from the rim. This position will allow air to escape, but will still contain most of the sound waves within the drum. If the pedal is still too bouncy, increase the size of the hole slightly. Keep doing this until you reach a compromise between the sound and the feel that you seek. Experiment, too, with the tension of the batter head—or perhaps with the *type* of batter head. Those three variables (air hole, batter head type, and batter head tension) are what have the greatest effect on pedal response.

Insuring Equipment

Q The guitar player in my band just had his guitar damaged when he left it at the bar where we were playing. When I started playing out, I tried to get my drums

insured, but my insurance company wouldn't touch them because I make money by playing. None of the drummers I know have been able to obtain coverage, either. Can you offer any suggestions?

I really don't understand what making money from a drumset has to do with it. Do insurance companies expect damage because of the fact that the equipment is being hauled around all the time?

Shannon Roll
Milford, OH

A To answer your last question first: Yes, insurance companies *do* expect damage to your equipment because it is being hauled around. They also expect damage while it is set up in a commercial establishment (club, bar, etc.) or on a concert stage. In fact, they base *everything* on "exposure to risk." In simplest terms, insurance is a gamble against risk. The higher the risk, the poorer the odds, and the less the insurance company is going to want to make that gamble. Obviously, the risk to a kit that's being constantly loaded in and out of a vehicle, transported on busy highways, schlepped in and out of clubs, and exposed



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Matt Sorum

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to potentially intoxicated patrons is much higher than the risk to a kit that is sitting safely in your basement and being used only for your own personal edification and amusement.

What you need to do is find an independent insurance agent who deals with all forms of personal and commercial insurance. Depending on how much you play out, and how much of your total income is represented by your drumming income, you *may* be able to qualify as a hobbyist (like someone who collects and sometimes uses other valuable items, such as firearms or expensive model airplanes). In that case you *might* be able to get what's called a "personal articles floater" to your existing homeowner's or renter's policy. If you have neither of those, you might be able to insure your drums on what's called an "inland marine" policy. (The name is weird, but it refers to a policy just covering specific items of value.)

Failing all of that, you may need to take out the same sort of commercial insurance that any business must obtain to cover its operating equipment. It's pricey—but what would be the cost of replacing your kit if it

was destroyed in a club fire, totaled in an accident with your van (which would most likely *not* be covered by car insurance, by the way), or stolen? If your band situation is solid, it may be possible for the band to take out some sort of blanket policy that covers *all* of the equipment, and split the costs. If not, you'll need to cover your own equipment yourself. Again, seek help from a knowledgeable insurance broker.

Original Sabians

Q I have a pair of 14" Sabian *HH* hi-hats that were (supposedly) among the first ten or so off the line when the new brand was first introduced. They have a signature that I cannot make out. Whose signature is this, and what would be the approximate value of the cymbals today?

Chuck Kirschling
Berea, OH

A We went to an unimpeachable source for this answer: Bob Zildjian, founder of Sabian. He replies: "Your *HH* cymbals are signed in Armenian script on the inside of the bell by Keroupe Zilcan, which is

'Zildjian' in Turkish. Keroupe was the original managing director of the K. Zildjian factory in Istanbul. He immigrated over twenty years ago with his two sons, Michael and Gabriel. They've been with the Sabian company ever since.

"In the old country, when Keroupe would write his name on the inside of an old *K* Zildjian cymbal it would mean "I approve of this." To keep that tradition alive, we had him sign every one of the *HH* cymbals that went out.

"As far as the value goes, that's a little tricky. Because we were not allowed to sell in the US until 1983, the cymbals would have to have been originally purchased in Europe or Canada in order to truly be among the very first that we made. If that is the case, then they might be worth a little bit more than today's list price."

Yamaha Tour Drums

Q About eight years ago I purchased a used Yamaha kit that included a 24" kick, 6 1/2 x14 metal snare, and traditional-depth toms ranging from 12" to 18" in diameter. The kit is finished in a natural

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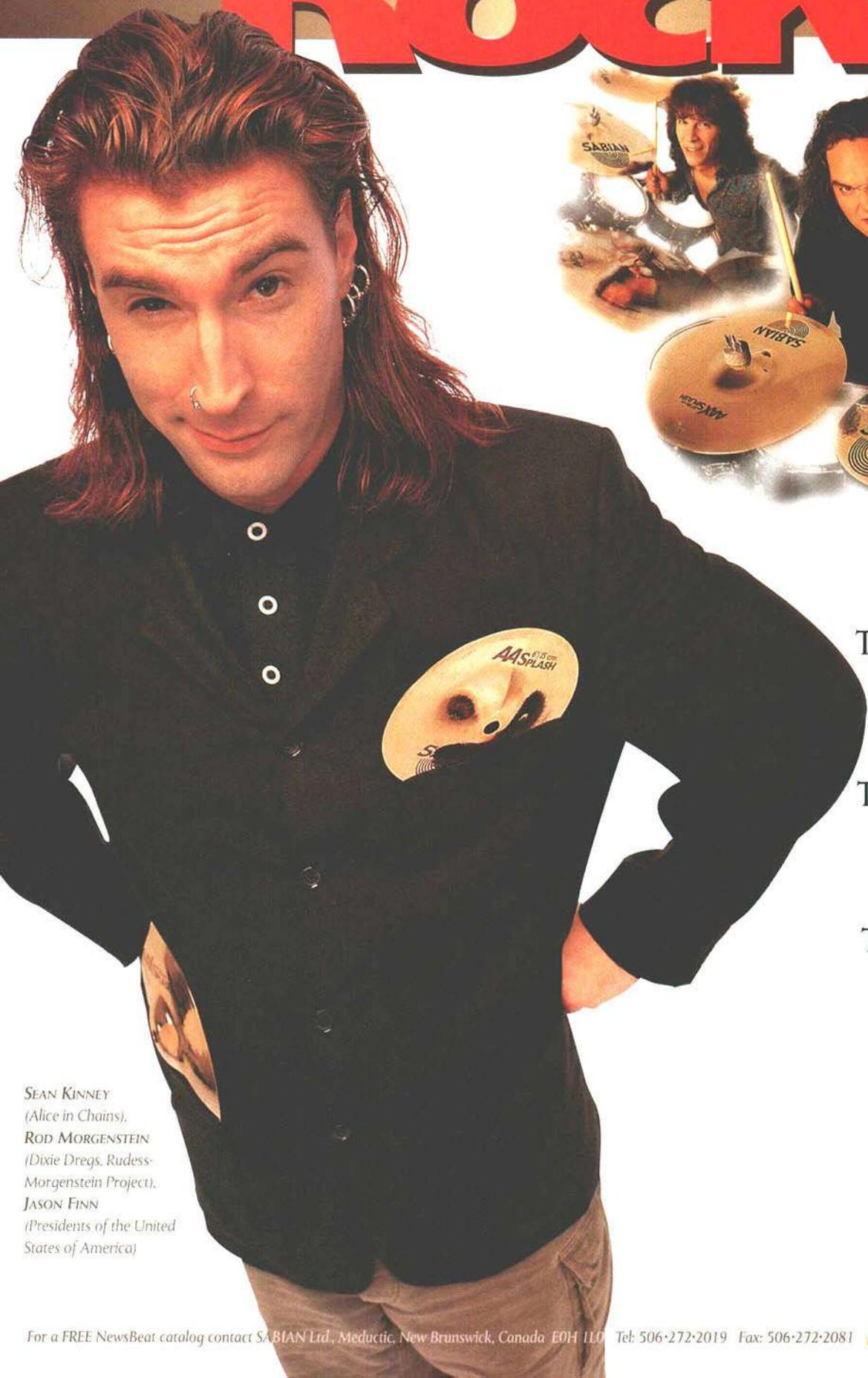
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wood finish similar to Yamaha's current *Maple Custom Vintage* series. All the stands are very heavy-duty, double-braced models, and the tom mounts have the resin ball-and-socket type mount. The lugs are very similar to the *Tour* series lugs of past years. Each tom's nameplate reads similar-

ly to this one from the 13" drum: Model TT913D, Serial #PM5012, Made In Taiwan, Republic of China.

I was told that the kit may have been purchased from a Yamaha representative some time in the early '80s. Even though the tag says "Made in Taiwan," there is

nothing cheap about these drums. I'd like to know their approximate age, what the shells are made of, whether the *Tour* series lugs are still available, whether Yamaha's current hardware (especially tom holders) will work with this kit, and what the kit's approximate value (in good to very good condition) might be.

Joel Labat
Marshall, MN

A Yamaha's product manager, Steve Anzivino, replies: "I'm glad to hear you're happy with the drums. The kit was produced in 1979, with shells of birch and camellia wood. The finish was called "Real Wood," which was a wood-stain satin finish. This series used steel triple-flanged rims, a 10-ply birch bass drum hoop, and a rounder bearing edge design than our current bearing edge.

"The 'fat' Tour-style lug assemblies on the set are no longer available. Thinner Tour-style lug assemblies are available; toms use part #U0030543, the bass drum uses part #U0030530. Our current tom holders will fit the tom mounts on your drums.

"As to the value of the kit, this depends greatly on the used-drum market in your area. In 1981, a five-piece set with hardware such as yours retailed for between \$1,700 and \$2,000."



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Photo by Lisa Wales

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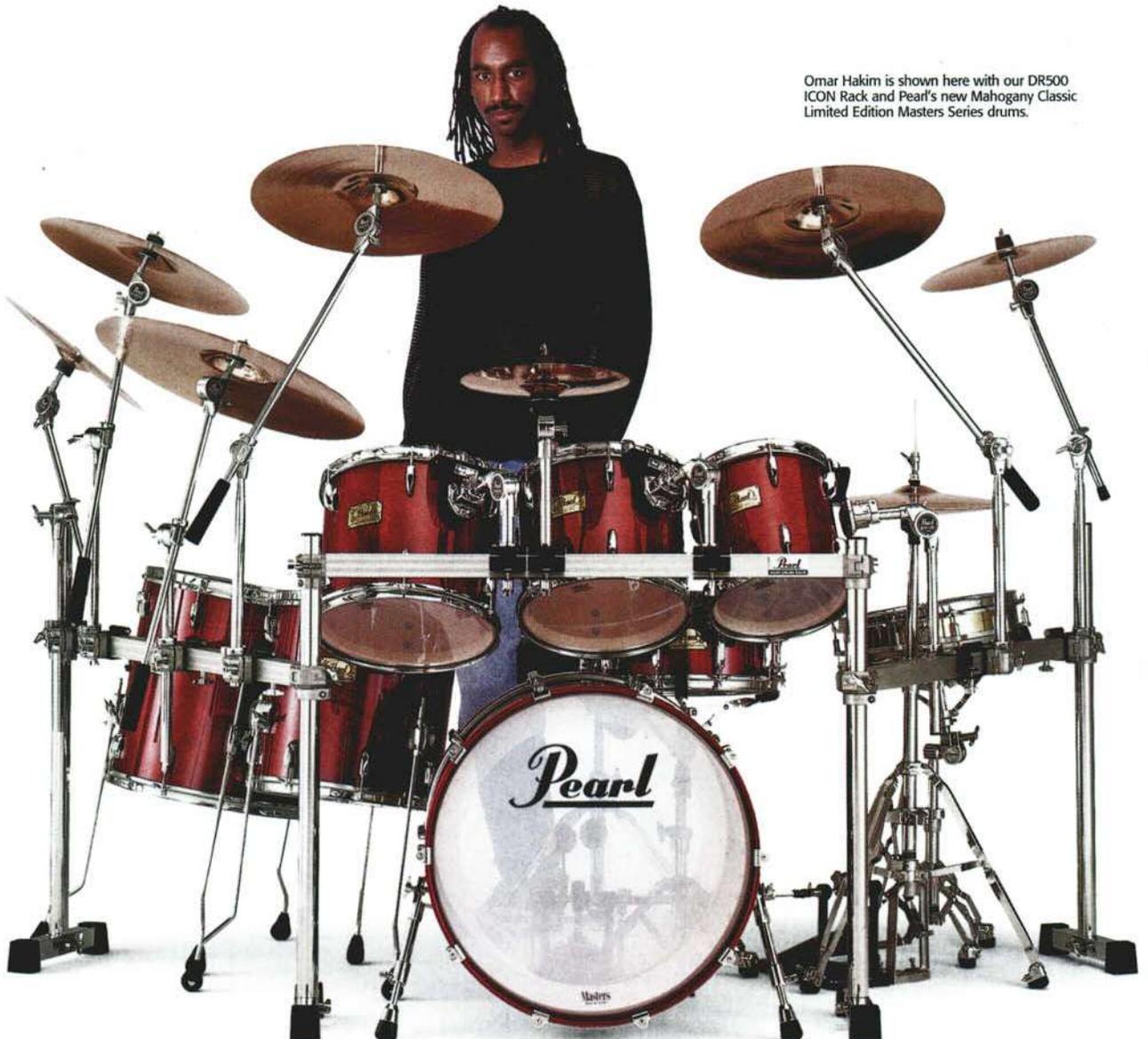
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1997 Frankfurt Music Fair Report

Text and photos by Hugo Pinksterboer

The Frankfurt International Music Fair was held in that German city from February 26 through March 2. As the world's largest musical-instrument trade show, it attracted virtually all of the major drum and percussion manufacturers who had exhibited at the NAMM Winter Market only a few weeks before (and whose

products were featured in *MD's* May '97 NAMM report). However, a significant number of smaller foreign manufacturers who could *not* display at NAMM took advantage of the opportunity to show their wares in Frankfurt. Here's an overview of those products.

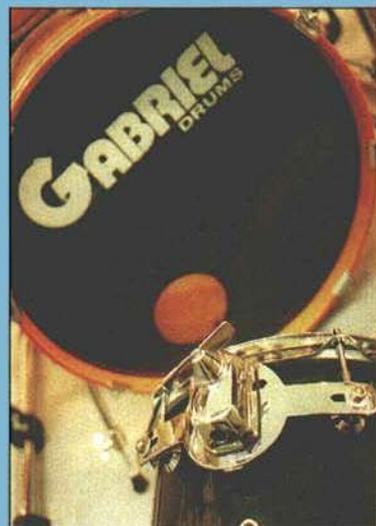
Acoustic Drums



Drum Research redesigned their mounting system, removing one of the steel support rings on the toms.



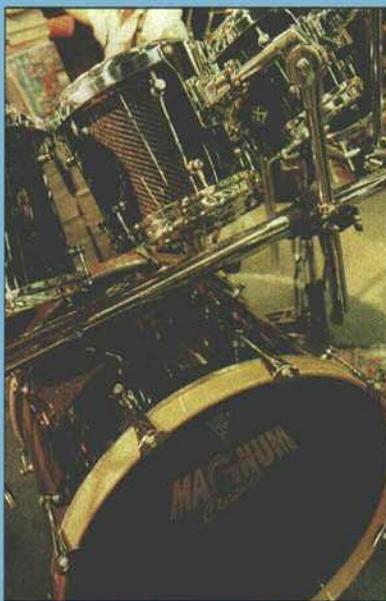
The Alto Ritmo snare drum is made by Italian cymbalsmith Roberto Spizzichino.



Gabriel Drums, from Greece, have a new tom support. The company builds their own shells from American maple.



Cast tom-support rings, cast-bronze hoops, and wood inlays on the tom holder and bass drum spurs are features of Italian LE Soprano drums.

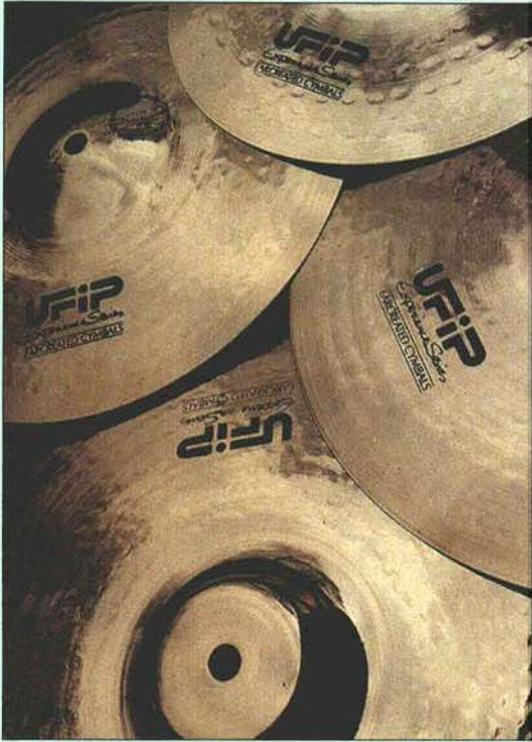


These Magnum drums feature American-made Rocket carbon-fiber shells, combined with small, patented German lugs with removable inserts.

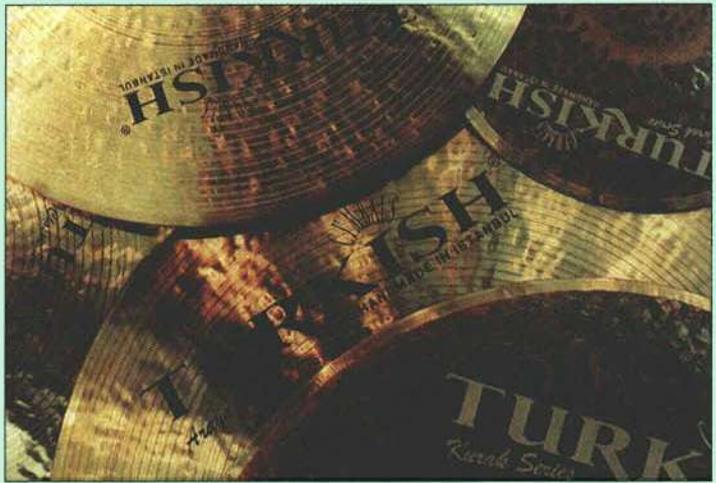


The German brand Trixon, famous for their "flat tire" bass drums and other unusual drum shapes, is back on the market after twenty-three years.

Cymbals

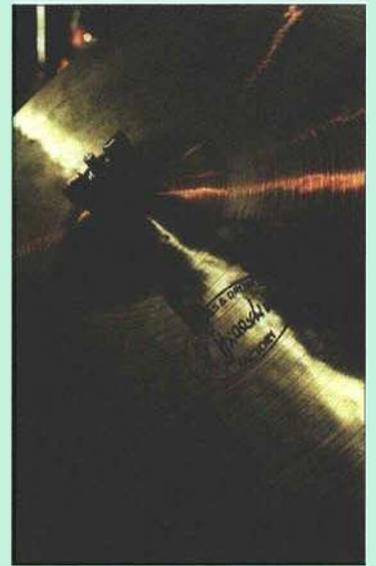


UFIP added splashes and a 20" China to their Experience Bionic series.



The lathed *Classic* series and unlathed *Kurak* series are made by Turkish Cymbals, now one of four cymbal companies based in Turkey.

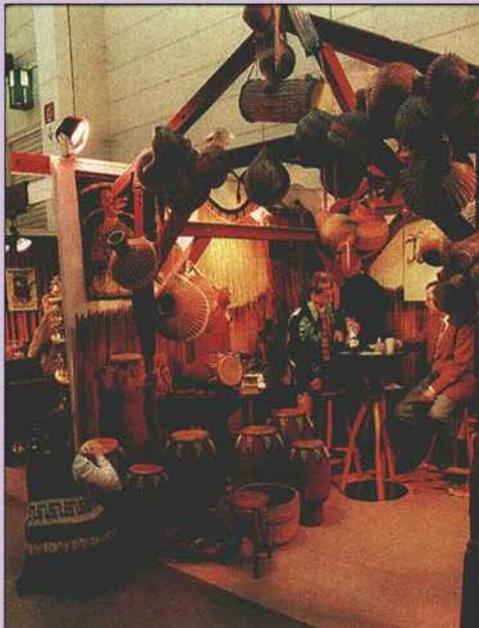
Roberto Spizzichino's cymbals come from the world's only one-man cymbal factory.



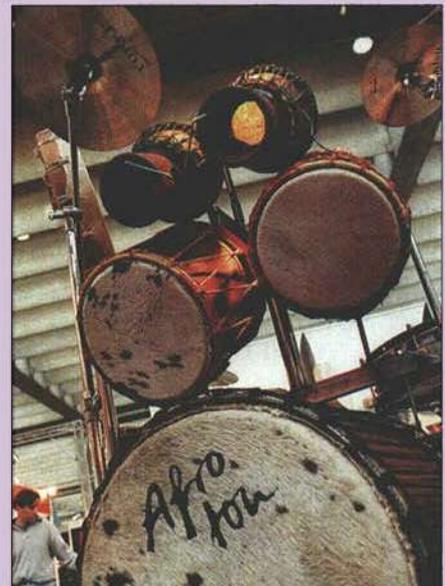
Percussion



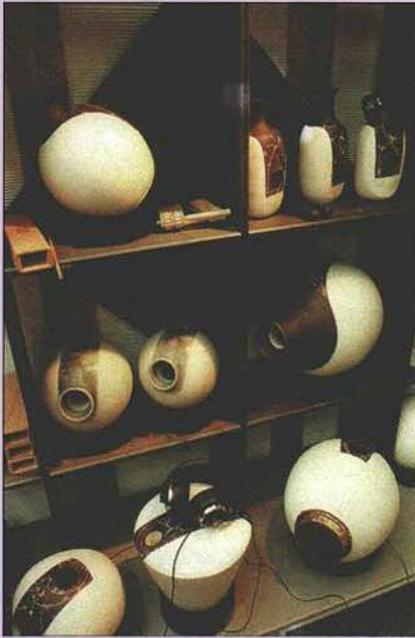
The Raul Som Bahia line of congas, available in 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", and 11" diameters, are just 24" high.



African percussion instruments were shown by Akom La Engel, from Germany.



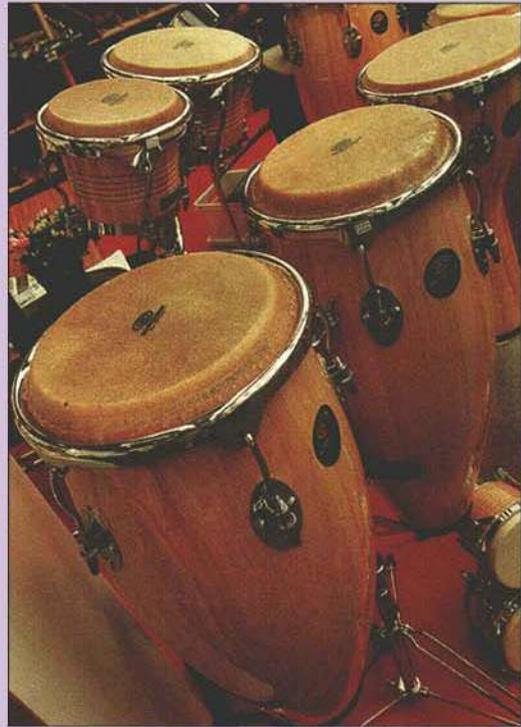
Afroton displayed a drumset based on African drums.



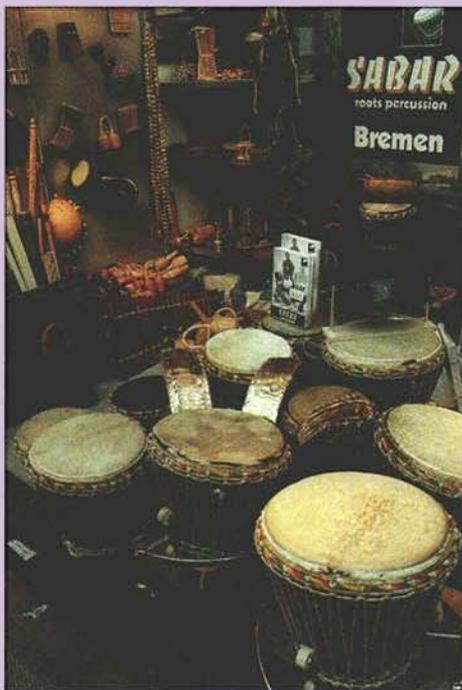
The Schlagwerk Klangobjekte *Skin-Udu* (left photo, bottom right corner) has a head on the top side. The company also showed their mountable frame drums (right).



PJ Drums & Percussion featured ceramic udu drums in professional and toy sizes.



Supercession 2000 series congas and bongos, from the Netherlands, made their international show debut.

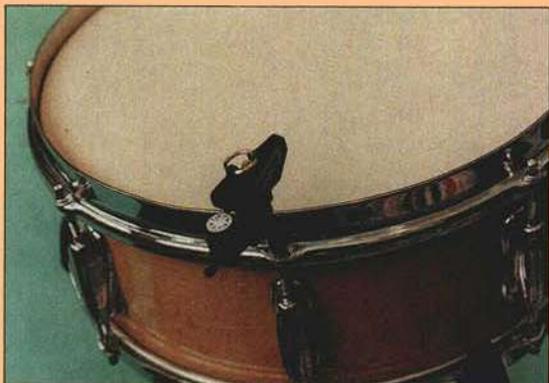


When Sabar debuted their African instruments at the Frankfurt fair eleven years ago, hardly anybody knew what a djembe was. Now everybody does, and there were lots of them around, including these Sabar models.

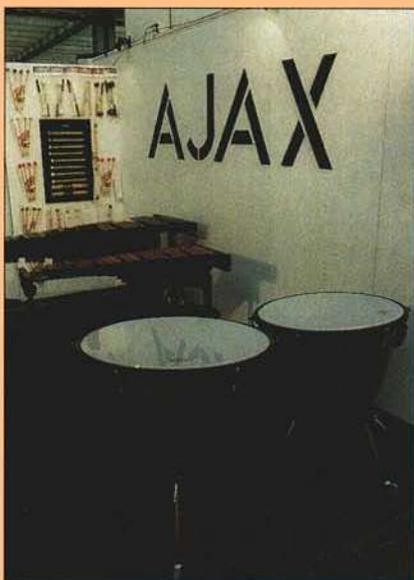
Miscellaneous



These *Solo* mallets (from the Dutch company ABC) are available in three hardnesses, and have slightly larger heads than previous models.



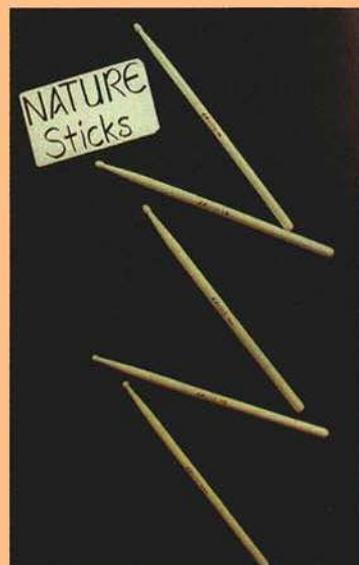
The Pro Orca *Memokey* (left) has a built-in torque wrench. The company's *Profil Xtra* sticks (right) are finished with soft rubbery varnish.



Lightweight *Ajax Voyager* timpani, from the Netherlands, will be included in the Ludwig catalog.



Altenburger supplies mounted and unmounted drumheads from the skins of calves, goats, deer, horses, pigs, and cows.



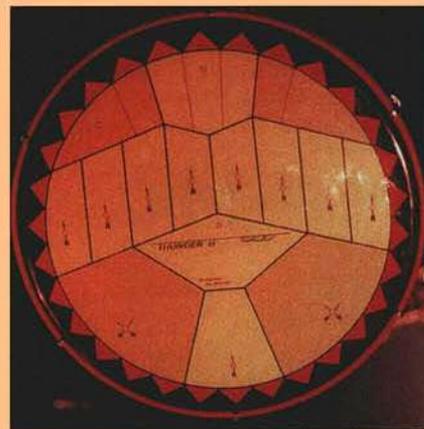
Agner's *Nature Sticks*, from Switzerland, are unlaquered versions of their regular models.



The Hungarian company Veiger builds waterproof collapsible cases.



Vancore timpani, also from the Netherlands, have isolating gas-filled spring feet.



Head movements on the 32-voice polyphonic, multi-zone *Thunder Hare* detected by a range of optical sensors, allowing for finger-drumming techniques.



Softapad drum triggers, made in England, are compatible with all sound modules.

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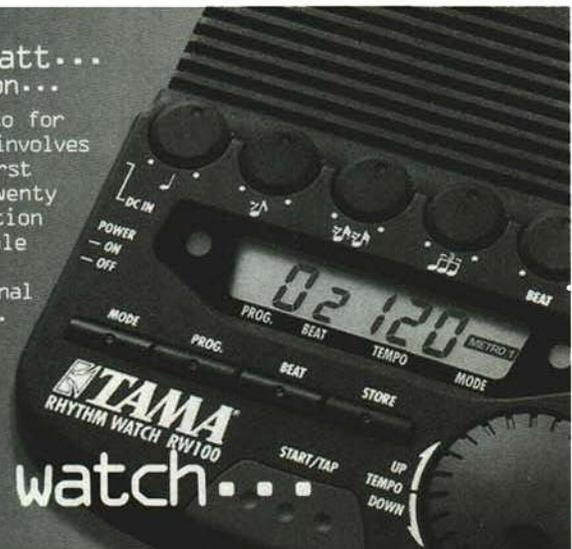


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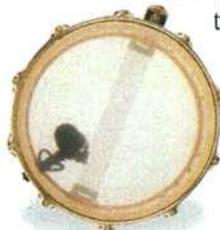
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DW Drum Artists shown above (clockwise from top left): Jonathan Moffett (Michael Jackson), Robin Goodridge (Bush), John Molo (Bruce Hornsby), Curt Bisquera (LA Studio) and George Stallings (Travis Tritt).

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DW Custom Snare Drum Collection

A Zildjian Potpourri

by William F. Miller

The Zildjian crew continues to come up with interesting ideas. We've got the scoop on their latest innovations.

Hi-hats, rides, Chinas, splashes, crashes...and plates? Talk about a variety pack! The new Zildjian offerings cover a wide sonic spectrum, from the grungiest lows to the shiniest highs. And a few of these new models have a unique "twist" in design and sound that you may not have seen or heard before. So fasten your seat belts, boys and girls: Here are the latest models from the big Z.

A Custom Projection Hi-Hats

This new hi-hat design from Zildjian is "drummer friendly." Why? First, the sound. The name "Projection" hi-hats might lead you to believe that they're loud and possibly limited. Yes, they have a beautifully clean and cutting chick sound—both the 13" and 14" models spoke easily through the loud band I played them with. But the stick sound on the hats is excellent as well—not heavy at all. And the splash sound? Delicate, yet with a hint of dirt that gives the sound some personality. These are some of the nicest-sounding hi-hats I've heard. (I put my 14" Ks back in the bag—at least for now.)

Now for the innovation. The *A Custom Projection* hats have an enlarged cup. This bigger bell, while not dominating the bow of the top cymbal, gives you some different sound possibilities. The cymbals seem to be just a bit thicker at the bell, so when playing the bell with the hats held tightly together, there's a noticeably brighter sound than from the bow. A *slight* sonic option.

It's when you start messing around with opening and closing the hats while playing on the bell that things get interesting. All sorts of ideas jump out: double-stroke rolls between the open hi-hat bell and the ride cymbal bell; a two-16ths-and-an-8th pattern where the hi-hat is opened on the "&s"; a very cool-



A Custom Projection ride and hi-hats



Clockwise from upper left: K Custom Dark crash, Oriental Trash splashes, and an Azuka Salsa Timbale cymbal

sounding open/closed cascara pattern on the bell of the hi-hat while pulsing quarter notes with the foot; bashing straight quarter notes on the open bell while playing a double pedal groove underneath—loads of possibilities. It's nice to have another playable bell sound on the kit, especially one you can open and close.

Obviously these hi-hats are pretty exciting. You have the combination of a great "traditional" hi-hat sound with what is essentially a new instrument. As for the price, the 13"s list for \$344, the 14"s for \$382.

A Custom Projection Ride

Fans of Zildjian's *A Custom* series are familiar with the line's beautiful shimmer and texture. The *A Customs* have a particularly nice ride sound that balances stick definition with a good measure of wash—a very popular sound today. The *A Custom Projection* ride, while having a similar shimmer to its *A Custom* brothers, is a louder and more focused-sounding cymbal.

The *Projection* ride is 20" in diameter, has a large bell, and weighs more than standard *A Custom* rides. Zildjian mentions that the profile of the cymbal is a bit different as well. How do those factors affect the sound? The first thing you notice is the "pingyness" of the ride sound. It's clean and clear, cutting right through the band. However, there's very little wash. Just to give you an idea of the cymbal's articulation, it leans more towards Neil Peart's ride sound than to Simon Phillips'.

The bell of the *Projection* ride didn't jump out at me when I played it with the tip of the stick; you could say it was a rather normal bell sound. However, when I put the shank of the stick to it, the bell just exploded; apparently the cup needs a little more muscle to get it going. One thing's for sure: It was very easy to focus the band on the time with the *Projection's* bell proclaiming the pulse. It lists for \$312.

14" K Custom Dark Crash

Here's a new entry to Zildjian's successful *K Custom Dark* series. At 14", you'd expect a fast and high-pitched crash. Well, it's fairly fast, but the cymbal doesn't just disappear. The *Dark* 14" has presence, and a deeper presence to boot than you might expect from a cymbal of this size. It's a very musical small crash that would work in any number of settings. It lists for \$234.

Azuka Salsa Timbale Cymbal

I don't often stand in front of fifteen-piece Latin bands playing timbale solos.



Oriental Classic Chinas

Okay, I've *never* done it (but I'd probably look swell in one of those cool shirts Tito Puente wears). So while not being a timbale expert, I can say that this cymbal, an addition to Zildjian's recent *Azuka* line, has muchos possibilities.

The *Salsa Timbale* model is 18" in diameter, is very thin, has a large bell, and features a brilliant finish. When ridden on the bow, this cymbal produces a *somewhat* washy sound (probably held in check by the brilliant finish), but the bell is very musical—not overly cutting or high-pitched, just a good, clear tone. The real beauty of this model is its crash sound. It's explosive, very sibilant, yet not harsh. And there aren't any annoying overtones that speak out above the "crack" of the crash.

This could be a versatile performer for a kit drummer, since the bell is certainly usable and the crash sound is excellent. It would



A Custom Chinas

offer you a secondary bell sound to that of your main ride, plus a killer crash sound. The *Salsa Timbale* cymbal lists for \$272.

Oriental Classic China

There was a time when I collected China cymbals; I just love that dark, mysterious tone. At one point I owned several—all different types, weights, designs, brands—and I still keep an ear out for them. But even with all of that experience, I've never heard a China cymbal as low and as nasty as Zildjian's new *Oriental Classic*. These cymbals take "trash" to a new level.

The design of these Chinas is a bit different. With a lip wider than a South American rain forest chief, the broad, upturned edge of the *Oriental Classic* gives it a unique appearance. You also have several easily accessible playing areas: the lip (with a dark and rancid sound), the bow (slightly more focused, good for ride patterns), and the bell (which actually *has* a bell-like sound). The bell rises up from the bow and then flattens, making mounting the cymbal upside down a breeze.

Both the 20" and 22" had a dark heart, the 20" just slightly higher-pitched but maybe even a hair trashier. The ride sound on both was nice, but the sheer presence of the crash sound was incredible. I mounted the cymbals upside down and horizontal, and the sound they projected was similar to a roaring ocean. Rolling on them with mallets was another experience altogether.

If you're looking for an exotic sound that will turn heads, check out the *Oriental Classic Chinas*. The 20" lists for \$301, the 22" for \$357.

A Custom China

The *A Custom Chinas*, while not being as scary as the *Oriental Classics*, are unique in that they are the first Chinas to be introduced in the *A Custom* line. It's very interesting to hear how the *A Custom* sound—clear, airy, and bright—merges with a China design. Yes, there's that beautiful shimmer and texture, but it's coming out of a lower, trashier China effect.

The *A Custom China* is available in 18" and 20" sizes. The cymbals are thin, helping to produce an explosive attack sound with a short decay. The 18" is particularly fast, but with a clean shimmer that is unique for Chinas. It works well for that punctuating, short-crash effect. The 20", while having a big crash sound, is particularly fun to ride on. The typical, trashy China sound mixed with the shimmer of the *A Custom* line made for a ride sound that cut through the band in a musical, not annoying way. This might be the China cymbal for people who find China cymbals to be a bit too harsh. The 18" lists for \$284, the 20" for \$324.

Oriental Trash Splash

It started with Stewart Copeland, the man who pretty much "introduced" the splash cymbal to the contemporary drumset. Manu Katche was the next big splash innovator. Now Carter Beauford is making a splash with his use of (several) little cymbals. If you're into any of these gentlemen, you undoubtedly have at least one splash cymbal on your kit.

But, *ya know*, don't all splash cymbals sound alike? Some might be a little louder, a bit brighter, or ring a little longer than others,



Earth Plates

but essentially a splash is a high-pitched crash that's there and gone—not a lot of personality. Until now.

Zildjian's *Oriental Trash Splashes* have some personality. They possess that short splash sound, but with a hint of dirt in there. Apparently it takes additional hammering to create these instruments, and they are very thin. They're even odd-sized: 9" and 11". The 9" actually has a slight tone to it that is very reminiscent of Chinese opera gongs—that wavering pitch effect. The 11", while being just as exotic-sounding as the 9", has a bit more body and presence.

If you're looking to introduce a splash to your setup but want a sound that's just a bit different, or you want to add a splash that will stand out from other splashes on your kit, the *Oriental Trash Splash* is the answer. The 9" lists for \$113, the 11" for \$132.

Earth Plates

Let me be perfectly frank: The Zildjian factory has never produced an instrument as crude looking as their newest creation, the *Earth Plate*. Described by prominent Zildjian employees as amoeba-like in shape, *Earth Plates* have a tear-drop contour and an unfinished look that seems totally unrelated to the beautifully finished look of Zildjian's other products. But who cares how they look? What do they *sound* like?

Made of the same alloy used to make top-quality Zildjian cymbals, *Earth Plates* produce a hard, bell-like tone. They're loud, and resemble the sound of a good dinner bell. In more qualified hands, musical tones can be drawn from them. Slightly different sounds can be produced from different areas of the plate, and the back side of an *Earth Plate* has grooves cut into it, allowing you to create a scraping affect similar to what you might hear from a notched triangle. Also like a triangle, an *Earth Plate* struck with one hand and muted with another can offer some interesting open-and-closed effects.

There's no question that a percussionist would enjoy the many sound possibilities available on an *Earth Plate*, and it would certainly look a bit "industrial" hanging from a setup. Drumset enthusiasts looking to get a sound reminiscent of a triangle or crotale, only much louder, might get a kick out of having one of these on

the kit. (Be aware that *Earth Plates* hang from two cords that are provided; they will not attach directly to a cymbal stand.)

Earth Plates may not be pretty, but they are interesting. They're available in two sizes: The high (small) model lists for \$95, the low (large) for \$136.

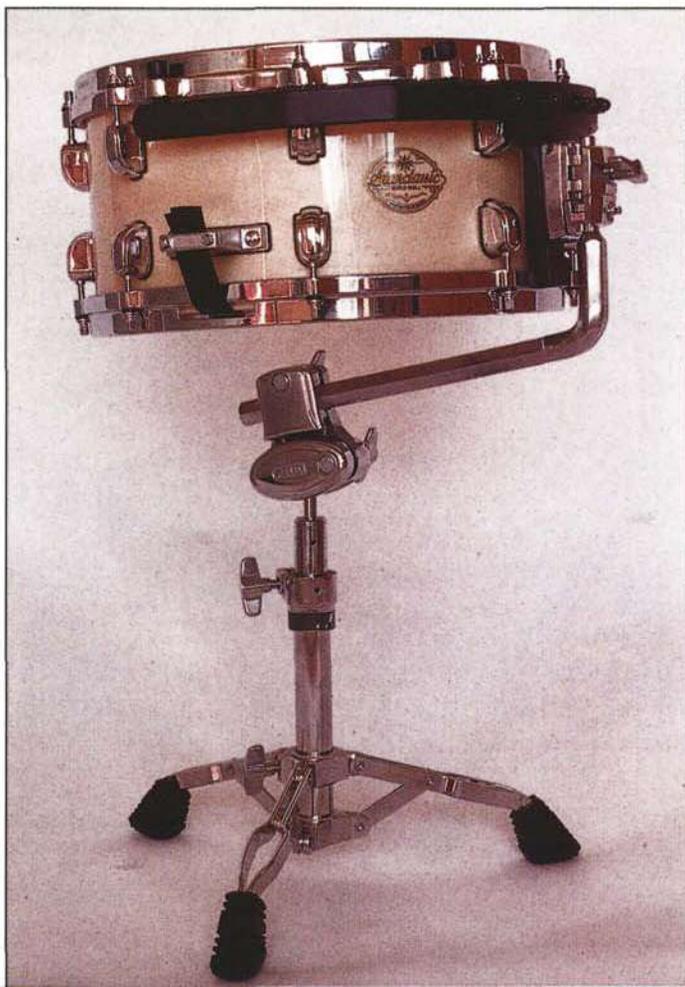
Tama Hardware And Accessories

Text and photos by Rick Mattingly

Air Ride Snare Mounting System

As much emphasis as there has been in recent years on the advantages of "suspension" mounting systems for drums, the single drum that is used the most is rarely mounted that way. Even most drummers I've seen with three-sided rack systems generally have their snare drums mounted on traditional snare stands.

Tama's *Air Ride Snare System* looks and acts much like a traditional stand. But it holds the drum via a suspension mount rather than in a "basket" that clamps to the bottom rim. Specifically, it uses the *Star-Cast* mounting system that was developed for *Starclassic* drums.



WHAT'S HOT

- *Air Ride* system improves sound of snare drums, and easily accommodates small-diameter drums
- *1st Chair* thrones incorporate improved mechanical features for stability and durability
- *Rhythm Watch* is easy to understand and use, offers several useful rhythmic programs, and has a flashing light for silent operation
- *Tension Watch* is helpful in getting drumheads (particularly looser-tensioned heads) in tune with themselves

WHAT'S NOT

- *Tension Watch* did not really speed up tuning time, and was only minimally effective on tightly tensioned heads (especially with die-cast hoops)

The mount looks very much like a RIMS mount, and in fact is licensed under RIMS patents. But unlike RIMS mounts (which attach to a drum's tuning lugs), the *Star-Cast* system incorporates a specially designed die-cast rim that has three extra "ears" to which the mount attaches. The prime advantages of the system are that the mount isn't as likely to affect the tuning of the drum, and you don't have to remove the mount from the rim to change a head.

Having played over the years on all sorts of toms with all sorts of suspension mounting systems, I had two basic expectations: The drum would have more resonance, and it would wobble. I was half right—the good half. The drum (a 6 1/2 x14 *Starclassic*) definitely had more resonance when mounted on the *Air Ride* stand than when mounted on a traditional snare stand. Rimshots in particular were bright and cutting.

When slamming backbeats and rimshots, there was a certain amount of "give," which is actually an advantage for those who prefer to avoid tendonitis. But there was no excessive wobble that interfered with sticking patterns or timing—even when I played relatively hard, with large sticks.

I'm guessing that the drum's stability is the result of a couple of

factors. For one thing, even though the drum is attached to a hex rod by a holder mounted on its side, the hex rod itself is connected to the stand directly under the drum, not off to the side. Also, this particular hex rod is darn near as thick as a crowbar.

The *Air Ride* stand definitely improves the sound of a snare drum, with no unpleasant side effects. One additional advantage of the system is that it easily accommodates small-diameter snare drums, which many standard snare stands do not.

Tama will be happy to sell you the whole package of *Air Ride* stand and *Starclassic* snare drum; a representative list price is \$769.99 for a 6 1/2 x 14 drum with stand. Or you can retrofit most snare drums by buying just the stand with the batter-side hoop and the *Star-Cast* bracket. For a 14" drum with either eight or ten lugs, the die-cast hoop is \$60, the *Star-Cast* mounting bracket is \$160, and the *HL80R* snare stand is \$139.99.



1st Chair Drum Thrones

Tama has four models in the *1st Chair* drum throne system. We received the two at the top of the line for this review. The top three models differ just in the seats themselves, so we'll start with what they have in common. First, the legs are double-braced and extremely heavy-duty. Each features *Foot-Life* rubber feet that are attached so as to avoid metal-to-rubber contact, which should prolong their life.

The height adjustment combines the threaded, piano-stool design with a T-bolt system. By loosening the T-bolt, one can quickly raise the threaded rod to the approximate desired height. Then, the plastic *Hite-Lok* collar can be quickly spun down to secure the setting, and to fine-tune

the height. The T-bolt can then be tightened to lock the rod in place. It's fast, easy, and stable. Depending on the thickness of the seat, *1st Chair* thrones can be set from about 17" to 25" high.

Drummers with big.... (Let's try that again.) Drummers who desire larger areas on which to sit will appreciate the *Round Rider* seat, which has a diameter of 13 1/2" and is slightly thicker than standard throne seats. It is extremely comfortable, and it lists for \$159.99. (The *Standard* model, which has a more traditional seat, lists for \$139.99.) The *Wide Rider* looks like a very large, well-padded bicycle seat, which allows you to sit back on the seat for more support without interfering with the movements of your legs. It lists for \$179.99.



Rhythm Watch

Most of us take advertising claims with a big grain of salt, but surely Tama is going overboard when they claim that the *Rhythm Watch RW100*, which is a programmable metronome, is "so simple, even your guitarist can use it!" C'mon now, *nothing* can be that easy to use.

But in fact the *Rhythm Watch* is extremely user-friendly, and it has several features that make it especially suitable for drummers. One feature that I particularly like is that it isn't filled with multi-function buttons. However hi-tech it might look to have a device with a minimum number of controls, it can drive you nuts when the same, single button does four different things, depending on how many times you hit the button next to it. Each control on the *Rhythm Watch* has its own function, so you can go right to the adjustment you want.

Starting at the top, there are six volume controls for the metronome functions. The one at the far left is the quarter note, the next one is the 8th note, the one after that gives you 16ths, and the fourth one divides the quarters into triplets. An interesting feature is that the 8th-note control does not give you straight 8ths; it only gives you the "&" of each beat. Likewise, the 16th-note control gives you only "e's" and "a's." When you turn up both the quarter and 8th controls, you do get straight 8ths, and when you add the 16th control, you get straight 16ths.

The advantage of this "separated-note" design is that you can adjust the relative volumes of each one. The quarters can be the loudest, the 8ths can be a little softer, and the 16ths can be softer yet. Or they can be exactly the same volume. On the other hand, if for some reason you want the upbeats emphasized, you can turn down the quarters so that the 8ths dominate. Likewise, the offbeat 16ths could be the loudest.



The triplet control does have all three subdivisions. However, it is a slightly different sound than the quarter, 8th, and 16th "beeps," so you can use it by itself to get equal triplet beats, or you can turn up the quarter-note control to emphasize the first note of each triplet grouping. (And if you also turn up the 8ths and/or 16ths, you can work on your two-against-three or three-against-four rhythms.)

The fifth dial, labeled "beat," works in conjunction with a button located below the LCD screen. Basically, "beat" refers to the time signature, as in how many beats per measure. If you set the beat button to 4 and then turn up the beat volume control, you will get a high-pitched beep on the first of every four quarter notes. This sound will activate whether the quarter-note volume is turned up or not. If, for example, you only have the 8ths turned up, you will still hear the high-pitched sound on beat one, with the regular sound on all of the "&s."

Finally, on the far right there is a master volume control. Once you have the other five controls "mixed" the way you want them, the master control can be used to adjust overall volume while keeping the same balance between the different elements.

Directly under the six volume controls is an LCD screen that gives you four readouts. First is the program number. The *Rhythm Watch* will store twenty different sets of tempos and time signatures. For example, program 1 could be a tempo of 92 with four quarters per bar; program 2 could be a tempo of 160 with three quarters per bar, and so on. You can't store the volume levels, though, so if you want quarters, 8ths, and 16ths sounding on program 1 but only quarters on program two, you'll have to turn down the 8th and 16th volume controls manually when you change programs.

The next readout is the number of beats, which was mentioned above. You can set from zero to six beats. Why zero? First, you should know that in addition to *hearing* the beats, you can also *see* them. There are two lights that flash back and forth in time with the quarter-note pulse; they are located on either side of the LCD display screen. The first beat of each group flashes red; all the others flash green. For example, if the beat is set to 4, then you get one red flash followed by three green flashes. If you set the beat to zero, all the flashes are green. So if you are playing a piece that changes meter from, say, 3/4 to 4/4 to 5/4, it might make a lot of sense to set the *Rhythm Watch* this way.

For live performance, an advantage of the flashing tempo lights is that you can turn the volume controls off but still have a visual aid to help you maintain a steady pulse.

The next LCD readout tells you the tempo, which is set by a large knob on the lower right of the unit. The range of numerical settings is 35 to 250, which should cover just about any playing situation. Setting a tempo by rotating the dial is much faster than stepping through tempos with a pushbutton (which is required on a lot of electronic metronomes and drum machines I've used).

Finally, there is an indication as to which of the *Rhythm Watch's* three "modes" you are in. The first is "tap," which allows you to set a tempo by tapping the large button at the bottom of the unit. The other two modes are "metro 1" and "metro 2," which simply sound different. The sounds of metro 2 are somewhat softer in timbre, which could be easier on the ears when using headphones.

Below the LCD screen are four buttons: The first selects mode, the second selects the program, the third sets the number of beats, and the fourth is the "store" button that saves the beat and tempo numbers into the currently selected program. You cannot save data into program zero, which means you can use that as a standard metronome, changing tempos and beats at will without affecting whatever you have saved into program numbers 1 through 20.

The unit runs on a single 9-volt battery, but it also has a jack for an AC adapter (not included) if you want to plug it in. There is also a head-phone jack and one for a footswitch that can be used to (literally) step through the program numbers. Finally, there is a threaded receptacle at the top of the unit by which it can be mounted to a stand and placed wherever you want it.

Overall, the *Rhythm Watch RW100* is logical and easy to use. (I'll even go so far as to suggest that accordion players can figure it out.) List price is \$190.

Tension Watch

Drum tuning is not an exact science, one of the main problems being that there is no "standard" pitch for a given drum. Add to that the fact that you generally have six to ten screws to turn per head (as opposed to one for a guitar string) and it's little wonder that many otherwise knowledgeable drummers approach drum tuning as a somewhat "hit or miss" ordeal.

Nevertheless, it is generally agreed that heads sound best when in tune with themselves, which means that the pitch should be the same opposite each tuning lug. It can be extremely difficult, however, to hear the fundamental pitch because of all the overtones, and so many drummers simply tune by "feel," with the premise that if each tuning lug is tightened the same amount, the tension opposite each lug will be the same.

Well, maybe. If you have a perfect rim, a perfect bearing edge, and a perfect head, that might be true. But if any (or all) of them are the least bit irregular, then equal tension on the lugs might not ensure equal pitch.

The head itself, however, should be in tune if the resulting tension around it is equal, which is where Tama's *Tension Watch* comes in. Unlike devices that measure the tension of the lugs, the *Tension Watch* measures the tension of the head itself.

After working with it for a while, my conclusion is that the *Tension Watch* will get you into the ballpark, but it's not the final answer. No matter how perfect the tuning was in terms of readings on the *Tension Watch*, I always had to do at least some minor tweaking to make all of the pitches match on a given head.

The device itself is simple to use, but doesn't necessarily speed up the process of getting a round head in tune. For starters, if the pitch opposite a given lug is too high or low, you often have to adjust that lug as well as the one on the opposite side of the drum. Depending on how many lugs are on the drum (and how close



together they are), changing one could easily affect the ones on either side. So, just as when you are tuning by pitch, when using the *Tension Watch* you must constantly go around the drum and back and forth, making small changes. In between, you need to press down on the head to make sure it settles and gives you a true reading.

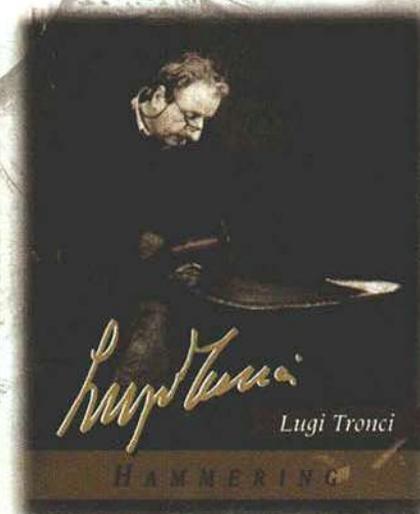
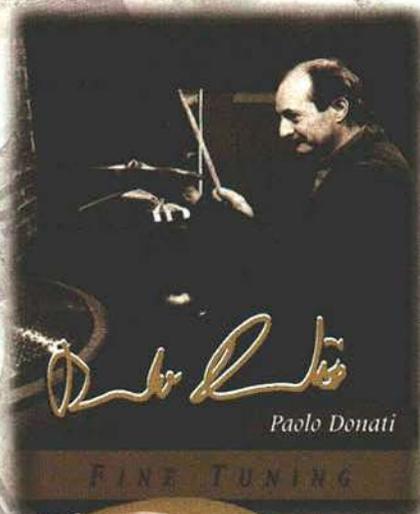
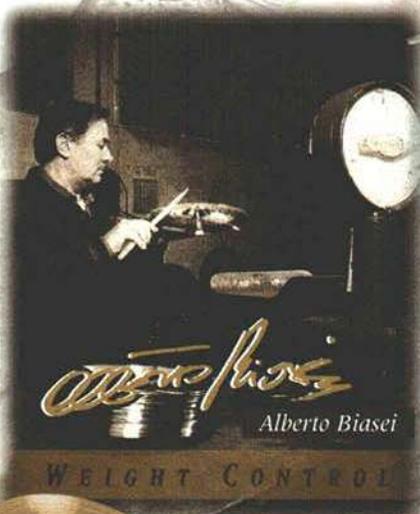
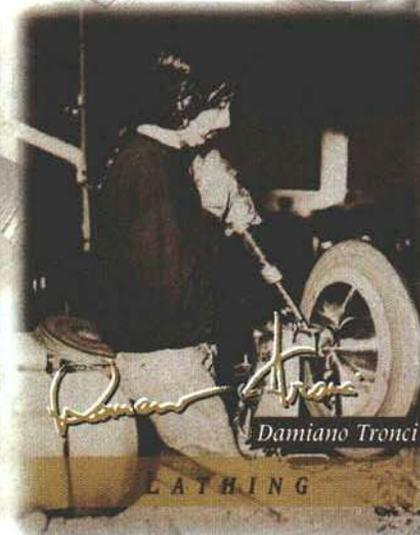
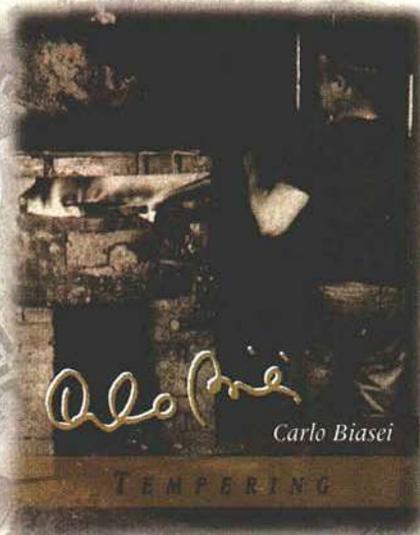
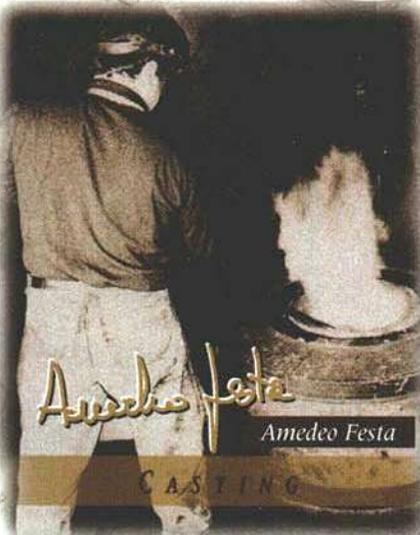
The *Tension Watch* was most effective on heads that were not meant to be too tight, such as tom heads, bass-drum heads, and snare-side heads. The tighter the head (like a snare batter), the less responsive the *Tension Watch*. (Don't even bother with drum corps-style Kevlar heads that are cranked way up there.)

The *Tension Watch* is not as effective when using heavy, die-cast rims either, since the tension is distributed more evenly around the rim and is not as crucial at each lug. I actually got consistent readings on the *Tension Watch* after significantly loosening every other lug on a Tama *Starclassic* snare with its thick rim (which says a lot about the rim!).

Still, for those new to drum tuning and/or who have trouble hearing the pitches, the *Tension Watch* could be a big help in getting your heads in the vicinity of where they need to be. Once you've found a tuning you like, you can record the *Tension Watch* settings so that you can keep the tuning consistent. That could also be a big help when replacing a head. The device includes a chart with recommended tensionings for different styles, but again, with all the variables, the settings should only be used as starting points. The ears still have to approve the final results. List price of the *Tension Watch TW100* is \$129.



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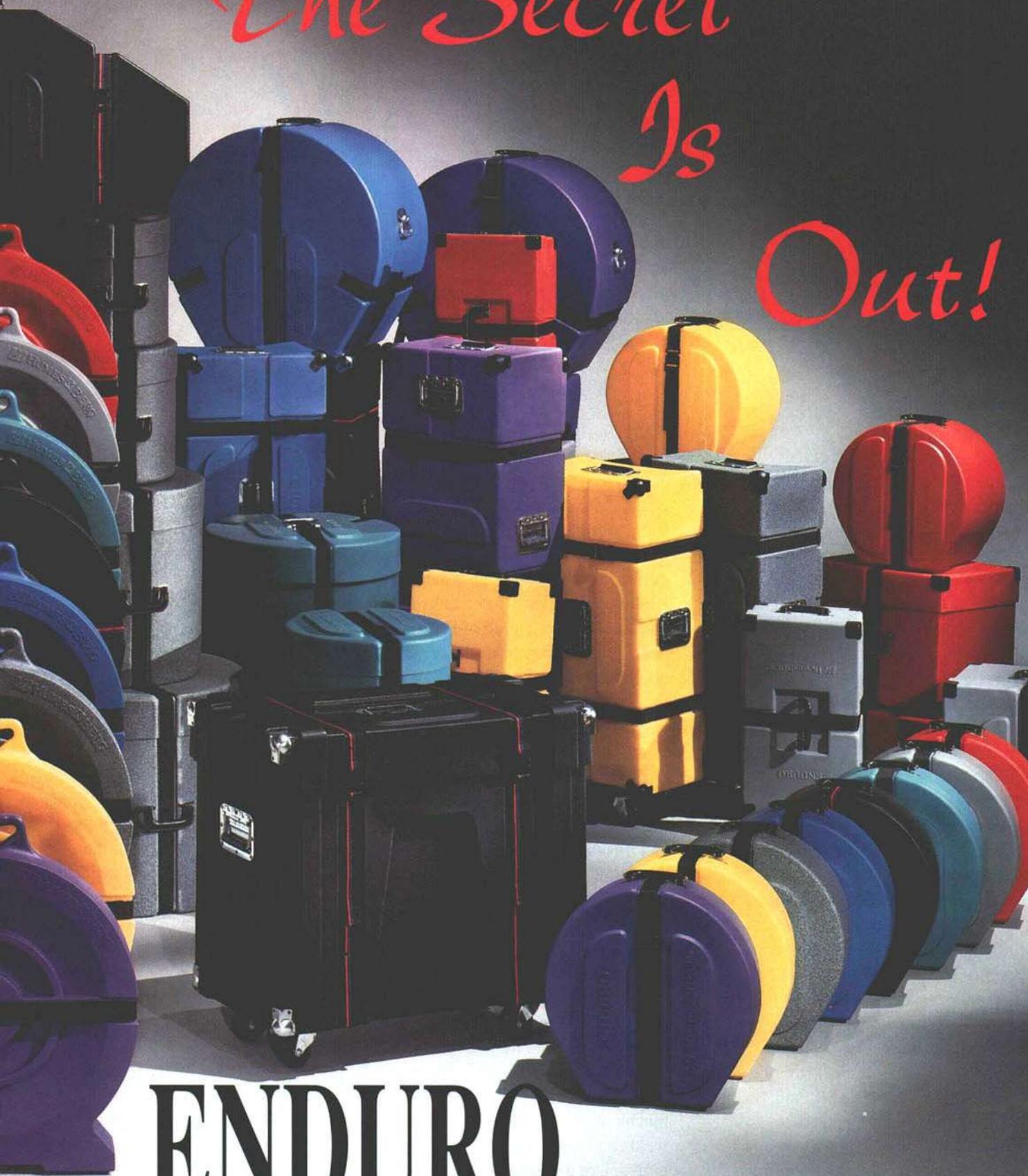
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Ringo Starr

Getting Better... And Better

Often now, when I think of the Beatles, I am reminded of the classic James Stewart film *It's A Wonderful Life*. I specifically recall the part where Stewart, about to commit suicide by jumping into a river, wishes he had never been born—until an angel actually allows him the luxury of viewing the world as if he had never been in it.

What if the *Beatles* had not been in this world? I have interviewed so many players through the years who have said that if it were not for the Beatles, they doubt they would have ever become musicians. On a personal level, I am sure I wouldn't be doing what I do.

Yes, for individuals, the Beatles changed lives. On a larger scale, they altered the entire face of popular music. On a sociological level, they influenced fashion, hairstyle, demeanor, attitudes, and philosophies—they unleashed a chain of events that have become historic. If the Beatles hadn't been? If Paul McCartney had not met George Harrison one day on the No. 86 bus on the way to school; if a friend had not taken Paul to see John Lennon with the Quarry Men; if Ringo, with

Rory Storme & the Hurricanes, had not played the same club in Hamburg as the Beatles and spent some time hanging out with them; if Paul, John, and George hadn't decided to replace drummer Pete Best with that bloke they jammed with in Hamburg...if all of that hadn't happened, *that* music could not have been created. It was those four human beings, the combination of each one's unique DNA—Paul's songwriting and bass playing, George's unique guitar stylings, John's songwriting and singing, and the brilliance of Ringo's grooves and fills that complemented the music and became signature parts of the songs—that made that exact sound.

I feel so lucky to have been the perfect age to appreciate those records when they were originally released. The Beatles recorded constantly, sometimes two albums per year, and we would wait eagerly for each new release. There would be a much publicized release date, and we'd count the days—the *hours*—until one of the local radio stations would play it precisely at midnight. I'd get to stay up late on those nights

and sit on the phone and share the new music with my Beatle pal as the station played the album from beginning to end. Incredibly, there's a complete generation of listeners who have experienced the Beatles since the group's demise. The music holds up. As my six-year-old twins get into our car, they demand to hear the Beatles.

Last year, twenty-six years after their breakup, the Beatles had one of their best years ever. Three double-set anthologies were released, giving the public the closest glimpse yet at the creative process of the group. Recordings of songs in various stages allowed us to peek inside the studio. Also, now that Beatles albums have been released on CD, the drum parts are much more audible than on their early vinyl counterparts. The time was definitely right to get back in touch with Ringo, who I had had the thrill of interviewing sixteen years ago. For some reason I was more nervous this time than last—probably because as I get older, the music becomes even more precious to me, and my awareness of the Beatles' impact on my life and others' is more profound.

by Robyn Flans

photos by Morrison + Wulffraat



For this interview, Ringo and I were to meet at a hotel suite in Los Angeles. The photographers and I set up the suite with the help of Todd Trent from Ludwig, who delivered Ringo's kit to the hotel room. As the anticipation of his arrival increased, a quiet resounded in the room. We waited in silence. Then, all of a sudden, the silence was broken by the endless ringing of the suite's doorbell—ding dong, ding dong, ding dong, ding dong, ding

dong, ding dong! It had to be *him*—who else would be so cheeky? As I opened the door with an, "Okay, already," there stood Ringo, looking much the star with his finger planted on the doorbell. He made a sweeping, grand entrance with his lovely wife of sixteen years, Barbara Bach.

Ringo set the atmosphere for an afternoon filled with humor and warmth, as he gave the interview his full attention. His animation and the laughter we shared is something I won't be



"As long as I can hold the sticks, I'll play."

forgetting any time soon.

I hope by reading this conversation you are able to feel Ringo's joyfulness and infectious laugh

between the lines. If you've had the good fortune of having seen one of his All-Starr tours, you know just what I'm talking about. If you haven't, go this spring/summer to see him on tour (rumored to be his last) with an all-English band featuring Dave Mason, Gary Brooker, Peter Frampton, Jack Bruce, and Simon Kirk. That's how you'll *know* what it's like to experience the one and only Ringo Starr.

Thirteen Reasons To Give Ringo Some Respect

by John Bryant

Was Ringo Starr the luckiest no-talent on earth? All he had to do was smile, bob his head, and keep the beat for three of the most talented musicians/songwriters of the century. Sadly, there are people who actually feel this way about Starr. Frankly, they're missing quite a bit. The following list shows just a few of the contributions Ringo made to the Beatles, to music in general, and to the art of drumming.

1 Ringo was the first true *rock* drummer to be seen on TV. All of the early "rock 'n' roll drummers" featured with Elvis, Bill Haley, Little Richard, Fats Domino, and Jerry Lee Lewis were mostly R&B drummers. These players were barely making the transition from the swing drumming style of the '40s and '50s to the louder and more "rocking" sound that is associated with "I Want To Hold Your Hand."

2 Ringo changed the way drummers hold their sticks by making popular the "matched" grip. Nearly all drummers in the modern Western world prior to Ringo held their sticks with the "traditional" grip. Ringo showed the world that power was needed to put the emphasis on the "rock" in rock 'n' roll music, so he gripped both sticks like hammers and proceeded to build a foundation for the music.

3 Ringo started a trend of placing drummers on high risers so that they would be as visible as the other musicians. Certainly Ringo was not the first drummer on a riser, but his visibility did proclaim him to be an equal member of the band. This is significant because most drummers before him were considered only sidemen. When Ringo appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1964, he immediately caught the attention of thousands of future musicians by towering over the other three Beatles.

4 These same viewers noticed that Ringo was playing drums—Ludwig drums, in fact. Ringo's influence was immediate. A mad rush to purchase equipment ensued, and subsequently the entire percussion industry went into a "boom" period that would last for years to come.

5 Ringo changed the sound of recorded drums. About the time of *Rubber Soul* (released December 6, 1965), the sound of his drumset started to become more distinct. Along with help from the engineers at Abbey Road studios, Ringo popularized a new sound for drums—a clearer, more up-close effect. He did this by tuning the drums lower and deadening the ring with muffling materials (especially pillows in the bass drum). This sound was to become very influential.

6 Ringo has nearly perfect tempo. This allowed the Beatles to record a song twenty-five times, and then be able to edit together different parts of numerous takes for the best possible version. Today click tracks are used for the same purpose, but the Beatles had to depend on Ringo to keep the tempo consistent throughout the dozens of takes. Had he not had this ability, the Beatles recordings would sound completely different. His perfect time and good feel give Beatles tunes an "ageless" quality.

7 In most recording sessions the drummer's performance acts as a barometer for the rest of the musicians. The stylistic direction, dynamics, and emotions are filtered through the drummer. He is the catcher to whom the pitcher/songwriter is throwing. If the drumming doesn't feel good, the performance of any additional musicians is doomed from the start. The Beatles rarely had this problem with Ringo.

Ringo's "feel" serves as a standard for pop-rock record producers and drummers alike. It is relaxed, but never dragging; solid, yet always breathing. There is a uniqueness to Ringo's playing that can in some ways be attributed to his being a left-handed drummer playing a right-handed drumset. Ringo's distinctive tom fills that lead with the left hand are just as important to his sound as Steve Gadd's rudimental stickings are to his. And yes, there is a great amount of musical taste in Ringo's decisions as to what to play and when to play it.

8 Ringo hated drum solos, which, like it or not, wins points with quite a few people. He only took one solo with the Beatles. His eight-measure break appears during "The End" from *Abbey Road*. Some might say that it's not a great display of technical virtuosity, but they would be at least partially mistaken. Set a metronome to a perfect 126 beats per minute, line it up with Ringo's solo, and the two will stay together!

9 Ringo's ability to play odd time signatures helped to push popular songwriting into uncharted areas. Two examples include "All You Need Is Love," which is in 7/4 time, and "Here Comes The Sun," with the repeating 11/8, 4/4, and 7/8 passages in the chorus.

10 Ringo's proficiency in many different styles such as two-beat swing ("When I'm Sixty-Four"), ballads ("Something"), R&B ("Leave My Kitten Alone" and "Taxman"), and country (the *Rubber Soul* album) helped the Beatles to explore many musical directions with ease. His pre-Beatle experience as a versatile and hard-working nightclub musician served him well.

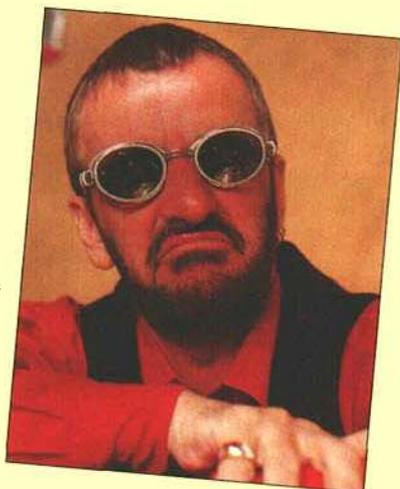
RF: In *The Beatles: Recording Sessions* [by Mark Lewisohn], George Martin is quoted as saying you made very few mistakes in the studio.

RS: Very few break-downs were caused by me, actually; they would happen either when the others would sing the wrong words, when John got his fingers stuck in the strings, or something like that. It was rare for me to have to stop. We were reminded of this when we played all of the old tapes back [to prepare the antholo-

gies]. Up to that point I had been willing to take some of the blame, [laughs]

RF: You have said that you black out when you play fills.

RS: I absolutely do. I know how to play "boom chick," 4/4, the rhythm patterns. But for me, the drummer as an *artist* becomes himself when he fills. I always found it very difficult, and I usually couldn't double-track a fill because it just came whenever it came and that's the only time you'd get that fill for me.

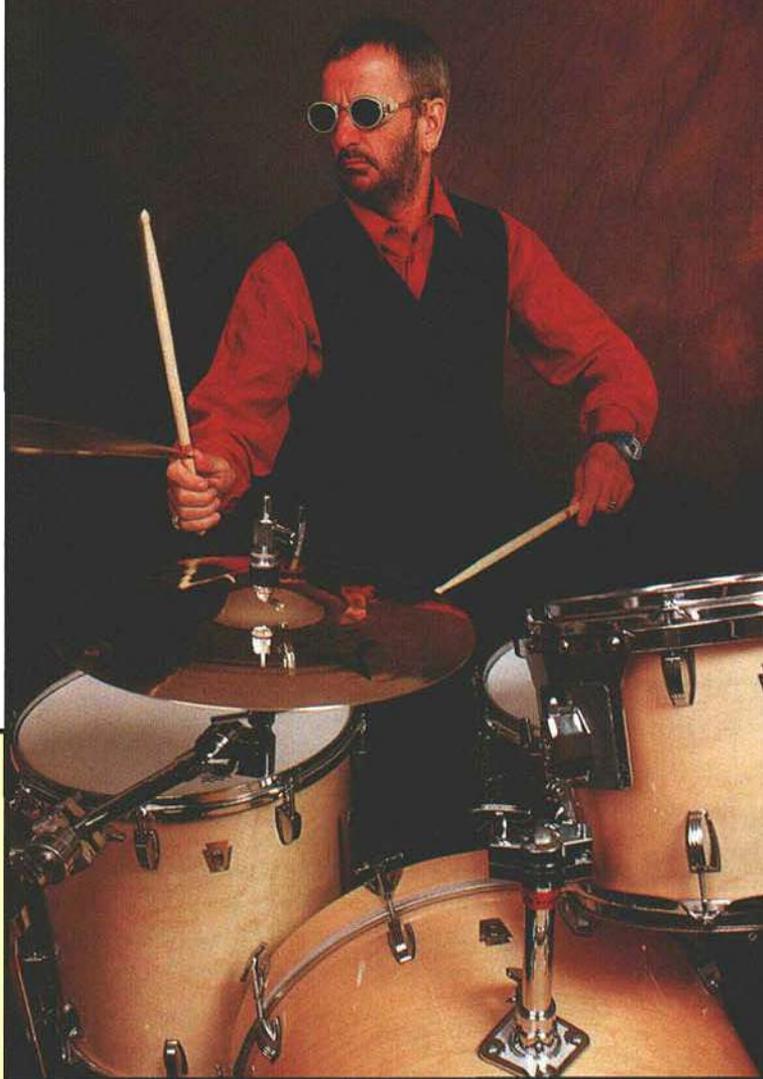


11 The idea that Ringo was a lucky Johnny-on-the-spot-with-a-showbiz-stage-name is wrong. In fact, when Beatles producer George Martin expressed his unhappiness after the first session with original drummer Pete Best, the decision was made by Paul, George, and John to hire the person they considered to be the best drummer in Liverpool—Ringo Starr. His personality was a bonus.

12 The rumors that Ringo did not play on many of the Beatle songs because he was not good enough are false. In fact, according to Mark Lewisohn's *The Beatles: Recording Sessions* [Harmony, 1988], Ringo played on every Beatles recording that include drums except for the following: "Back In The USSR" and "Dear Prudence," on which Paul played drums due to Ringo temporarily quitting the band, "The Ballad Of John And Yoko," again featuring Paul on drums because Ringo was off making a movie, and a 1962 release of "Love Me Do" featuring session drummer Andy White.

13 When the Beatles broke up and were trying to get away from each other, John Lennon chose Ringo to play drums on his first solo record. As John said in his famous *Rolling Stone* interview, "If I get a thing going, Ringo knows where to go—just like that." A great songwriter could ask no more of a drummer—except maybe to smile and bob his head.

John Bryant is a session drummer and producer in Dallas, Texas. He has recorded and toured with Ray Charles, the Paul Winter Consort, and the University of North Texas One O'Clock Lab Band, and is currently a member of the D'Drum percussion ensemble. Bryant started playing drums after seeing Ringo Starr on The Ed Sullivan Show in 1964. In 1976, he played a rehearsal with Paul McCartney & Wings when regular drummer Joe English became ill.



RF: What about when you played live?

RS: We played the songs. The drum parts on those early Beatles records had a specific rhythm pattern all the way through. They weren't complicated and there wasn't a lot of jamming. The song was only two minutes ten, and we were doing half-hour shows. All those singles had their definite patterns: There weren't a lot of fills. They came later when we started doing *Rubber Soul*; that's when it started loosening up.

RF: The *Recording Sessions* book said you had the toughest role in the band.

RS: It's the drummer's joke: I was surrounded by three drummers pretending to be a bass player and two gui-

tarists! [laughs] Everyone else knows exactly what the drummer should play, and if anything goes wrong on stage, the front line automatically looks at the drummer. I actually found it helpful that John, Paul, and George would say, "Do this, do that, what about that?" But the classic one was when John brought some Motown records in and said, "I want you to play like this." And I said, "Well, there are two drummers on that." "Yeah, but just play like that." So I did the best I could and that's how we got a lot of the beats we did. It's not like I invented everything. I was being forced by the writers to do other stuff—not forced, let's just say they had these crazy ideas.

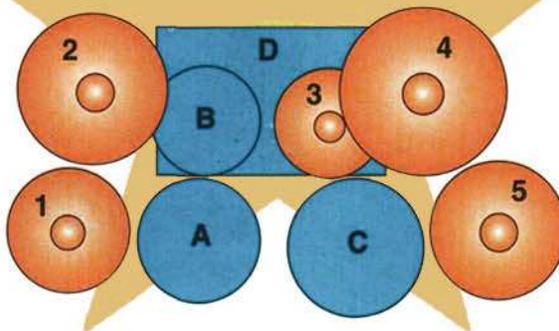
Starr Time

Drumset: Ludwig *Vintage Super Classic*
 A. 5x14 *Black Beauty* snare
 B. 9x13 tom
 C. 16x16 floor tom
 D. 16x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian
 1. 14" *New Beat* hi-hats
 2. 18" A crash (from the '60s)
 3. 13" *K/Z* hi-hats (mounted)
 4. 20" A crash-ride (from the '60s)
 5. 16" A medium-thin crash

Hardware: Ludwig

Sticks: Pro-Mark 5AL (with wood tip)



One of the fun stories is when we first went to London to meet George Martin and record "Please Please Me." I was playing the bass drum with my foot, a maraca in one hand, a tambourine in the other, and I was crashing the cymbals on the accents. I think that's what inspired him to bring in Andy White, [laughs] It was, "Oh well, better get a real drummer." I was trying to get all the accents and all the sounds, so I was hitting the

snare with the tambourine and shaking a maraca.

RF: When recording, you had to play songs over and over again....

RS: ...while *they* broke down. I have one rule: I don't stop when we're recording. Whatever happens, I don't stop, because a mistake can turn into part of the song—unless it's an absolute screwup. If John stopped, the three of us might have kept going. We couldn't do that in the early

A Tribute To Ringo

by Gregg Bissonette

Last year I was asked to do an hour-long concert at the Percussive Arts Society convention in Nashville. I decided to make the theme of that performance "A Tribute To Ringo," because I sincerely feel Ringo Starr deserves so much praise

for all of the great grooves, fills, and feels he's created over the years. The following examples are a few of his parts I transcribed for my performance.

"She Loves You" starts off with Ringo's fill on the small tom, which leads into the chorus feel that he plays by riding on the floor tom and adding flams on the snare drum on the "&" of 3 and the "e" of 4. The song goes into the verse feel in the seventh bar, where Ringo plays the hi-hat. Ringo's approach to riding on the floor tom was something that I don't think a lot of people were doing back in the early '60s.

Next is "Tomorrow Never Knows," which starts with four bars of the beat before the band comes in. Ringo rides on the crash while playing a "signature" Ringo groove—hitting the small tom on the "&" of 3. He didn't play beat 4, and that gave it such a cool feel. Another thing that's really great is that he doesn't play any fills throughout the entire song!

One thing that really hits me about "Drive My Car" is that the guitar part starts on the "&" of 4, which makes the downbeat deceiving. (I eventually figured out that the fill comes in on beat 3.) In the seventh bar of the verse, on the line "You can do something in between," Ringo plays a kick and snare fill that's almost identical in rhythm and feel to the vocal line. It doesn't get in the way of the vocal; it enhances it.

days because we were all recorded on two mic's, but later on we would carry on even if someone broke down to see if it was worth it. And sometimes it was.

Now the kids are in the studio with their seventy or eighty tracks. When we started, we had to be a good band because we didn't have all those tracks. We had to do the basics. Later on, we felt we had a luxury because we had twenty-four tracks, [laughs] Actually, I don't



In "Ticket To Ride," we hear one of Ringo's most famous signature beats. For the basic beat he mimics the guitar part on the drums, and when he gets into the chorus in bar four he plays a unison fill with one hand on the small tom and one hand on the snare drum. This is an extremely difficult lick to pull off at that tempo. People need to know that Ringo, when he wanted to, had tons of chops and could pull off lots of really fast and complicated licks. He just has so much taste that he chose not to always show it. It's obvious that for Ringo the song always came first.



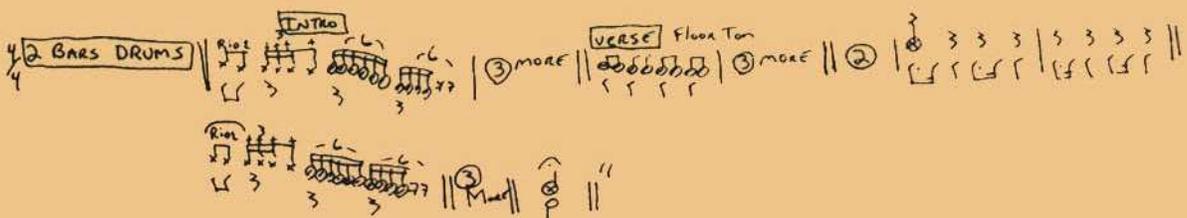
I picked "Strawberry Fields" because here we have a tune with a straight-8th feel, but Ringo plays fills that don't have a straight-8th feel at all; they swing like crazy. What's also interesting about this one is that there are lots of little odd-time bars in the song.



"In My Life" has a very unusual, minimalistic beat. In the verse the hi-hat part is on the "&" of 3. Then when John sings, "Now I often stop and think about them..." Ringo goes to the cymbal bell, playing only quarter notes. It's so tasteful.



Next up is the two-bar intro of "Come Together." Everyone knows what song it is when you play that beat. On the verse, Ringo chooses to play just 8th notes on the floor tom, while he plays quarter notes on the bass drum. Then during the two-bar vocal break, he plays the bass drum alone; it fits so well with John's vocal.



think we ever had twenty-four; we had eight.

RF: In fact, Lewisohn's book points out that the advent of multi-track didn't always make it easier. On one track, you guys overdubbed so much stuff that the drums became inaudible, so they overdubbed you playing a red plastic Abbey Road chair, "slapping the drumsticks on the cushion and making a thwack to emphasize the snare beat." Do you recall that?

RS: No, but I recall that I would hit anything: I'd hit the drum cases, my leg, a chair.



George, Paul, and I whacking the offbeat, so it would come through powerfully enough because of the layers. We'd be

In the early days we could only hear the snare and the cymbal stuff—never any bass drum. Later on it got to where

on the track and then we'd deal with piano and guitars. If we were going to take anything off, we'd take off the bass, the

"For me, the best thing I got out of going through all of that footage with Paul and George

You're talking much later on, because we used to overdub just the offbeats [backbeats]. Sometimes we'd have three snares in there and it would be

playing so much because we only had eight tracks. It was just madness, but it worked. We knew no better, so it worked for us.

we could hear the kit quite well. In fact, the basic track always had the drums on it, so no matter what happened the drums were done. They were

guitar, or the piano and redo them. And as everyone knows, if you really listen to these anthology records, you can hear things that aren't on there

Ringo starts "Birthday" with a recognizable fill, and then he plays something very different: For the first bar of the groove he plays a tightly closed hi-hat, but on the second bar he goes to a washy, open hi-hat with the snare and bass drum on all four. He alternates this through the entire verse. When Ringo takes that "drums only" break, he could have done a number of things, but he just holds 8th notes on the bass drum and hi-hat with quarters on the snare.



In "Twist And Shout," Ringo really puts a swing into the song's "teen beat" kind of groove by accenting the "&" of 2. Also, at the end of the song, where the guitar and bass play quarter-note triplets, he decides to make his fill a continuation of their part by leading into the last note of the song with it.



"Tell Me Why" is basically a swingy, jazzy kind of rock shuffle. It's interesting that Ringo plays the same signature fill that he plays in the first intro bar throughout the entire song. Then, after the eight-bar bridge and another bar of time, Ringo plays the same kind of technical, really difficult fill that he plays in "Ticket To Ride," a two-handed unison sextuplet at a quick tempo. Play this fill along with the CD and try to make it sound smooth—it's a chops-buster!



anymore. But the drums always stayed the same.

RF: A lot of people don't realize how much percussion was

RF: Do you recall any of the more enjoyable parts you played?

RS: The fun thing for me was

was just hanging out with them again."

played on the Beatles music. Is it safe to say you did about ninety percent of it?

RS: Yes, that's right. George and Paul did some too.

playing piano on that chord at the end of "A Day In The Life" [from *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*], where we all hit that chord at the end.

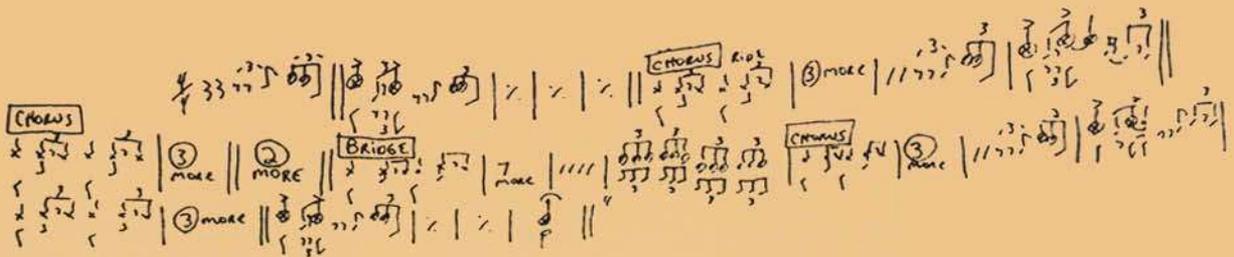
That's one of my favorite memories—I was playing piano.

RF: You also played piano on "Don't Pass Me By" [*The Beatles (White Album)*].

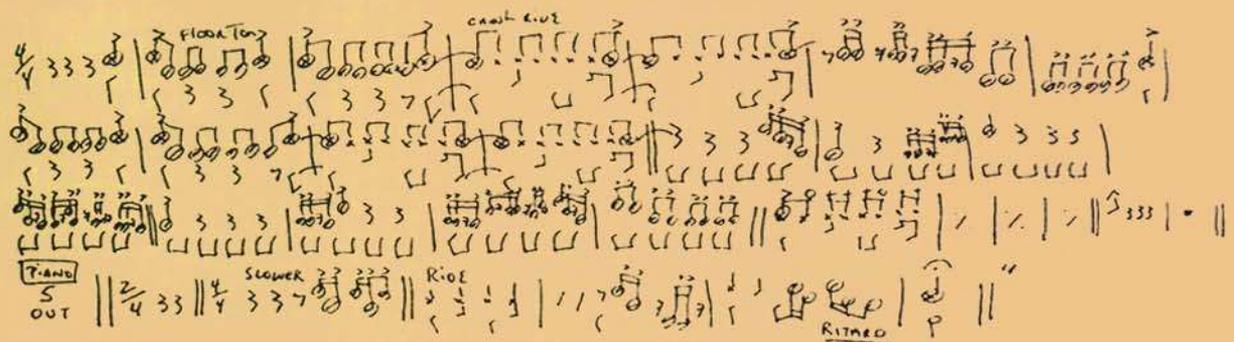
RS: Yes, because I wrote it on piano. That's another thing. The amateurish way I played piano—which isn't amateurish really—but it gives the music a certain quality, whereas a trained pianist gives it another

quality. That's why John and Paul played a lot of the piano on the Beatle records, because it gave it a different quality than having a real pianist. If we wanted a real pianist, then we would have had George Martin, because he'd know where the actual notes were; we'd be guessing.

RF: I read that the band had hired session players at various times in the recordings, but



"The End" is the song where Ringo plays his famous drum solo, which lasts for the entire middle section. Ringo keeps the bass drum on 8th notes the whole time while bringing the toms in with 16th notes. Definitely "air drum" material for generations to come.



The Beatles are my all-time favorite band; with these examples I've only scratched the surface of the hundreds of great songs that Ringo played on. Check out the rest of them, and let's all learn more from one of the world's greatest drummers, Ringo Starr.

ended up scrapping those sessions.

RS: Those musicians were too serious—too real, in a way. Also, in the early days they thought we were just jokes. They thought, "We're a real orchestra, what are we doing with you bums?" If you listen to the records, when we do have classical musicians, it's the people who enjoyed what we were doing that were featured.

RF: You mentioned "A Day In The Life"; that was really like putting together a jigsaw puzzle.

RS: It's two different songs put together. Depending on who you talk to, it was either Paul's idea or George Martin's—it depends on whose book you read. I feel it was Paul.

RF: The book says you marked the middle section.

RS: It was empty—just blank space.

RF: And you timed that space with an alarm clock.

RS: It was very simple. We worked on the first section, which was John's, and then Paul said he had something. So we recorded that section. But we had this

With A little Help From... Ringo, On Ringo

by Robyn Flans

During my interview with Ringo Starr I played some pieces of Beatles music for him that I believe highlight his brilliance—his simplicity, his unique fills, his *feel*. Listening to the music sparked some interesting stories from Ringo, which he shared in an almost stream-of-consciousness manner. The result was a rare glimpse into Beatle-dom.

"I'M Looking Through You"

[The first reference here is from the *Anthology 2* version; it originally appeared on *Rubber Soul*, 1965]

RS: So far, I'm only playing maracas. George [Harrison] would have been leading the hand claps. It's on a box, isn't it?

RF: The documentation says it's either played on your lap or it's hand claps.

RS: [Listening intently] I used to play on the drum cases or I'd slap my thigh. But that sounds like it has some snare going on as well, so it could have been really heavily clothed—I used to put tea towels over the drums—and maybe I'm playing sort of a rimshot. I can't remember what I did. It sounds like it has a snare underneath—I'm sure we'll get letters on this.

"In My Life"

[*Rubber Soul*, 1965]

RS: This was a steal from "You Better Move On," by Arthur Alexander. This was my version of that beat. Where's my bass drum? Never could hear the bass drum on our early records. We had a mic' on it, but George Martin never felt it necessary to actually include it in the record, [laughs] I mean, *Sir George Martin*.

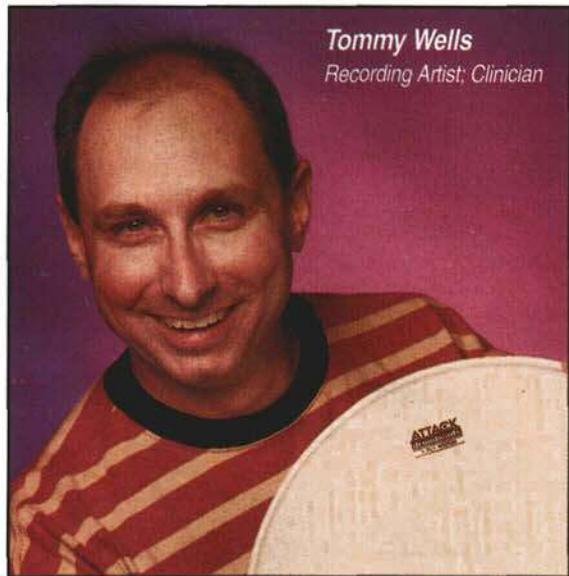
RF: Do you recall how the song was presented to you?

RS: Most of the songs were presented with whoever wrote it either on guitar or just bumblin' on piano. That's how George and I would first hear a Lennon-McCartney song. There wasn't a lot of making tapes and playing them for the boys. It was like, "Here, I've got this," and we'd listen to it and see what we could do with it.

"A Taste of Honey"

[Released in the UK on *Please Please Me* and in the US on *Introducing The Beatles*—both in 1963]

RS: Brush work. I had forgotten, until they released the *Anthology* records, that there was quite a bit of brush work on the early records. I knew how to play brushes because I had the



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huge blank space between the two, so we counted out the bars and thought we'd fill it in later. By then, we were comfortable in the studio and with what we were trying to do. It was just part of how we worked.

It's always surprising to me when people say, "Oh my God, you *did* that?" When we were there, we weren't sitting around going, "Oh my God, look what we're doing." We were just going, "Let's do that," and that's how it was.

RF: Can you describe the roles each of you played within the musical context of the band?

RS: For me, the roles weren't like everyone thinks—"You do this, you do that." The role was that we supported each other. No matter who was on, the others would support the best they could. We wanted to be really well known. We wanted to make records. We were musicians, playing to more and more people, and it was this gradual roll that went on and on, though of course the fame thing got out of hand.

experience with the bands I came from. You had to be a jack of all trades then. But this is a cabaret song, really. The Beatles were a cover band and a cabaret band—a rockin' cabaret band. It's still so simple, which is always the killer.

RF: You have said that jazz was not your favorite thing.

RS: No, it wasn't. I don't feel that was jazz; it was the best I could do with brushes. And it's very, very basic. It's sort of playing swing with the brushes, and then it goes into that "four" thing.

RF: But prior to the Beatles, how much was there to listen to that *wasn't* jazz?

RS: You've got to remember that Bill Haley was out when I was fourteen, so for me it started there, really. Bill Haley was a big influence, because seeing that movie [*Rock Around The Clock*] was the start of all hell breaking loose—they ripped up the cinema. Before that, of course, it was Johnnie Ray, Frankie Laine, Gene Autrey—people like that. And they were my heroes, too. Brushes were a part of that. I used them a lot when I was in skiffle groups. We did these skiffle numbers by people like Lonnie Donnegan, the Vipers, and people like that. So because I used to only play the snare, my early drumming experiences really focused on brushes. I used to have to beg to use the kit. I would travel by bus, which was very difficult, so you could just about carry your snare, cymbal, and brushes.

"Drive My Car"

[Released in the UK in 1965 on *Rubber Soul*,

in the US in 1966 on *Yesterday...And Today*.]
RF: Do you remember coming up with that part?

RS: No. Parts just happened. I was always relieved when I found one, though. If you go back to the bootleg tracks, which are now the *Anthology* tracks, and you hear early takes of the songs, usually the drum parts are pretty similar to the final versions. I'd find my part and say, "Okay, that's a cool part, now let the band work around it."

"Rain"

["Rain" was released in the US as a single in 1966 and in 1970 on *Hey Jude*. It's now available on *Past Masters, Volume II*]

RS: "Rain" is amazing. This is where you start hearing me bring in a lot of colors to the track.

RF: How was this presented to you?

RS: John was just playing the guitar and singing the tune. It was one of those things we just went for. It's basically just rock. By then I started accenting and reading the song more. We were getting away from pop songs where it was "verse, chorus, middle, verse, chorus, and then out." When we got to this stage of the game we were all experimenting, including me. It starts in that weird place—like seven beats in. I was purposely trying to be strange. I was tired of being restricted, so it was, "Hey, I can come in here. I can do this and try this."

"Rain" is one of my all-time favorite drum parts, and it's the first time I think I was playing that "snatch" hi-hat ["open" punctuations]. And what helped me do that, dear drummers, was that I was born left-handed. I write right-

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RF: The bass and drums are the foundation. Did you work off of Paul mostly?

RS: Paul and I used to work up quite a lot together. On the early recordings, it's hard to tell, but if you listen to the later ones you'll hear the bass and bass drum patterns really working together. That's very difficult. People don't take that into consideration. Often it's, "Oh, let's play," but it really has to be in sync. The bass and bass drum had to play the same character feel, and that's what gives you the foundation so everything else on top can go mad.

RF: What was a good day in the studio like?

RS: We recorded at a lot of different places. In the early days we never had a day off. We'd go in the studio, cut a couple of tracks, do a TV show, go on tour, come back, do a movie, then do another record. We were just moving all the time—in the car, do something, in the car, do something else—it never stopped. And it was exciting.

The fun bit was later when we'd be

handed, but if I throw or play cricket or do anything physical, I'm left-handed. So I'm sort of this left-handed guy with a right-handed kit. I cannot roll around the kit; I cannot start on the snare, go to the top tom, and then go to the floor tom. I cannot go round the drums that way. I have to start on the floor tom and move up, so those snatches on the hi-hat were just to give me room to get somewhere so I could get my hands working and get my arms to move around the drums.

"I'll Be Back"

[The first mention below refers to the *Anthology 1* version; the original version in the UK was on *A Hard Day's Night*; in the US it was on *Beatles '65*.]

RF: It blew me away when I heard the waltz version of "I'll Be Back" after only being familiar with what it evolved into.

RS: I'm not playing a waltz, I'm playing 4's. The idea we had was, if they played a waltz, I played 4/4. If I went strange and played a waltz, they'd stay in 4/4.

RF: On the *Anthology* version John has trouble singing it.

RS: He often got lost. So we eased it up, made it easier for the vocalist; he wrote the damn thing. We'd try all these different ways, but we were governed by the writer. He found it impossible to do it the original way, so we changed it.

RF: According to the documentation, it got changed to the way we hear it in the master by the next take.

RS: But that could have covered two hours. We probably didn't just say, "Oh, let's do this." We probably did a few takes before George Martin pressed the button.

The fun thing about the *Anthology* records is that you get to hear a lot of break-downs: "I can't play that," "My fingers won't do this," "I don't know what happened," "Where are we coming in?" There's very little dialog from me, though, because I never had a vocal mic'. They were all shouting at each other and at me through the vocal mic's. The drum mic's wouldn't really pick up my voice. There's not a lot of chat from me because of that. I could hear them, though.

A song would just evolve, because that's the nature of music. "This is a great idea, let's start with that," and then it would evolve into a better idea. Sometimes it evolved back to the original idea. The other thing that sometimes happened in the studio was that we'd want to do a track a certain way, and try take after take after take. If it just didn't work we'd go and have a cup of tea. We'd come back and do it exactly the same way and it would work perfectly. Hard to explain.

Away from the Beatles for a minute, the best representation of that was when I recorded "Take 54" with Harry Nilsson in England with Richard Perry. We did fifty-three takes that didn't work. When we got to take fifty-four we said, "This has got to be the one; it's the name of the song!" And it was crap.

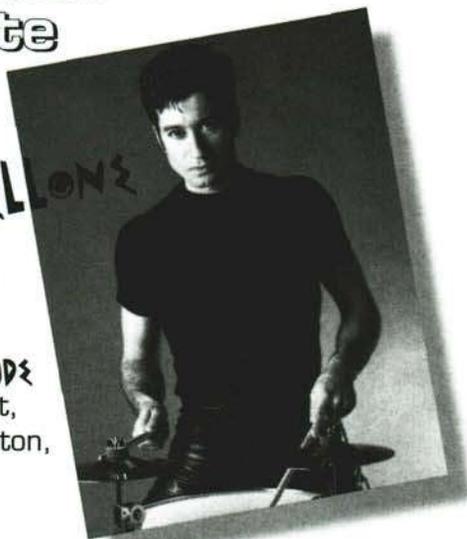


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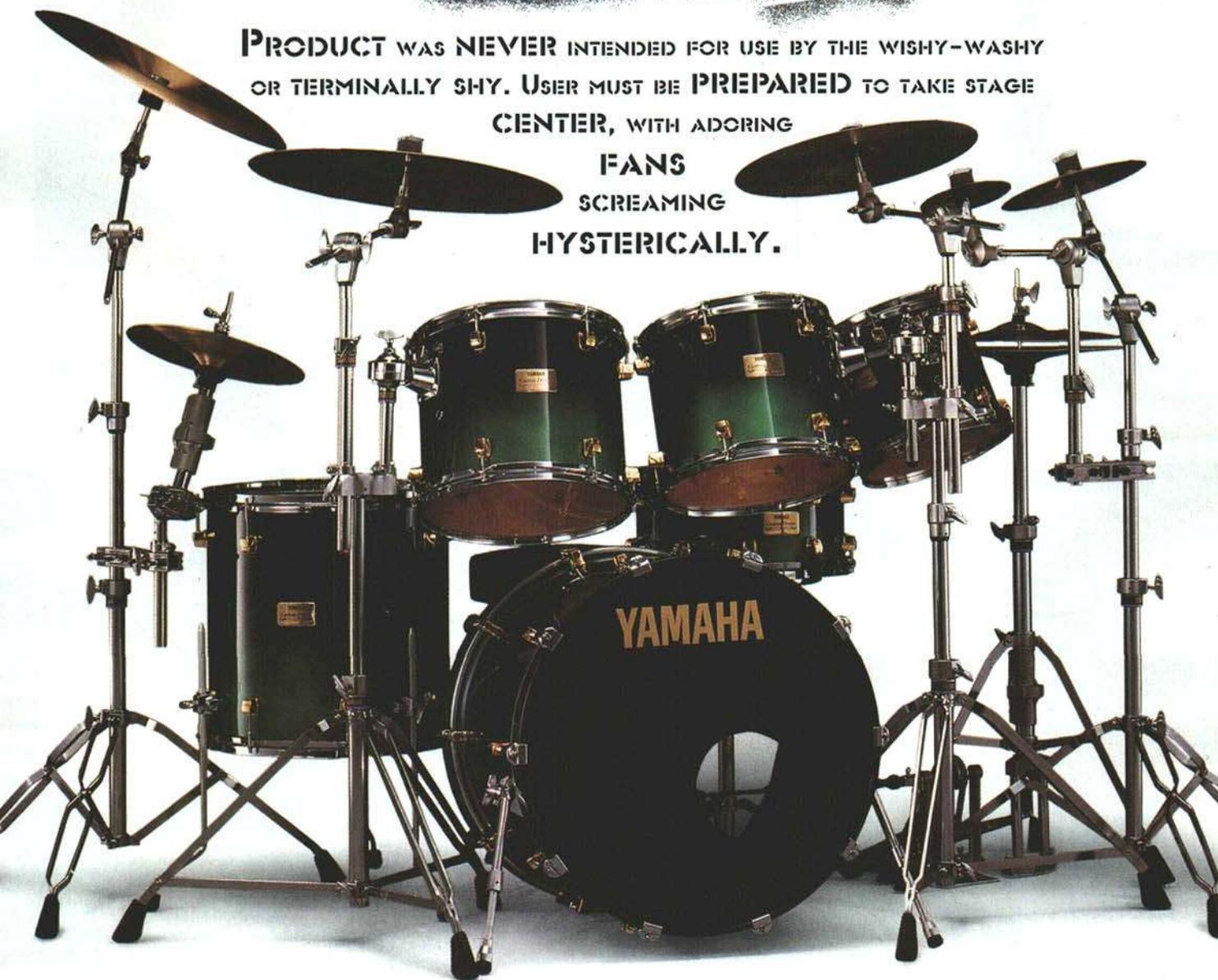
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creating in the studio—this is later in the '60s—and we'd all say, "Oh yeah, that's it, that's it, give us a cassette of that, George [Martin]." We'd end up going home and not always liking what we came up with.

RF: What was a bad day in the studio?

RS: Some days you just felt bad and you didn't want to be there. It blows me away to think about how nowadays it takes two years to make a whole album, and then remake it. It's all evolved like that now because it's become such a huge damn business. Probably the heaviest of our records cost a hundred grand. It might now cost three times as much as the records cost then, even if you take into account what a dollar was worth in the '60s. I still think we were making cheap records.

A bad day was when it wasn't working. A bad day later on was when you were sitting at home in the garden and you didn't want to drive into town. It was a beautiful day, the kids were playing, and you were happy and had a cup of that tea that George Harrison mentioned [in the *Anthology* videos] and you just felt like, "Oh God, this is great." Leaving that made it a bad



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day, but once we were there and playing it was fine. And there weren't a lot of bad days, except for later on, because we were all in the same spirit.

RF: It's been said that for George and John the "Get Back" sessions [from *Let It Be*] were a nightmare, but your feelings are still undocumented.

RS: Those were the sessions at Twickenham Studios. We were supposedly going to be filmed while making a record. It was miserable. The place was big and cold and uncomfortable for everyone, especially when people were arguing. John and Paul were having their disagreements, and then in the Twickenham sessions George and Paul were having their disagreements. And as everybody knows, George left and then we all met at my house. Those things made it uncomfortable. But certainly, if the session was good, nobody was fighting. The music always got us over the difficulties. "Okay, this is what we do."

RF: Various accounts, like the *Let It Be* film, made it sound dismal.

RS: It was hell. And it was the break-up happening right there. It was very strange.

If you watch the Beatle anthology, you'll get the whole story.

RF: There is going to be an anthology book?

RS: Yes, it will be a coffee table book taken from the twelve hours of filming we did. It will probably be out next year. I can't see it coming out this year; there's enough out there already. Besides, Paul's new album is coming out this year, I'm going on tour, and I will be making an album later on. It was pointless to do anything the last two years, because it was Beatle madness.

RF: Is there a lot more Beatles material we haven't heard?

RS: Not really. I have some stuff—I'm sure we all have copies of things, but I have copies of a few gems that have never come out. I have them on acetate. It was much later that we started taking cassettes home and listening to them.

RF: Tell us about your upcoming tour. Your son has gone off and left you.

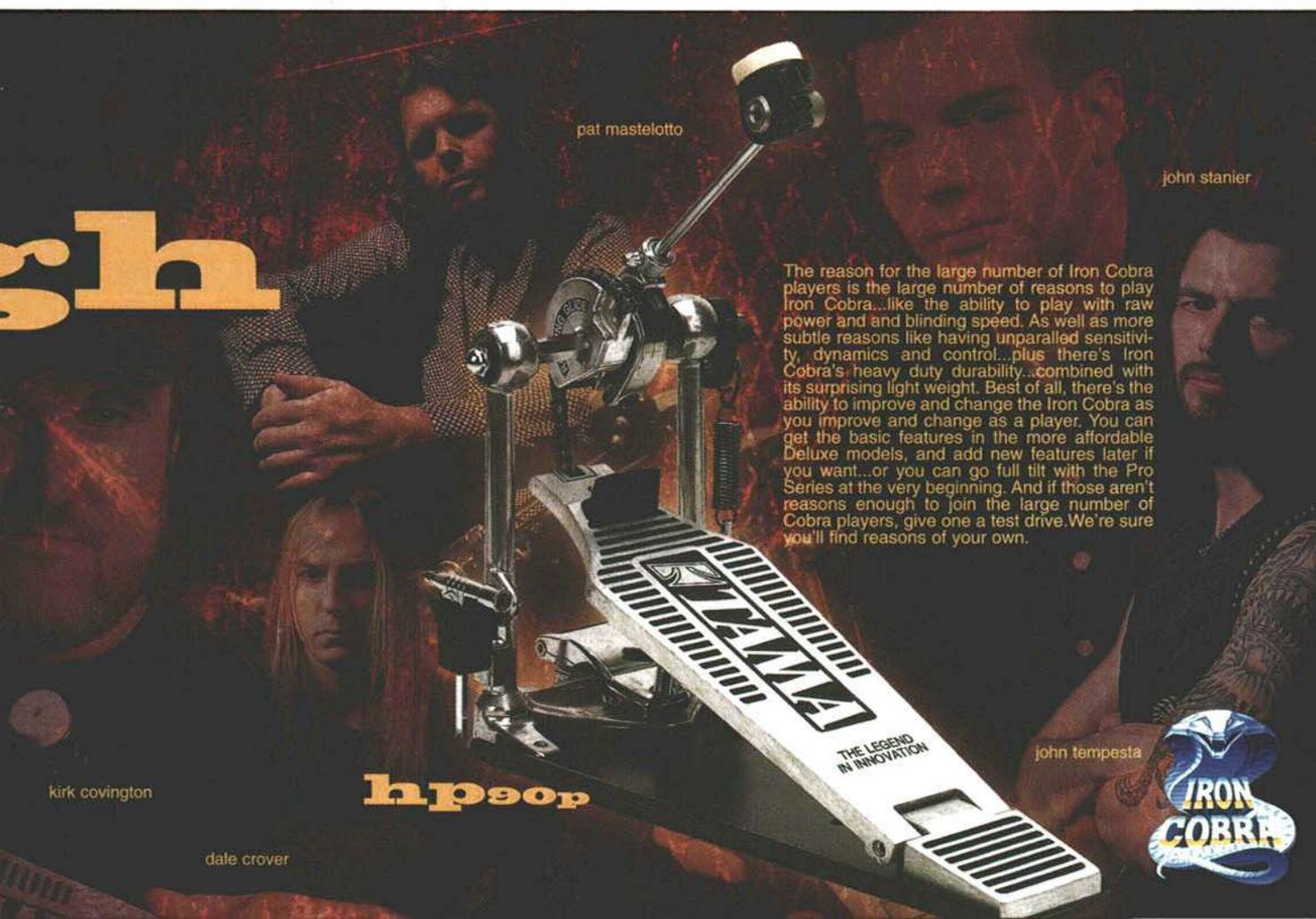
RS: Zak still loves me, so he tells me. "I'm not playing with you dad, but I still love you." But it was such a joy for me to see

him play with the Who. [See the interview with Zak Starkey on page 78.] They have always been one of his favorite bands. To see one of your children fulfill his dreams is beautiful. My younger son, Jason, is also a drummer. He's in two bands now, so he's drumming away, always practicing when he's not playing with bands or fellow musicians.

Both of my sons do the thing that I find impossible, which is practice. I've never been able to do it. I have a kit at home and I get on it, but within two minutes it's the most boring thing for me because I like to play with other musicians. I've always played with people, and I've made all my mistakes in front of people. I've done all my good fills and bits with people, too.

RF: What was it like to be on stage with Zak when he played with you on your tour?

RS: Great. At one time they were both up: Jason played my kit in New York. "On the drums, Zak Starkey, and on the other kit, Jason Starkey, my other son." Someone in the audience yelled, "You'll be introducing your grandmother next!" [laughs] But it



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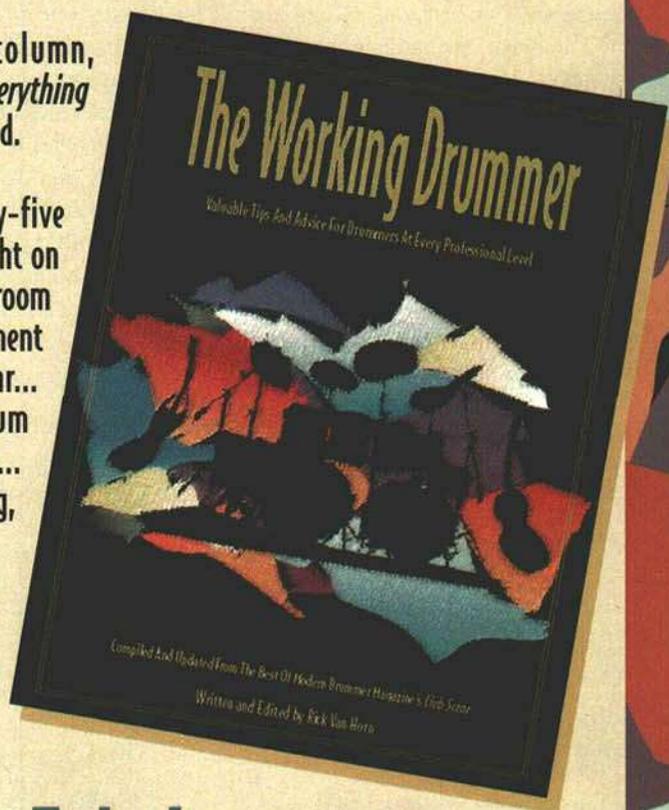
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was great with Zak. I could look over every night and there would be my boy—and he's a brilliant player. It's always great to listen to him. He's so serious about the whole damn thing. That was great.

RF: There have been rumors that this next tour of yours may be your last. With all of

the fame and fortune you have, why do you continue?

RS: Because I love it. I love getting up there and having fun with the audience. I love playing, and as I said, I need people to play with. Every time I finish a tour I say, "That's it. I'm not touring again," because

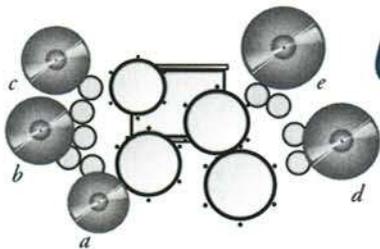
anyone you speak to will tell you the playing is fine, but it's that damn touring that's hard. But then I sit for a year and end up saying, "Why don't we go out?"

When I put a band together I try to pick people I've never played with before. I just make phone calls, invite some people, we rehearse, and it always seems to work. It's always possible that it might not, but it's never happened yet.

RF: The tour of yours I saw had Jim Keltner and Levon Helm on drums. What was it like working with them?

RS: It was great. I had played with Jim Keltner through the '70s; he was the only other drummer I had played with. When I decided to start touring again I realized that if I wanted to do what I wanted to do—play the drums and also go downstage and sing and party—I'd better get another drummer.

I was also thinking of people who could sing and have songs. Levon's name came up. It's *my* band, so we can have three drummers. And Levon is just a magnificent drummer. He's the guy young drummers should listen to to get that lazy, slop feel—and I don't mean slop in a bad way. I have always admired him. The first time I heard *Music From Big Pink* was with George. Eric Clapton played it for us. The playing was great—and the voices! Levon's voice is just the best—and Rick's [Danko], too. For the tour with Jim and Levon I had Rick on bass, so I had it all. And if you want to hear greatness on the other side, there's



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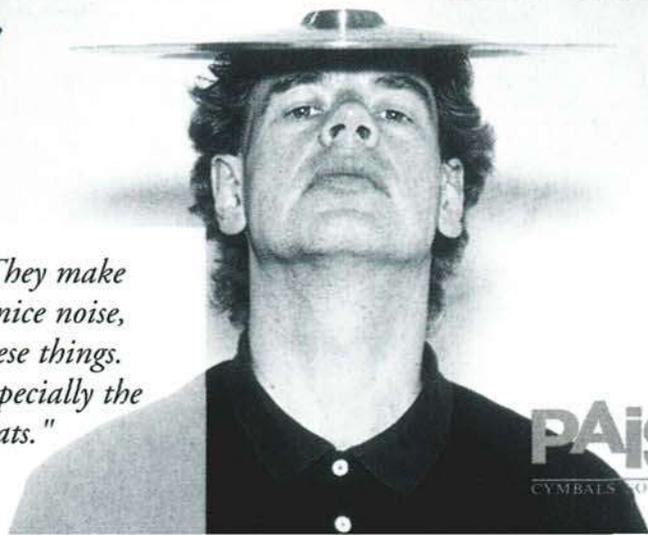
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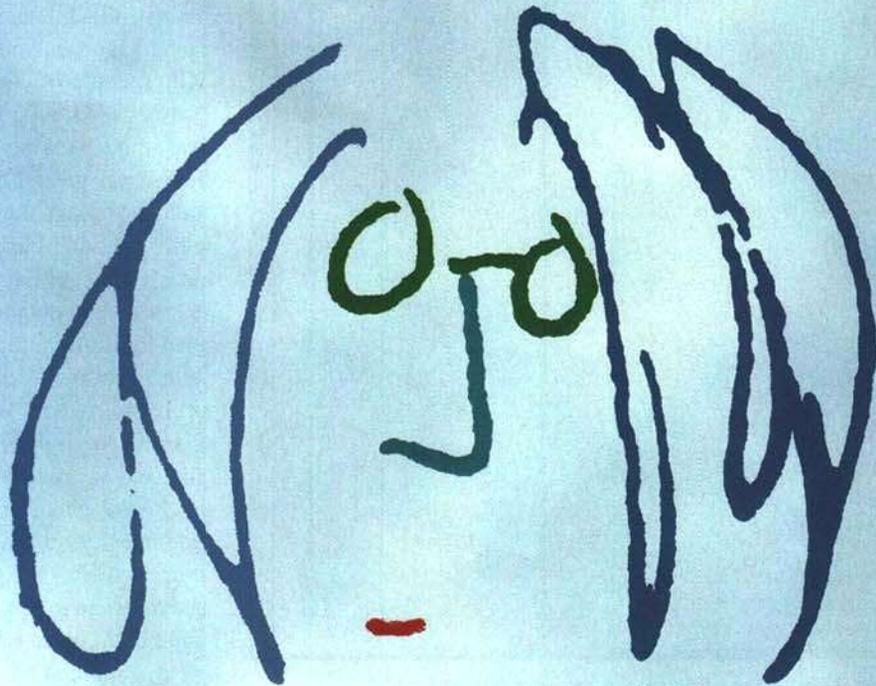
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5. Winners will be notified by mail and must sign and return an affidavit of eligibility/recording rights/publicity release within 14 days of notification date. The affidavit will state that winner's song is original work and he/she holds all rights to song. Failure to sign and return such affidavit within 14 days or provision of false/inaccurate information therein will result in immediate disqualification and an alternate winner will be selected. Affidavits of winners under 18 years of age at time of award must be countersigned by parent or legal guardian. Affidavits subject to verification by JLSC and its agents. Entry constitutes permission to use winners names, likenesses, and voices for future advertising and publicity purposes without additional compensation.

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Jim Keltner, who is still the most versatile drummer in my book. And then if you want to hear just great rock 'n' roll, you can listen to me! [laughs]

RF: The three of you obviously played different roles.

RS: When I go out, it's my name, so on the last tour Jim and Zak were the drummers and I played with *them*. When Simon [Kirke] comes, he'll be the drummer, because I'm up and down. So he'll have to know all of the parts, I'll only have to know half. With Jim there's never a battle. We complement each other. That also happened with Levon and with Zak. I'm looking forward to playing with Simon, though.

RF: Speaking of touring, and you being such a people person, were you disappointed when the Beatles didn't tour anymore?

RS: No, it was miserable at the end. We were in these little cages all the time and we were playing so badly just trying to get over the noise in the auditorium. I couldn't play any fills in the show. I couldn't do them because they would just disappear into the cosmos. All I could do was whack, whack, whack.

RF: The footage in the anthology tapes shows more than that.

RS: But you're talking early live stuff. That's what we did. We were a live band. We played every damn club we could find, and it was easy to move that tight unit onto the bigger stages.

RF: I remember your telling me in our last interview that it got to where you had to



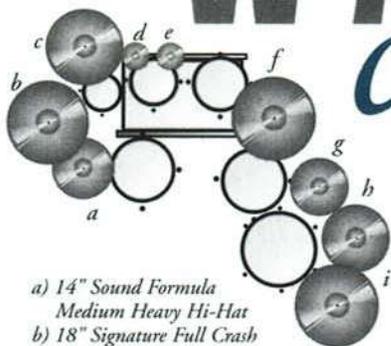
read the other guys' lips to tell where they were in a song.

RS: Yes! That was later on when it was getting crazier and crazier. I wish someone had the foresight, including ourselves, to have taped the *early* shows when we were doing clubs in Scotland or even at the

Cavern. There is very little from the Cavern. There's that early recording from Germany [*Live! At The Star Club*], but the sound quality is so bad. But those are the things you think of later. It's like I keep telling Zak: "Videotape my granddaughter!" He does it for a while and then he

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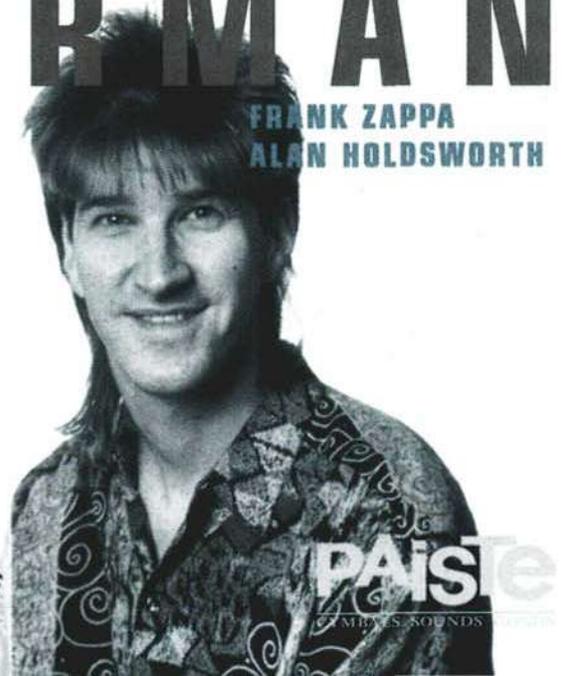
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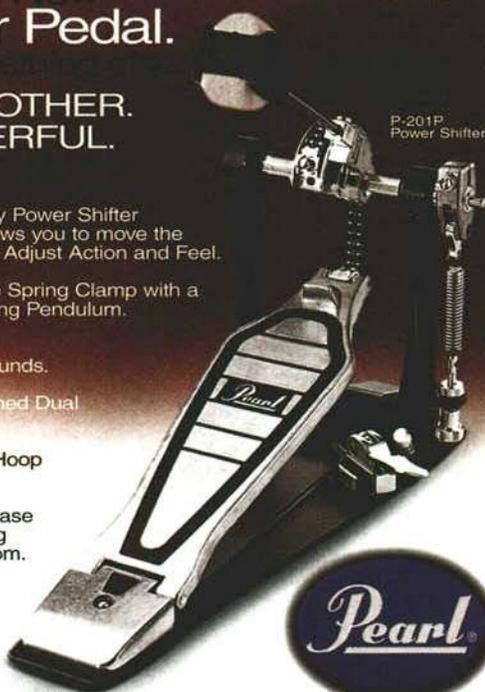
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RF: As I watched the video anthology and saw *my* life flash before me, I wondered what it must be like to be you watching all of that.

RS: It was really eye-opening. George, Paul, and I did watch every damn frame of it. There's so much stuff that, though we hadn't really forgotten, we hadn't thought about. It was, "You said that?" and "Oh yeah, and you did that? Remember this? Remember that?"

RF: While you're watching it, you can actually feel...?

RS: ...oh yeah, I'm there. For me, the best thing I got out of going through all of that footage with Paul and George was just hanging out with them again. And we made some music together and it was still the best. "Free As A Bird" [from *Anthology I*] was the most incredible experience for me in ten years. John was there—because he was coming out of the speakers. Then I heard the harmonies of the other two and the singing they put on it and the track with the drums and bass. And George's guitar—he's a very emotional guitarist. I still get goose bumps when I hear his solo in "Free As A Bird."

The whole thing was a very moving experience for me. And like a lot of very moving experiences, it passed. Now we're all separate identities again, but at least for a moment we were together. The down side of the whole thing was, of course, that

John wasn't there. And that was hard. I think it would have been more interesting...all we had was footage and words from him from 1980, and I'm not 100% sure [those sentiments] would be how he'd feel today. But you can't change it. This is what it is and this is what we did. It was beautiful.

RF: You recently worked on Paul's project.

RS: I don't know if I'll be on the album, but I did a track. And then we did some really fine jams, with him on bass, me on drums, and Jeff Lynne on guitar. Paul's just great to play with. I love to play with him. He's an amazing bass player, and I know how he plays. It's fun for me.

RF: You're doing your own album?

RS: I've been approached by a label to do an album. I have a few little bits I'll turn into songs, and I'll start working with other writers and we'll find songs. I haven't picked the producer yet.

RF: And your life has changed drastically in other ways since our last interview.

RS: I don't remember much from then. Through drugs and drink I lost quite a few brain cells, but thank God I'm not losing any more.

RF: What would you tell people you learned from all that?

RS: They should just say yes—yes to life. But when you're young, you're invincible and you get caught and you get hooked. All you have to do is pick up a music paper to find the name of somebody who died from

it, and that's a real possibility. If it will do any good for people to know this, the Beatles were not saints, but most of the music was made straight, and that's the deal.

RF: So the first time you got back on the kit after rehab...the normal fear is that you can't do what it is you always did under the influence.

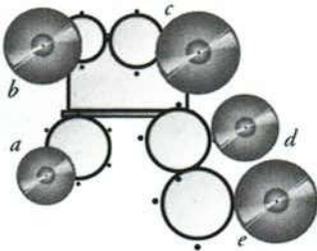
RS: I felt I couldn't play, I felt I was finished. I felt there was no joy, no laughter. That's all false. There's lots of laughter, there's lots of joy, and you *can* play. Since 1989, when I sobered up, I've bumped into many, many musicians who have done the same, and it's interesting that we all went through those initial couple of months, feeling we wouldn't be able to play. We all laugh now at that. Our alcoholic or drugged brain likes to tell us lies, but we've got to prove it wrong by sobering up, and that's what we've done.

RF: You've changed your whole life.

RS: Yes. I've done a complete 180. Of course, I'm over the edge now. I only eat fruit and vegetables and drink water. I don't eat meat or fish, I work out—things musicians don't usually do. I have a gym in the house, and sometimes I have trainers come in and put me through my paces when I get lazy. I never get lazy enough not to do it, but I get lazy in what I do.

RF: As you get older, is it easier or harder to play?

RS: Because of the joy of being a musician, you can play until you drop. As long



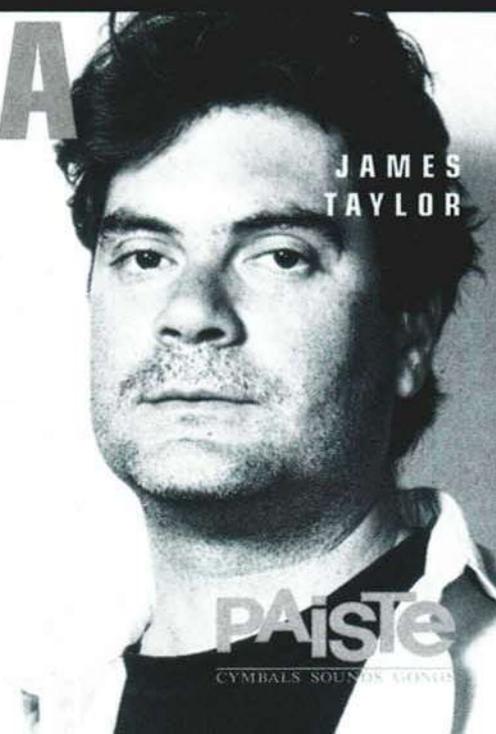
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as I can hold the sticks, I'll play—although I'm starting to realize that maybe in a couple of years I'll be in a blues band, [laughs] I'll just be playing the blues. You see all those kid bands, [acting frantically] "Gotta play fast, gotta play fast." But I'm going to play the blues [adapts a slow, hip voice]. And that's okay with me. That franticness goes.

RF: I do want to ask you about your drum solo on "The End" [from *Abbey Road*].

RS: That only happened because there were the guitar solos at the end, so they felt it was time for a drum solo. That's why it worked out. It wasn't like, "Oh, we need a drum solo," because I would have said, "Piss off." I don't do drum solos. Drum solos were never something that interested me. Very few drum solos have ever interested me, except for maybe John Bonham's solo where he hits the drums with his hands. But that's probably interesting to me because I know him, or *knew* him. There's another one for you crazy guys out there—he's gone.

RF: So like you said, you don't have to tour, yet that's next on the agenda.

RS: There's a lot of joy on stage and there's a lot of love going from the band and me to the audience and back. You can only get that playing live. There's nowhere else you can get an instant reaction. The minute I say, "Yellow Submarine," the audience goes balmy. Everyone knows it, and I force everyone to sing it with me. It's fun. Sometimes something happens on stage and it doesn't gel or I don't feel comfortable, but that's part of it. That's life. Overall, it's a lot of fun. I still have to run on. I'm in the wings, I run on, and then I'm okay.

RF: Nerves?

RS: Yeah. I have to get on in a flash.

RF: You really still get nervous before a show?

RS: Oh yeah. You're *on*. So I run and get the mic' and get the first couple of lines out of the song—then I'm okay, then I'm at home. But getting up there...my heart is going and I'm breathing hard, so I either have a panic attack or I get on stage, and I tend to want to get on stage, so I have to run.

In a way, you're putting yourself out

there; you're laying yourself on the line—"Here I am. You've come to see me and I'm going to give you the best I can." There's always that little demon that says, "I hope it's good tonight." And sometimes it's not your fault, you just have a dead audience. They're there, but it's like a cosmic thing; it's just not gelling somehow. But when it gels.... That's why players go out forever, because when it gels there's nothing like it. There's no way you can explain that to anybody who hasn't experienced it. It's just you and the audience, and there's a whole cosmic magic that goes on, a connection that is so strong that it's amazing.

The author would like to thank Jim Keltner, Gregg Bissonette, Allen Flans, Evan and Karen Kent, Kenny Aronoff, and Doreen Reardon for their assistance with this interview.



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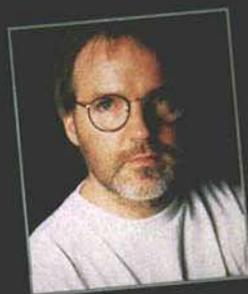
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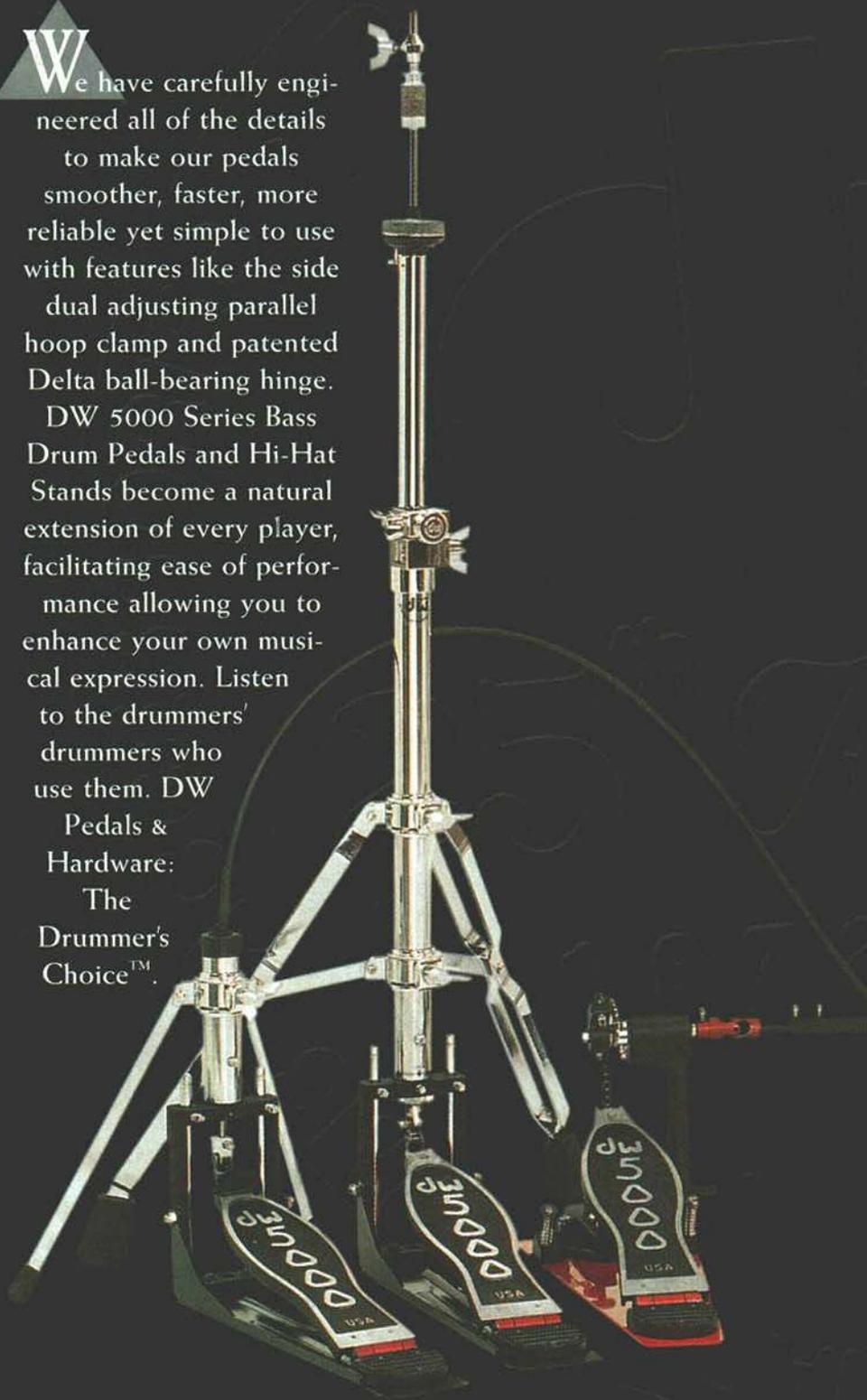
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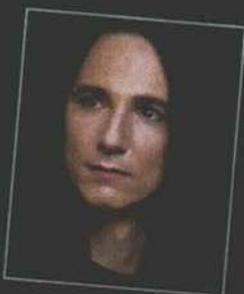


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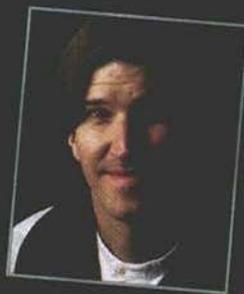
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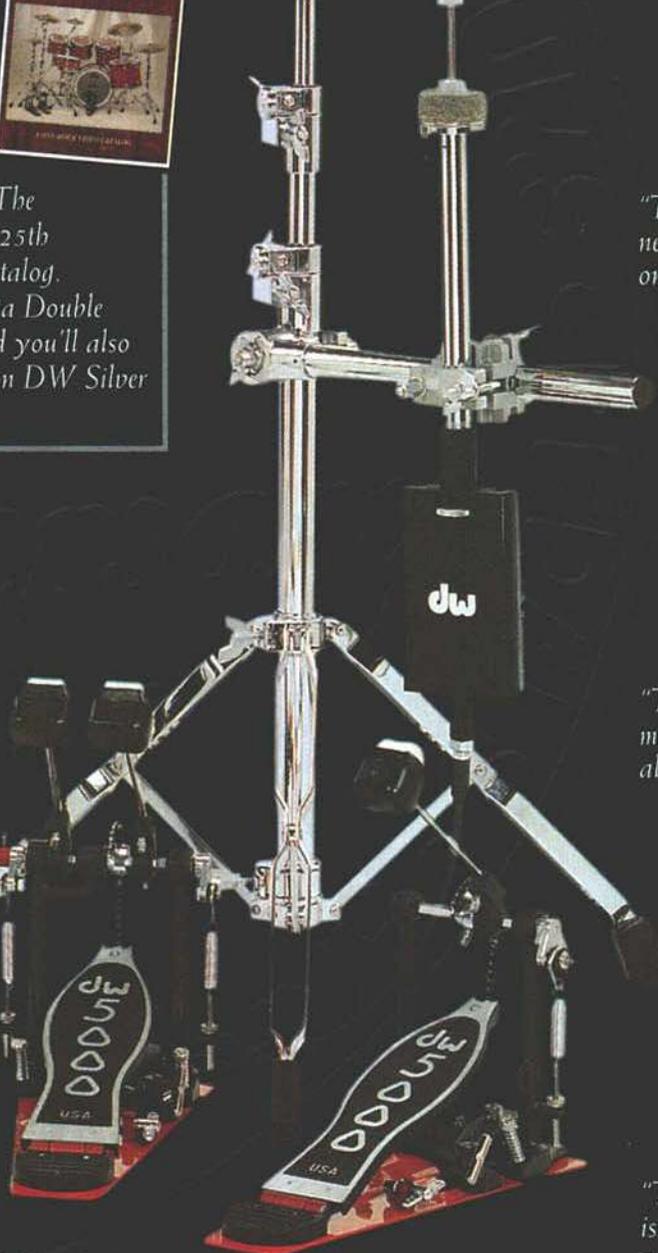
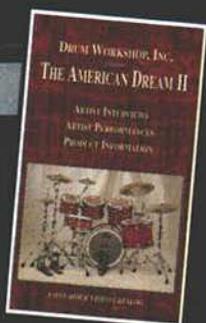
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Zak Starkey

by Robyn Flans

Zak Starkey was five years old when the Beatles broke up. But music was all around him: His father's home studio contained a massive record collection of which the Who, Slade, Alice Cooper, and T Rex were among Zak's favorites. Besides, music was obviously in his genes.

Zak was ten when his dad, Ringo Starr, introduced him to the drums. While it was a father's one and only drum lesson to his son, Zak absorbed his father's attitude about music: "The greatest musical lesson I ever learned from my dad was to play with as many people as I could," Zak says. By the time he was twelve, Zak had found some

older musical companions on his block, and they were playing in clubs by the following year.

One night, when Zak was sixteen, the Who's John Entwistle happened to be in the audience at one of his gigs. Although Zak was many years his junior, Entwistle and he became close friends. In fact, Entwistle was so impressed with Zak's playing that he asked the young drummer to play in a side project John was putting together. Zak had to decline that initial offer. When Zak turned nineteen he began playing with Roger Daltrey. Then, later that same year, he finally began working with Entwistle.

Tours with Joe Walsh, Roger Daltrey, and Ringo's All-Starr Band followed, all leading to a one-night performance of the Who's *Quadrophenia* last year. It was such a success that the band decided to turn it into an entire tour, which started up again this April in Europe and will be coming Stateside in July.

Today at thirty-one, with an eleven-year-old daughter of his own, Zak has obviously worked through any difficulty he might have had—not only being the offspring of a celebrity, but also choosing the same career as his famous father. The young Starr has a delightful awe and respect for his father's musical legacy—and he is enjoying the success he's creating for himself.

RF: Do you recall your first memory of the drums?

ZS: There was always a kit at home. I suppose I remember from about the age of four or five that I became aware of a room in the house that was a studio, and there were instruments in there. At about seven, my brother and I would sneak into the studio

Rising Son

when everyone was out of the house. We'd fiddle around with old ARP synthesizers and stuff like that. We didn't know how to turn it on, but we were pretending we were driving a spaceship or something.

RF: And you grew up loving the Who.

ZS: When I was about seven the house we were living in was full of albums; there were records everywhere. I could listen to whatever I wanted to, and I really got into the Who's *Meaty Beaty Big And Bouncy*.

RF: When did you start noodling around on the drums?

ZS: That happened when I was about ten. I was just hanging out in the studio with my dad one day and he asked, "Do you want me to show you a couple of things?" And I said, "Okay." He showed me how to keep time, just playing straight 4's, and then he left me to it. He said, "If you want to learn, put on headphones and play along to records."

RF: And was it something you wanted to learn?

ZS: Yes, much to everyone's surprise. I don't think anyone could believe it because I used to do it every day. I would come in

from school and that's what I'd do. I used to drive my mum insane.

RF: What was it you loved about Keith Moon?

ZS: God, *everything*. The drums are so at the forefront of that music and there's so much going on with it. It was so aggressive and so nasty, and that's what I was into.

RF: What was your favorite music to play to of theirs?

ZS: I sort of played to all of it, but the main albums for me were *Live At Leeds*, *Who's Next*, and *Quadrophenia*.

RF: Were your folks supportive as you were getting more into drums?

ZS: Yes. My parents were divorced at the time. My dad gave me a small four-piece Ludwig kit when I was eleven, and it used to be in the dining room. But my mum let me do it; she put up with it. I was never actively pushed to do anything like that, but I was never discouraged. I was left to do what I wanted, really. I'm sure they thought it would wear off after a while and I'd lose interest, but they were wrong!

RF: Did you ever want to take lessons?

ZS: No, I was just into playing with other

people.

RF: Boy, that sounds like your dad. But he said you are different in one respect—you were able to practice. Practicing is a very solitary thing.

ZS: I don't practice as such—I don't sit down and practice rudiments or anything, but if a gig comes up and somebody sends me a tape, I'll sit there and learn the stuff. I don't work on my whatever they're called—rudiments—because I don't know them.

RF: He said you've always been consumed with it.

ZS: In my teens, when I was playing in those bands, we'd rehearse three times a week and we'd do gigs on the weekends. As far as playing on my own, though, I didn't do that much.

We're going back out on the road with *Quadrophenia* soon, and I'll probably spend a week or so limbering up, going through material, and just trying to get back after three months off.

RF: What was the first big gig for you?

ZS: When I was about sixteen, there was a studio very close to where I lived that did

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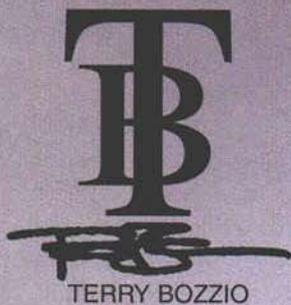
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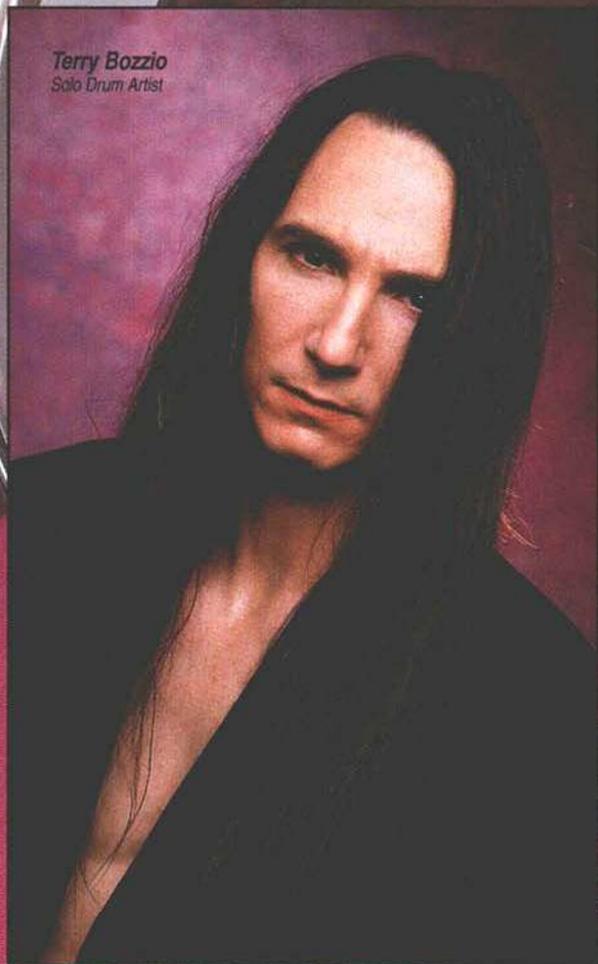
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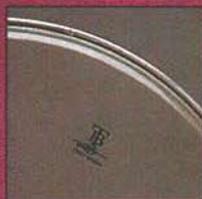
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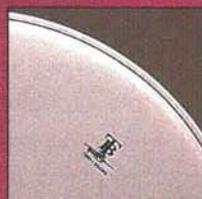


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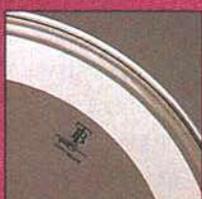
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1-Ply Medium Clear



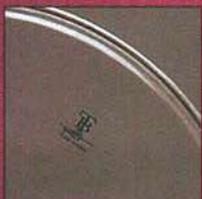
1-Ply Medium Coated



1-Ply Medium
Clear/Coated



Coated Dot Batter



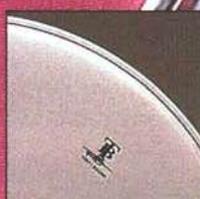
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quite a bit of business. I got to know the studio owner after jamming with him in a pub one night. From then on I started to do a lot of sessions there. It was mostly stuff you've never heard of, but I did some work with the Spencer Davis Group, who had reformed at the time. I was getting paid like fifty pounds a day, and I thought that was it, I had made it.

At about nineteen I started playing with John Entwistle. When I was sixteen or seventeen, he was at a gig I was doing at a place called Dingwalls in North London. He saw the band I was playing with and asked if I could do some work with him, but I was busy with the band.

RF: You were too busy for John Entwistle?

ZS: There's a lot of loyalty involved in being in a band—an awful lot. I was in a band with these guys from the age of fourteen. I had been in bands with the bass player since I was a kid, and I had been with the other guys for something like three years. You don't just drop everything. Luckily John called me again when I was nineteen, so I started working with

him then. We made a record, which took a long, long time and then never came out. I can't even remember the name of the label, but it was impounded by the FBI for tax evasion or something, and it just didn't happen.

RF: Welcome to the world of rock 'n' roll.

ZS: Yeah, a lot of that stuff does happen.

RF: I guess you never really encountered that stigma of not being taken seriously because you were a famous person's son.

ZS: Well, yeah, people tend to take me at face value. They think because I'm Ringo's son and play the drums, I must be shit. I used to get that from a lot of people. I used to get that from the press when I was sixteen years old, but I learned to take it on the chin and get over it, otherwise I'd never leave the house.

RF: That's good advice, but it's hard not to take it personally. Certainly in the beginning you must have. How do you get past that?

ZS: By realizing that maybe it won't go away. Unless I just forget about it, it's going to drag me down. Even now when I read reviews of shows I do, I have to take

that attitude. There are a million reasons why the reviewer didn't like it, and they probably aren't because it wasn't any good.

RF: I know you've been asked this a million times, but was it tough growing up the son of a Beatle?

ZS: No, not really. I never got any shit at school or anything about it. Also, I never thought of him as a Beatle. When I first started trying to carve out a career, things got a bit difficult occasionally because of it. But that's mainly a media thing.

RF: It's nice to see that you've played with your dad. A lot of celebrity offspring deny their heritage and don't want to have any association with the parent.

ZS: I went through that, definitely, when I was sixteen years old. I went through that heavily, but you've got to realize it's not going to go away. In a lot of ways, my dad's drumming was a huge influence on me. The same time I was listening to all these Who records, I was listening to *Abbey Road* and stuff like that.

RF: What are your favorite tracks that he's done?

ZS: There are so many. "The Word" is

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one. The thing about his drumming is it's so incredibly original. And it's so great for the song. He's listening to the song and he knows what's going on, and what he plays complements the song perfectly. That's the chemistry of a great band—that's why the great bands are the great bands. It just works. Even with the Who, if you take a member out of the band it's never going to be the same. With my dad's parts, you can pick any track and there's just one bit on the drums where you go, "God, how did he do that?" or "Why did he do that? It's so good."

RF: How did you end up playing with the Who?

ZS: That didn't happen until last year, when Pete wrote a script for *Quadrophenia* and was asked to do the Prince's Trust Concert at Hyde Park. It was just going to be one gig, but the gig was so good everyone wanted to do more, which is often the case in these kinds of situations. You start out working together for half an hour and end up working together for two years.

RF: What are your favorite parts to play?

ZS: I like it all. I've been listening to that

album for twenty years. It's every little bit of it, every little imperfection—just everything; it's *Quadrophenia*.

RF: I heard that you approached *Quadrophenia* as a complete piece—warts and all—and that you wanted to keep Keith Moon's imperfections. Can you elaborate on that?

ZS: I really don't want to sound cheeky. There were some things that are wrong on the album that probably not everyone would spot, and I play those.

RF: You must feel that it's a part of the song, the music.

ZS: It is to me. I don't play what Keith played note-for-note on everything. Probably 70% of the parts are changed, but there are certain things within every song that Keith did that *have* to be there. Otherwise it's just not *Quadrophenia*, to me or to people who are Who fans.

RF: Who do you find yourself really listening to when playing with the band?

ZS: Pete. He does different stuff every night. If you're not on it, you're going to miss it. The whole band is pretty much like that. It's not a very regimented thing.

Playing with the Who, for me, is the ultimate drumming gig because it's really a jazz gig. Obviously, it's not jazz, but I can go out and play anything I want. There's no other gig where you can do that.

RF: So you mean it's like jazz in the improvisational aspect.

ZS: Yes, it's very, very free-form. Everybody is throwing in stuff every night, which is what keeps it fresh and alive. Once you start going through the motions, you're dead.

RF: What does the music require of you as a drummer?

ZS: The hardest thing about *Quadrophenia* is to hold it back because it's such a lively piece of music with so much going on. It could very easily run away with itself. The hardest thing is just keeping fifteen people together.

RF: Were you ever into jazz at all?

ZS: A little bit. I was into some Cannonball Adderley stuff, and his drummer, Roy McCurdy. I don't know much about the guy apart from the fact that he is fantastic.

RF: Any other drum heroes?

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ZS: I've got loads. Al Jackson was one of my biggest influences. His stuff with the M.G.'s and Al Green—just great. Jim Keltner, Jim Gordon, the guy in T Rex—Bill Legend—was a huge influence. Richie Hayward, and Kenny Jones with the Small Faces, especially on *Ogden's Nut Gone Flake*. The drums are just incredible on that album.

RF: When did you work in your dad's band?

ZS: In '92 and '95. In '91 I was playing with Joe Walsh. It's been a long seven years of American tours. Then I played with my dad, and after my dad, I played with Joe again.

RF: When you played double drums with your dad, were there defined roles that each of you played?

ZS: We were just having a lot of fun, bouncing off each other. Nothing was written in stone, and we were having a good time. The '95 tour in particular was a very balls-out rock 'n' roll tour, with Randy Bachman, Billy Preston, and John Entwistle.

RF: Your dad says you're a much better drummer, technically, than he is. What do

you have to say about that?

ZS: Technically, neither of us knows what we're doing. It's true. We've never had lessons and we don't know what rudiments are; it's a feel thing.

RF: He seems to think you have it much more together than he does.

ZS: It's just that the jobs I've done in the past have called for a lot of drumming.

RF: So it's more sophisticated than "Twist And Shout."

ZS: But it comes down to the same thing. It's just feel. You feel it, you don't think about it.

RF: So what happens when you've accomplished your childhood dream? What is the dream now?

ZS: There's always stuff to do. Playing with the Who was a dream, but I had forgotten it, although it certainly came back. It's something I hadn't thought about since I was a teenager, but then I got the call.

Playing with the Who is the biggest rush there is. At eleven years old I used to go to bed dreaming about what I'm doing now. I don't know how many people can say that.



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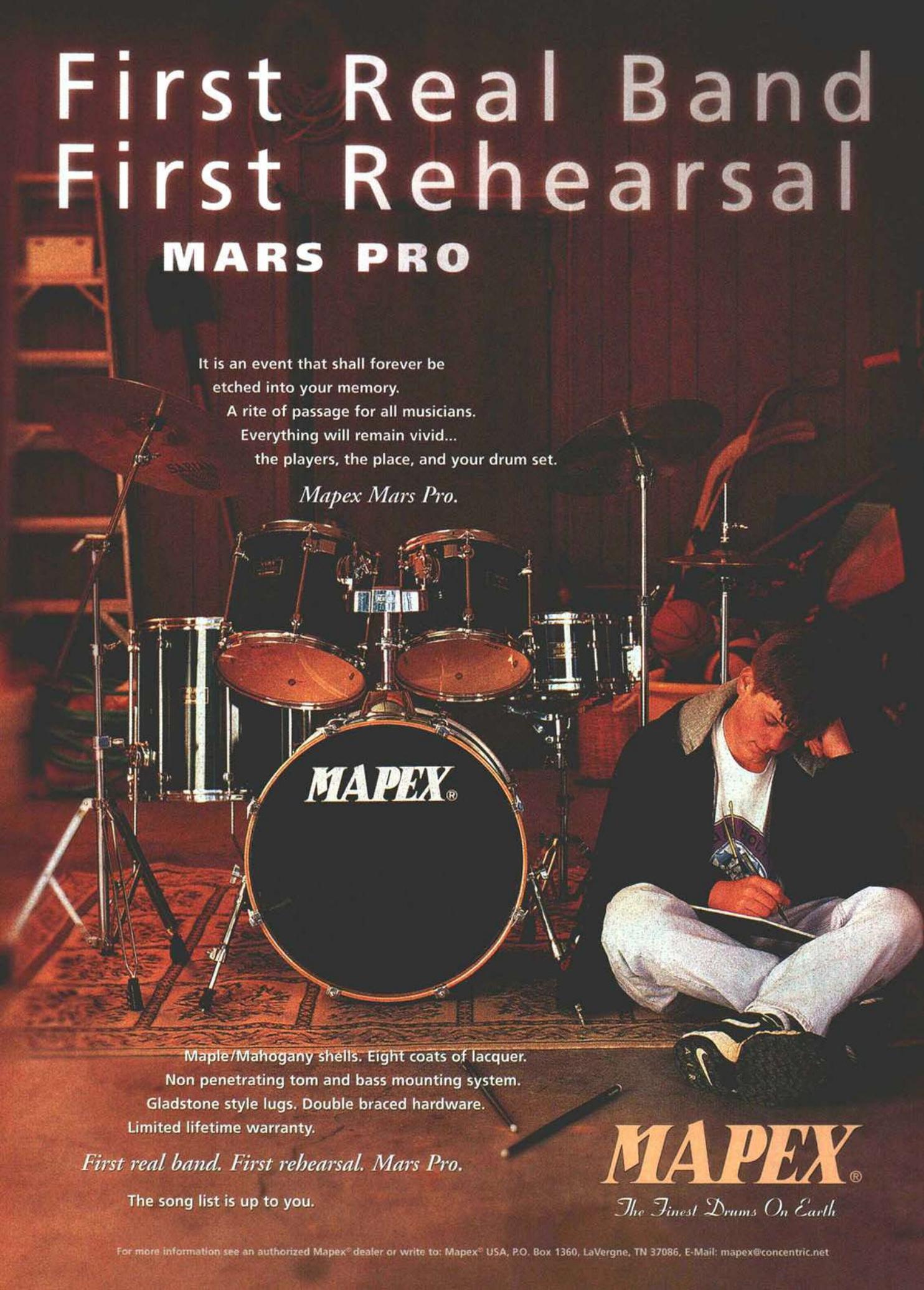
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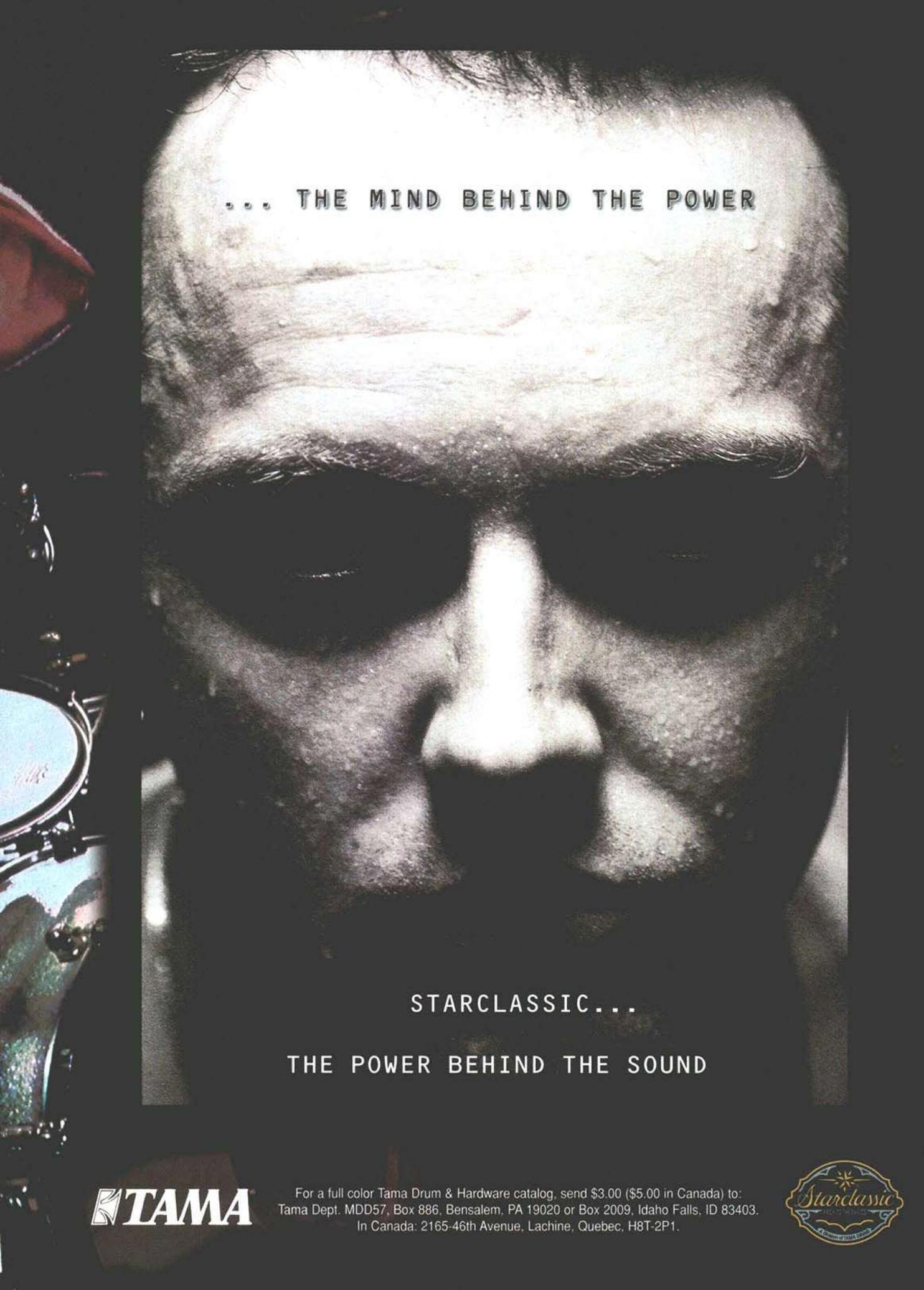
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Billy Drummond

A stroll around the suburban New Jersey home of Billy Drummond and his wife, Renee Rosnes, reveals hints to the subtle nature of Drummond's work. A large audiophile-quality stereo system dominates the comfortable living room, while a bookshelf houses a home video course on wine-tasting alongside the *Legends Of Jazz, Drumming* series. On a kitchen table, next to a stack of hi-fi mags, lays a fresh box of Cuban *Partagas Habana* cigars, nabbed by Renee on a recent trip to South America.

Enamored of life's finer things, Billy Drummond is a true connoisseur. Though he laughs at the suggestion, it's evident in both his musical drumming style and in his leisure activities. From the silky sheen of his swinging time feel to the shimmering sounds he draws from his ample collection of vintage *K Zildjians*, Drummond's playing exudes a wealth of jazz history along with a surprisingly adventurous approach.

On *Dubai*, his third solo record for Criss Cross, Drummond's nimble, piano-less quartet spins jazz on the head of a pin with stunning results. Somewhere between free jazz, exotic experimentalism, and solid mainstream blowing, *Dubai* captures four musicians in a magical session. With bassist Peter Washington supplying the beefy bottom, Drummond trades ideas with saxophonists Chris Potter and Walt Weiskopf in an often blistering game of cat & mouse. Those who know Drummond for his bebop batteries with Sonny Rollins, Joe Henderson, or wife Renee's piano-led recordings for Blue Note will probably expect more of his assured timekeeping. And it *is* there—matched with blazing hi-hat flurries, melodic cross-rhythms, and dazzling group interplay.

Given his own platform and choice of musicians, Drummond arrives as one of the most promising leader-drummers in jazz. Arriving in New York in 1988, Drummond attempted the typical path to jazz success, but instead was instantly roped into a headlining gig with OTB.

by Ken Micallef

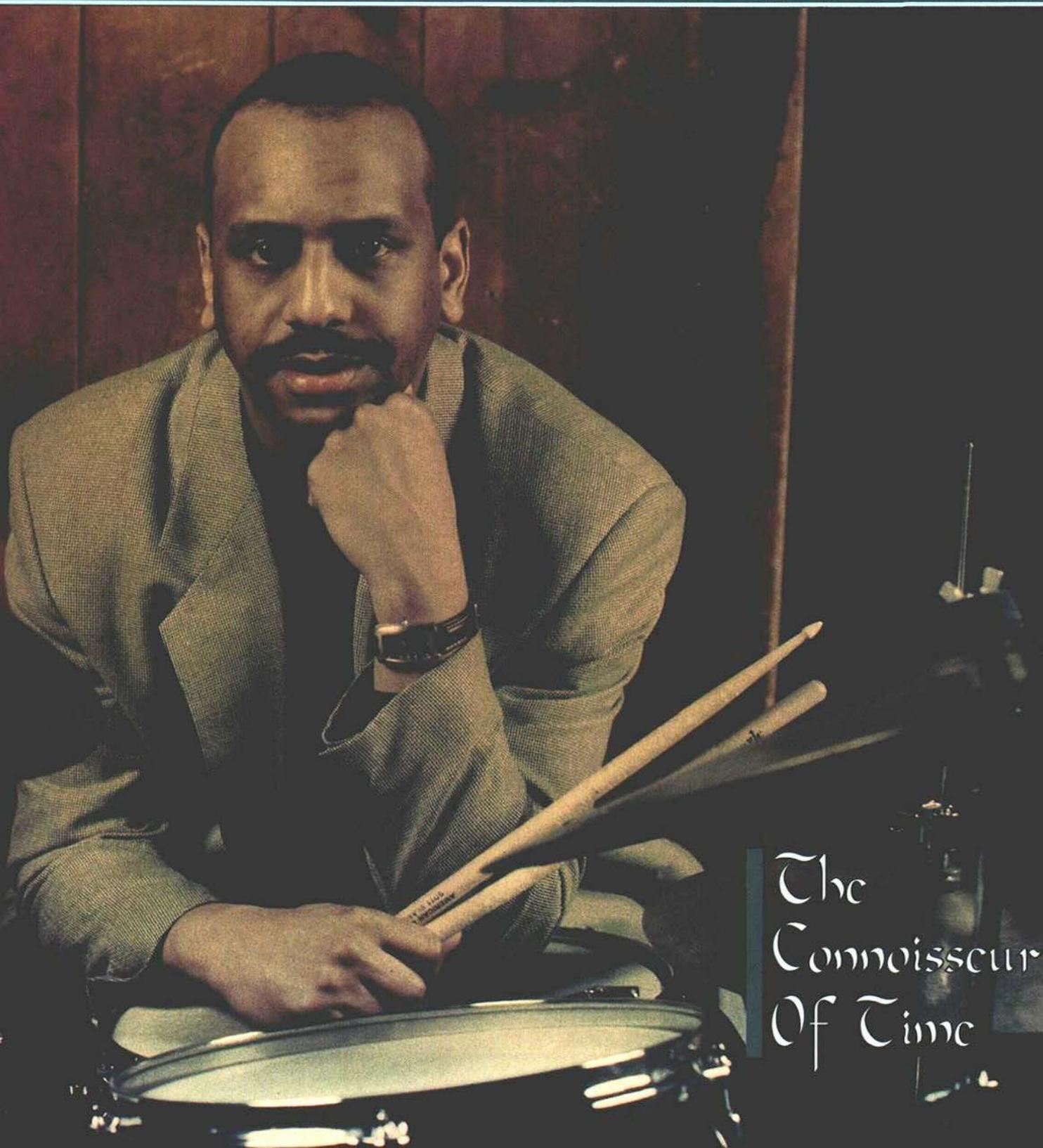
photos by Paul La Raia



Gigs followed with Horace Silver, Nat Adderley, Javon Jackson, Steve Kuhn, Vincent Herring, Billy Pierce, and James Moody, to name but a few. Now spending seventy percent of his time on the road, Drummond has come a long way since playing his tiny Zim-Gar drums in his parents' Newport News, Virginia home.

Billy's drum room resembles a small drum shop. Photos of Tony, Max, Elvin, Higgins, Blakey, and Haynes grace the walls, while '60s drumsets (Ludwig, Gretsch, Slingerland) are stacked neatly. An Italian-made Hollywood floor tom (with variable-

pitch foot control) stands in a corner next to a dense record collection. Vintage stereo gear peeks out from behind Billy's cymbal collection, with cymbals autographed by everyone from Tony Williams to Elvin Jones. Here Drummond enters his "dream world." Surrounded by history, music, and hardware, he's free to entertain his muse. After a long practice session, perhaps some wine is in order...or possibly one of those valuable Cuban stogies...or maybe some cappuccino or other creature comforts—for Billy Drummond, the connoisseur.



The
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Of Time

KM: You've always been a very solid, in-the-idiom drummer. But your playing on *Dubai* and other recent records shows tremendous growth. Is it evolution or just a case of getting the chance to play?

BD: I have a lot of influences that come through in my playing. Before I came to New York in 1988, I was never just a Blue Note-listening, hard-bop kind of guy. In the '70s, when I

was buying a lot of records, I was buying everything. I was into ECM as well as straight-ahead, swinging stuff. Jon Christensen is one of my all-time favorites, and of course, Jack DeJohnette defines that sound with his cymbals. His solo drum record, *Pictures*, where he plays solo drum melodies—back when he was using the dark and flat rides—really struck me. I always dug all that stuff.

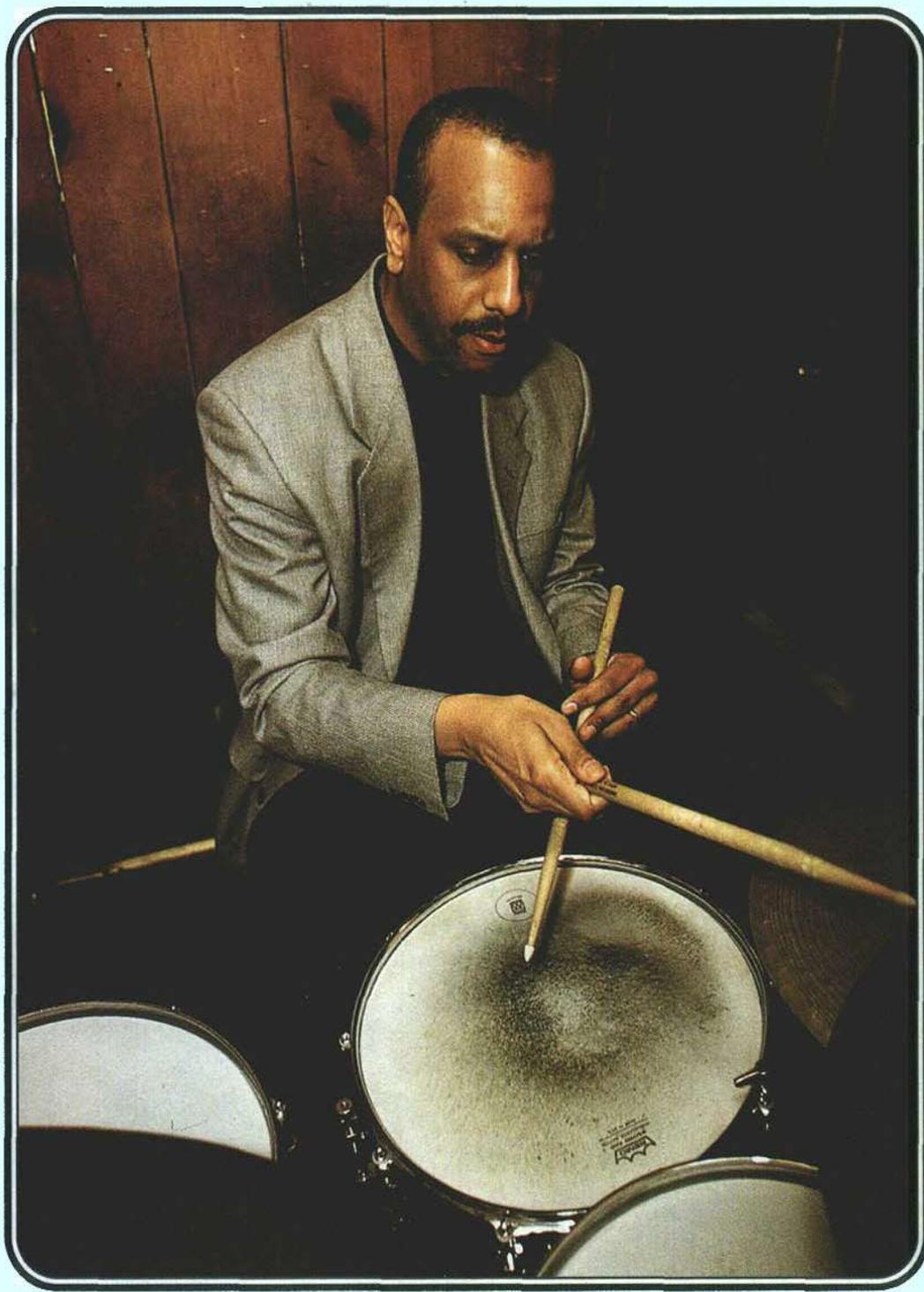
Individuality—
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all be striving for.

When I was living in Virginia, there wasn't such a separation [between styles]. In New York you've got the hard bop guys, the guys who only want to play high-energy, aggressive stuff, and then the downtown guys. But I was into everybody, from Barry Altschul to Elliot Zigmund. I didn't know that their paths don't cross that much. I thought that Eric Gravatt was still playing around. He's a prison guard now. I was also into Sunship Theus, who played with Woody Shaw, Charles Lloyd, and even John McLaughlin—an esoteric, high-energy player. And I was also into Philly Joe, Max, Tony—and Buddy Rich, who was always on TV.

KM: When I first heard you, I thought you were part of that Kenny Washington, dyed-in-the-wool, purist style.

BD: Kenny is a big influence on me. He really helped me out. He would make tapes for me, play records for me. He would say [does scrunched-up face, Washington impersonation], "Man, you need to use your bass drum. You got potential."

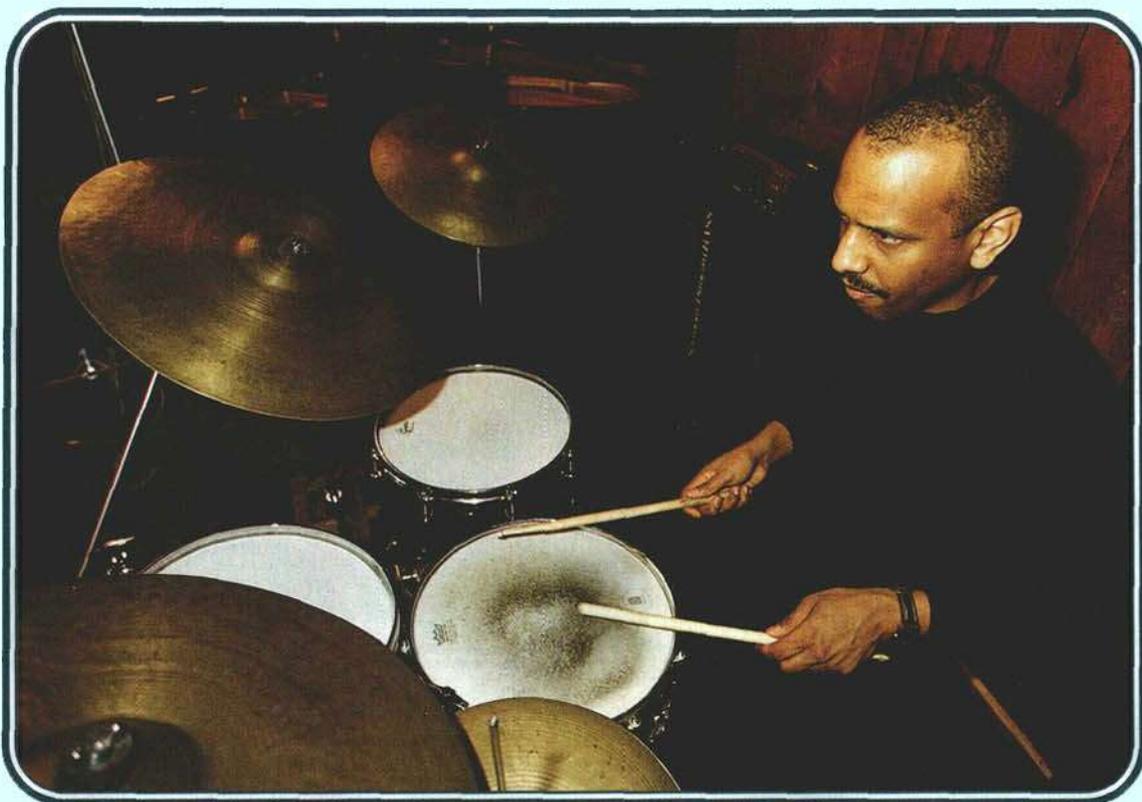
The first time I played opposite Kenny, I was with OTB, and he was with Jimmy McGriff. I was playing a shuffle. I thought it was hip, but I probably wasn't playing my bass drum on all four beats real strong. He said, "Man, you need to come over to my house." That was cool, I didn't take it badly. A lot of people don't want to listen to what Kenny has to say, because they think he's a hardass. But



he's not; he loves the drums and music.

KM: On some of your records you play it straight, but on *Dubai* and Walt Weiskopf's *Simplicity*, you're playing more free and colorful.

BD: A lot of the records I have played on haven't been well distributed, like many of the dates I've recorded on Criss Cross records. You don't really hear about the records where I play more of my style. People get typecast because of what they played on a certain record. You may not



"I hope the young cats coming up don't put blinders on. Too many of us don't socialize together around New York. That separation is going to hurt. All kinds of things can fit under the banner called jazz."

know what someone is really about.

But I feel like I have progressed, playing with everyone I have played with. It's natural; you get stronger and stronger. On a lot of the gigs I've played, maybe I wasn't exactly myself. You have to play the role of the drummer in the band sometimes.

KM: *Dubai* also seems to be one of those magical sessions where everyone is playing all the right notes.

BD: I chose the right guys, players who I knew could go in any direction. They had their foundation together and they could play changes inside and out.

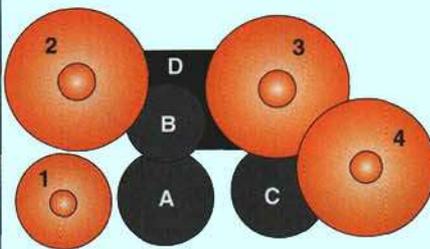
And Peter Washington is one of my favorite bassists—we've done a zillion records together. We can go anywhere, and harmonically we won't sound like we're fishing. And Chris and Walt are so free, it couldn't feel anything *but* good with those guys.

KM: The hi-hat punctuations and

cross-rhythms you're playing against a free pulse seem like they'd be influenced by the freedom of a piano-less group.

BD: For me, sometimes the piano can dictate a certain direction harmonically. I like playing with piano; you can be free with a piano too, but without

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the piano it's more wide open, there's more space. You can respond to the bass player and create things rhythmically and push it in another direction. It's the drums, bass, and sax, with nothing in the middle, just direct lines between the three. You hit the sizzle cymbal and it just sounds, with nothing backing it up. Silence is sometimes just as pretty as a chord.

KM: Does that allow you to play more tonally?

BD: That too. It brings out the tone of the drums in a different kind of way. On *Dubai*, I like the way the drums sound. They're by themselves. They really blend in with the wood of the bass. Those two instruments sound really nice together. It's like when McCoy Tyner drops out with Coltrane; the band takes on another sound and another vibe. It opens things up and the cats start playing differently. It's like a color change.

KM: Does playing piano-less also require more responsibility on your part?

BD: You have to comp a little differently; you don't really comp in a bebop way. The piano isn't playing those pushing accents.



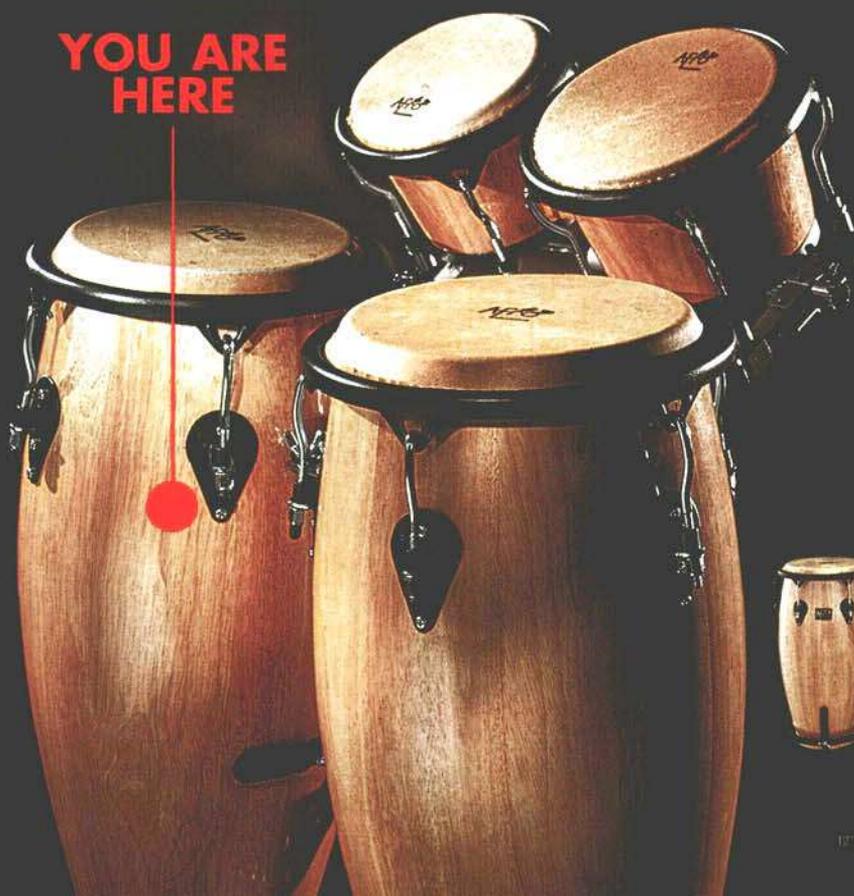
You don't have to respond to that. You can respond to something differently or come up with something else. Maybe you don't respond at all, you just leave space and let it happen without forcing the issue.

KM: Your first two solo albums didn't

prepare listeners for this one. Do you feel you've made a breakthrough, or just gotten a chance to really play?

BD: I hope I've improved—that's what records should be about, a documentation of your progression—especially at this

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stage of my recording career. From my first record [OTB's *Spiral Staircase*] to my most recent one last week [with Dave Shoemaker], I hope there is the same line of consciousness, hopefully improving and maturing and finding myself—developing a sound and having a good cymbal beat. I hope that this record is a reflection of being aware of what I'm doing. It's a chance to be who I am.

KM: I hear Tony-isms in your playing, and some of *Dubai* is Elvin-like as well, but you sound largely influence-free. How does one develop a style?

BD: You have to check out all the cats, the predecessors, even lesser-known ones. I love Pete LaRoca, Ed Blackwell, Billy Higgins, and Ben Riley. Borrow what you like from everybody and synthesize it. You'll become yourself, you're not going to sound just like someone else. It's stupid to spend your whole career trying to do that.

We like the guys we do because they sound like no one else. We like Al Foster because he's totally different from Elvin Jones. I'm sure he listened to Elvin up the yin-yang and tried to play like Elvin early on, but it doesn't come out sounding anything like Elvin. It sounds like Al Foster. That's the beauty of it. That's what we should all be striving for—individuality.

KM: Drummers do model their playing after others'.

BD: We all go through that. One day it's Roy Haynes, other days it's Philly Joe or Barry Altschul or Al Foster. But it will all

come through you and out of you in a funny kind of way. My interpretation of Jon Christensen will be different than Peter Erskine's take on it. I have other stuff that he might not have, and the same for him.

KM: How would you practice extracting that?

BD: I never did that too much. I grew up with Roy Wooten—Future Man—and he brought over [Miles Davis's] "Four"...

Drumming With Drummond

Here are the albums that Billy feels best represent his playing:

Artist	Recording	Label
Billy Drummond Quintet	Native Colors & One World	Criss Cross
Billy Drummond Quartet	The Gift	Criss Cross
Billy Drummond Quartet	Dubai	Criss Cross
Renee Rosnes	For The Moment	Blue Note
Walt Weiskopf Sextet	Simplicity	Criss Cross
Walt Weiskopf Nonet	Song For My Mother	Criss Cross
Scott Wendholt Quintet	Through The Shadows	Criss Cross
Johnny King	Notes From The Underground	Enja
Javon Jackson	A Look Within	Blue Note
Bobby Hutcherson	Mirage	Landmark
Bob Belden	Shades Of Blue	Blue Note
Laurent DeWilde	Open Changes	IDA

Here are Billy's inspirational records from the basement vault:

Artist	Recording	Drummer
Jackie McLean	Jackie's Bag	Philly Joe Jones
John Coltrane	Transition	Elvin Jones
Yusef Lateef	Into Something	Elvin Jones
Miles Davis	Live At The Plugged Nickel	Tony Williams
Wynton Kelly	Kelly At Midnight	Philly Joe Jones
Keith Jarrett	The Impulse Years	Paul Motian
Andrew White	Live At The New Thing	Eric Gravatt
Joe Henderson	Power To The People	Jack DeJohnette
Steve Kuhn	Life's Magic	Al Foster
Keith Jarrett	My Song	Jon Christensen
Gateway	Homecoming	Jack DeJohnette
Jack DeJohnette	Pictures	Jack DeJohnette
Max Roach, Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, Elvin Jones	The Big Beat	

On The Web

If you'd like more information on Billy and his recordings, visit his Web site at: www.jazzcorner.com/drummond.html.

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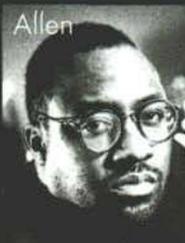
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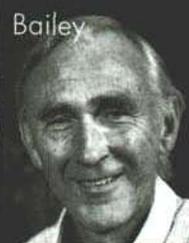
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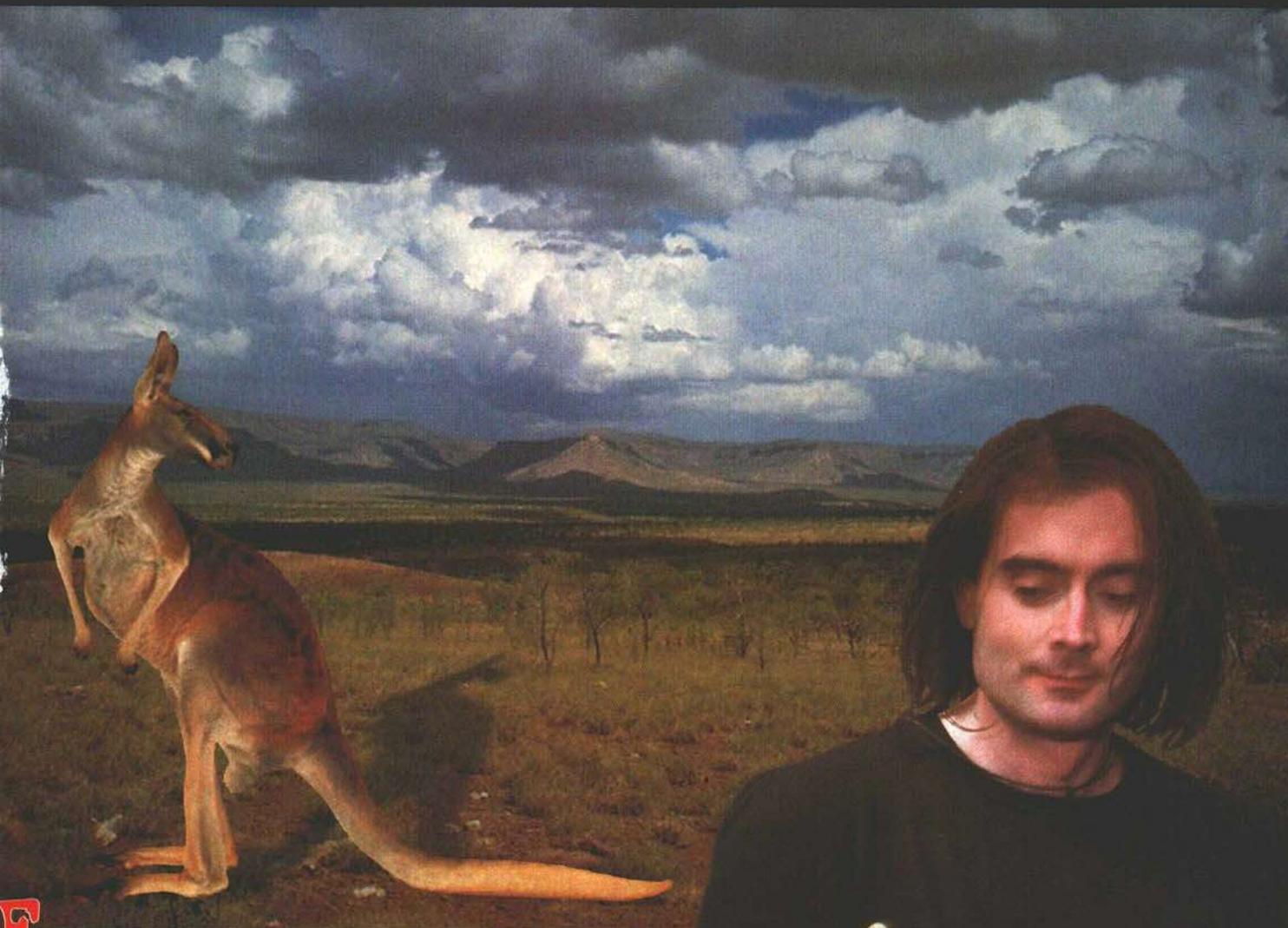


Bailey

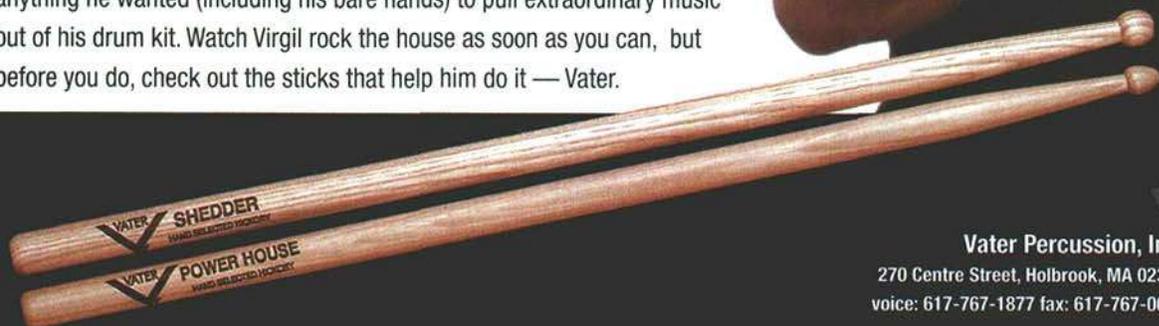


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And More with Tony Williams. When I heard the ride cymbal I was floored. I had been into Max and Philly, but I hadn't heard that kind of clarity. It was different. From then on, it was all about the ride cymbal for me. That led me to Lenny White and Eric Gravatt and Jack DeJohnette, who were coming out of Tony. Listening is one way of extracting a vibe from someone. If there are things you like but can't play, it's time to get down to business and figure it out. The Billy Cobham roll was the big thing back when. You had to work and practice.

KM: Your dad had a big record collection?

BD: Yes, he had Max, Philly Joe, Art Blakey, Louis Hayes, Joe Dukes, Roy Brooks. I still have all my dad's collection, with the original pressings of *Milestones* and *Kind Of Blue*—all that stuff. I also learned a lot from a drummer who's still down in Virginia, Howard Curtis. He's one of the most complete percussionist/drummers I've ever met. He can play like Elvin and then play the Creston concerto for marimba and orchestra. He also plays fife & drum corps and in shows. I had been playing out of the Fred Albright book for

snare drum, and I went to him. He said, "Have you ever heard Jack DeJohnette?" After that, we became friends. This was back in the '70s, when nobody had endorsements.

KM: Do you want an endorsement?

BD: I would like some help on the road. It would be nice if, wherever I went, a drumset of a certain standard would be waiting. If I'm playing somewhere and there is a 24" bass drum with a hole cut out of the head and power toms and *Pinstripe* heads...c'mon. I would like to call a company and say, "Here is my itinerary; can you provide me with something close to my specs?" It's good to have a semblance of sameness throughout a tour so you don't have to go through this crap.

A company like Gretsch was put on the map by Art Blakey, Papa Jo Jones, Philly Joe, Mel Lewis, Tony—the cats that were out there hitting. They weren't selling the kind of records that Marilyn Manson is selling, but they built a company. The guys playing Gretsch today probably got into them because of those cats. I loved looking at their ads when I was little. And the drums always sound great. But that's what

I would want an endorsement for. I have enough drumsets. It's about having some help on the road, which is where I am most of the time. It's a drag to have to play brushes on a *Pinstripe* head. It just doesn't sound right.

Jazz guys can sell drums. We did before. For a while the standards of the industry were whacked. Power toms? Power is here, [points to his arm] Blakey had power on those little Gretsch sets. Or even Billy Cobham on those Fibes drums. The first time I saw him was at a club in Williamsburg, Virginia playing with George Duke, John Scofield, and Alphonso Johnson. I couldn't believe it. It looked like there was a chipmunk behind the set. There were chips of wood flying all over the place. It was deep.

KM: Who were some of the other drummers you saw as a kid?

BD: When I was nine I saw Buddy Rich at the Hampton Jazz Festival. I saw Maurice White with Ramsey Lewis, and I couldn't believe it. He was using a set almost as small as mine. I had a Zim-Gar drumset. I met him and he put me up on his drums. Who knew I'd be listening to him ten years later with Earth, Wind & Fire. Then there was Joe Dukes in Atlantic City with an organ player. He was playing like Art Blakey—really fiery. He was a hard swinger and a great soloist. He had a record on Prestige called *The Soulful Drums Of Joe Dukes*. All the pieces were built around the drum solos.

KM: Did you tape yourself playing in the formative years?

BD: I did. I met Max Roach once, and he recommended I do that. He said to tape your gig and listen back to it. When you're playing, you don't realize that what you're doing might not sound good. It might sound good behind the drums, but it may actually sound ugly out front. There is nothing worse than an ugly sound on the drums. I've always wanted a pretty sound.

KM: You do have a very smooth sound. There is an effortlessness to your playing while you're still swinging. Have you worked hard on technique, posture, and position?

BD: To an extent. I used to practice in front of a mirror. Tony's hands, the way he sat—I always wanted to emulate that. He had such a beautiful way of playing the instrument: poetry in motion. I took snare

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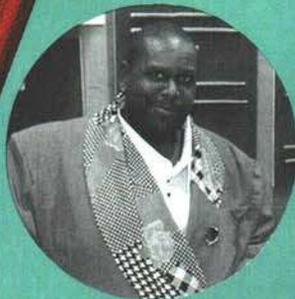


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drum lessons in school. I studied the Cirone and Wilcoxon books. I was into the pad and doing all that correctly. I never studied the drumset—though that was my plan when I came to New York, to get a good teacher. But luckily I started working right away.

I really like Peter Erskine's technique, and Al Foster's. His hands are so beautiful, and Kenny Washington's hands too. I like that beautiful playing. I used to see Al Foster all the time. He's one of my favorites. He has his own vocabulary. His sound is so even.

KM: Is the volume, which Tony Williams was known for, something that can be emulated?

BD: Drums are naturally loud. In the beginning when drums were played, they were played outside. If I do play loud, it's not because I've borrowed it from Tony. Philly Joe was loud with Miles. Tony was accused of that, but I can't say anything bad about him.

KM: But how do you translate that aggressiveness into your drumming?

BD: You have to follow the music. Sometimes you can dictate, especially if

it's your band.

KM: On the track "Car Tunes," from *The Gift*, was aggression a goal?

BD: I wanted that '60s, Chick Corea vibe. That's a Donald Brown tune.

KM: On *Dubai* the interplay is aggressive.

BD: It just came off that way. I didn't say anything; we just played. Those Criss Cross dates are usually good, because there is no record company pressure. It's just cats playing for the moment. I've been on over thirty Criss Cross records. There isn't a bad one in the bunch.

KM: What do you practice now to keep pushing ahead?

BD: I don't really practice; I go downstairs and play. Things will come up and I'll start going for stuff. I might put on a record and play along with it just to keep loose. If I can get away with it I'll play all night. Renee does the same thing. Or I might start playing records or take all my snare drums out and play with them. I try to retain that feeling I had when I was a little kid. I'm a big fan of *MD* [*Billy's got a couple years' worth of the magazine neatly stacked in one comer*], and I still buy a lot of records. I go to my basement and enter my dream

world of all the cats. I've been lucky. I've played with Sonny Rollins, Bobby Hutcherson, Pat Metheny, Joe Henderson, Steve Kuhn. I never thought that would happen.

KM: How long were you with Sonny Rollins?

BD: For a year and a half, from '94 to '95. When he is on, there is nothing like it. He can trade eights with you for half an hour, with him staring you in the face. He's a well of ideas, and he never repeats himself. You run out of your stuff pretty quick! He keeps you so rhythmic, and his sound is so great. Even the rehearsals were incredible.

Sonny likes good, solid time from the drummer. I don't think he wants too much dialog. He wants time as a springboard for him to do his thing. He has so much inside, he is so rhythmic and so melodic. He needs to have a level to play off of. Anything less would detract from what he is about. He likes to trade, he likes that conversation. That experience strengthened me.

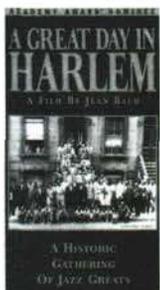
Buster Williams is another guy who turned me out in terms of time. A heavy bass player, four to the bar. Heavy swing. He and Ron Carter—they pull a lift out of

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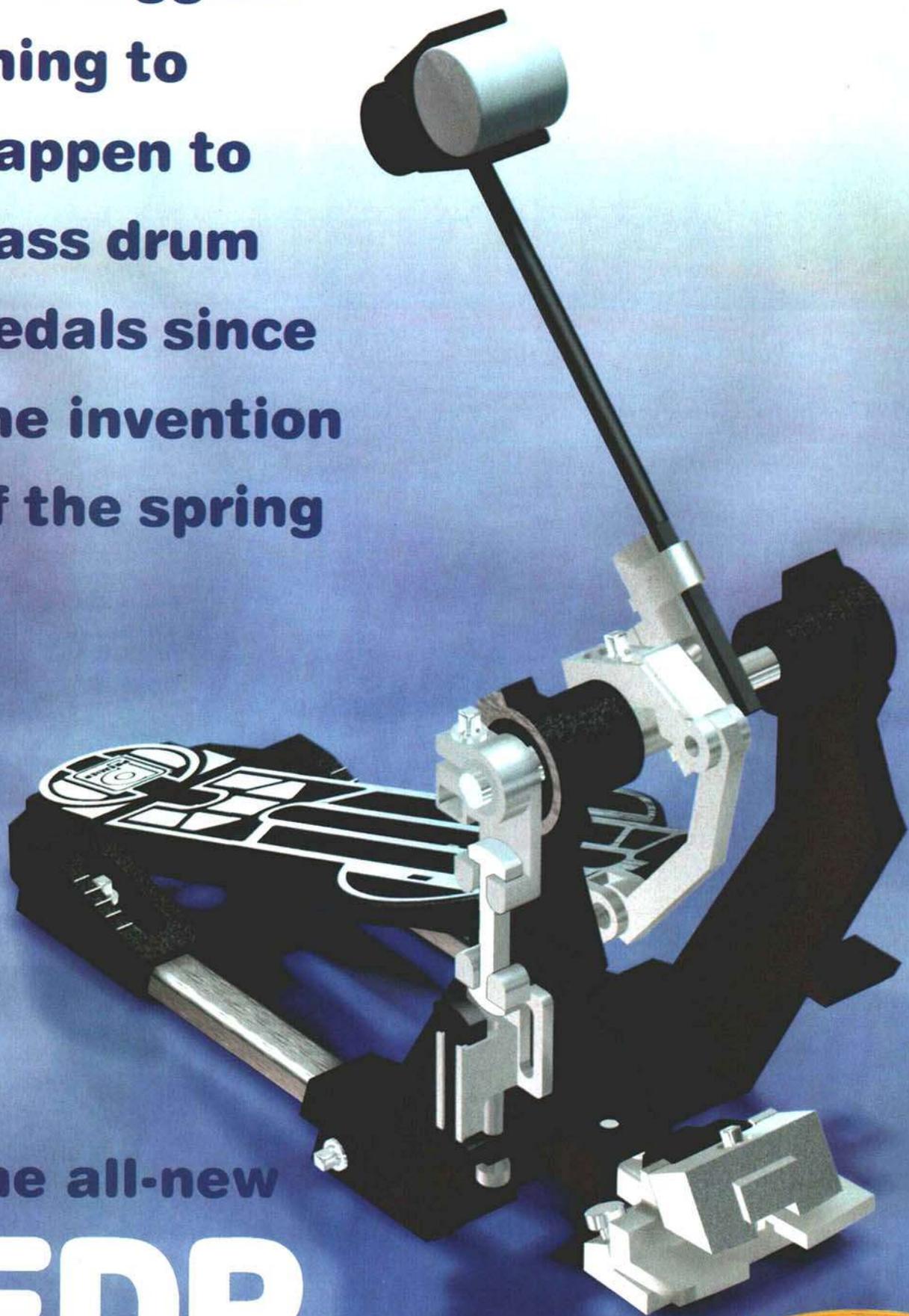


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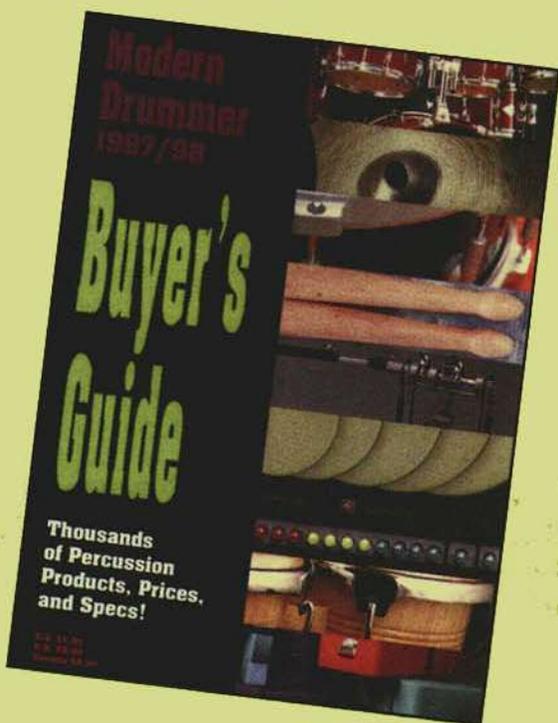
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you. I was used to my contemporaries, and we're trying to figure it all out. But when you get with those cats, they pull you up.

KM: What other leader gigs helped you improve?

BD: I played with Bobby Hutcherson regularly for seven years. That was a dream gig, because he played a lot with Joe Chambers, who influenced me so much cymbal-wise. Playing with him helped me focus my cymbal beat. Bobby's a vibes player who wants you to go for it. He likes to hear that bashing thing. He's from the '60s, when they wanted to free the stuff up. I had to play intensely without covering him up, which is what Joe Chambers did so well. He was intense but not loud, so you could still hear Bobby.

Steve Kuhn is another guy I love playing with. I went into these bands after my idols. Kuhn used to play with Al Foster. To fit in with Steve's very personal style, you can't play haphazardly. You have to be sensitive. He likes a lot of dialog, but you have to be swinging. You can't play stock figures. You have to be creative.

KM: You played more in the pocket with

Horace Silver.

BD: Horace wanted me to build everything. Don't let it all hang out right away. He wanted the solo to build to a climax. He said, Don't play all your stuff right away, let it happen. Then I did a few weeks with Joe Henderson.

KM: How would you contrast playing with Rollins and Henderson?

BD: Joe is a little more subtle. He is coming out of Sonny, who was a big influence on Joe. Different tones and sounds. With Joe you can play a little more, a little looser.

KM: Your drumming is very subtle on *Dubai*, but it's also very aggressive in places. With Renee, you play very closely with her rhythms; you're very smooth. It's surprising to hear you play more out and free.

I played recently with [bassist] Marty Ehrlich, who people see as a Knitting Factory guy. But when you play with these guys you realize it's all the same. You play whatever the music calls for.

Look at my record collection. I've got the Art Ensemble of Chicago and Oscar

Peterson. But I love both of them. I don't care. I hope the young cats coming up don't put blinders on. There is so much music to enjoy. Too many of us don't socialize together around New York. That separation is going to hurt. All kinds of things can fit under the banner called "jazz." We don't sell a lot of records as jazz musicians anyway. Why divide it all up so we get even less of the pie?

KM: The corporate marketing of jazz seems to be a hindrance, not a help to the music.

BD: They want to give it a rock 'n' roll image. Jazz was never like that. It was never big business. It's okay to make money, but to say that one guy is *the* guy? The musicians usually decide that. Everybody was digging Coltrane before he was famous. Hopefully the younger musicians will get out of this separatism thing, whether it's hard bop versus free, or white versus black. The experienced acts are cool, they just want to play. That's why I switch from style to style; the music is still beautiful on all counts.

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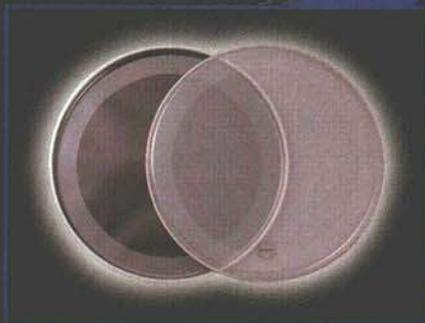
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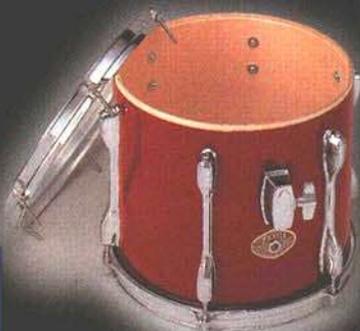
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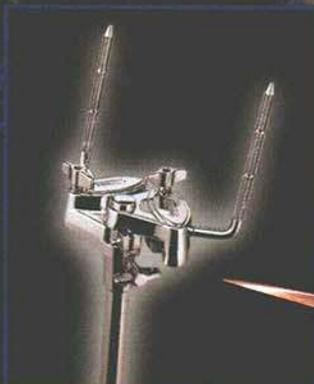
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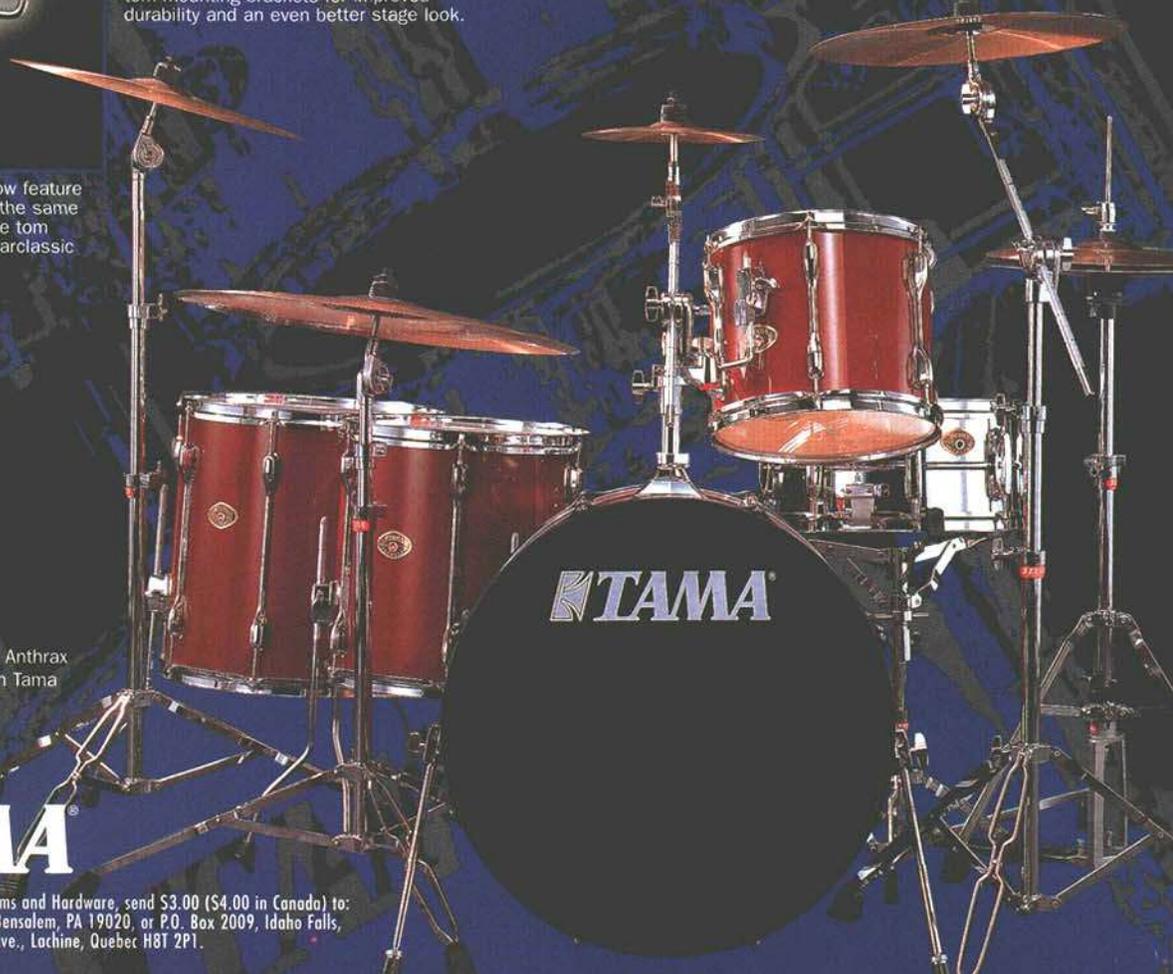


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your records, not the usual standards. Charles Lloyd, Harold Land—even unusual Monk tunes.

BD: I want to record the tunes written by the musicians. We've done Gershwin and Irving Berlin, but let's check the other stuff.

KM: You're obviously a connoisseur, which reflects in your drumming.

BD: I like the finer things, [laughs] Harold Land, Walter Bishop Jr., Dewey Redman—these are great writers no one knows about.

KM: Your cymbal sound is very smooth, refined, and even. Did you concentrate on cymbal playing at any point?

BD: There again, Tony Williams was a big influence. I started thinking about that when I heard him in the early '70s. I would just sit down with my ride cymbal and ride for hours—playing different tempos, just trying to get a good sound. Then I checked out Jack DeJohnette with Charles Lloyd and Joe Henderson [*Power To The People*], Lenny White with Freddie Hubbard [*Red Clay*] and Joe Henderson [*Live At The*

Lighthouse, If You're Not Part Of The Solution You're Part Of The Problem], Joe Chambers with Bobby Hutcherson [*Total Eclipse*]*—that's all for cymbal playing. How about Roy Haynes with Chick Corea [*Now He Sings Now He Sobs!*] More recently, I've checked out Ben Riley with Kenny Barron on *Green Chimneys*.*

I also worked on being able to hear 2 and 4 without so much chomping on the hi-hat. I like the hi-hat there, but it's good to translate that into your ride cymbal beat. That way you hear that 2 and 4, but it's not lopsided. It should be even without the heavy accent on 2 and 4. You don't want to sound like a clock. It should be a smooth line of consciousness, not hippity-hoppity. Listen to Jimmy Cobb for that. It should all be felt and moving. Buoyancy is the goal.

With Tony, it sounded like his bass drum and hi-hat were on springs. Then when you saw him live you saw that he was playing 4/4 on the bass drum too, to maintain the undercurrent. He had that strong foundation. You have to have that. His scope was wide.

There are so many great drummers, guys you've never heard of. There's Edgar Bateman in Philadelphia, Bobby Ward and Lenny Nelson—they both grew up with Tony Williams in Boston—Ralph Penland in Los Angeles, Leroy Williams and Pete LaRoca here in New York...primo, bad dudes.

KM: You've sometimes referred to "letting the drums play themselves." When does that happen?

BD: When you work with those special leaders or with a really good bass player—then the music plays itself. I don't have to force anything. I can just let it happen rather than force the issue to create this excitement or to make it swing. When everything is right, *you* don't have to make anything happen. The drums play themselves.

KM: What gigs did your dad do down in Newport News?

BD: In his young days, before he became a county sheriff, he played bebop. I still have a test pressing of a record he made: The Billy Drummond All-Stars. I would wake up to Jimmy Smith, Horace Silver, Art Blakey. He was into Sid Catlett, Philly Joe, Max, and Art—those were his guys. I would look at his old *Down Beats* and see the guys playing Gretsch drums.

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I was always attracted to the drum solos. It seemed fun. He showed me how to hold the Sticks. He could play all the hip hi-hat and brush stuff. I was into Buddy Rich, but dad told me about Max. I realized there was another way of soloing. You didn't have to be Superman. You could think in a different way.

I played in the band in school; my dad wanted me to learn how to read music. I played All-City and All-State percussion, going through the snare drum books. And I played in Top-40 bands, funk bands. Then I discovered soul music and eventually Billy Cobham. I got my performance degree from Shenandoah Conservatory. I played at Busch Gardens for two summers. We made the Festhouse Band record. I split the drum chair with Roy Wooten.

I also met Carter Beauford at Shenandoah; he was a recreational therapy student at the time. No one knew he played drums but me and a couple other guys. We were just buddies, hanging out, listening to records, partying. Carter and I would take turns practicing while one of us went out for food. I turned him on to Elvin; he was

more from the Cobham-Harvey Mason thing. He was a great funk player, even then. I learned a lot from him as well about grooving and playing in the pocket. He's an incredible drummer and one of my closest friends. *[Carter spoke highly of Billy's talents in his October '96 MD cover story.]*

KM: What were the events that led up to your moving to New York?

BD: I came to New York in 1988. I did a Top-40 band for the four years prior to coming, but I would come to Manhattan on my nights off. I'd come see Al Foster a lot, who was very encouraging. He let me sit in with Joe Henderson. I sounded awful.

Anyway, I moved to New York with some money I had saved. I got a gig with OTB, which was kind of a fluke. Mike Mossman, the trumpet player, called and said, "We can't find Ralph Peterson. Can you make a gig in Pennsylvania tonight?" He gave me directions and I made the gig, which I sounded horrible on. I didn't know their music. Ralph's a great drummer, and I was totally green. But they took me on, which was my first week in New York. I played the next weekend at the Village

Gate—and I didn't even know how to get there! We were playing opposite the Mingus Dynasty band with Billy Hart, Buster Williams, and Kenny Barron. I was like, Man, this is stupid.

I came to New York simply to study and hang out and hear the cats—just soak it all up and see what happens. I got a gig, but I wasn't prepared for it. It's another level in New York. After that I worked with Joe Henderson, then Horace Silver, all the while meeting people and playing sessions. I got a house gig at Augies. I played Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, Bill Stewart played Thursday, and Leon Parker played the weekends. I didn't come with the idea that I would take over New York. It was the opposite; I wanted to check it all out.

KM: Were your preconceptions about New York shattered?

BD: I thought a lot of cats would be playing around that weren't here. But other than that, New York is still the place—the most vibrant scene. You go anywhere else and you notice it right away.



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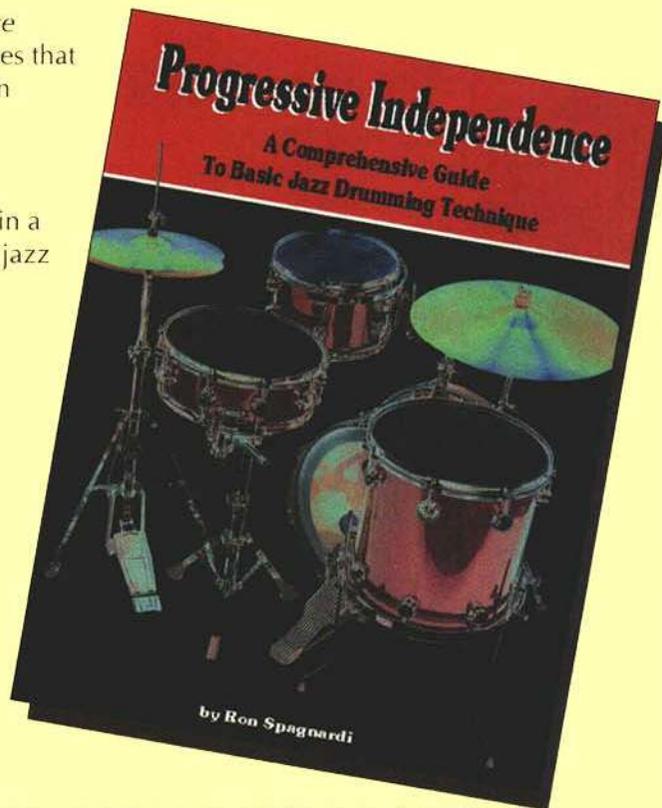
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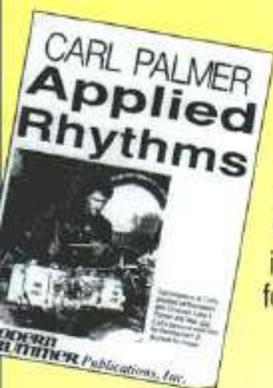
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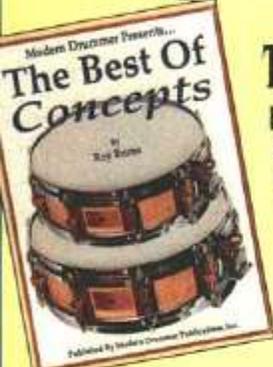
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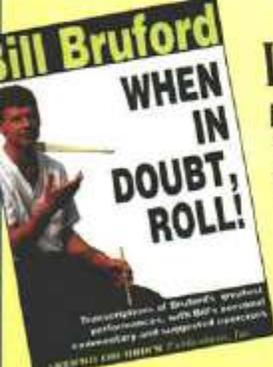
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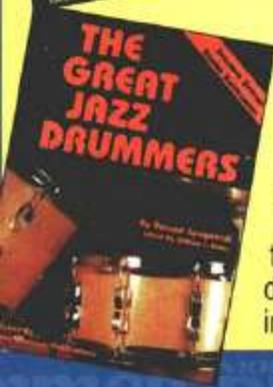
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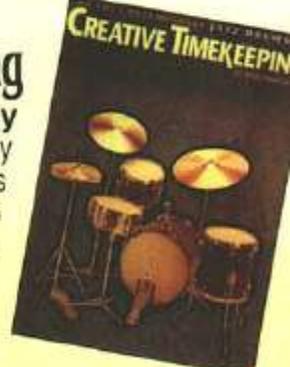
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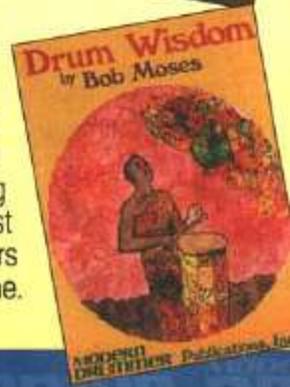
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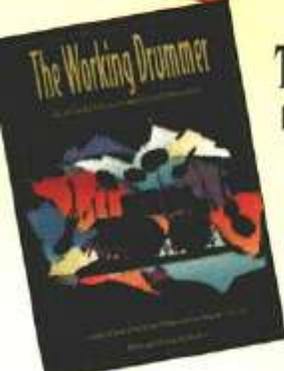




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MOD5

YAMAHA

Drums At Thirty

by Rick Van Horn

Keeping
The
Concept

If you picture Yamaha as a major musical-instrument manufacturer with multiple product divisions flung across the world, you'd be right. (My visit to the drum division alone recently took me to both Osaka and Hamamatsu, in Japan, and to Jakarta, in Indonesia.) On the other hand, if you figure that percussion instruments made by such a company would automatically *reflect a corporate* mentality with an emphasis on high-tech mass production and the bottom line, well—there you'd be wrong. Scale and scope of operation notwithstanding, Yamaha drum equipment is manufactured under one guiding principle: Keeping the concept of hand-crafted quality.

Now in its 30th-anniversary year, Yamaha's drum division has been operating under that guiding principle since its inception. And along the way, that principle has led to the development of instruments and systems that have set industry standards, including birch drumshells, suspended "floor toms," and low-mass lugs.

My guide and mentor throughout my visit to Yamaha's facilities was the company's drum marketing *manager*, Takahashi Hagiwara—known to drummers around the world simply as "Hagi." He outlines the company's phi-

losophy regarding the creation of drums, saying, "We want people to know that even though Yamaha is a modern manufacturing company, our drums are still handmade. Now, obviously 'handmade' doesn't mean that they're whittled out of a tree; of course machines are used to make some of the work easier. But those machines are carefully controlled by skilled technicians. And even then, every step has someone checking it by hand. And many of the steps lead to final work that is done entirely by hand, without any machine assistance.

"Yamaha always tries to determine the best way of doing any given operation," Hagi continues. "Should it be put on a computer-operated machine, or done by hand? You have to look at costs, because that's part of doing business. A computerized machine might make drums a little faster—but the machine alone might cost \$200,000. Compared to other types of manufactured products, the drum industry is still making products in relatively small numbers. How many drums would we have to make before the machine paid for itself?"

"Naturally, where we can reduce costs, we do so. That's why we moved our low-end manufacturing operation to Indonesia a few years ago—to take advantage of labor costs, greater manufacturing space, and other factors. But first and foremost we think about quality—which is why we kept the high-end operation in Osaka, which is fairly near to the headquarters facility in Hamamatsu. That way we keep production close to the design office, and we can easily work on prototypes, test new ideas, and get input from our endorsing artists. And we can oversee every aspect of product development to maintain the quality level."

The Yamaha Product Line

Product development is near and dear to Hagi's heart—mainly because he's been so heavily involved with it over the years. When it comes to product development, Yamaha takes a long view—preferring to set trends rather than follow them. As a result, the *Recording Custom* series has been on the market for twenty-one years; the *Maple Custom* series has been around for ten. And each of these series was several years in development prior to its launch.

To these veteran drum lines Yamaha has added the *Beech Custom* series, introduced in January of this year.

One reason for the new line is acoustic; maple, birch, and beech each have their own unique sound, and different drummers have their preferences for different reasons. The other reason is economic, as Hagi explains. "Our *Stage Custom* low-end kit sells for around \$1,195 retail. A *Maple Custom* kit is priced at \$4,700, a *Recording Custom* at \$4,400. We could have given the *Stage Custom* a little shinier lacquer finish and sold it as a 'mid-priced' kit for \$1,000 more. But that's not Yamaha's way of thinking. We already have a good-sounding low-end kit with wood shells and a lacquer finish, and it's selling well. Why tinker with a good thing?"

"So instead of thinking about how to make the *Stage Custom* more expensive, we wanted to develop a totally new step up. I wanted a kit with professional features—six-ply tom-toms and snare drums and eight-ply bass drums, YESS suspension mounts, wood hoops on the bass drums, professional lugs, and a unique badge design—but that could be made for less than the high-end kits we already had. So how about a new wood?"

There must be an element of *deja vu* in this new launch for Hagi, because "How about a new wood?" was the question he asked of the drum industry over twenty-two years ago, when he first dreamed of creating an all-birch kit. Prior to that time, all of Yamaha's drums featured combination birch/mahogany/birch shells—in a

market dominated by maple drums.

Fortunately for Yamaha, Hagi's dream was aided by a change in recording trends. Maple drums were warm and resonant—which was fine as long as they were being recorded with a couple of overhead mic's, a bass drum mic', and one mic' for snare and hi-hat. But with the advent of "fusion" in the mid-'70s, kits began to be recorded with mic's on every tom. Engineers wanted drums with short decays, because they were easy to control.

To gain input for the development of his "dream" kit, in 1975 Hagi brought

make a lot of changes. Don't confuse people.'

"Many of the drummers brought in products or ideas to show me," Hagi continues. "I studied a *lot* during that week, and I developed my new ideas. Six months later I had the *Recording Custom* prototypes to show the guys."

"The guys" included studio legend Steve Gadd, who has been associated with Yamaha drum development since the mid-'70s. "I talked a lot to Steve," says Hagi. "As a team, we developed the *Recording Custom* toms to take advantage of birch's shorter decay time. We also decided not to cover the shells, based on information I got from visiting Frank Ippolito's Professional Drum Shop in New York. Frank used to take the coverings off of other brands of drums, re-finish them, and sell them as 'his' drums. And they always sounded better! So when we introduced the *Recording Custom* series, they came with our 'Real Wood' lacquered finish." (To this day, Yamaha offers no covered drumkit lines to the general market.)

Hagi credits Steve Gadd with the idea behind another major Yamaha innovation: "Steve suggested that some of the sound of floor toms went through the legs into the floor. Perhaps they should be hung instead. So we created that idea, around '76 or '77."

From its initial launch in 1975, the *Recording Custom* drumkit has gone on to become what Yamaha believes is the most-recorded drumkit ever. (Given its

incredible popularity throughout the late '70s and '80s—and the preeminence of the drummers who played on it—it would be hard to dispute that claim.) And although there have been a few technical improvements over the years, today's version is not all that different from the one launched in 1975. As Hagi puts it: "We've kept the concept."

However, as a *marketing* manager, Hagi recognizes that it's hard to keep things the same—no matter how successful they may be—when other brands are changing in order to "look new." "It's



one of the last Yamaha birch/mahogany/birch drumkits to Frank Zappa's studio in California, and invited LA's top studio drummers to play it and give him their input. "Jeff Porcaro, Jim Keltner, Larry Bunker, and many other drummers came in over a period of a week," Hagi recalls. "Many people liked the short decay of that kit—and remember, it was our *old* model. Jim Keltner—who has always been a friend and teacher to me—kept saying, 'Hagi, if you're going to make something new, keep the concept. Don't

important for us to expand our business, of course," he says. "You can't remain stagnant. A few years ago we added the *YESS* suspension mount to the *Recording Custom* series to bring it more into what people wanted for suspended-drum sound. And the new tom holder we introduced around the same time provided tremendous improvement in flexibility of positioning. But we designed that holder so that it could be completely compatible with a twenty-year-old drumkit; it would fit exactly the same way. This is part of 'keeping the concept:' Bring in new ideas, but don't lose what you already have that's good."

The biggest problem with making design changes in lugs or tom holders is that they are expensive to implement, and they can alienate just as many people as they please. However, it's easy for Yamaha to make changes in colors and finishes. So they have focused on this area very heavily, offering the new *Custom* program of color selection (along with shell and lug choices) from an extremely wide palette. In addition, the limited-edition *30th Anniversary Maple Custom* series comes in a variety of sparkle finishes, including blue fade and Elvin Jones gold.

"That kit also features a special 'badged' drumhead," says Hagi, "like from the days of Buddy Rich, when drummers would have their initials on their heads. The badge is almost identical to those used on Yamaha kits thirty years ago. These are all the kinds of marketing things that are fun to do, in a limited edition, for a special purpose. It makes them special now, and perhaps a little more 'collectible' later on.

"Later on" is very important to Hagi. "When I'm thinking about a line of drums," he says, "I'm not thinking about today. I'm thinking about how people will feel about them in the future. Maybe twenty or thirty years from now, people will look back at our drums with the same reverence that drummers now have for 'classic' Gretsch or Ludwig drums today. That's my dream."

Yamaha Hamamatsu

Hamamatsu, Japan could just as easily have been called "Yamaha City," since Yamaha's corporate offices and manufacturing facilities occupy a very large portion of the city. It is here that Yamaha makes pianos, band instruments, and a variety of other products. And although drums are not

actually manufactured here, it is here that they are created—because it's in Hamamatsu that Yamaha maintains its design section, R&D department, and product-testing facilities.



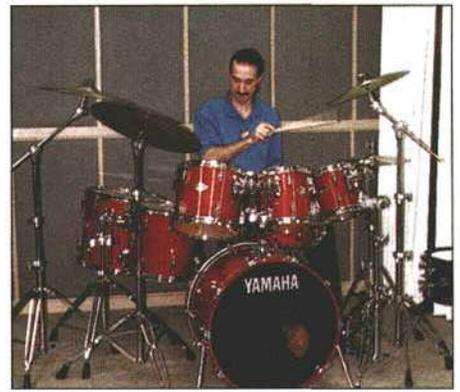
Yamaha's "brain trust"—the designers who create drums and equipment—utilize computers to help them formulate building plans and diagrams.



The plans go to the talented men of the R&D department, many of whom have been with the company fifteen years or more. It's up to them to create prototypes for testing—like the timpani shown here.



Yamaha's electronic percussion designers are also located in the Hamamatsu facility. Product testing (here being conducted on a prototype of the new *DTX Version 2* by Yamaha's US percussion products manager, Steve Anzivino, under the watchful eye of Yamaha designer Mr. Tanaka) takes place in a specially constructed sound studio. Yamaha is heavily committed to the development of electronic percussion along with its acoustic lines.



Testing of acoustic products (like this *Beech Custom* drumkit) takes place in yet another soundproof facility. It's here that Yamaha artists are often invited to play the products and offer their input.

Yamaha Osaka

Yamaha's *Maple Custom*, *Recording Custom*, and new *Beech Custom* drums are manufactured in Osaka, in a plant owned and operated by Sakae Rhythm Musical Instruments, Ltd. With a proud seventy-year history of making musical instruments, Sakae has been making drums for Yamaha for over thirty years—the past twenty of which have been totally dedicated to Yamaha production. The company is headed by Mrs. Akiko Nakata and her son Eizo. When Mrs. Nakata's husband (then the president of the company) died suddenly ten years ago, Mrs. Nakata took over the operation and carried on in his spirit. The company has continued to flourish under her direction.

The construction of a Yamaha drum begins with maple, birch, or beech veneers milled in Hamamatsu and shipped to Sakae Rhythm. Although rough-cut to size at the mill, each veneer must be precision-cut as the first manufacturing step in drum-making.



A carefully angled cut is put on each veneer to create the scarf joint that is a feature of Yamaha shells. Each veneer then gets rolled through a machine that applies just the right amount of a specially formulated glue.

Glued veneers are hand-bent and placed within large steel molds. Each "layer" of veneer is rotated within the mold so as to stagger the seams where the ends meet (for added strength).



Veneers are tapped firmly into the shell to ensure a proper fit and gapless seams.



The key to Yamaha's *Air Seal* system is this inflatable bladder, which is placed inside the mold—within the drumshell—to apply outward pressure. The process squeezes out any excess glue, keeping the shell thickness consistent. At the same time, it forces the shell to conform absolutely to the shape of the mold—thus ensuring roundness.



Molds with "shells-to-be" inside are put through an industrial-size microwave oven to cure the glue from the inside out. This minimizes both time and temperature requirements, and prevents damage to the shell from overheated moisture within the cellular structure of the wood.



Most shells are trimmed on a twin-blade saw that cuts their top and bottom edges (and establishes their dimensions) at the same time. Certain shells, however, get cut into bass drum hoops on this multiple-blade saw.



Sanding is an important element of Yamaha drum finishing. This operator carefully sands the inside of a tom-tom shell. The machine moves the sandpaper on two different axes, while rotating the shell against it.

After initial sanding, the shells are stained. Then they are allowed to cure overnight in a specially controlled room. Next comes three coatings of polyester with sanding in between each coating, and another night of curing.

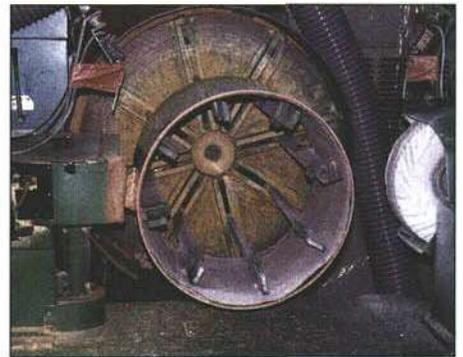


After yet more machine and hand sanding, the shells are sprayed with a layer of colored polyurethane, sanded again, then sprayed with two layers of clear polyurethane. All of the final spraying, including the coloring itself, is done by hand, by craftsmen who have been with the company for many years.

Another night of curing is followed by still more machine sanding, hand sanding, machine buffing, and hand buffing. In all, each drum goes back and forth between the spraying and sanding/buffing operations a total of nine times.



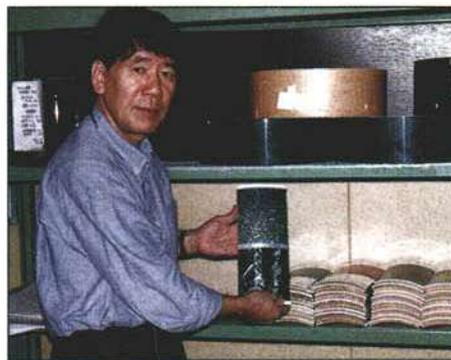
Maple Custom Vintage shells aren't sprayed—they're hand-stained with a special varnish also used inside the barrels of Yamaha clarinets (because it is especially resistant to humidity). After each shell is stained, it goes into the curing room for a day, then gets "seasoned" for a longer period. Then it is stained a second time, and cured again for a day. When completed, the finish actually "mellows" with age, turning from a pale pinkish color to a golden amber.



This buffing operation turns each shell between two buffing wheels (one spinning vertically, the other horizontally) to smooth out the microscopic lines made by the other.

After coming off the machine, each drum is further buffed by hand. Hand-buffing of *Recording Custom* drums has been

overseen by Mr. Koyama (shown below) for the past fifteen years. So virtually every drummer playing such a kit has Mr. Koyama to thank for its final appearance!



Every finish offered by Yamaha is sprayed onto a shell segment (displayed at lower left by drum marketing manager Takahashi "Hagi" Hagiwari), along with data about that color and how it was mixed. Half of the segment is then covered in silver foil to protect it from ultraviolet rays, which are a major cause of fading. The rest of the shell is left exposed. Yamaha keeps these samples for many years in order to be able to re-create the original color.

Bearing edges and snare beds are cut on programmable machines. They must be carefully calibrated for every type of drum, and they are rechecked for correct calibration every few drums. Bearing edges of 35° are used on snare drums to promote a sharp attack.

A template is used to guide the special cutting machine to create the contour on the top and bottom of each shell, including the snare bed on the



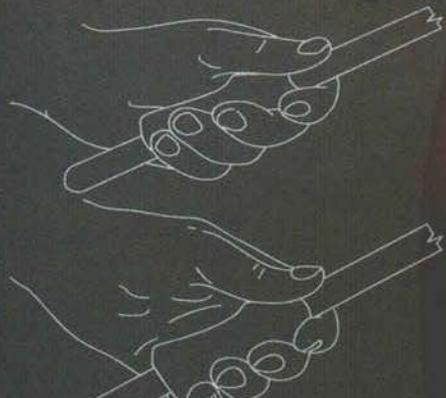
bottom edge. Snare beds are cut differently on the *Steve Gadd* models; all others are the same throughout the various series.

After cutting, bearing edges are carefully hand-sanded, then "trued" against a metal surface guaranteed by the Japanese government to be an absolutely flat surface. (The slightest imperfection sends the drum back to have its edge recut.) The edges on *all* pro-level Yamaha drums are sealed with the same varnish that is used on the *Vintage* kits, which protects the edges from moisture. Thus there is no exposed or "raw" wood anywhere on the drum.



A series of presses set up with multiple-drill configurations drill the shells for tom mounts, lugs, snare strainers, etc. Each setup is carefully checked against the actual

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piece of hardware that the holes will accommodate. The operator double-checks the positions of the holes on the drumshell by wrapping a template around the outside surface of the shell to show exactly where each set of holes should be drilled.

After the holes have been drilled, an inspector checks them against another template. He also marks the correct locations for two badges and the *YESS* tom mount.

Drilled shells move onto an assembly line, where the various hardware is installed.

The design of drum hardware is more complicated than it might appear. For example, the low-mass *Maple Custom* lug is cast with a tiny pin to keep it vertical, which is critical since it is only attached to the shell with one screw. The pin only penetrates about halfway through the plies of the shell, but still prevents the lug from rotating. A nylon washer helps to lock in tuning and make the lug noiseless. There's also a self-locking nut within the lug, and a tiny plastic part that seats inside the lug to hold the self-locking nut in place. Four separate parts must be cast and/or

machined just for this lug. But it provides the performance that Yamaha wants.

The cost of manufacturing or purchasing "small parts" like these is a large part of the overall cost of manufacturing drums. But Yamaha tries to economize in this area by "designing to last." For example, the basic design of their bass drum spurs has been the same for over twenty-two years. Says Hagi, "When you find something that works, you stay with it."

Yamaha Indonesia

Yamaha Music Manufacturing Indonesia (YMMI) was established in the city of Jakarta in 1989 to take advantage of low labor costs, larger manufacturing space, and locally available materials.



Since 1995 the drum-making operation has been totally dedicated to the production of Yamaha's *Stage Custom* series. The factory turns out

thousands of the entry-level drumsets each year.

The manufacturing processes for *Stage Custom* drums are essentially the same as for all other Yamaha lines—including the use of the *Air Seal* system. Only the shell materials (mahogany, falkata, and birch) and some elements of the finishing processes are different.



Much of the manufacturing is done on new, state-of-the-art equipment like this edge-cutting machine...



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...but the hand-crafting concept remains firmly in place, with operations like hand-sanding bass drum hoops...

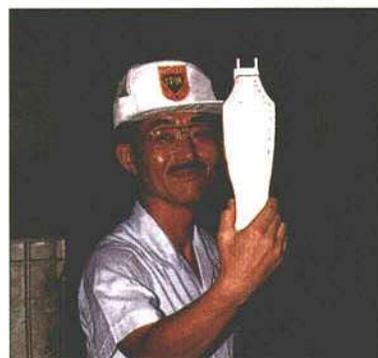


...and inspecting each shell individually for trueness.

Yamaha makes most of its drum hardware in the Yamaha Indonesia Motor Manufacturing (YIMM) motorcycle factory. Many motorcycle parts are die-cast and/or machined—processes that are also required for drum hardware. Since the enormous (and expensive) casting, machining, and plating equipment already existed in the motorcycle factory, it made economic sense to establish the hardware-making operation there as well.



Casting machines as large as this...



...are required to make a single pedal plate (displayed here by YMMI president Hideo Ohashi).

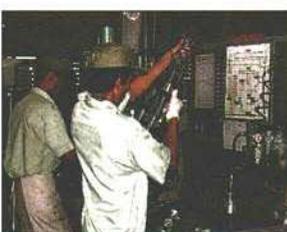
While machines provide the heating, molding, or mechanical force necessary for the initial creation of various parts, skilled craftsmen turn them into finished drum hardware by such processes as de-burring pedal castings with a hand-held grinder...



...buffing each lug casing individually prior to plating...



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MD '97 READERS

HONOR ROLL

MD's Honor Roll consists of those drummers and percussionists whose talent, musical achievements, and lasting popularity placed them first in MD's Readers Poll in the categories indicated for five or more years. We will include these artists, along with those added in the future, in each year's Readers Poll Results as our way of honoring these very special performers. This year, MD is pleased to add Eddie Bayers (Country '93-'97), Peter Erskine (Mainstream Jazz '92 and '94-'97), and Tito Puente (Percussionist '92-'95 and '97) to the Honor Roll.

ALEX ACUNA Latin/Brazilian Percussion

STEVE GADD All-Around; Studio

AIRTO Latin American and Latin/Brazilian Percussion

DAVID GARIBALDI R&B/Funk

KENNY ARONOFF Pop/Mainstream Rock

LARRIE LONDIN Country

EDDIE BAYERS Country

ROD MORGENSTEIN Rock/Progressive Rock

LOUIE BELLSON Big Band

NEIL PEART Rock; Multi-Percussion

GARY BURTON Mallet Percussion

TITO PUENTE Percussionist

DENNIS CHAMBERS Electric Jazz; Funk

BUDDY RICH Big Band

ANTHONY J. CIRONE Classical Percussion

ED SHAUGHNESSY Big Band

VINNIE COLAIUTA All-Around; Studio

STEVE SMITH All-Around

PHIL COLLINS Pop/Mainstream Rock

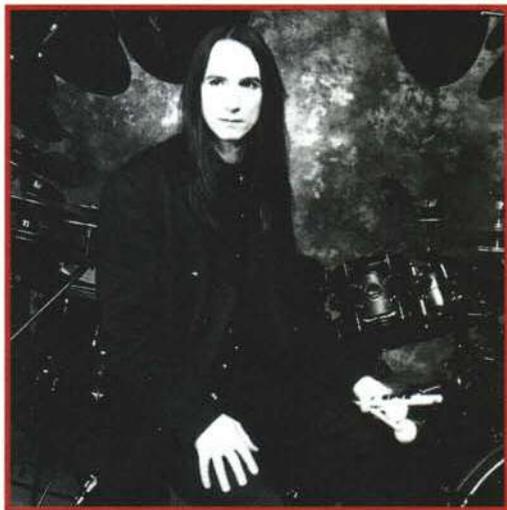
LARS ULRICH Hard Rock

PETER ERSKINE Mainstream Jazz

DAVE WECKL Electric Jazz

VIC FIRTH Classical Percussion

TONY WILLIAMS Jazz/Mainstream Jazz



HALL OF FAME 1997: TERRY BOZZIO

1996: Vinnie Colaiuta

1987: Billy Cobham

1995: Elvin Jones

1986: Tony Williams

1994: Larrie Londin

1985: Louie Bellson

1993: Jeff Porcaro

1984: Steve Gadd

1992: Max Roach

1983: Neil Peart

1991: Art Blakey

1982: Keith Moon

1990: Bill Bruford

1981: John Bonham

1989: Carl Palmer

1980: Buddy Rich

1988: Joe Morello

1979: Gene Krupa

POLL RESULTS



ALL-AROUND
ANTON FIG

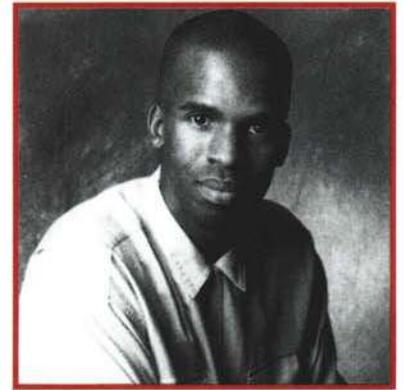
2. Kenny Aronoff
3. Carter Beauford
4. Simon Phillips
5. Dennis Chambers



Jay Wiley

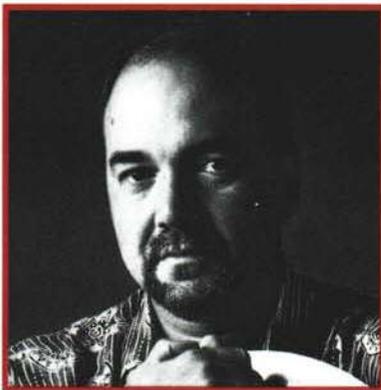
STUDIO
KENNY ARONOFF

2. Josh Freese
3. John "J.R." Robinson
4. Curt Bisquera
5. Jim Keltner



ELECTRIC JAZZ
WILLIAM KENNEDY

2. Steve Smith
3. Joel Rosenblatt
4. Paul Wertico
5. Billy Cobham



Shigeru Uchiyama

MAINSTREAM JAZZ
PETER ERSKINE

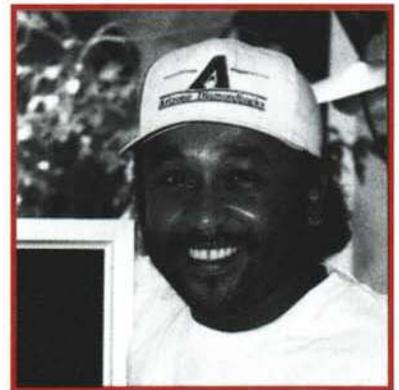
2. Max Roach
3. Bill Stewart
4. Marvin "Smitty" Smith
5. Jack DeJohnette



Sean Yennett

BIG BAND
MARVIN "SMITTY" SMITH

2. John Riley
3. Bernie Dresel
4. Lewis Nash
5. Gregg Field



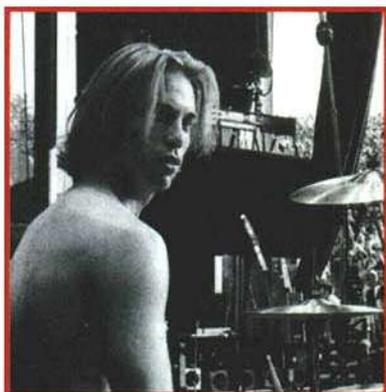
POP/MAINSTREAM ROCK
CARTER BEAUFORD

2. Steve Smith
3. Matt Cameron
4. Vinnie Colaiuta
5. Jimmy Chamberlin

READERS POLL SUBSCRIPTION GIVEAWAY

In appreciation for the participation of MD's readership in this year's poll, three ballots were drawn at random to determine the winners of a Flashback Tee and a 6-Panel Cap from MD's Classic

Casuals line. Those winners are Tim Toohey (of Elgin, Texas), Brett Williams (of Tarzana, California), and Edwin Colon (of Bayamon, Puerto Rico). Congratulations from Modern Drummer!



**HARD ROCK
MATT CAMERON**

2. Danny Carey
3. Alex Van Halen
4. Vinnie Paul
5. Dave Lombardo

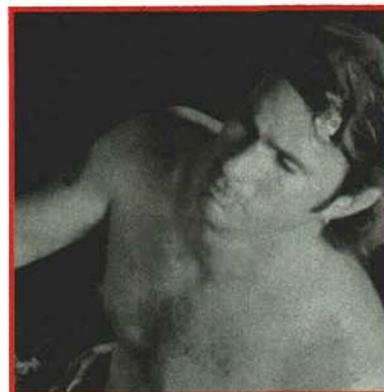


Lissa Wales

**PROGRESSIVE
ROCK**

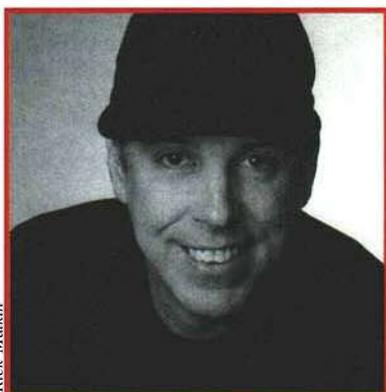
MIKE PORTNOY

2. Tim "Herb" Alexander
3. Matt Cameron
4. Bill Bruford
5. Carter Beauford



**FUNK
CHAD SMITH**

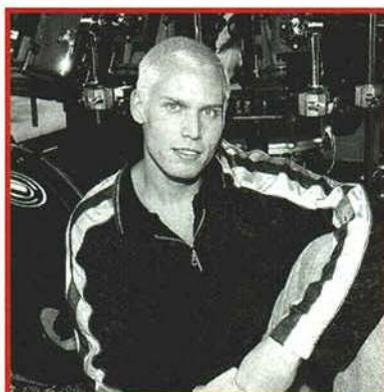
2. Carter Beauford
3. Herman Matthews
4. Omar Hakim
5. Philip "Fish" Fisher



Rick Malkin

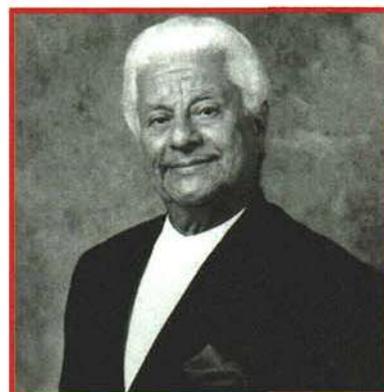
**COUNTRY
EDDIE BAYERS**

2. Mike Palmer
3. Dony Wynn
4. Paul Leim
5. Jamie Oldaker



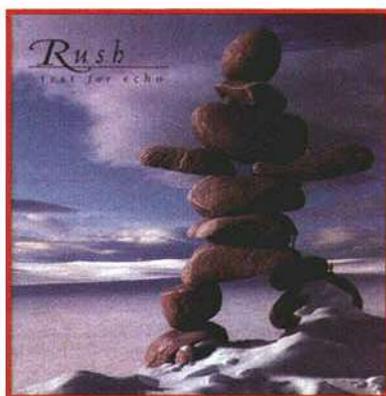
**UP & COMING
CHAD SEXTON (311)**

2. Josh Freese
3. George Pendergast (Dishwalla)
4. Adrian Young (No Doubt)
5. Virgil Donati



**PERCUSSIONIST
TITO PUENTE**

2. Luis Conte
3. Sheila E
4. Trilok Gurtu
5. Giovanni Hidalgo



RECORDED PERFORMANCE

NEIL PEART—Rush: Test For Echo

2. Carter Beauford—Dave Matthews Band: Crash
3. Danny Carey—Tool: */Enima*
4. Matt Cameron—Soundgarden: Down On The *Upside*
5. Lars Ulrich—Metallica: Load

EDITORS' ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This award is given by the editors of *Modern Drummer* in recognition of outstanding contributions to the drum/percussion community by a performer, author, educator, manufacturer, etc. The persons so honored may be notable figures in drumming history or active participants on today's scene. The criteria for this award is the value of the contributions made by the honorees in terms of influence on subsequent musical styles, educational methods, or products. There will be no limit as to the number of honorees that may be designated each year. For 1997, MD's editors are pleased to honor:

AL DUFFY



At some point in the late 1960s, a drum-repair technician at Frank Ippolito's Professional Percussion Center in New York City by the name of Al Duffy removed the leather-strap drive system from a Camco bass drum pedal, and replaced it with a toothed sprocket and a short length of bicycle chain. That single development revolutionized the pedal industry, setting a standard that virtually all pedal manufacturers have since followed. Drummers who play in today's high-powered styles particularly owe Al a personal debt of gratitude, for were it not

for the durability of the chain system he originated, bass drum pedals could never withstand the pounding given them by contemporary drummers.

Al's contributions to drumming continued for many years thereafter, as he lent his creative talents to a variety of projects and companies. From 1979 until his passing in 1988 he served as director of both research & development and educational percussion for the Pearl Corporation. While there, he was responsible for much of Pearl's expansion into marching, symphonic, and Latin percussion, and for their support of school music programs.

A drummer of over fifty years' experience, Al Duffy knew about drums, drummers, and drumming, and was always eager to share his knowledge. In that capacity, he was a frequent contributor to *Modern Drummer*, often serving as the source of information for questions posed in the *It's Questionable* department.

SONNY GREER



Duke Ellington is considered one of the most important musical figures of the twentieth century, and his orchestra was the means by which he expressed his artistic genius. The drummer in the driver's seat had to be a great musician, and such notable artists as Louie Bellson and Sam Woodyard would make their mark in later incarnations of the band. But the man who set the drumming standards for the Ellington orchestra was the late, great Sonny Greer.

Born in 1903, William

Alexander Greer became a standout performer. In his long tenure with the Ellington orchestra—from 1923 to 1951—Greer drummed with subtlety and taste. He had natural instincts for the music and always complemented it. His concern for the musical requirements of the band was even reflected in his bass drum sound; Greer was known to use timpani heads so that the drum could be tuned to a precise pitch.

But where Greer really shined was on stage. He was a *showman*. His ability to mesmerize an audience with stick tricks, flash, and personality is legendary. And he added to the spectacle of an Ellington performance by using a huge, custom-made drumkit. Sonny was *surrounded* by drums—each with his initials hand-carved into the shells—plus cymbals, chimes, gongs, a vibraphone, and timpani.

While his contributions to the art of drumming in its early days are many, the impact of Sonny Greer's performance helped focus the spotlight not only on himself, but on *all* drummers from then on.

CLYDE STUBBLEFIELD, JOHN "JABO" STARKS, AND MELVIN PARKER

Rarely can the essence of a musical style be completely conveyed by one artist. But when it comes to the style of "funk," the phenomenon that is James Brown certainly encapsulates the attitude, ingredients, and landmark songs more accurately than any other.

Of course, funk music is all about rhythm, and the drummers who provided the pulse to Brown's groundbreaking work were central to the creation of a playing style that permanently changed the musical landscape of the ensuing decades—and which fascinates and informs the work of countless drummers to this day. Funkadelic had a debt to pay; Earth, Wind & Fire did as well; Miles Davis was revitalized by the funk; hip-hop would be unthinkable without JB; as would the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

Though JB certainly employed numerous other drummers during his career, Clyde Stubblefield, John "Jabo" Starks, and Melvin Parker were the ones who made the most lasting impressions. They are the gentleman who played on most of Brown's tunes during his heady mid-'60s/early-'70s period; they are the ones who are imitated, sampled, and revered by students of the genre. These drummers weren't interchangeable, either: JB chose each very specifically for his abilities—Melvin Parker on "I Got You" and "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag," Clyde Stubblefield on "Funky Drummer" and "Cold Sweat," John Starks on "Sex Machine" and "Talkin' Loud & Sayin' Nothing." Yet each shares in the credit for creating the funkier music in history, and the benchmark for groove, feel, and taste behind the kit.



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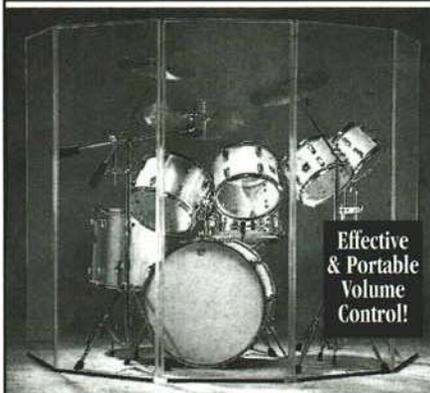
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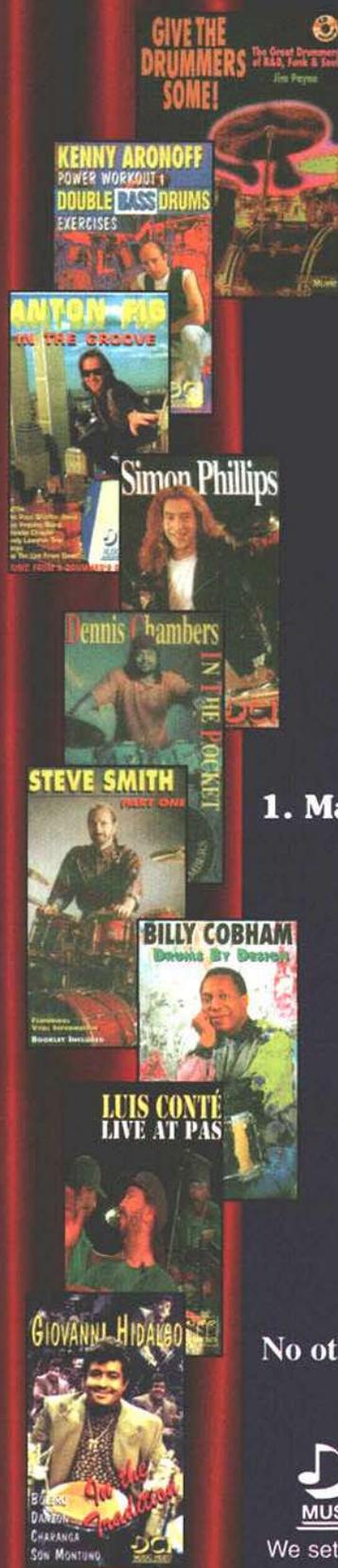


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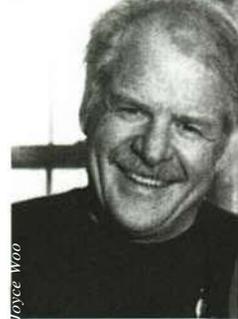


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Royce Woo

The Twenty-Six Drumset Rudiments

by Peter Magadini
Music by Spiros Damianos

MUSIC KEY

S.D.	
B.D.	
H.H.	

For many years the twenty-six snare drum rudiments have remained one of the most practiced and attainable essentials of basic coordination and snare drum technique. The twenty-six *drumset* rudiments take the twenty-six snare drum rudiments one dimension further. These drumset rudiments transfer the stickings and rhythms of the basic snare drum rudiments and redistribute them between the hands and feet of the drummer playing at the drumset.

It is suggested that each drumset rudiment be worked out between the snare drum, bass drum, and hi-hat (as written), and then ultimately improvised on the entire kit. Take each rudiment slowly, working on the individual parts, and then combine them.

Note: If you play a double bass drum setup, alternate the written bass drum part with each foot, leaving out the hi-hat pattern (with the exception of rudiment 13, where the second bass drum replaces the hi-hat part).

1. Single-Stroke Roll

Musical notation for the Single-Stroke Roll in 4/4 time. The notation shows a series of eighth notes on a single staff, with alternating bass drum (B.D.) and snare drum (S.D.) parts indicated by 'X' marks below the staff. The pattern consists of four groups of eighth notes, each group containing a pair of eighth notes followed by a quarter note.

2. Double-Stroke Roll

Musical notation for the Double-Stroke Roll in 4/4 time. The notation shows a series of eighth notes on a single staff, with alternating bass drum (B.D.) and snare drum (S.D.) parts indicated by 'X' marks below the staff. The pattern consists of four groups of eighth notes, each group containing a pair of eighth notes followed by a quarter note.

3. Five-Stroke Roll

Musical notation for the Five-Stroke Roll in 4/4 time. The notation shows a series of eighth notes on a single staff, with alternating bass drum (B.D.) and snare drum (S.D.) parts indicated by 'X' marks below the staff. The pattern consists of five groups of eighth notes, each group containing a pair of eighth notes followed by a quarter note.

4. Six-Stroke Roll

Musical notation for the Six-Stroke Roll in 4/4 time. The notation shows a series of eighth notes on a single staff, with alternating bass drum (B.D.) and snare drum (S.D.) parts indicated by 'X' marks below the staff. The pattern consists of six groups of eighth notes, each group containing a pair of eighth notes followed by a quarter note.

5. Seven-Stroke Roll

Musical notation for the Seven-Stroke Roll in 4/4 time. The notation shows a series of eighth notes on a single staff, with alternating bass drum (B.D.) and snare drum (S.D.) parts indicated by 'X' marks below the staff. The pattern consists of seven groups of eighth notes, each group containing a pair of eighth notes followed by a quarter note.

6. Nine-Stroke Roll

7. Ten-Stroke Roll

8. Eleven-Stroke Roll

9. Thirteen-Stroke Roll

10. Flam

11. Flam Tap

12. Flamacue

13. Flam Accent

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Jingle Guiro,
Caxixi (medium),
Double Shaker,
Ganza (large),
Cowbell,
(8" big mouth),
Cowbell (5"),
Cowbell beater,
Hand A-GO-GO

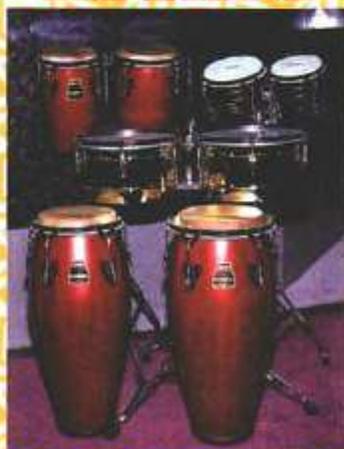


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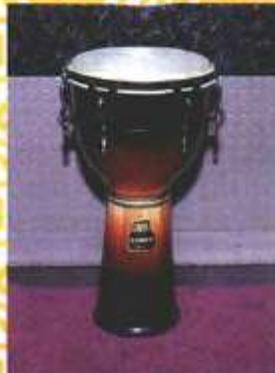
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John Riley: On A Big Band Session

by Steve Fidyk

The conditions in a recording studio can be anything but comfortable. The drummer is usually isolated in a booth, has to read sketchy charts, and must play with musicians he or she may have never worked with before. How does a drummer approach a session where tensions can run high, staying within the budget is vital, and musical ability and consistency is expected?

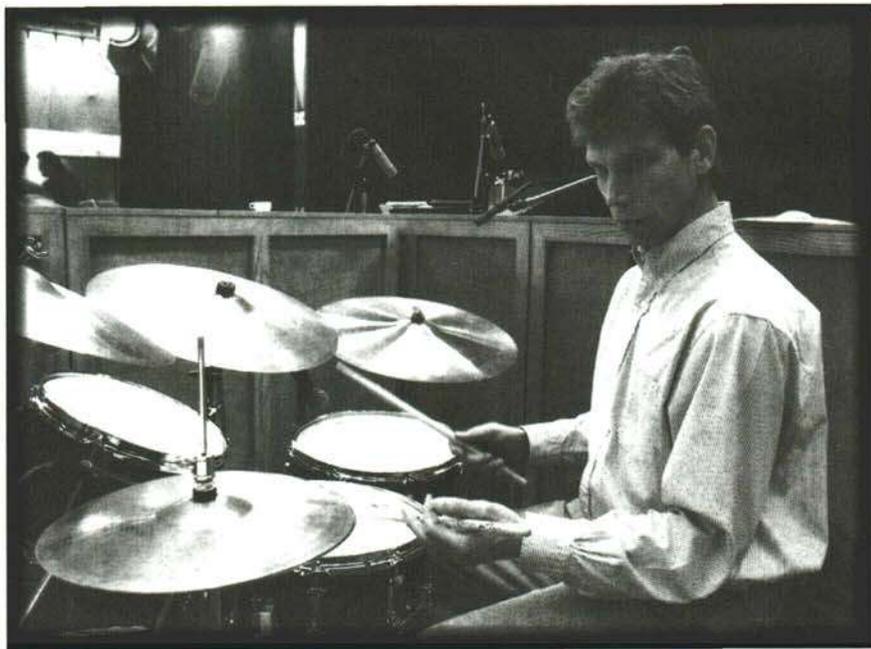
At the core of the session we're discussing this month is jazz luminary John Riley. On a recent big band date, Riley fearlessly challenged the thirteen-piece band, propelling the musicians to new crests in ensemble and solo interaction. Always knowing his role within the group, Riley anchored the band by providing support and a swinging time feel.

I had the opportunity to observe the session and to speak with John immediately afterwards about his approach. I asked him what he does to prepare for a session, what transpires before the tape rolls, and what proceedings unfold from the initial booking of the date through the last downbeat. In addition to hearing John's impressions, we will be analyzing a chart he played on the session.

Preparation

"After Bob Mintzer called me for the session," Riley recalls, "I called the studio to see what drums were available. [*The session was recorded direct to 24-track analog on a vintage Neve console at Avatar Studios in New York City (formerly the Power Station).*] I requested a small kit with an 18" bass drum with two heads on it. On the day of the session, the call time was for 11:00 A.M. I arrived forty-five minutes early, and it took about that much time to get everything organized. I started to arrange the drums and cymbals when the engineer, Malcolm Pollack, asked me if the equipment was okay. I told him I wasn't sure because I didn't know what the music would require.

"The composer, Gabriele Comeglio, arrived, and I asked him if I could look at the drum parts," John continues. "One piece was a fast straight-ahead tune, the second was a shuffle, and the last was a funk chart. At that point I realized that the 18" bass drum



wouldn't work for all three compositions. Since I knew we were on a tight schedule, I made a decision to switch to a 22" bass drum, which could work for all three tunes." According to Riley, the 22" bass drum had a hole cut in the front head, but the engineer wasn't happy. "Malcolm suggested that the drum would sound better if we removed the front head," John says. "So we took the head off and put a little padding in the drum. On the funk tune, I put in additional padding."

The studio set Riley was provided with had three toms, not his usual setup. "I took one of the toms off," John says, "and once the bass drum was in place, I tuned the drums so that they sounded good to my ear. Basically, I didn't touch the snare drum or the high tom, but the floor tom had some weird overtones in it so I tuned it up—more in tune with itself. I also put a small piece of gel on the snare drum, which controlled some of the overtones."

While the drums on this particular session were provided by the studio, the cymbals were Riley's, including a Zildjian 22" *K Custom* medium ride with two rivets, an 18" *Pre-Aged K* crash, a 22" *A Custom Swish*, and 13" *K* hi-hats.

Once the kit was tuned and set up, the engineer miked it, using an AKG D-112 on the bass drum, a Shure SM57 on the snare, Sennheiser 421s on the toms, AKG C-451EBs for the overheads, and an AKG C-451 on the hi-hat.

At 10:45 A.M., all of the other musicians arrived. They warmed up, and then the music was passed out. At 11:00 A.M. the musicians started getting sounds for the engineer, which took approximately fifteen minutes—not a lot of time. "The ensemble was slated to record three tunes in a three-hour block of time," John states, "so we knew we didn't have time to spare. The basic procedure was that we would read through each tune, make any corrections that needed to be made on the parts, discuss how long the solos were going to be and where the background figures were going to come in, and then record."

Approach

During the read-through, John explains, "I decided how the drum part related to what I was actually hearing from the ensemble. Did I hear the band playing the rhythms that were written on the page? Were there accents being played by the ensemble that weren't written that I needed to enhance?"

This point is illustrated in the 6/4 measure of the chart for "Fast." Bob Mintzer asked the rhythm section to make the bar more obvious. Riley offers two reasons why the 6/4 bar wasn't jelling. "First, the piano chart had nine measures at letter B as opposed to eight; the part was wrong. Second, and more importantly, the drum chart didn't include the figure!" So John extracted the figure from the lead trumpet part (see the accompanying chart), and once the changes were made, the measure was fine.

"It helps to know the form and road map of the piece you're playing," Riley insists. "Are the phrases symmetrical? Do they move in four-measure increments? Being aware of the form and developing a sense of the harmonic movement of the music will aid in counting. The drum part for 'Fast' is not symmetrical, but the phrase lengths are. The music moves in four-measure phrases, but the page has some systems [staves] with five measures per line. [See systems six, through eight.] Also, at letter C, the drum chart had nine measures on the page, when in fact it is an eight-measure phrase." This is truly a classic example of a chart being merely a rough guide.

A skill that is often overlooked by drummers is the art of interpretation—siphoning out the most important accents within the figure. The drum chart for "Fast" provides us with the written figures, but no indication regarding what part of the ensemble is playing the figures. "I put accents over the key rhythms on the chart that were stressed by the ensemble," John says. These are generally the high points of the phrase where the band peaks—for example, page one, system five, measure seven.

According to John, this approach gives more weight to specific portions of the phrase: "If you only play the written rhythms on the page," he explains, "everything is in unison. Connecting the figures through your time feel

is more important than just playing the individual accents." Bari saxophonist Roger Rosenberg backed up this point: "I love playing with John, because he doesn't just play the figures, he gives the band something to play against."

Though there's no mention in the chart, letter L marks the beginning of a drum solo segment. This section, in which the band and bass play the figures in stop time, is divided into three sixteen-measure phrases, marked letters L, M, and N on the chart. At John's suggestion, the first sixteen bars were played *piano*, the second *mezzo forte*, and the third *forte*. "I built each section by adding dynamics to my solo," John recalls, "mirroring what the band played. I achieved this by incorporating some of the figures plus connective rhythmic material. Including parts of the figure in the solo adds musical tension and helps associate the drums with the rest of the ensemble. It wasn't just 'drums with band accompaniment.'"

On page three, third system, fourth measure, the solo concludes and there is a D.S. back to letter A. For continuity, Riley played the same break at the end of his solo as he did on the count-off at the *A tempo* on page one. This helped bridge each section of the form together.

Here's the chart for "Fast":

Handwritten musical score for a drum set, consisting of 15 staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, rests, and performance instructions. Key elements include:

- Staff 1:** Marked with a box containing 'E'. Contains rhythmic notation with accents.
- Staff 2:** Continuation of rhythmic notation.
- Staff 3:** Marked with a box containing 'F9'. Contains rhythmic notation.
- Staff 4:** Continuation of rhythmic notation.
- Staff 5:** Marked with a box containing 'G'. Includes the instruction "ten. solo/ open time" and a time signature of 6/8.
- Staff 6:** Marked with a box containing 'H'. Includes the instruction "on cue time" and a time signature of 8/8.
- Staff 7:** Marked with a box containing 'HS'. Includes the instruction "time" and a time signature of 10/8.
- Staff 8:** Marked with a box containing 'LM'. Contains rhythmic notation.
- Staff 9:** Continuation of rhythmic notation.
- Staff 10:** Marked with a box containing 'LS MS'. Contains rhythmic notation.
- Staff 11:** Continuation of rhythmic notation.
- Staff 12:** Marked with a box containing 'M'. Contains rhythmic notation.
- Staff 13:** Continuation of rhythmic notation.
- Staff 14:** Marked with a box containing 'S'. Contains rhythmic notation.
- Staff 15:** Continuation of rhythmic notation.
- Staff 16:** Contains the instruction "del \$" and a time signature of 3/4.
- Staff 17:** Marked with a box containing 'B'. Includes the instruction "tutti" and the word "bill" written above the staff.
- Staff 18:** Continuation of rhythmic notation with "bill" written above.
- Staff 19:** Marked with a box containing 'XS'. Includes the instruction "bill" written above the staff.
- Staff 20:** Continuation of rhythmic notation with "bill" written above.
- Staff 21:** Contains the instruction "molto rall." and a time signature of 3/4.

Perspective

"I don't have the time, energy, or patience for long, drawn-out projects," says the man who put together this date, Bob Mintzer. "It needs to come together quickly." Immediately following the session, he gave his perspective. "I had been approached by Italian composer/alto saxophonist Gabriele Comeglio to assemble a band to record three of his compositions. The cats I hired on the date work with my big band regularly. For my money, they are the most consistent and musical players in New York. Making music requires a team effort, and everyone in the ensemble is a team player. And John Riley, much like Buddy Rich, is lightning-fast technically and conceptually. He plays with authority and individuality. He understands what the music needs *and* what the musicians around him need. John is one of the most musical and adaptive drummers I've worked with."

Of the three compositions recorded that morning, two were recorded in one take. "More time was spent discussing how the tunes were going to be approached than actually playing them," Riley says. "This is because the notes are obvious; it's what you *do* with them that matters." When recording music for the first time, "talk-throughs" are imperative; they ensure that everyone is on the same wavelength. Adds Mintzer, "I usually like first takes the best. They are generally the most spontaneous and have the most energy."

It's A Wrap

One of the most difficult attributes for a drummer to develop is consistency, but it's the one quality that will keep you working in the studio. When recording, your playing is under a microscope. During playbacks, great drummers like John Riley know how to detect where adjustments are needed to propel the music. These mental or physical modifications may seem immense, but the more experience you have, the less taxing they will be.

Reaching the level of competence required for performing in the studio takes experience and trial & error. Take every gig, regardless of style or money involved. You can't practice playing with musicians; you have to experience it.



Clyde Stubblefield: Funky Drummer

by Chuck Silverman

MUSIC KEY

Open	○
H.H.	×
S.D.	●
B.D.	⊗
H.H. w/foot	⊗
Ghost Note	○

The following article is excerpted from Chuck Silverman's new book, *The Funkmasters, The Great James Brown Rhythm Sections*. This particular excerpt focuses on the great Clyde Stubblefield and his performance on JB's classic tune "Funky

Drummer."

"The name of this tune is 'The Funky Drummer'... 'The Funky Drummer'... 'The Funky Drummer'... 'The Funky Drummer'." James Brown's voice may have faded out at the end of this recording, but Clyde Stubblefield's drums never stopped. Three decades later, they continue to reverberate in thousands of hip-hop recordings that use samples of this classic drum performance as their heartbeat.

If you're an aspiring R&B drummer, or any drummer for that matter, this is the main event. There is enough material in this track to write two drum books. James Brown may have thought he was giving Clyde Stubblefield a solo in this tune, but in reality, the entire track is a drum solo.

"Funky Drummer" is a drastic departure from JB's "Cold Sweat"/"I Got The Feelin'"/"Mother Popcorn" concept. The ever-present ghosted snare notes are eliminated entirely in Pattern One (they return in Pattern Two), accented snare backbeats are placed squarely on 2 and 4 instead of being displaced, and the hi-hat pattern has shifted from 8th notes to 16th notes while incorporating some oddly placed openings and closings.

Pattern 1 (and its variations) is found throughout the first three minutes and twelve seconds of the tune.

Pattern 1

Variation

Following the return of the intro, Clyde spends the next two minutes gradually developing and evolving his part into Pattern 2, as he plays through a free-form jam between the rhythm section, JB's organ and vocal ad-libs, and Maceo Parker's second solo. The new pattern starts off with the famous twenty-second sampled groove (after James exclaims, "I wanna walk the floor—one, two, three, four, get it!" at the 5:35 mark). Sadly, the original single

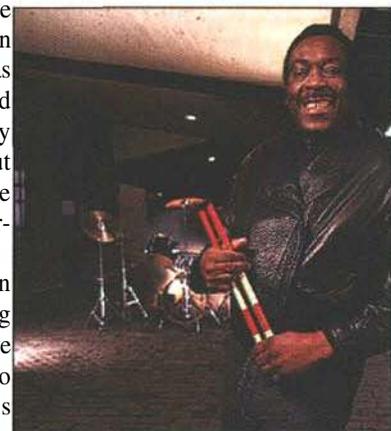
version of this tune did not contain the drum solo; it ended at 5:35, just before the solo began.

Pattern 2

Variation

When you take into consideration the technical demands of the tempo, the ghost notes, and the hi-hat openings and closings, the effortless feel that Clyde is able to throw down is all the more remarkable. It's one of the reasons his groove has been sampled so many times as opposed to being re-created by other drummers. They can copy Clyde's notes, but they can't reproduce the feel and spirit of his performance.

Clyde left James Brown shortly after recording "Funky Drummer," but he returned in June of 1970 to perform some live dates and participate in a few studio sessions. In November, after cutting "Get Up, Get Into It, Get Involved," he departed once again. Over the course of the previous year, The Godfather's focus had gradually shifted to "Jabo" Starks, but Clyde had already left an indelible mark on the band. Aside from other reasons behind his departure, Clyde's virtuoso performance on "Funky Drummer" may have shown him that it was time to move on: It wasn't humanly possible to top what he had just done!



Clyde today: Still funky

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The Drummer As Recording Artist

Part 2: Business & Copyrights

by Hal Howland

Following last month's look at sales & promotion, in this issue we'll examine two more important aspects of recording: business and copyrights.



Because your recording project will involve sizable investments of time, talent, and money, you should draft a formal business plan, especially if you will be seeking investors to finance your recording. This plan includes a project summary (stating how much money is needed to complete the project and how much income you expect it to generate) and a detailed plan that describes the history and management of your label or group, your own background, your goals, your market, your marketing plan, how your project will be manufactured, how long it will take, expected risks, and your financial status.

The next step is to separate your personal and business finances. Hire a lawyer and a bookkeeper to help you. Dedicate a part of your home strictly for business use (this home office is tax deductible), and keep track of all costs and income. Open a business bank account.

Unless you are incorporated, you should file a fictitious name certificate at your county clerk's office. You cannot copyright your business name, but you establish ownership by using the name often over time. If your company becomes huge, you may want to contact the Trademark and Patent Office, 2021 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Arlington, VA 22202, (703) 557-3158. This will entail scaling a mountain of paperwork—but by then you'll probably be used to it.

If your state collects sales tax, you will need to obtain a resale license. Depending on your sales volume, you will have to file sales tax returns monthly, quarterly, or yearly. Hiring employees will require that you obtain a federal ID number, withhold taxes, and pay social security, unemployment, and worker's compensation. Be prepared for your federal and state tax returns to become more complicated.

Once you are well established you may want to join various trade organizations: The National Association of Independent Record Distributors and Manufacturers (NAIRD), founded in 1972, costs \$200 for a new regular membership, or \$150 to renew. Only if you become a major label will you join the National Association of Recording Merchandisers (NARM). The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS), founded in

1957, promotes excellence in the recording industry and is concerned mainly with the *Grammy* awards; as a creative artist you may become a voting member. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), founded in 1952, fights bootlegging and administers the awarding of gold and platinum records. You may already belong to the American Federation of Musicians (AFM, which just celebrated its 100th anniversary); singers generally belong to the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA). Both unions set wages and working standards that, in a perfect world, would guarantee you a fine living—but in fact benefit mainly the orchestral musicians and celebrities who least need help.

The cheapest way to finance your recording is to use your own money. Alternatively, you can attract investors, or you can borrow from a bank, finance company, savings and loan association, trade association, credit union, credit card, or pawn shop. You might borrow from family or friends if your relationships are beyond question. Be absolutely certain ahead of time how you will repay any loan, and how long it will take.

If at this point you are still crazy enough to proceed, here is a useful excerpt from my forthcoming book *The Human Drummer: Thoughts On The Life Percussive*:

"I have one piece of advice to anyone contemplating this important step: Raise enough money before you start to see the project through to the end. Fifteen thousand dollars sounds like a lot of cash, but your CD could easily cost that much, by the time you figure in musician and producer fees, studio time, tape, copying, mastering, manufacturing, artwork, packaging, shipping, promotion, and so on. (The big record labels spend many times that amount every day to release albums that, like yours, may never break even.)"



Your original compositions may be your greatest asset. You can become very wealthy indeed by licensing your tunes to other artists (whose popularity will increase the demand for your own recordings). But before you publish your work you must establish your ownership of it.

The revised Copyright Law, which went into effect on January 1, 1978, grants you the right to publish your work, record and distribute copies of it, perform it in public, make derivative works or arrangements of it, and display the work in printed lyrics or on videodisc. These copyrights belong to you as the composer, and for works created or published after January 1, 1978 remain in

effect for the period of your lifetime, plus fifty years.

First you must fix your compositions in a tangible form: in sheet music or as a recording (phonograph record, cassette tape, or CD). Each format must bear the proper copyright symbol: for a single composition © 1997 *Pseudoalternative Music (EMI)*. All rights reserved; and for a commercial recording ©1997 *Unlistenable Records*. All rights reserved. Unauthorized duplication is prohibited by law. You can affix these notices before registering your works with the copyright office.

Next, contact the Register of Copyrights, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20559, (202) 707-6850. Request a separate Form PA for each of your songs; the fee is \$20 per song. (You could register several songs as a collection for one fee, but for a sound recording you should register each song separately so you can license them and collect royalties.) Request Form SR for the recording itself; the single fee is \$20. Unless you have assigned your music to a publisher, the copyright claimant is you (and any collaborators). If you have assigned your music to a publisher, the claimant is the publishing company; in this case you must file a transfer notice with the Copyright Office. Along with the forms you should send your music in tangible forms, complete with copyright notices. With Form PA you should send a lead sheet or, if the piece is complex, a score. (Hire a professional copyist if you do not know how to write sheet music). With Form SR you send two copies of your recording.

There are many ways to earn money from your compositions, including licensing them to other artists to record and perform on radio, television, films, videos, and in concert; publishing sheet music; releasing and promoting your CD in foreign countries; and

composing specifically for film, TV, advertising, and software. Once you have made your music available for public sale in any form, it is published (regardless of whether you have formed or signed with a publishing company); thereafter anyone who wants your music must pay you for it.

Songs can earn considerably more than the recordings on which they appeared originally. Because of competition, it will be difficult to sell your songs to established artists, and attracting a publisher can be more difficult than getting signed to a label. Carefully research any publisher that approaches you, and never sign anything without the advice of an entertainment lawyer.

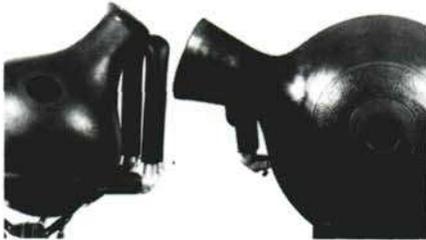
You can form your own publishing company and thereby collect royalties as both writer and publisher. You must select a company name that has never been used. Submit several prospective names to ASCAP or EMI (see below) before reserving one.

Other artists may record your published compositions as long as they file a mechanical license with the publisher. This license states that the artist will pay up to 5 cents per song or 95 cents per minute (whichever amount is larger) per record sold. Your lawyer can prepare a mechanical license.

If a number of artists express an interest in recording your music, you may want to sign with the Harry Fox Agency, 205 E. 42nd St., New York, NY 10017, (212) 370-5330, which for a fee will issue your licenses and collect your royalties.

You should join a performing rights organization that will help you monitor when and where your music is played. The American Society of Composers, Authors & Publishers (ASCAP), 1 Lincoln Plaza, New York, NY 10023, (212) 595-3050, charges no fee to join but charges annual dues of \$10 for a writer and \$50 for a pub-

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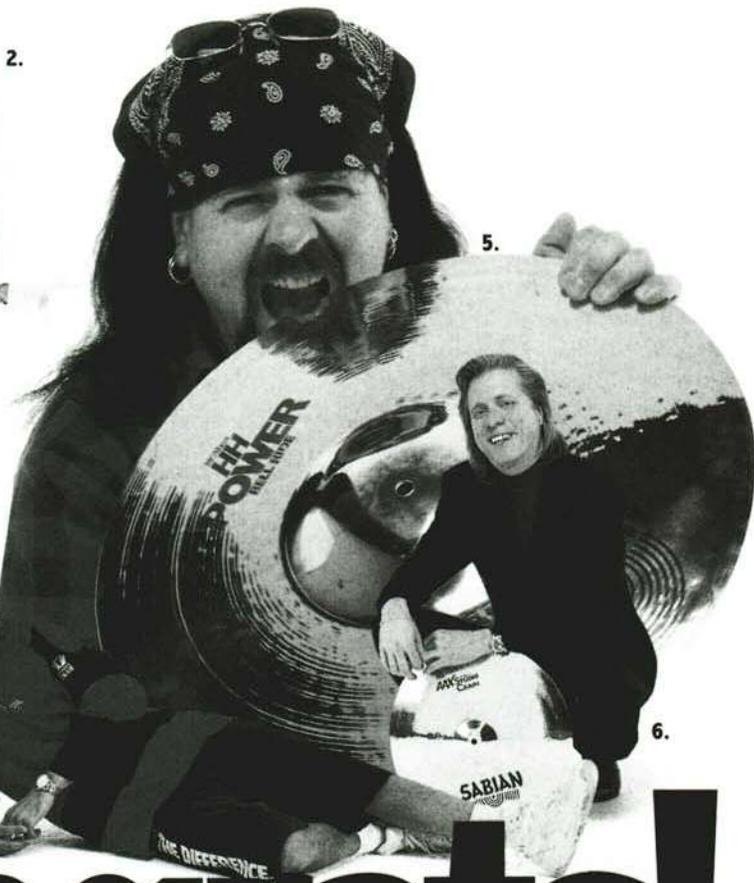
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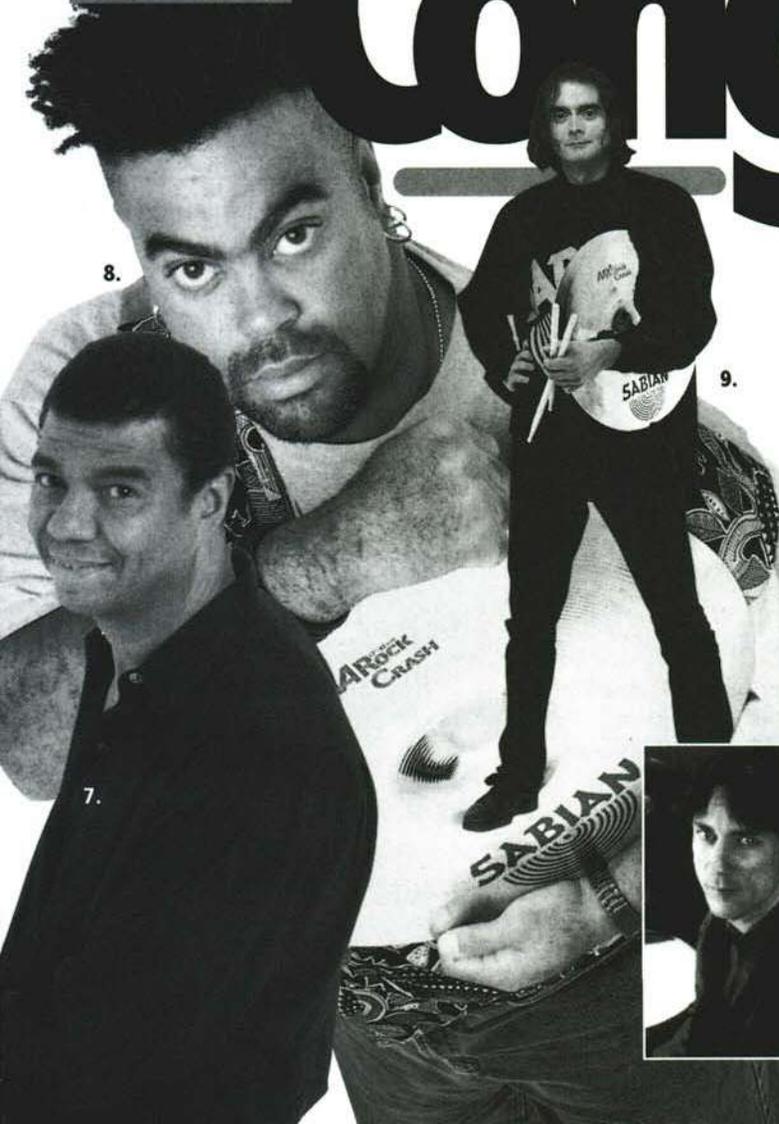
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DAVID BOWIE

by Adam Budofsky

By the time they reach fifty years of age, most musicians avoid the unfamiliar in all its shapes and guises. They've long since made their unique artistic statements; now it's time to coast and "give the people what they want," as Ray Davies would say.

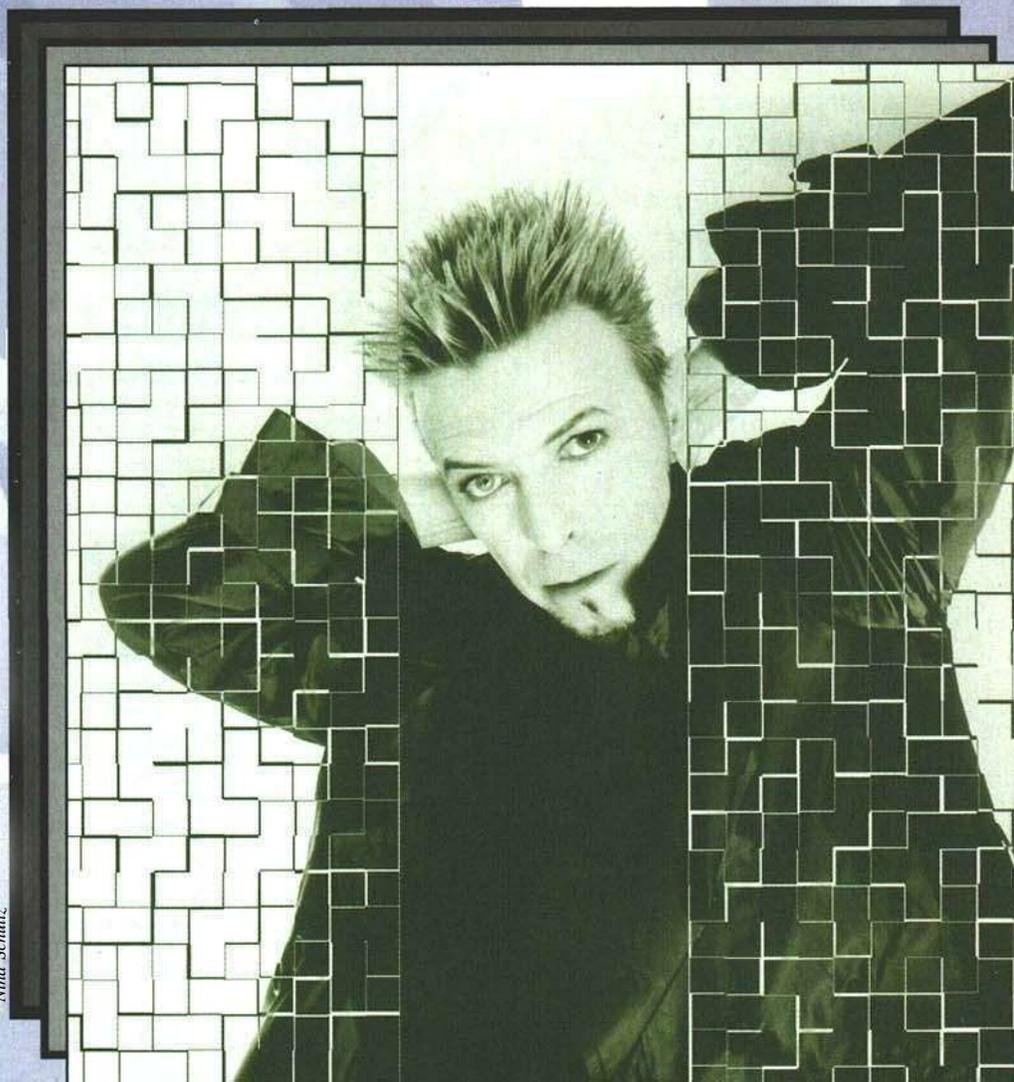
During his half-century on Earth, David Bowie has made no secret that this is *not* his mind-set. With each new Bowie release, pop fans are reminded just how quickly most other artists lose touch with their muses: Sure, Bowie has had his share of artistic near-misses, but he's certainly never forgotten rock 'n' roll's promise to shock, excite, mutate—elicit a *reaction*. Through periods of spacey folk/cabaret ditties, riff-heavy glam workouts, smooth soul stylings, random Germanic avant-rock, or out jazz/metal, Bowie has made it clear to aspiring drummers that preparing for the first day of rehearsals means nothing less than opening your mind to every possibility.

This year has found Bowie bathed in a brighter spotlight than he's enjoyed in quite some time. Some of the attention is due to his turning fifty this year, the star-studded birthday bash he threw for himself at Madison Square Garden to celebrate the event, and his highly publicized embracing of on-line artistic avenues. Mostly, though, it's his new collection, *Earthling*, and its fractured drum & bass-driven slabs of futurist sound that have reset our sights on **DB**. Appropriating, intensifying, and re-configuring the hyper-speed drum parts

of England's latest club craze, Bowie throws the role of rhythm in modern music into full relief—and seriously tests the chops, smarts, and taste of new drummer Zachary Alford in the process.

"What I really wanted to do," Bowie explains, "was not so very dissimilar to what I did in the '70s—and something I've repeatedly done—which is to take the technological and combine it with the organic. It was very important to me that we didn't lose the feel of real musicianship working in conjunction with anything that was sampled or looped or worked out on the computer.

"This record owes a debt to drum & bass in the use of rhythm,"



Nina Schultz

Bowie offers. "But I don't have much interest in the top information; what we are doing is a million light-years away from what, say, Goldie would be doing or any number of other drum & bass or purist artists. Groups like Storm Trooper are fantastic, but it's not what we're doing at all."

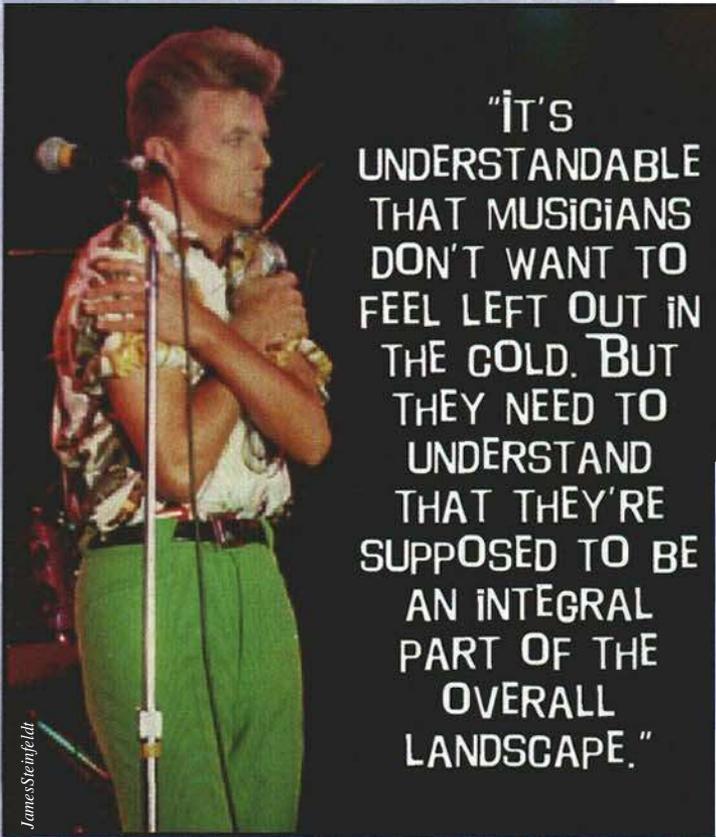
Predictably, the recording process for *Earthling* wasn't quite "cut live and keep what we can." According to David, "I indicated to Zach the style and tempo of the piece of music; virtually, that's all I gave him. He would take like half a day and work out loops of his own on the snare, and create patterns at 120 bpm that we would then speed up to the requisite 160. Then he would have that as a bedrock to play on top of. That loop would be fairly minimal—maybe four or

eight bars maximum. And then over the top of that he would improvise on a real kit. So what you had was a great combination of an almost robotic, automaton approach to fundamental rhythm, with really free interpretive playing over the top of it. I think the best example of that on *Earthling* is a track called 'Battle For Britain,' where you really get a feeling for how Zach and the loops are interacting."

Readers might recognize Alford from one of several high-profile situations the drummer has appeared in recently, like major tours with Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel's *Shades Of Grey* album and documentary, or the B-52's' perennially popular "Love Shack" video. Bowie learned about the drummer through his previous timekeeper, Sterling Campbell, who played on his envelope-pushing last album, *Outside*. "Ironically," David explains, "Zach is Sterling's best pal. Sterling got a great offer from Soul Asylum to become an integral part of the band, and quite rightly he said, 'Look guys, I'd love to do the [*Outside*] tour, but this is a real opportunity for me to join a group proper. But you might like this kid.' That's when he recommended Zach."

"The moment he sat down, I thought that Zach was absolutely great. He's only a young guy, but he's played hard and well over the last few years, and he's got a pretty varied diet—everything from soul bands to hard rock. He's kind of like the rest of us; he's quite eclectic in his taste. He likes all kinds of music as long as it's good. I think that's what you would find with everybody in this band: There is nobody who is stuck in a particular place. Everybody is very open to new musical experiences and listening to anything that's good or inventive or has new information. You've not got any closed ears in *this* band."

Ironically, David Bowie's constant and groundbreaking musical explorations often overshadow his extensive abilities as a vocalist.



James Steinfeldt

"IT'S UNDERSTANDABLE THAT MUSICIANS DON'T WANT TO FEEL LEFT OUT IN THE GOLD. BUT THEY NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE OVERALL LANDSCAPE."

(Drummer Joey Baron, in his July '96 *Modern Drummer* feature, recalled being struck by the pure strength of Bowie's voice.) With his style of music—and singing—potentially changing at the drop of a hat, how does that affect what David expects and needs from a drummer? "The style of drumming will change from project to project," David agrees. "So it really is ridiculous to ask a hard rock drummer to get involved in something that is very soul-based, for instance. But what I look for in any drummer that I work with is a guy who knows how to support the vocals, but at the same time is quick enough to dash in with an inventive flurry if necessary to give the music a greater kaleidoscopic quality—which I feel is what Zach's forte is. He just knows how to

do both those things. He can be terribly supportive when you are going through the verse structure. But then, as soon as you finish that verse, he is capable of going along with [keyboardist] Mike Garson, who he rides off a lot—as well as [bassist] Gale Ann Dorsey, of course. He can start becoming very inventive in those parts where I'm not singing. And he listens to the music.

"Interestingly enough," David continues, "Zach is also one of the few drummers who, when you do playbacks, doesn't say, 'Should my snare drum be louder?' [laughs] Actually, that's being unfair—it applies to all musicians. But the people in this band tend to have a good overview of the music, and it's really satisfying to work with people like that. It's understandable that musicians don't want to feel left out in the cold, but it's kind of frustrating when the *only* thing they're ever listening to is their own instruments, and they don't really understand that it's supposed to be an integral part of an overall landscape. Luckily, because of the nature of the work that I do, it does tend to attract people who aren't like that."

As Bowie suggests, the style of music he's working on at any given point dictates the type of drummer he likes to work with. Mick Woodmansey was the drummer many people heard when they were introduced to Bowie's music through the string of early '70s albums that made the singer a phenomenon on both sides of the Atlantic. *The Man Who Sold The World*, *Hunky Dory*, *The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars*, and *Aladdin Sane* revealed Bowie's truly unique stage and studio persona through hits like "Changes," "Ziggy Stardust," "Suffragette City," "Gene Jeanie," and "Panic In Detroit."

"Mick was a very fundamental drummer," Bowie recalls. "I think he knew his strengths and weaknesses quite well. Mick never became overly ambitious. He was quite open to direction

and in a way sort of carried out what I wanted done much more than most of the other drummers I've worked with. His strengths definitely were in the area of British rock and British rhythm & blues. He understood the kind of drumming that one associates with the band Free, for instance. For most of those guys in that band, that was kind of the ultimate rock-god band for them, [laughs] So he'd really work hard at that style of drumming, which was fairly fundamental but had sort of a simplistic aggression to it."

The next several Bowie albums served as kind of a transitional period for the singer, and featured Aynsley Dunbar (*Pinups*, *Diamond Dogs*, and "the loudest, hardest, baddest, most British of rock stars," according to David), Tony Newman (*David Live*), and Andy Newmark (*Young Americans*). Bowie's next skinsman, though, Dennis Davis, would contribute to the series of releases that are considered by many to represent Bowie's artistic peak: *Station To Station*, *Low*, *Heroes*, *Stage*, *Lodger*, and *Scary Monsters*.

"Dennis was so open," Bowie fondly recalls. "He was almost orgiastic in his approach to trying out new stuff. He'd say, 'Yeah, let's do that new shit, man.' I told him about a Charlie Mingus gig that I saw where the drummer had polythene tubes that would go into the drums, and he would suck and blow to change the pressure as he played. Dennis was out the next day buying that stuff.

Dennis is crazy, an absolute loony man, but he had a lot of his own thoughts on things, and he would throw us all kinds of curveballs."

Bowie seems to take some sort of paternal pride in relating that Dennis Davis was in fact Sterling Campbell's drum teacher—and

likes to illustrate the relationship with a little anecdote. "This is very "Dennis": Sterling Campbell used to go over to Dennis's house to ask for lessons, and Dennis would say, 'Ah...sure. You want to clean those windows?' [laughs] Sterling looked after Dennis's pad, and in return Dennis taught him. Isn't that great? Dennis, of course, came to many of the gigs we did when Sterling was around, and then in turn, Sterling has always come to all the Zach gigs. And then all three of them have turned up on some occasions. They all get on very well with each other. So it's lovely that I've got this kind of a real lineage between them, going back to 1976."

The mid-'80s proved to be a commercial zenith for David Bowie, even if the critics (and he, himself, in retrospect) weren't all too thrilled with the more accessible if less challenging material of *Let's Dance*, *Tonight*, and *Never Let You Down*. Still, drummers were treated to top-notch performances by players like Tony Thompson and Omar Hakim, the latter of whom David today refers to as "a guy I would have loved to tour with. Omar is a fascinating drummer, with impeccable timing. He's always fresh in his approach."

Opinions differ regarding Bowie's next "band" project, Tin Machine, but it's pretty clear that the experience pulled the singer out of a creative rut. "That was a bizarre project," David feels, "but I'm *really* glad we did it. I mean, what [guitarist] Reeves Gabrels and I got out of it was a whole set of instructions about what we wanted and didn't want to do [next]."

The drummer in Tin Machine was Hunt Sales, a journeyman player with credits ranging from big band gigs, to Todd Rundgren,

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to Iggy Pop, whose watershed *Lust For Life* album Sales had played on and Bowie had produced. Tin Machine was designed to be about *playing*—loud, improvisatory, metallic hunks of sound that gladly traded the potential of train wrecks for the chance of musical epiphanies. "Some nights it just blew me away," David recalls. "It was so adventurous and so brave. When it worked, it was *unbeatable*—some of the most explosive music that I've been involved in or even witnessed. But when it was bad, it was so *unbelievably* awful, you just wanted to have the earth open up and take you under. Hunt did some extraordinary things in that group, though. I always felt that he would have been more in tune with a big band setup; he plays like a big band drummer—his snare even faces outwards. The whole thing about him is that slouch and mood of the big band drummers.

"Fortunately the world never really got to hear us at our worst. But then again, I think they probably never got to hear us at our best, either. The albums are almost an appendage to the whole thing. We were really a live experience. There is an album we put out called *Oy Vay, Baby*—which is Hunt Sales' title, I might add...the whole Soupy Sales link. But the track 'Heaven's In Here' gives some indication of what we were like when we were good."

Following a couple more hit-and-miss solo albums, Bowie emerged in 1996 with *Outside*, an album deemed "difficult" and overambitious by many, but which nonetheless contained some startling material. *Outside* featured the work of Sterling Campbell, whom Bowie describes as "spontaneous and extremely inventive. Sterling plays a song differently every time; there are definite shades of his teacher, Dennis Davis." *Outside* also enlisted the playing of Joey Baron, about whom David proclaims, "Metronomes shake in fear, he's so steady." Perhaps more importantly, *Outside* provided the blueprint in some ways for *Earthling's* man-machine experiments.

David suggests that Zachary Alford's ability to work with the electronics on the *Outside* tour and on *Earthling* has somewhat encouraged the whole band to grow into the situation together. "Zach has been *such* a substantial part of the way that we've worked over the last year and a half. We've got the balance pretty good now between

how much we should lean toward the organic side of things and how much we should have the fundamental, industrial sampling/looping quality. We know how to operate in that world very well now."

How long David Bowie chooses to inhabit this particular world is anyone's guess. In the meantime, the music scene in general—and drummers in particular—should be glad that his artistic wanderlust has led us down yet another path of exploration.



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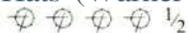
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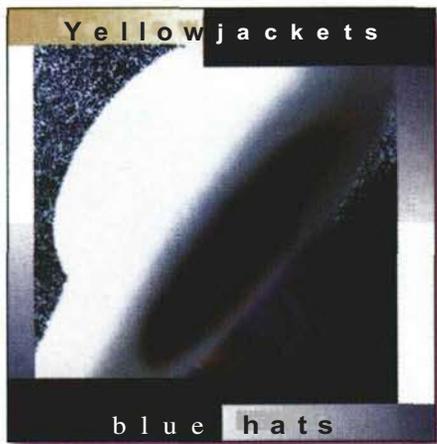
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drummer: William Kennedy

with Russell Ferrante (kybd), Bob Mintzer (al sx, tn sx, bs dr, EWD), Jimmy Haslip (bs)



Over a span of thirteen recordings, the metamorphosis of this LA funk & fusion group into world-class jazz icons has been a glorious sound to behold. From their early days with drummer Ricky Lawson, the Jackets developed a style reminiscent of the Crusaders & LA Express, featuring the funky chops of Lawson and the bluesy guitar of Robben Ford. Replacing guitar with sax and eventually adding Bob Mintzer and William Kennedy changed the direction toward a more swing- and world-music format, giving the Jackets a unique and distinguishable sound of their own.

The band's latest, *Blue Hats*, is a rich blend of traditional swing and African-based rhythms. On "Capetown" and "Savanna" Kennedy demonstrates intricate polyrhythmic grooves that counterpoint the melodies and

bass line, resulting in an exciting blend of swing and 6/8 African time. The drum sound here—and throughout—is warm and wide open. Kennedy's hi-hat and ride cymbal work in particular is exceptional, and his fluent feel for the melodies is directly reflected in his cymbal punctuations. On "Prayer For Peace" Kennedy exhibits tasteful swing-ballad brush work, and "Statue Of Liberty" is a clinic in up-tempo swing playing. You'll also hear spectacularly realized bebop ("Coal Minor Blues"), smooth funk ("Coquimbo"), and even a taste of the old Jackets ("New Rochelle").

Blue Hats should satisfy the traditionalist, the fusionist, and the smooth jazz listener. "Hats off to William Kennedy for some of the most tasteful and inspiring drumming you will find today.

Mike Haid

Tommy Igoe

New Ground (Deep Rhythm Music)

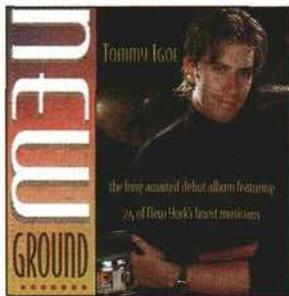


drummer: Tommy Igoe

with Paul Adamy, James Genus, Lincoln Goines (bs), Mitch Stein (gtr), Jon Werking (kybd), Robert Quaranta, Ray Kennedy, Dave Kikoski, Andy Ezrin (pno), Emedin Rivera (perc), Greg Gisbert, Liesl Whitaker (trp), Dan Levine, Jack Schatz (tn), Darmon Meader (tn sx, al sx), Ed Palermo (al sx), Cliff Lyons (al sx, fl), Jeff Lederer (tn sx, fl), Steve Kenyon (bar sx, pic), Peter Eldridge, Lauren Kinhan, Darmon Meader, Kim Nazarian (vcl)

There's a versatile new drumming power on the scene, judging from the solo debut of Tommy Igoe. A sideman with New York Voices, Stanley Jordan, and Art Garfunkel, among others, Igoe here gets to step out and let his drumming prowess shine. And this live studio recording shows the drummer capable of raising the action to another level with relative ease, with playing that is disarmingly strong, funny, and inventive.

Any album with two Frank Zappa covers is not your typical jazz fare, and Igoe's decision to tackle them certainly reflects his aesthetic sense and puts his talents in relief. Tommy's fills setting up the guitar solo on "Heavy Duty Judy," for example, are breathtaking. And his internal clock is proven to be amazingly sharp



SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

An early barrier-breaker in the drive to push drummers into the spotlight, **BUDDY MILES** provided indispensable kit and vocal work with Jimi Hendrix and the Electric Flag, and on his own solo releases—and he's still at it today. Mercury's Chronicles series collects much of this soulful master's affecting work on *The Best Of Buddy Miles*.

Iroko, a voice and percussion trio featuring **BILL SUMMERS**, celebrates the sounds of the bata drum on *Ilu Orisha* (Interworld), a potent album mixing Yoruban ceremonial music and the bata's "secret calls."

Unfairly pegged early on as "Sonic Youth Junior," Blonde Redhead nonetheless set up their own unique and relentless grooves on *Fake Can Be Just As Good* (Touch & Go). When they're on, and drummer **SIMONE PACE** sits tight in the slot, the repetition is truly trance-inducing.

It's Christmas for **OLIVER GENE LAKE** fans. RCA Victor has released three albums by trailblazing sax player Steve Coleman, and Lake drops consistently funky, skewed, and aggressive kit work all over the place. *The Sign And The Seal* sees Coleman's Mystic Rhythm Society melding contemporary jazz to West African and Latin roots music. *The Way Of The Cipher* explores the jazz/funk/rap continuum through Coleman's Metrics ensemble, and *Myths, Modes And Means* asks the Mystic Rhythm Society to do no less than "explore the essential relationships between humanity and creation." Sounds heavy? It is.

RatingScale

- ★★★★★ Excellent
- ★★★★ Very Good
- ★★★ Good
- ★★ Fair
- ★ Poor

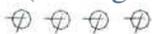
as he takes the tune apart, turning the beat into a sparring partner, a tool to be worked with rather than enslaved to. On the other Zappa tune, "G-Spot Tornado," Igoe's musical bashing keeps the boisterous trombone and frantic marimba together, pausing mid-bar to mimic one of Lederer's sax figures.

"Everybody's Boppin'" (with New York Voices) features the drummer's crisp, clean swing, while "Goat Patrol" is a slightly dark big band take, and ultimately more playful. "Twin Towers" is fusion with a sense of adventure, with a section in 7/4 that grooves just as hard as "Real Deal," a funky jazz-pop instrumental that benefits from the drummer's confident attention to the pocket. An impressive debut. (*Deep Rhythm Music*, fax: [201] 489-0037, e-mail: tomjess@carroll.com)

Robin Tolleson

Critter's Buggin'

Host (Loosegroove)



drummer: **Matt Chamberlain**

with Brad Houser (bs, bs dr, vcl), Bubba Rabozo (sx, pno, gtr)

This odd Seattle trio owes more to John McLaughlin and later-day Coltrane than to any icon of rock. Twisted, implacable song structures and rhythms lend a free-form foundation to the record—a mix of incessant tribal drumming, hip-hop, dub music, funk beats, and jazz beneath sparse spoken-word narration.

Drummer Matt Chamberlain, best known for his work in the late '80s with Edie Brickell & New Bohemians, turns retro here in both sound and style. Though the beats are largely straight-time, and the parts aren't ridiculously demanding, the *sound* is the thing here: There's a lot of sonic exploration going on within the 4/4. In the sax-based jazz romp "Manhog's Day In The Park,"

for instance, Chamberlain pulls four or five distinct sounds from his snare alone. In fact, the whole kit comes off sounding dissonant, as if it were recorded primarily with ambient mic's in a room lined with aluminum. Some of the tunes were actually recorded live at a club show, and on those cuts you can hear the air moving through the kick drum. The mild fuzz of the overall mix is intoxicating.

As for the rest of the band, Houser and Rabozo seem enamored with the possibilities of making *any* sound work in any situation, and their instincts are right far more often than not. (*Loosegroove Records*, www.loosegroove.com)

Matt Peiken

Bernard Purdie

Soul To Jazz (ACT)



drummer: **Bernard Purdie**

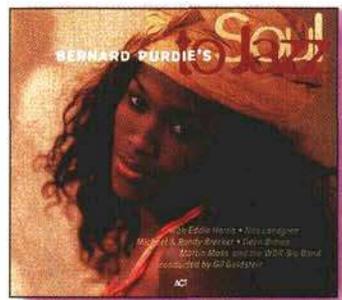
with Gil Goldstein (kybd), Eddie Harris, Michael Brecker (tn sx), Randy Brecker, John Marshall (trp), Mils Landgren (tbn), Martin Moss (vcl), Dean Brown (gtr), Dave King, John Goldsby (bs), the WDR Big Band

This is a refreshing big band session, with Purdie showing great versatility in the chair, swinging but grounded in the groove. His open, triplet-inspired feel on Bobby Timmons' "Moanin'" precedes the solid, tight beat on Stevie Wonder's "Superstition," which gives the horns no room to stray. Gil

Goldstein's arranging is nice—there's freedom as well as formality, and the choice of songs is right on.

Soul To Jazz mixes standards of the modern jazz era like "Senor Blues" (Purdie tantalizes between Latin and swing feels) and "Freedom Jazz Dance" (Arif Mardin's funky arrangement) with pop staples like "Land Of 1000 Dancers" and "Gimme Some Lovin'." Oscar Brown Jr.'s "Brother Where Are You" is a slice of the '70s with a low-down Tom Malone sax arrangement, and "Iko Iko" is true to the Meters' funky style while incorporating the WDR's strong horn section. This sixteen-piece big band is one of Europe's best, and they're up to every challenge put forth here. Purdie is right on top of everything too, with an impressive combination of precision and drive—from soul to jazz. (*US distributor/or ACT Publishing: Blue Jackel Entertainment, Inc., 322 Hicksville Rd., Bethpage, NY 11714, tel/fax: [516] 932-1608*)

Robin Tolleson



Roland Vazquez

Further Dance (KVCD)



drummer: **Roland Vazquez**

percussionist: **Ricardo Candelaria**

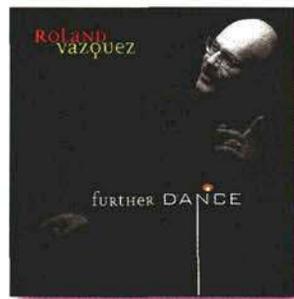
with. Walt Weiskopf (tn sx, fl), Mark Soskin (pno), Anthony Jackson (contra bs gtr)

Composer/drummer/producer Roland Vazquez has drawn attention backing Clare Fisher and Luis Conte, among others, but has actively recorded his own music since his 1979 GRP debut, *Urban Ensemble*, which *Billboard* called "a decade ahead of its time." On this latest release, Roland continues to display his strong compositional skills with nine originals and two duo improvisations. He is accompanied by a group of excellent musicians, including Anthony Jackson, who is perhaps the most-recorded electric bass guitar player in the world.

Roland's use of multi-percussive Latin sounds on the drumset, such as the cascara on hi-hat, clave on woodblock or rimclick, two bells, and other timbale sounds make it clear that he is influenced by Afro-Cuban music. And there are a variety of Latin variations represented here, including applications of guaguanco, 6/8, cha cha cha, and songo. However, this is only one aspect of Roland's versatility. In addition to a ballad and some intricate brush work, a contemporary composition, "Tu Sabes?" gives the recording a lift with traces of funk.

Still, great Latin-based percussive work remains the heart of the music. "Sum Fundango" is an improvisational duet with percussionist Ricardo Candelaria playing some nice melodic riffs on tumbadoras (congas) behind Roland's cascara/bell patterns on drumset. Here the drummer and percussionist do a fine job of complementing without overpowering each other. In fact, all the drumming throughout the recording is crisp and precise.

It should be mentioned that there are no overdub tricks on this CD: The whole project was recorded live to 2-track with no



punch-ins, board fades, or mixing. With this in mind, one appreciates even more the tight interplay and spontaneity of the players. (RVCD, 924 W.E.A., #1, New York, NY 10025, fax: [212] 316-2130, Web: www.rvcd.com)

Victor Rendon

Paul Schutze & Phantom City Site Anubis (Big Cat)

drummer: Dirk Wachtelaer

with Paul Schutze (kybd, tapes, samplers), Alex Buess (bs clr, contra bs clr), Lol Coxhill (sp sx), Raoul Bjorkenheim (gtr), Bill Laswell (bs), Julian Priester (tbn)

On *Site Anubis*, Paul Schutze has created a fascinating sonic landscape out of programmed percussion, tape loops, and some extraordinary live drumming. The first track, "Future Nights," slowly develops from an array of programmed rhythms, but before you know it, Belgian drummer Dirk Wachtelaer sneaks in through the back door, laying down some Tony Williams ride cymbal patterns, snare drum comping, jazz phrasing, and rock fills that sound simply great against the wall of electronic sound. The nature of this record is rhythmic freedom (anxiety?), and this track smartly symbolizes the tension through the interplay between the live drummer and the programs of rhythmic madness.



"Blue Like Petrol" is the best pure drumming track on the record, as it is the only one with no percussion programs or loops. On this track, Wachtelaer lays down a "free" funk groove over ambient keyboard sounds and Bill Laswell's sub-sonic bass/dub. Wachtelaer is definitely grooving on 8th notes, but he's displacing the beat absolutely everywhere, and the fills and textures he creates are wonderfully rich. (Oh yeah, and his drums sound great, too!)

"An Early Morning" and "The Big God Blows In" are more representative of the general sound of the record as a whole, again placing programmed rhythms and live drumming over and under, around and through each other. At a certain point, I found myself attempting to sonically separate the live drums from all the complex programs, but then I realized that they really don't

need to be dissected to be appreciated. The resultant polyrhythms and sonic textures are the real story here.

Considering the success with this process on this record, along with the recent popularity of "drum & bass" and "jungle" music, might we be hearing the future of music here? Or are we just hearing Paul Schutze's sonic destruction of the modern-day metropolis? Quite possibly, we're hearing both. (*Big Cat Records, 14 East 4th Street, 3rd FL, New York, NY 10012, tel: [212] 320-8503, fax: [212] 320-8600*)

Ted Bonar

The Bob Florence Limited Edition Earth (Mama)

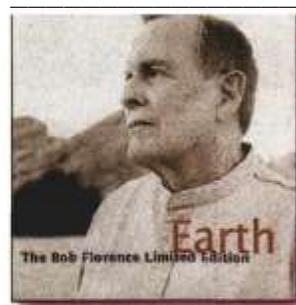
drummer: Gregg Field

with Bob Florence (pno), Trey Henry (bs), Don Shelton, Kim Richmond (al sx, sp sx, dr), Dick Mitchell, Terry Harrington (tn sx, dr), Bob Efford (bar sx, bs dr), Bob Carr (bar sx, al clr), George Graham, Wayne Bergeron, Warren Luening, Steve Huffsteter, Carl Saunders (trp, fl), Charlie Loper, Alex Iles, Bob McChesney (tbn), Don Waldrop (bs tbn)

A rare modern ensemble playing big band jazz, the Bob Florence Limited Edition features thoughtful compositions and ambitious arrangements performed by top-notch players. Whether working with one of the bandleader's originals or with a new arrangement of an older piece, the Limited Edition seeks a modern sound while remaining true to the spirit of big band.

Drummer Gregg Field (formerly of Frank Sinatra's combo) proves himself a master of the dynamic palette, which accounts for much of the power of the Limited Edition. His ability to patiently kick the band a notch at a time until it reaches a full roar, or to drop the group instantly from a shout to a whisper, is in evidence on every track. (Check out Florence's beautiful arrangement of "Emily," where Field's introductory brush work is so soft it's practically subliminal.)

Serving both as a departure from the arrangements on the rest of the album and as a Field showpiece is an interesting twist on Thelonious Monk's oft-covered "Straight, No Chaser." Here Florence wisely avoids issuing just another take on the classic



VIDEOS

Advanced Drum Grooves with Jamie Borden (Star Licks/Hal Leonard)

level: intermediate to advanced
\$9.95, 30 minutes

This modest little educational flick would have benefited from a bit of focus. Borden starts off on target, demonstrating how drummers can spice up their tired old beats by orchestrating singles, doubles, flams, ruffs, and paradiddles around the set. His presentation is quick and to the point, and the (gen-

erally high-quality) camera work clearly shows what his feet and hands are doing.

Unfortunately, the thirty-minute limitation hampers Borden's ability to offer a progressive method of working up and then incorporating these ideas—you're constantly feeling rushed. Actually, if the sections on funk grooves and shuffles were cut (why are they here anyway?) and a little more direction were employed, more pertinent info could have been imparted. In addition, the audio distorts at certain points, and we're forced to deal with shaky camera movements (and a bass player "tonguing" his strings) one too many times for comfort.

Still, Borden rightly reminds drummers that "the key is to be inventive," and he does offer

effective directions on how to do just that. And the low retail price and solid foundational ideas on *Grooves* go a long way toward justifying its purchase.

At this point in time, drum video producers should be more adept at putting together useful, lesson-oriented packages. After all, pretty much every drum star has released his own video by now (vanity vehicle or otherwise); the time seems ripe for the concepts—not the personalities—to finally dictate the content. Videos like *Advanced Drum Grooves* take a step in the right direction; now the process just needs to be perfected. You know there are plenty of drummers waiting for it to happen.

Adam Budofsky

tune, opting instead for a radically reworked arrangement in which the infectious head is played neither on piano nor by the horn section, but by Field on *cymbals*. Near the end of the piece, Field marks each of a series of horn kicks (which often break the bar line) with a flourish, climaxing in a four-bar solo. Gregg then switches from colorist to straight man during the coda, swinging steadily on the ride cymbal while the entire horn section solos simultaneously.

In fact, this edgy version of "Straight, No Chaser" serves as evidence of why the Bob Florence Limited Edition works so well in the late 1990s: Florence, Field, and Co. can take a jazz standard and tinker with it—changing its form, adding new tonalities—but still preserve its bluesy essence. It is this ability to look forward while tipping their hats to their big band predecessors that makes the Limited Edition a vital force in modern jazz. (*Mama Records, 555 East Easy St., Simi Valley, CA 93065*)

Michael Parillo

BOOKS

Latin Real Book

Salsa, Brazilian Music, Latin Jazz

edited by Larry Dunlop and

Rebeca Mauleon-Santana

(Sher Music)



level: advanced

\$40 (accompanying CD. \$16)

Any serious jazz musician is familiar with the various fake books that contain many of the standards recorded by Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Thelonious Monk, to name a few. While excellent sources for the world of jazz, they contain only a few Latin tunes that have become standards, such as "Manteca" by Chano Pozo and Dizzy Gillespie. Thanks to Sher Music, we now have the *Latin Real Book*, a dynamic collection of 177 examples of some of the best tunes in contemporary and classic salsa, Latin jazz, and Brazilian music.

Using an English/Spanish format, the book starts with notes on rhythmic styles and important clave information, and a list of Basic Vocabulary explaining some common terms such as montuno, rumba, and mona. The core of the book contains the tunes themselves, by artists such as Ray Barretto, Eddie Palmieri, Tito Puente, Cal Tjader, Mongo Santamaria, Leny Andrade, Gal Costa, and Elis Regina, including classics like "A Mi Que," "Bilongo," and "Compadre Pedro Juan."

Most fake books only give you the melody and chords. This book, however, also provides detailed arrangements to many of the tunes. These include bass lines, piano montunos, horn lines, and lyrics. Appendix I contains styles for various Cuban and Brazilian rhythms with score examples for percussion, piano, and bass. Drum and/or percussion parts for individual tunes are also provided here. Finally, Appendix II is a list of sources with song titles and the recordings from which they were transcribed. You will also find many photos of top Latin jazz artists sprinkled throughout the book.

The book has a plastic coated wire binding that allows it to be opened flat on a piano or music stand. The printing of the music is large and clear, and an accompanying sampler CD (sold separately) features original recordings of twelve tunes included in the book.

The *Latin Real Book* is the first professional Latin fake book ever published, and a lot of care and research obviously went into it, thanks to music editors Larry Dunlop and Rebeca Mauleon-Santana (author of *Salsa Guidebook For Piano And Ensemble*). An important source for all musicians and music educators who have an interest in this rich and varied music.

Victor Rendon

The Essence Of Afro-Cuban Percussion & Drum Set

by Ed Uribe

(Warner Bros.)



level: intermediate to advanced

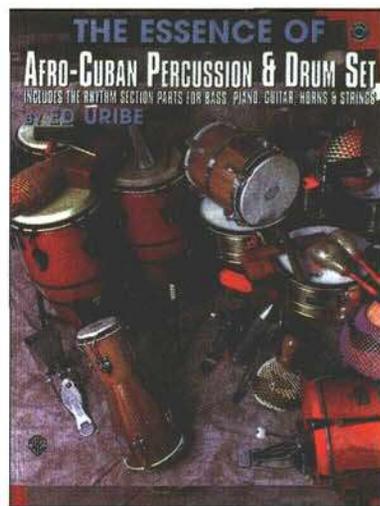
\$39.95 (book with two CDs)

Weighty in pounds as well as wisdom, this 328-page/two-CD tome is a marvelous volume in which educator/clinician/performer Uribe guides us through a comprehensive, encyclopedic tour of the Afro-Cuban pulse. It's a new standard, deserving of a place on an honored shelf alongside the groundbreaking *Afro-Cuban Rhythms For Drumset* by Malabe and Weiner.

The ambitious book opens with a history of the music's development followed by three main sections. Part I covers percussion instruments and their roles; Part II focuses on the rhythm section, song styles, and characteristics of various ensembles, including examples of complete arrangements; Part III addresses the drumset as used to interpret traditional (non-drumset) styles, and also in a contemporary context. Uribe's incisive, open-minded commentary illuminates the transcriptions, offering invaluable practical information. Even on the basics, his insightful eye offers one of the best printed explanations yet of the role of clave and how to determine its "direction."

The book is most effective for those with solid playing and reading experience who are seeking an understanding of the world of Afro-Cuban rhythms. There's one small glitch. The Disc 2 program numbers are out of sync with the book; consult instead the audio index, which lists the programs correctly. But don't let a minor blooper dissuade you; this important volume is worthy of being bound in leather.

Jeff Potter



To order any of the videos or books reviewed in this month's *Critique*, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, call

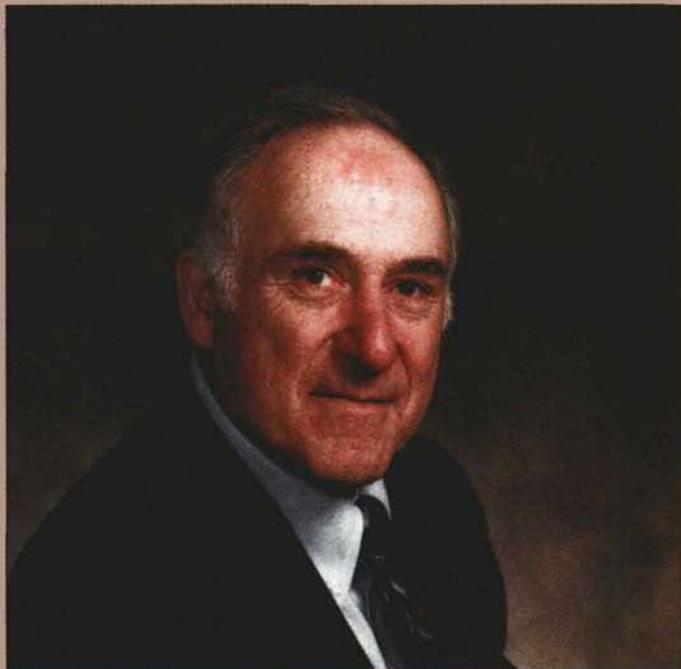
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Mr. Sabian

Robert Zildjian



by Kevin Kearns

To say that he is tenacious, competitive, entrepreneurial, and driven only scratches the surface. As the second son of the late Avedis Zildjian, Robert Zildjian made the task of building the Avedis Zildjian Cymbal Company into the biggest cymbal manufacturer in the world his life's work. He spent over forty years helping make the company one of the most recognized names in the music industry—only to lose control of it after his father's death in 1979.

Sixteen years after losing the much-publicized three-year battle for control of the Zildjian company, Bob nonetheless hasn't lost the drive to be number one. He's older, wiser, and more determined than ever to make his company, Sabian, the largest cymbal producer in the world. If you think this guy is going to be happy being number two, think again.

To gain some insight into the man who was instrumental in building two of the largest cymbal companies in the world, MD sat down with Robert Z. to learn about the industry, the music, and the artists he has worked with over the past sixty years.

KK: What did you do during your years at Zildjian?

RZ: After the second World War, I came home from Europe and went right back into the melting room with my brother, Armand. I eventually started going on the road quite a bit. At the time there were about eight hundred dealers in the United States who were our best prospects, so I went out to call on them. Every spring and fall I would spend about a month on the road. I would tour as far as the West Coast and back again.

I had taken accounting in college, so I set up the books for the company, too. There were times when I was out on the road and would have to catch a plane from St. Louis or wherever to Boston to close the books, and then fly back, pick up my car, and go out again. I did this three or four times until we finally wised up and got an in-house accountant.

Early on my father would purchase the raw materials, but as he was getting on in years, he began to alienate a lot of those suppliers. He tried to "nickel 'n' dime" them to death. Then when there were shortages, like during the Korean War, these suppliers would stop calling on him, because he was always trying to knock down the price. So I ended up doing a lot of the buying. I was also in charge of advertising. In fact, I did the first ad for Zildjian. We even won a couple of honorable-mention advertising awards.

Export was another function that was strictly my responsibility. Exporting products during the cold war could get a little complicated. For example, you would sell to a French agent who sold to a Bulgarian agent behind the Iron Curtain; selling directly to them from the United States was illegal. We had a German guy who would sell into East Germany, and a Danish fellow who sold regularly into Russia. If any of these things had come out into the open, the Bureau of Foreign Commerce would have stopped us from exporting. So we needed a "layer" between us. It was then that we formed a separate company, the A. Zildjian Export Company, to limit our liability. I didn't want these foreign agents



to do this type of distributing, and I stopped it whenever I could, but when you're running thirty different agents in Europe, how the heck can you pull each guy up?

In 1958 we set up Percussion SA, which was our own office and warehouse in Europe. I ran that office. Then in the '60s I wanted to do a Zilco cymbal—an entry-level or second-line Zildjian product. So we created the Azco company, for which we built a plant in Meductic, New Brunswick, Canada. But in the '70s, when the demand for Zildjian got very big, we had to turn Azco over to doing nothing but making Avedis Zildjian cymbals. Consequently, we had no Zilco cymbals to start the customers on. Well, I still wanted to do something about serving that entry-level market, so, with two cymbal makers from UFIP, I formed Tosco in Italy. That did very well producing an entry-level product for about ten years.

KK: By the way, do you play the drums?

RZ: I did when I was a kid. Drummers like Gene Krupa, Ray McKinley, and Ray Bauduc would come to visit my father and play on the drumset downstairs. They would do all these wonderful things. But when something like that happens, after a while you say to yourself, "Hell, I'm *never* going to be that good."

Plus my father never really believed in the arts, per se. For example, my brother had the potential to be a good pianist, a good drummer, and a good trumpeter. All he needed was schooling, discipline, and a certain desire. Well, he had everything except the discipline and the family to back him up.

I knew I didn't have the dexterity to become a real good musician, but I wanted to have an old-time dance band. I got involved with a band years ago, and to fill certain needs of that band, I took up various instruments. I started out on the clarinet and sax. Then the band needed a drummer, so I played the drums. Then this kid came in and wanted to play the drums, so I said, "Well, we need a bass anyway." So I went into Boston, bought a bass, and figured out how to play that. That was in the late '40s and '50s.

KK: Did you consider your dad an entrepreneur?

RZ: Oh, yes. He had the will and the desire to do things. That's what it really takes. I carry around a quote by Calvin Coolidge that always impressed me: "Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent." That's Cal Coolidge, who was considered a dunce by a lot of people—but he wasn't. My father had that stubborn persistence...Bill Ludwig's father, old man Ludwig, had it...H.H. Slingerland—those guys all had it. And they were the people that we worked with.

My father was a *candy maker*, for goodness sake. He didn't

really want to get into the cymbal business. But my mother—an old Yankee—said, "This sounds like a very interesting thing, something that our boys could use as time goes on. And it's a family business, the history of it..." My father still said, "I don't like the idea." But she said, "Let's do it!" If it weren't for her saying these things, I don't think we would have gotten into the cymbal business.

KK: Do you feel that you inherited the "entrepreneurial gene"?

RZ: I do have the same persistence and stubbornness that my father had. That's one of the reasons we never got along. We were too much alike. But if we hadn't butted heads, the company wouldn't have had the growth that it had. We would have opened up a lot of new avenues for other people to come sliding in. We only wanted to be cymbal makers—we didn't want to get into drums or anything like that. That is what kept him going. And I was there with the accountant sort of attitude—the guy who had been on the road, the one who would come back and say, "No, you guys are living in an ivory tower. Your dealers are saying this and that...."

Too many people in the business don't get out enough, and then get the idea that they invented the wheel. Unless they are willing to listen to the people underneath them, they aren't going to succeed.

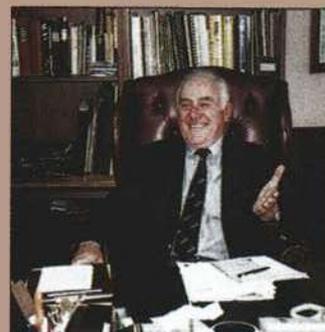
KK: Who were some of the artists you worked with?

RZ: Tommy Thompson, who was with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, taught me so much about classical cymbals. He could make the worst pair of cymbals sound good. His knowledge about what it took to really make a good hand-hammered cymbal, from a player's standpoint, was really helpful.

Saul Goodman, the great percussionist with the New York Philharmonic, while being a fine musician, could be really tough to work with. He used to come in and say, "Who the hell do you think you are? The good cymbals come from Turkey." Well, a year later Tommy Thompson and I went down to see the New York Phil. When we got there, Saul said, "You know, Bob, a lot of people think that you've got to go to Europe or Japan for good instruments. They don't know that everything good comes out of the United States. We've got the best damn cymbals." Do you know why he was saying all of this? Because he started making his own timpani! So he'd say, "Buy American!" [laughs] Saul was a great musician, though. He really was.

KK: How about Buddy Rich?

RZ: Buddy Rich was my brother's responsibility, thank goodness. I had nothing to do with Buddy; we didn't get along too well. I still feel that as a technician he was probably the greatest in the world, but as a *musician* he wasn't up to the likes of Gene Krupa, Ray McKinley, or Louie Bellson. Those fellows were drummers,



but they were musicians, too.

KK: Where did the new product ideas come from?

RZ: A lot of ideas came in from the players who would visit our dealers. For example, Bill Mather of Mather Drum Center is an old drum repair guy who originally came from England. He was a super craftsman—a bit shifty, but a super craftsman. He eventually became Gene Krupa's road manager. Anyway, he started a drum shop in New York, and drummers went there from all over. They would tell him what we were doing wrong and what we should be doing: "Wouldn't it be great if...."

Also, in those days the Dorsey band, the Woody Herman band, the Benny Goodman band, and this or that band would come to town, and their drummers would come to the factory. I can still remember delivering cymbals to them backstage as a kid in Boston. These fellows were the ones who would tell us things like, "You should try to develop something like a Chinese cymbal, because every time we get one it cracks." They told us we should do sizzles, and they suggested a lot of the different things that later on became developments.

My father was a personal friend of Zutty Singleton, Gene Krupa, and Woody Herman. They would get on the phone and say, "Listen, what should I do for new cymbals, or with this new drummer I've got? Can you do something?" We'd have a conference and they'd tell us about the changes in sound they needed.

Kenton used to call us regularly after Shelly Manne quit. A few other drummers followed Shelly into the band, and they regularly broke cymbals. Stan would get on the phone and say, "Why are they all breaking?" We knew darn well it was because the guys weren't hitting the cymbals right. They were trying to keep up with eight brass and whatever else was in that band. Shelly could do that with a glancing blow. That's when I first wrote the cymbal glossary, to begin standardizing cymbal terminology and vocabulary, and started drawing diagrams showing how you should and shouldn't play cymbals.

KK: Did you investigate ways of making cymbals more durable?

RZ: That's a very intricate, complicated situation. You're talking about an evolution. But that's when we decided something had to be done. Our research in those days involved grabbing an engineer out of MIT and saying, "What are we doing wrong on this and that?" Of course, we had engineers coming in all the time. An engineer helped me develop a lot of the special machinery that you see in our plant. We had to do these sorts of things to keep our product growing not only in numbers but in quality.

By the time the Beatles came in, music was going straight into the popularization of whack, bang, and crash. We had terrible problems in England because of all the rock bands that came out. There were thousands of kids who tried to emulate that sound, and in doing so they were breaking a lot of cymbals.

So I gave lectures all over England. I would tell them, "Look, for crying out loud, don't use a battle ax or your father's billy club, go back to your regular drumsticks. Hit it with a glancing blow, and don't beat the brains out of the thing."

KK: Let's fast-forward a little bit to December 4, 1982. What was the biggest challenge you faced starting Sabian?

RZ: The biggest challenge was the forty-four years I had spent putting Zildjian on

the map. That was the biggest challenge, because I knew *now* I would have to compete with a virtual monopoly that I had helped create.

KK: It has been reported that Sabian's first year of production was 50,000-55,000 units. The second year sales went down, and then the third year, sales went down again.

RZ: The third year, 1984, saw a worldwide depression in percussion.

KK: Were you beginning to wonder what you had gotten yourself into?

RZ: I've got the same persistence that my father had.

KK: So you weren't worried about it?

RZ: Of *course* I was worried about it. But I wasn't worried that it was going to go belly-up. All the time I was thinking, "Let's think of a new deal, let's get a new thing going." 1984 was our low, but it was everyone's low. I'll tell you why it was low: It was that damned drum synthesizer from Simmons. While the demand for electronic drums was going up, nobody wanted Ludwig, Slingerland, Sabian, Zildjian, Paiste...we *all* had a dip.

KK: So what did Sabian do to try and turn itself around, to position itself better so that when the rebound happened you would be able to take off?

RZ: We put the Charles Alden Music guys together with the Hohner people. That was the beginning of our distributor for the United States, H.S.S., which gave us a strong sales force. Dave MacAllister [vice president of marketing with Sabian] and I worked out a whole advertising campaign. We then developed a marketing force up here in Canada. Within months things started to turn around.

KK: Last year you completed a new 42,000-square-foot factory, providing yourself with roughly four times the floor space you previously had, at least a doubling of production, and a new layer of management. Has growth like this prompted a change in strategy or corporate philosophy since the early years?

RZ: Not really. Quality has still got to come first—quality in every line. I haven't gone into any of our cymbal lines without the number-one idea being that we've got to do it *better* than anyone else, and at a price that is reasonable. That's the only way we are going to beat the Chinese, German, French, Swiss, and Taiwanese

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KK: How did Sabian get so many artists so fast?

RZ: Contacts. When I started Sabian, Eddie Haynes joined us. He was originally with Premier in the UK, but he worked with us at Zildjian. Eddie knew Phil Collins, so that was how Phil heard about us. Chester Thompson switched because of our association with Phil. He was playing Paiste at that time. Eddie also put us in touch with Kenney Jones from the Who, and Ringo was playing our stuff, too, though he didn't want to advertise. Then Harvey Mason, who I still think is one of the finest drummers in the world, came on board.

I'll tell you who was really good to us: Larrie Londin. In the '70s he was touring with the Chicago Musical Instrument bunch, which was Pearl drums, Gibson guitars, and Dellape accordions. At that time we were making Zildjian cymbals in Canada at the Azco plant, so we'd go to the MIAC musical instrument trade show in Toronto. Larrie would be there doing demo sessions for Pearl drums. When he'd have a session, I would lose all the guys off my stand. It was then that Larrie asked, "You guys are making Zildjian cymbals in Canada? Who does it?" I said, "That guy there, Nort Hargrove, makes them." So Larrie said, "Then I'm going to get all my cymbals from Canada." And when the "divorce" with Zildjian came, Larrie just came over with us.

KK: What is the significance of signature cymbals? There are models for Jack DeJohnette, Chester Thompson, Carmine Appice....

RZ: ...Ed Thigpen, Ed Shaughnessy, Bruno Castalucci from Belgium, Andre Ceccarelli from France, and we have plans for others. What we do is create a cymbal to the specific needs of the artists, who bring to us unique and different sound concepts. It has to have specific peculiarities. Once it has those, it then becomes their trademark cymbal.

KK: What can drummers expect next from Sabian?

RZ: Right now we've got six very distinct and different lines: *Hand Hammered*, *AAX*, *AA*, *Pro*, *B8 Pro*, and *B8*. What we want to do is just have a simplified, straightforward company. We have growth plans—but we want to control and nurture that growth, to

make sure that we're easy for the public to deal with.

KK: You spent forty-four years building one company. You could have retired after the break-up; why start all over again?

RZ: It was because of my wife, Willie. When my father died in '79, I thought that my brother and I were going to share equally in Zildjian. That was the way I wanted it, the way I'd set it up for my kids. But it was proposed that the oldest members of successive generations of the family should run Zildjian. Armand is older than I am, so the company went to Armand and his son Robert. Ergo, I became a minority shareholder. On top of that they had some plans for the company that I didn't agree with. For example, they were planning on closing our Canadian operation down. I couldn't see coming up here and saying to the eighteen people working here at that time, "Sorry, we've got this building with all kinds of manufacturing potential, but you're all fired." That weighed very heavily on my conscience.

So I went home, got my wife and kids together, and said to them, "Look, we have a possibility of getting into this with a new

company. Or, we can sit back and settle for a big sum of money. What do you guys think?" Without hesitation Willie said, "Listen, my children have every right to become cymbal makers, to work in the music market, and to enjoy the life that we're enjoying. If we have to do a duplication up in Canada, I'm ready, willing, and able to go—so let's go!" In the spirit of that decision, we named the company for our three kids: SALLY, Bill, and ANDY.

KK: Are you still angry about the "divorce"?

RZ: I don't know. I don't think much about the anger. Essentially, I'm twice as happy up here. I've got my two sons involved in this, and they are growing into it. I've got intelligent people working for me. It's much better.

Each time we have a record sales month, everybody is delighted with it. The growth has been great. There will come a day when we will be on top, and staying there will be every bit as difficult as working our way up. As the younger brother, you've got to expect to work harder, and I did—that's why Sabian has come as far as it has.



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The Stone Master Model

by Harry Cangany

George Burt Stone was one of a handful of turn-of-the-century drum manufacturers from Boston that included Frank Dodge, Nokes & Nicolai, and Harry Bower. Among them, Stone is the best remembered—and deservedly so.

His company, George B. Stone & Son, Inc., was founded in 1890, and he originally operated a full-line music store. Through the store and later through his catalogs, Stone sold Duplex, Leedy, Ludwig & Ludwig, and Walberg & Auge products, as well as those he manufactured. His office boys included George Way (later to figure prominently in the drum-making business in his own right) and (legend has it) H.H. Slingerland.

Stone's drums were well built and handsome. You *may* find an out-of-round *Radio King*, but I doubt you'll find an out-of-round Stone. The top-of-the-line snare was called the *Master Model*, and it was one of the first separate-tension products available. If you have never played an old single-tension snare drum, you can't fully appreciate its limitations.

Suffice it to say, when the earliest separate-tension models came out, they were revolutionary.

The *Master Model* started its life as a steam-bent, solid-maple shell, which was finished naturally or painted black or white. Around the shell are rods that pass through metal plates and screw into locking nuts on one end and into single claws on the other. The rods are offset top and bottom. Later *Master Model* snares have ply shells and "modern" finishes. The drum pictured has wooden hoops painted cream with white marine pearl inlays that

match the shell. This drum was made around 1929, near the end of the company's manufacturing days.

Another reason Stone is well remembered is because of his son, George Lawrence Stone. (Remember, the company was named for *both* of them.) George Lawrence Stone was the author of *Stick Control* and *Accents And Rebounds*. How many of us have called him names while we tried those exercises? I guess that's immortality. George L. also worked at the company as an office helper when George Way was there. He became president of the company after his father's death in 1917.

George B. Stone's company lasted into the early '30s, at which time all the machinery was put into storage. Ralph Eames purchased those machines in 1950 and moved them to Wakefield, Massachusetts to build rope-tensioned drums. In 1978,

Joe MacSweeney bought all the equipment, and he still uses it to build Eames custom shells. Truly the most historic drum-making machinery we can trace sits not far from Boston. Long may it run.

A *Master Model* is one of a handful of snares "on the verge," in my opinion. As more information is disseminated to collectors and more

of these rarities are found, we can

expect prices to rise. Plus it has lugs—rudimentary though they seem—and that's the mark of a modern drum. At the moment, we find *Master Models* in the \$1,000 range. They will double. (There are Stone marching drums and bass drums around, but no great demand exists.) Those of you who live in the Northeast are lucky to be in the right area, because Stone was definitely a regional champion.



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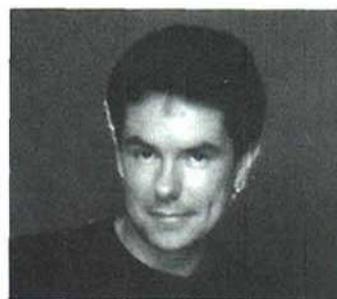
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Todd Obernolte

Twenty-six-year-old Todd Obernolte hails from Owatonna, Minnesota—but says that he's a "full-time road dog," so he's rarely if ever at home. His ten-year drumming career has consisted mainly of work with cover groups and touring artists. He's currently touring with Gido & the Aunties, trying to make ends meet while shopping for a label deal. "I love playing live," says Todd, "but the studio is where I have the most fun."

Todd lists his playing style as a combination of rock, funk, and salsa, but says that the thing he's proudest of is being known as a songwriter's drummer. "Everyone I've ever worked with," he says, "has told me that the drums I put to their music add something to the song." Todd's demo with Gido & the Aunties underscores this trait; he's tasteful and expressive throughout the pop-oriented



material, without ever being obtrusive. He performs on a Tama drumkit, and says that he uses "whatever cymbals I can afford to buy at the time I need one!"

After a few months of formal training early in his career, Todd was first influenced by Tommy Lee and Gary Mallaber. But recently he's been listening more to Dave Abbruzzese and Scott Mercado. "And someday," he adds, "I'd like to have a sense of meter like Charlie Watts." His goals are straightforward: "To be in a signed band, to do more studio work, and to actually make a decent living as a full-time musician."

-if you'd like to appear in *On The Move*, send us an audio or video cassette of your best work (preferably both solo and with a band) on three or four songs, along with a brief bio sketch and a high-quality color or black & white close-up photo. (Polaroids are not acceptable. Photos will not be paid for nor credited.) The bio sketch

Shir Konas

Israeli-born (but now New Jersey-based) Shir Konas is a drummer/composer/vocalist working in the New York City area. Originally trained in classical piano, Shir switched to drums in high school, focusing on jazz and big band. Following military service in the Israeli army during the Gulf War, Shir continued her jazz studies in Israel, while touring nationally with a rock production, working as a freelance recording artist, performing with two bands, and teaching drums at a conservatory. Not bad for someone who had barely reached the age of twenty-one!



From 1992 to 1994 Shir pursued the jazz & contemporary music program at the New School for Social Research in New York City, ultimately graduating with honors. During those years she played drums

with a progressive metal band, her own jazz band, and a variety of freelance gigs. These led to her current activities with two groups: the Living (an eclectic rock trio influenced by everything from Van Halen and Jimi Hendrix to Sly & the Family

Stone) and Pen Pal (a punk/pop band). Both have released self-produced CDs. Shir's playing on these recordings reveals a versatile style that combines power, musical imagination, and sensitivity—and utilizes every element of the drumkit to full advantage.

Shir's current setup includes a Yamaha *Rock Tour Custom* kit with Zildjian and Sabian cymbals. Today, at the ripe old age of twenty-five, her goals include "looking for more musical challenges, recording, and possibly touring the country and overseas."

Pat Caruso

Originally from New Jersey, Pat Caruso now resides in Studio City, California. From 1982 to 1991 he performed and recorded rock, blues, and R&B music on the East Coast with a wide variety of original and cover acts, including the Skulls and Judgment Day. After relocating to California in 1992, Pat branched out into other musical activities (including playing country music and doing studio work), and performed with such artists as the Hookers and Mark Konrad. He also studied at Musicians Institute, as he says, "to broaden my musi-

cal horizons."

Despite his efforts at musical diversification, Pat



says that he remains a "classic rock" drummer at heart, influenced by the likes of Ian Paice, Clem

Burke, Joey Kramer, John Bonham, and Chad Smith. His demo tape reveals a playing style that reflects his influences: straight-ahead, no-nonsense rock with plenty of power and energy to support a band. However, a dynamic live drum solo on the same tape proves that Pat is no slouch in the chops department, either.

With a battery of Ludwig *Classic* drums and Paiste cymbals, Pat hopes to "improve as a drummer, explore as many musical avenues as possible, and make a living as a drummer with a signed touring act or solo artist."

should include your full name and age, along with your playing style(s), influences, current playing situation (band, recording project, freelance artist, etc.), how often and where you are playing, and what your goals are (recording artist, session player, local career player, etc.). Include any special items of interest pertaining to what

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Paradigm Shifts

by Ron Hefner

Webster's Dictionary defines *paradigm* as a "pattern or example." Paradigms are models; they represent all the attributes of a particular structure, whether it be social, political, religious, or—for our purposes—musical. Certainly, all of these structures have changed considerably in the past twenty years. With *MD* now in its twentieth year of publication, those of us who remember the first issue can look back over the last two decades and see how the paradigm of drumming has changed, for better or for worse.

Few of us are willing to totally embrace new ideas at first. We want to hang on to past traditions. A look at any recent issue of *MD* illustrates this. Along with reviews of high-tech studio headphones and the announcement of an *MD* World Wide Web site, there are countless ads for "vintage" drum products and articles about great drummers from the past. In *MD*, the old and the new exist side-by-side. This coexistence of old and new is why we use the expression "paradigm shift": Paradigms don't change quickly; they "shift" over time.

This shift can also be seen in the way the "icon" drumset has changed. For years, the standard kit included four drums and two cymbals. I remember the first drum catalog I saw when I was a kid. It was a Rogers catalog, and on the cover was an overhead view of a drummer sitting at a four-piece kit. Every other company featured virtually the same set configuration on the cover of its catalog. Interestingly, this setup was the norm for all kinds of music; Joe Morello played essentially the same set as Ringo Starr. Today, check out the drumsets in the ads in this current *MD* issue. A far cry from the old four-piece model, they probably have two or three mounted toms and a couple of floor toms, as well as numerous cymbals and a double bass drum pedal. Whether or not a drummer can make better music on today's set is beside the point (and perhaps a subject for a different

article). The point is that the drumset "icon" of today reflects changing trends—both artistic and commercial.

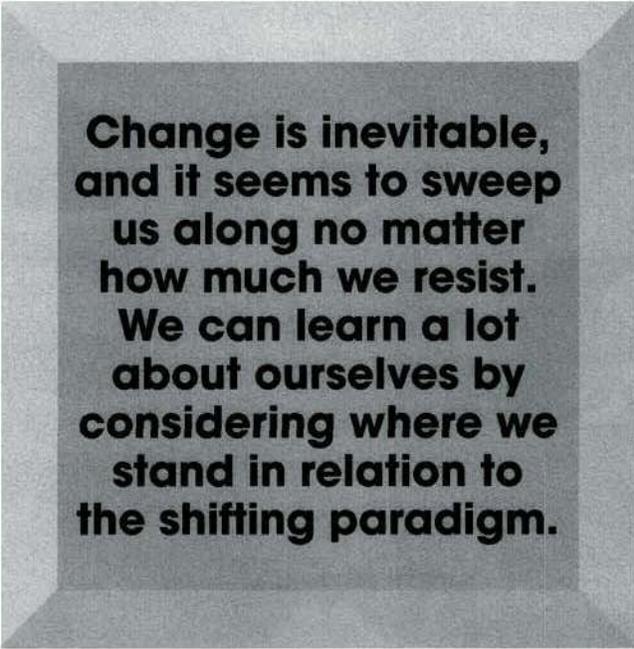
Notice too how the terminology of drumming demonstrates changing perceptions of the role of the drums in music. Today, the bass drum is more commonly referred to as the "kick" drum. The word "kick" implies a lot about how many (if not most) drummers nowadays play that particular drum. Apparently, the general volume of popular music, including contemporary jazz, has increased to the point where the drum must be "kicked" in order to be heard.

Certainly, few young drummers today have any reason to learn the traditional techniques of tuning the bass drum to complement the sound of an upright bass or "feathering" the drum to subtly propel the time. Those techniques have not disappeared, yet they are now pretty much out of the mainstream.

The appearance of the "kick" drum in today's vocabulary illustrates another shift in focus—away from the organic sound of the instrument and toward a studio-controlled sound. This began in the '70s, and many recording engineers today still use close-miking techniques, which necessitates some muffling. Therefore, the bass drum needs to be "kicked" because it probably has padding inside it, muffling on the

heads, and a hole in the front head for a microphone. A good overview of this shift toward an "engineered" sound can be found in an *MD* article about recording technician Tom Dowd (March '95). Dowd has recorded everybody from Don Lamond to Butch Trucks and has lived through a multitude of changes in recording techniques. He laments the fact that the drummer has virtually lost control of the drum sound in the studio, pointing out that close-miking puts most of the dynamics in the hands of the engineer.

Note, however, the "retro" trend in recording technique that has surfaced in the last few years. Engineers are experimenting with "ambient room" miking, allowing the organic sound of the drums to emerge. Like the trend toward vintage drums, this illustrates



**Change is inevitable,
and it seems to sweep
us along no matter
how much we resist.
We can learn a lot
about ourselves by
considering where we
stand in relation to
the shifting paradigm.**

how paradigms never shift quickly; we often re-examine paradigms of the past. I find this healthy. It shows an awareness that, just because something is new, it's not necessarily better.

Other terms that are now a part of the drumming vocabulary are "pocket" and "backbeat." Popular music vernacular has, in some form, always reflected this concept. In early Dixieland music, the drummer played press rolls on the snare, emphasizing the 2 and 4. Later, swing music assigned this task to the hi-hat. Bebop moved the emphasis to the ride cymbal, giving more of a continuous flow to the time. Then, rock 'n' roll came along, featuring a bass-and-snare orientation. The terms "pocket" and "backbeat," however, really became prominent with the modern, "in your face" 2 and 4 heard on virtually all popular recordings today. Traditionalists like Tom Dowd no doubt cringe at the gated, pumped-up snare sound on today's recordings. (An older drummer once told me it sounded to him like a baseball bat hitting a piece of aluminum siding!) The unavoidable fact is that in most of today's popular music, the "backbeat" rules. Some jazz purists are probably horrified by the idea that many of today's drummers will go through their entire careers without ever keeping time on a ride cymbal the way Max Roach or Art Taylor did. What is interesting, though, is the fact that no matter how much the paradigm of drumming shifts, the drummer remains the "timekeeper." That is one role that will likely never vary.

Another aspect of the shifting paradigm is the way drummers hold their sticks. I remember well the uproar among my older mentors when Ringo Starr made his appearance with the Beatles

on American television: "It's barbaric!" cried my school band director. "He holds the sticks like a couple of hammers! How can he have any technique? I'll bet he can't even play a roll!" In the ensuing years, many traditionalists steadfastly held to the belief that matched grip was a "bastardized" way of playing, that drummers who used it were technically deficient—and, worst of all, couldn't "swing." The truth is, a lot of drummers were already experimenting with matched grip long before the appearance of Ringo—Chico Hamilton, Art Blakey and England's great Phil Seaman, to name a few.

Traditional grip actually dates back to centuries ago, when parade drums were hung on a sling, which caused them to angle severely to the right. This continued into the early '70s, at which time rigid carriers came into use, allowing marching drums to be played horizontally. Although some drummers still play "traditional" grip, I think it's safe to say that matched grip has now become the norm. It makes more sense physically, and it better facilitates movement around the set. Here, we are witnesses to the paradigm shift in progress: There is little doubt that, a couple of generations from now, traditional grip will have all but disappeared.

Change is inevitable, and it seems to sweep us along no matter how much we resist. In this century, we've seen an incredible amount of change in the art and craft of drumming, as well as in the commercial trends that influence it. We can learn a lot about ourselves by considering where we stand in relation to the shifting paradigm. With another millennium coming to an end soon, I present you with two scenarios to consider:

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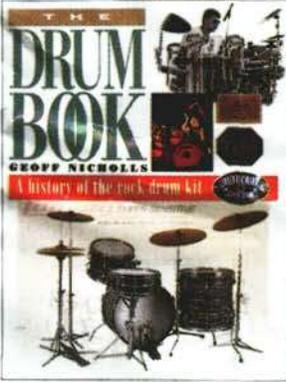


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MD7

1) I'm sitting here writing this article on a state-of-the-art computer. In the next room sits my recently purchased '60s vintage white marine pearl drumset—a set which I find myself using more and more, even though my "modern" set is probably more suitable for most gigs. I was compelled to buy the computer for vocational reasons; I was compelled to buy the vintage drumset for reasons that I don't really understand. My guess is, though, that I feel a need to keep one foot in the past as an "anchor" against the winds of change.

2) It's the year 2025. A drummer in his or her mid-forties sits in front of a virtual-reality, satellite-fed, computerized television screen. The broadcast is a musical program featuring the latest pop-phenomenon band. The drummer on the screen elicits this commentary from the viewer:

"These young drummers are silly! Look at the way they hold their sticks—and listen to the way they have the drums tuned. And they haven't done their homework. They need to study the works of the great old masters like Neil Peart and Bill Bruford! What is happening to drumming?!"

Perhaps some things never change. As artists, we all want to be as open-minded as possible—yet, at the same time, it pains us to see traditions die.



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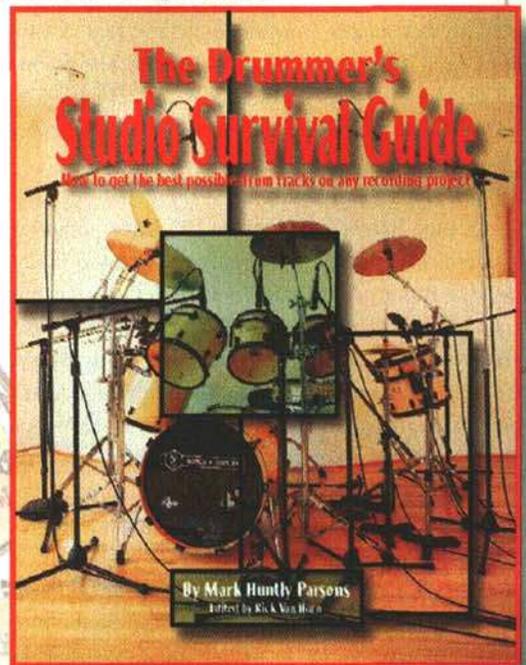
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MOD2

Chapin Receives Drum Master Award

The New York/New Jersey drumming community recently bestowed its fourth Drum Master award upon legendary drummer/author Jim Chapin. A respected instructor and jazz performer, Chapin is best known for his *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer*, one of the most successful drum books ever. Previous winners of the Drum Master award include Ed Shaughnessy, Jack DeJohnette, and Sam Ulano.

The presentation took place on April 27, 1997 at the Red Blazer Too nightclub in New York City. The evening was hosted by noted drum teachers from the area, and featured entertainment by Sam Ulano's Bourbon Street Swingers. The event was supported by Sabian and Drum Workshop.

Net News

West Coast Musicians Online (WCMO) includes classifieds for musicians and instruments/equipment, a national/worldwide gig calendar, hundreds of links to new and popular bands, musicians, music managers, and music teachers, exposes, and "surprises." Amateur musicians can correspond with gigging professionals who lend their advice regarding the music industry and its competitive environment. Webmistress Dawn Henson updates the site once a week and interviews new bands once a month. Regular page visitors are encouraged to submit commentary. Interested musicians should surf on over to www.cwo.com/~eella/index.html.

FestivalFinder: Music Festivals of North America—at www.festivalfinder.com—is claimed to be the most extensive, up-to-date guide to North American music festivals ever created. Covering more than 1,300 festivals in the United States and Canada, the site allows users to browse or search by musical genre, performer, location, date, and festival name. Home pages are specially designed for fans of classical, folk, jazz, blues, rock, reggae, bluegrass, country, Cajun, zydeco, and world music. In addition to details and descriptions of events, FestivalFinder also features discussion groups and contact numbers for accommodations and tourist information. For more information, contact Tom Clynes or Nicole Adams at (773) 878-2523, or via e-mail at rady@festivalfinder.com.

Thomas Howie has created a database on drum retailers, manufacturers, instructors, and Web sites on his home page. The links area includes a separate retailers page that lists many store addresses and phone numbers, even those that don't have Web sites. Access www.geocities.com/soho/9870/, and click on "Drumming Resource Directory." Related pages include "Howie Homestead": www.geocities.com/heartland/plains/2340/, and the "Resource Page": members.tripod.com/~thowie/.

Guitar Center's Web site at musician.com features "The Musician's Search Service," an online tour that facilitates locating

musicians for touring, recording, or casual projects with user-defined search criteria. Musicians can use this feature to market their talents to prospective employers, agents, and record labels. The site's "CyberFolio" pages highlight unsigned artists with photos, wave files of their music, and direct e-mail links to the artists themselves. Other site amenities include "Music Link Central" (a categorized listing of links to more than 10,000 music-oriented Web sites), free technical assistance on musical equipment, free subscriptions to industry magazines, and dates of upcoming musical events. Musical equipment (including software) may also be purchased from Guitar Center directly over the Internet.

New Web sites include:

DW, www.dwdrums.com

M Productions (Montreal Drum Expo CDs), www.total.net/~dandeman (email: dandeman@total.net)

Hip Pickles, www.hippickles.com

Dave Weckl, members.aol.com/daveweckll/index.htm.

Indy Quickies

Mapex Drums has moved to new digs in the Nashville area. They can be contacted at P.O. Box 1360, LaVergne, TN 37086-1360, tel: (615) 793-2050, fax: (615) 793-2070.

The Nashville Percussion Institute (NPI) recently appointed **Tim Smith** as its director of curriculum. Tim's numerous performance and album credits include Jars of Clay, Poco, Sky King, and Matraca Berg. He is also the author of *From The Top*, an educational video and workbook specifically designed for the instruction of beginning drummers, and he has contributed articles to numerous music magazines, including *Modern Drummer*. Tim's duties at NPI will include heading up the Institute's "Summer Extravaganza '97" session. For more information about NIP curriculum and activities, contact Nashville Percussion Institute, 500 Lafayette Street, Nashville, TN 37203, (615) 313-9000.

Vintage and custom drum historian/salesman **Rob Cook** has transformed his Rebeats sales catalog into a thrice-annual newsletter, which will contain feature articles by Rob and guest authors, as well as interviews with drum makers and top drummers, vintage gear information and reviews, drum show coverage, percussion industry news, and excerpts from major drum-history publications. It will be mailed free of charge to mail-order purchasers. Paid subscriptions for any two issues are \$8 for US residents, or \$12 for foreign residents. For more information contact: Rebeats, 219 Prospect, P.O. Box 6, Alma, MI 48801, tel: (517) 463-4757, fax: (517) 463-6545, Web: www.rebeats@aol.com.

In related news, Rebeats has provided the following list of upcoming 1997 shows that will feature **vintage and custom drums**:

5/17 and 5/18/97—Seventh Annual Midwest Custom and Vintage Drum Show, St. Charles (Chicago), Illinois

9/13/97—Second Annual Boston Custom and Vintage Drum Show

Endorser News

Will Calhoun is now a Sabian cymbal artist.

New Aquarian drumhead endorsers include: **Paul Bostaph** (Slayer), **Daniel Glass** (Royal Crown Revue), **Glen Noyes**, **Vincent Dee**, **Dante Roberson**, **Barbara Borden**, **Brian Brignac** (Wayne Troups), **Carlo Marino** (Tracy Lawrence), **Norm Leggio** (Psychotic Waltz), **Rocky Caron** (Joe Nichols), and **Vince White** (Moon Seed).

Sam Ulano, **Duke Blues** (KoKo Taylor), **Steve Collier** (Studebaker John & the Hawks), and **Jason Schmidt** (Dry White Toast) are endorsing Slug Percussion products.

New DW drumset artists include **Martina Axen** (Drain), **Christian "Spice" Boerin** (Dread Zeppelin), and **Albert Casanova** (Emilio). Using DW pedals and hardware are **Matt Laug** (Leigh Andreoni) and **Brian "Brain" Mantia** (Primus).

Ralf Wochele (Fools Garden) is playing Sonor drums.

Drummers now using Zildjian cymbals and drumsticks include: **Adrian Young** (No Doubt), **George Pendergast** (Dishwalla), **Brett Reed** (Rancid), **Trey Gray** (Faith Hill), **Travis McNabb** (Better Than Ezra), **Jim DiSpirito** (Rusted Root), **Giti Khalsa** (Seven Mary Three), **Eric "Bobo" Correa** (Cypress Hill), **Pat Petrillo**, and **Kate Schellenbach** (Luscious Jackson).



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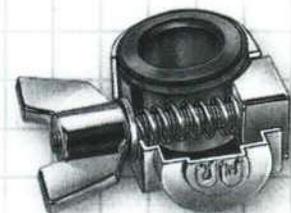
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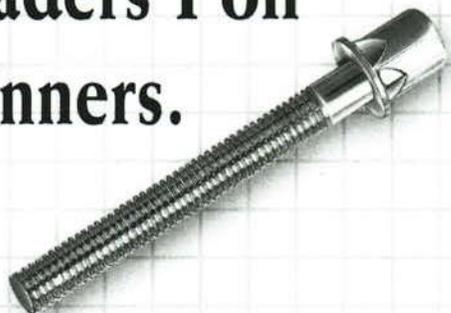
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Port Charlotte, Florida drummer Dave Gravelin has combined the old and the new to create this acoustic/electronic hybrid kit. The "new" consists of Roland *PD-7* pads, a *KD-7* kick drum unit, and a *TD-7* drum module. The "old" is represented by four late-'70s *RotoToms* and an even older Ludwig *Supraphonic* snare drum. Zildjian and Sabian cymbals complete the kit, which is mounted on a combination Gibraltar/Roland rack. The whole thing sits atop a riser that Dave built himself using 2x4s, angle iron, and plywood.

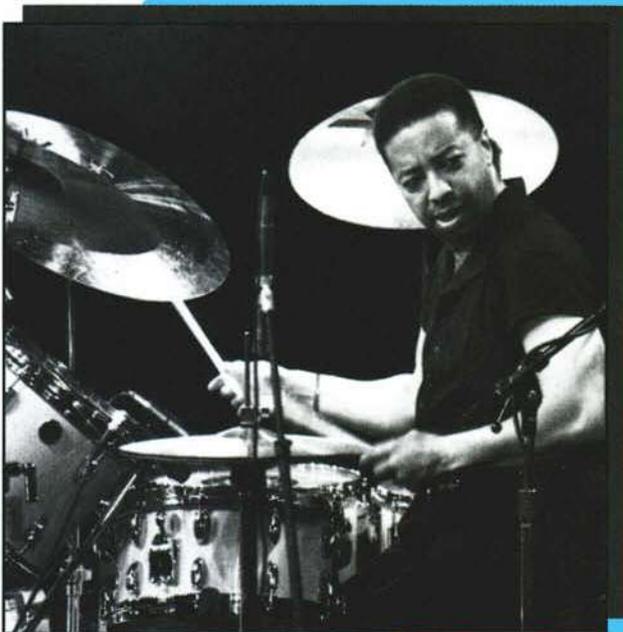
PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

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.



NEXT Month

A TRIBUTE TO TONY WILLIAMS

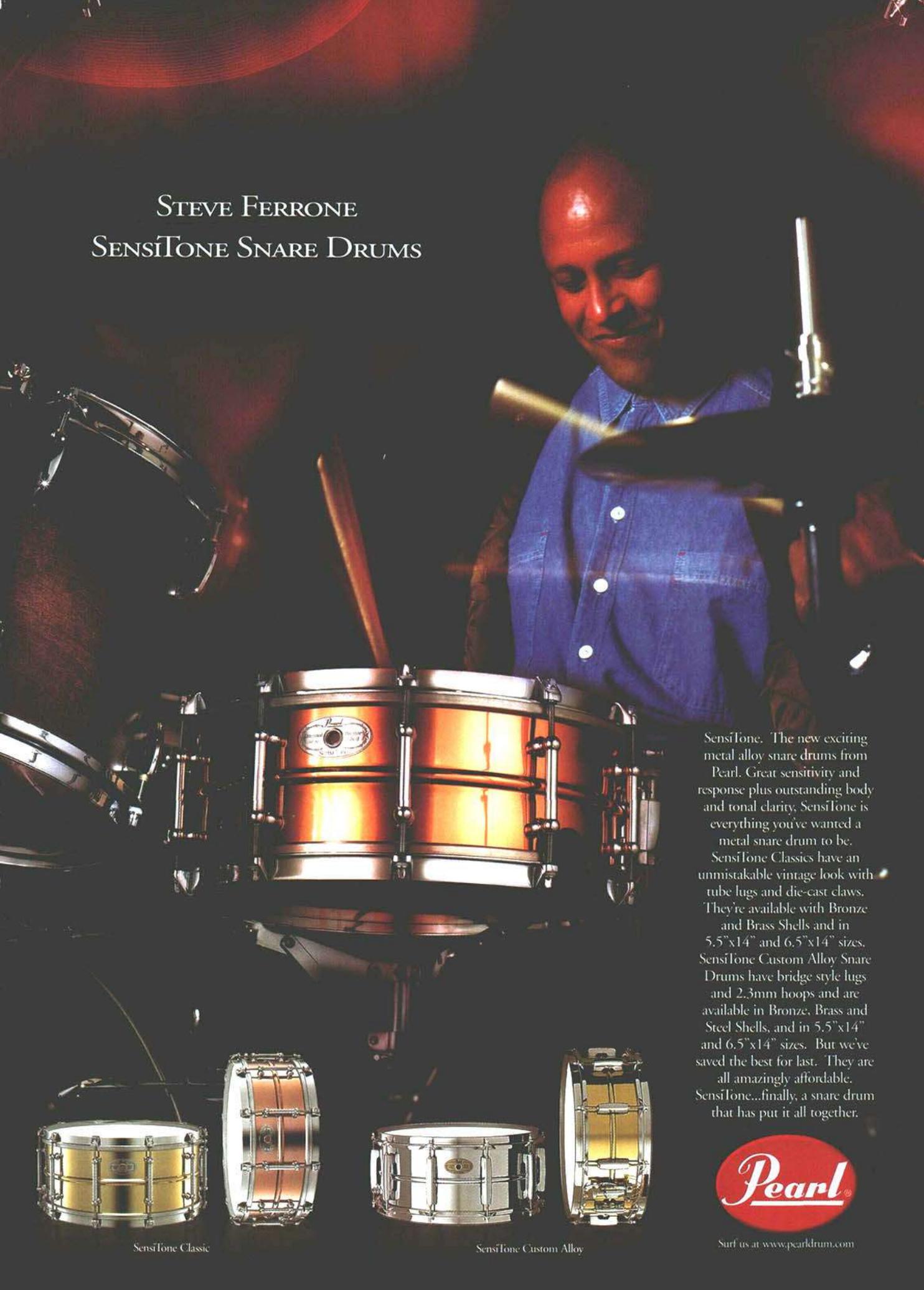


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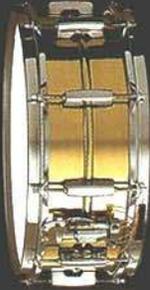
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