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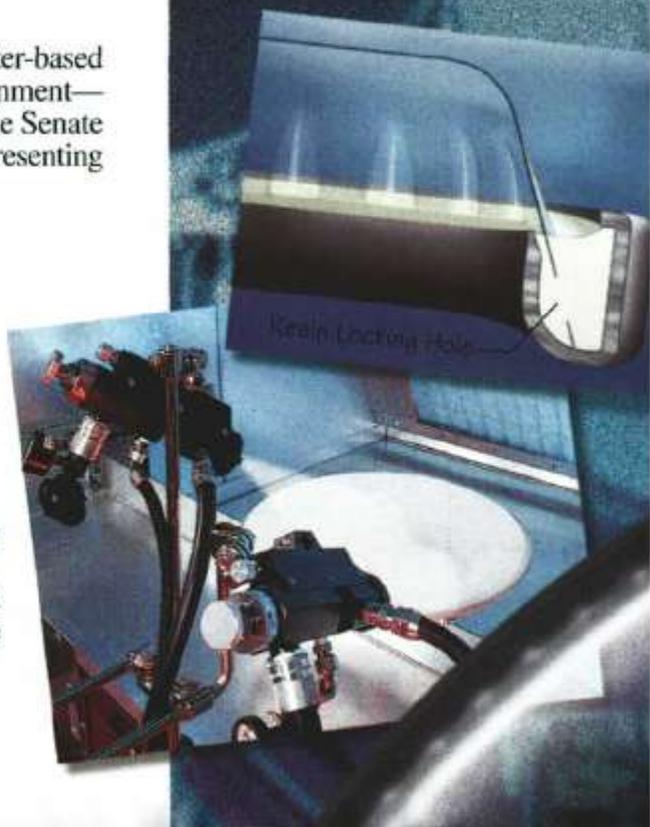
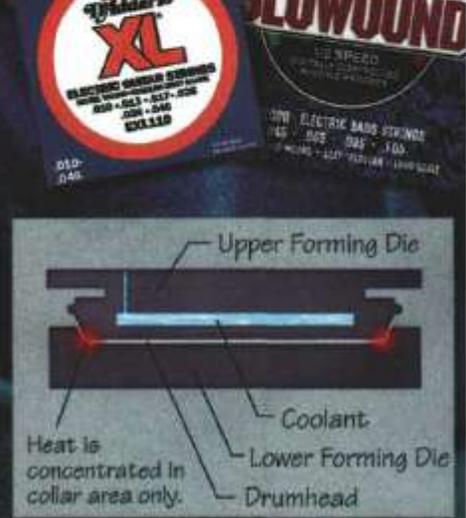
All Evans coated drumheads are now sprayed with a new water-based coating that is extremely durable, but also safe for the environment—something we take very seriously. In fact, the New York State Senate recognized D'Addario's commitment to the environment by presenting us with the Award for Environmental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

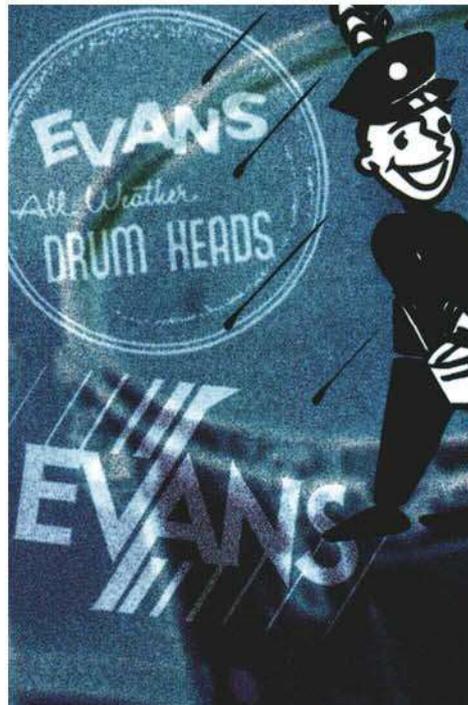
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We didn't invent Evans drumheads. In fact, Evans began to commercially market drumheads using Dupont® Mylar back in early 1958. Chick Evans was considered a rebel when he hit the road with the first Evans All-Weather polyester drumheads. Many of our 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.

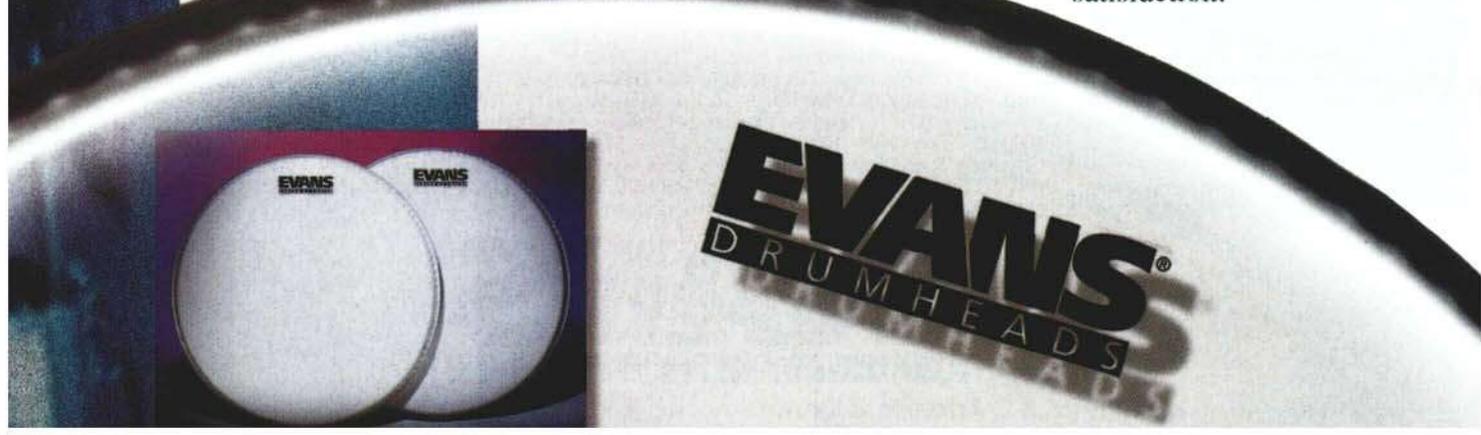
Of course, throughout the 20th century, D'Addario's focus has always been musical instrument strings, but when Charles D'Addario began producing gut strings in Astoria, N.Y. in 1917, he frequently supplied drum makers with quality gut snares. Now, with the acquisition of Evans, our commitment to the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

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*"[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."*

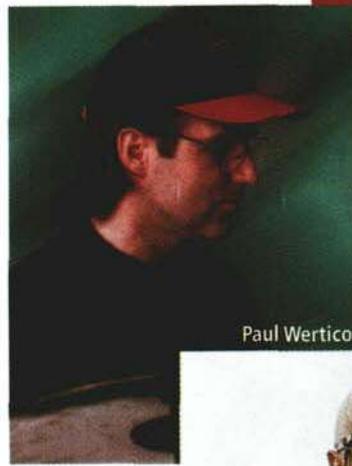
--Carl Allen

*"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."*

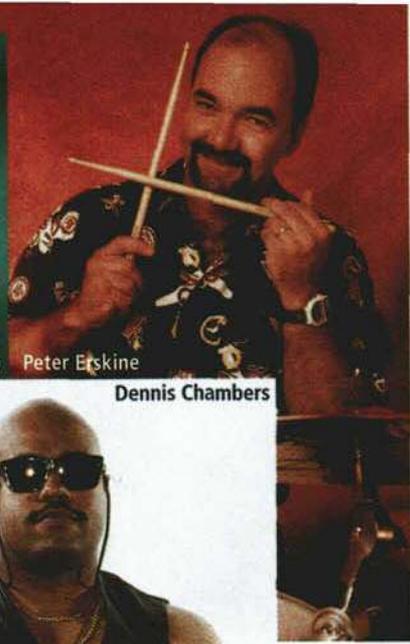
--Michael Baker

*"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."*

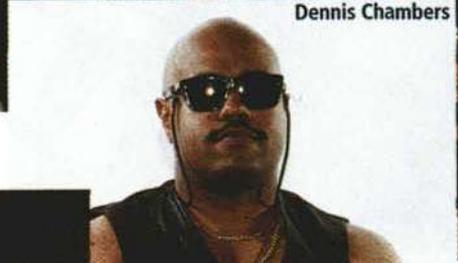
--Adam Nussbaum



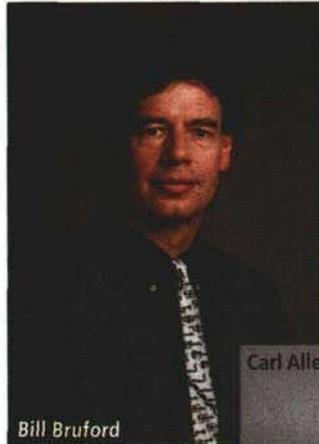
Paul Wertico



Peter Erskine



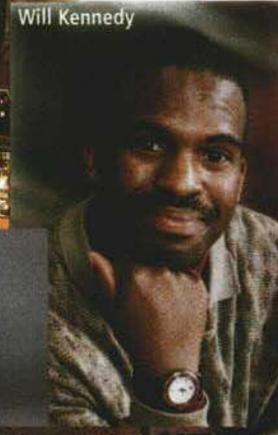
Dennis Chambers



Bill Bruford



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Will Kennedy



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photo by Alex Solca

## CHAD SEXTON

311's funky reggae/rock fusion gives drummer Chad Sexton plenty of stylistic room to roam. Add his plentiful chops and exploratory rhythmic sense to the equation, and you've got an up & comer to keep an unblinking eye on.

by Jim DeRogatis

**56**

## SURVIVING DRUM AUDITIONS

Rare is the drummer who can avoid auditions on his way to the top. Rather than just grinning and bearing it, though, the smart drummer attacks the opportunity and makes it his own. In this exclusive report *MD* picks the brains of the pros who've been there.

by Robin Tolleson

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## HIGHLIGHTS OF MD'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL WEEKEND

We don't like to brag, but.... A decade on, and the drumming event of the year just gets better and better. The players who made this year's show happen: Donati, Tempesta, Gadd, Hidalgo, Stewart, Hernandez, Wertico, DeJohnette, and Ferrone. A special *MD* photo-essay.

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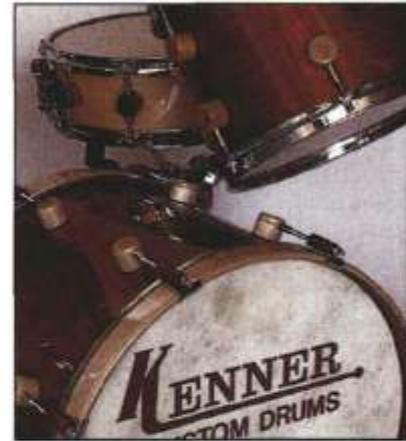
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### MD GIVEAWAY #2

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# Shaping Up

**B**ack in May, I had the opportunity to perform at *MD's* 10th Annual Drum Festival Weekend as part of the "Percussion Originators Ensemble." Our group consisted of drum industry figures known for the companies we founded—Herb Brochstein of Pro-Mark, Drum Workshop's Don Lombardi, Roy Burns of Aquarian, Vic Firth, and myself—but in fact, each of us actually began our careers as professional drummers.

Having been behind a desk at *Modern Drummer* for the past twenty-one years, the decision to perform at the Festival caused me more than a mild degree of apprehension. Though I'd never stopped playing over the years, I hadn't actually performed in this type of setting for some time. The challenge I faced was to get back into some semblance of the playing shape I'd enjoyed as a full-time player.

With only four months to prepare, I was quite aware of the need to structure—and stick to—a consistent practice regimen. And though I couldn't devote eight hours a day to the task, I *did* have evenings, weekends, and a few days off when I could put in the necessary time. With a basic plan mapped out, I pulled out my dog-eared copies of *Stick Control*, *The New Breed*, *Master Studies*, and a selection of other books I'd neglected, and began woodshedding at home. Practice sessions—which would range from one hour in the evening to full eight-hour days—were divided into segments, with equal amounts of time spent on everything from hand and foot speed and endurance to solo work

and lots of focused listening. All in all, I'd say I devoted around a hundred fifty hours to the task.

The day of our Festival performance finally arrived, and I'm happy to report that it actually came off pretty well. And though Messrs. Colaiuta, Weckl, and Chambers certainly have *nothing* to fear, I must say I was very pleased that in a relatively short period of time I was able to get back into better shape than I ever thought possible.

So what's the point of all this? Simply put, for anyone who feels it's too late to get it together again after a few years of neglect—*don't believe it!* Just dig out that dusty practice pad and those old books and set up a consistent, workable program. Sure, it's hard work, but it's also incredibly satisfying as you steadily see the progress you're making with each passing week. Yes, it may have taken the pressure of a major performance to get me back to the practice room, but I don't regret a minute of the time I spent there. And, as I spoke with my cohorts in the Ensemble—who also devoted time preparing for our performance—each expressed similar feelings. Who knows, now that we're all back in such great shape, we may just give up our day gigs, pack our gear—and take the act on the road! Look for us at an arena near you!

*Don Spagnardi*

## MODERN DRUMMER®

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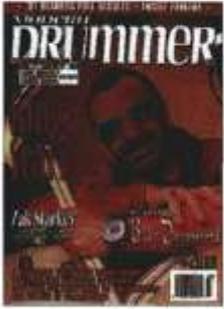


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**RINGO STARR**



Thanks so much for the July '97 cover story on Ringo. It's great to see such an influential musician being honored in this way. Robyn Flans did a great job, and her first-hand experience with the

Beatles' music was an asset in the interview. I enjoyed and appreciated the "Thirteen Reasons To Give Ringo Respect" article, too (and those thirteen are just a few). Gregg Bissonette's analysis of Ringo's drumming on a few notable tunes was very insightful.

Though I have come to be influenced by Williams, Gadd, Weckl, Colaiuta, Chambers, et al, Ringo was the man who inspired me to play drums upon seeing and hearing the Beatles on the *Ed Sullivan Show* one Sunday night in February 1964. I first learned to play the drums by playing along to all of the Beatles records—and I've been playing ever since. Thanks for honoring Ringo, *MD*. He certainly deserves it.

Sal D'Amato  
 via Internet

What a great article on Ringo! If anyone out there thinks he's not that good a drummer, get hold of Ringo's album *Sentimental Journey*. It was recorded almost thirty years ago—with a full orchestra. Listen to the stuff Ringo puts down on that record, and then judge.

Ringo is one of the main reasons I started playing drums, and I'm still doing it thirty years later. Thanks again to Ringo for his influence on music—and on me.

Ralph Trussell  
 Pittsburgh, PA

It's about time Ringo was recognized for his irreplaceable playing with the Beatles.

And speaking of "about time," since the same issue featured your annual Readers Poll results, isn't it about time Ringo joined the ranks of Hall Of Fame members?

Jim Carberry  
 Los Angeles, CA

*Editor's Note: Entry into the MD Readers Poll Hall Of Fame comes as the result of reader votes; it is not awarded by Modern Drummer. However, the Editors Achievement Award, which is awarded by the MD editors, was presented to Ringo in 1995.*

**BEN GILLIES**

When I read the "Next Month" section in the June '97 *Modern Drummer* and saw Ben Gillies' name, I thought, "Well, he must have something really important to say, because his playing sure doesn't warrant an article of any kind." After reading the article in the July issue, I found that my original preconceptions were correct: Ben Gillies is a mediocre drummer and he doesn't even know it! Being seventeen myself and laboring in an original band (yes, original, not Nirvana rip-offs or John Bonham plagiarism), I find it very frustrating to see such a mockery of drummers in our age group. The fact that he "never really gave 'em [rudiments] much use" epitomizes his and many others' attitude that bland, repetitive drumming isn't bad. They claim it's a "style," and that we should give credit to people who masterfully put the snare on 2 and 4 in all their parts. (Usually we give credit to Phil Rudd for this one.)

It seems that as the generations become more and more lazy, we invent new "styles" to step down to our levels, instead of practicing to be able to actually play anything else. The result is drummers playing sloppily, missing beats, rushing, or dragging. But because our sloppy drummer's band has a hit song, that drummer will not have actually made mistakes. Oh no. He will have developed his own "style." And be sure this drummer will pat himself on the back for that. He'll say, "I don't do paradiddles and things like that because there's no place for them in what we do." And what is it, Mr. Gillies, that

you do? I can't think of one drummer I've seen who simply "doesn't do paradiddles." They're a basic building block of modern drumming, and there isn't a style of music around that they won't fit in. So unless you are playing some kind of experimental music that transcends rudimentary skills, stop making excuses for your technical shortcomings and buy a practice pad!

I would like to know why Ben Gillies was in the *Up & Coming* column. I can assure you, he isn't going anywhere. When Tony Williams was playing with Miles Davis at the age of seventeen—he was "Up & Coming."

In closing, I just must reiterate my discontent with another article that commends somebody for being sloppy and boring, and that calls them a "minimalist" when they simply were playing to the best of their limited abilities. They just seemed minimal as compared to the *real* drummers out there, who work and practice for hours every day and who *deserve* their recognition—if they ever get it.

Paul Knegten  
 via Internet

**MD FESTIVAL**

Thanks for putting together such an accomplished and inspiring group of performers for your 10th Anniversary Drum Festival. Every performer had something interesting and enlightening to share with us. I particularly enjoyed seeing people like Horacio Hernandez, Virgil Donati, and Tony Royster—players I had never seen before and who each brought unique talents to the show. I left the festival re-invigorated about my own drumming and excited about how much more music there is to learn.

Thanks, also, to Rick Van Horn and the entire *MD* staff for their approach in procuring talent from the whole percussion family for the festival, instead of just drumset players. With this in mind, I suggest that for an upcoming festival (hopefully next year) *MD* present a performer on one of the oldest and most exciting forms of percussion (and one that is rapidly growing in popularity in the US): tabla. Zakir Hussain (the foremost classical tabla player of his generation, who has performed with John McLaughlin as a

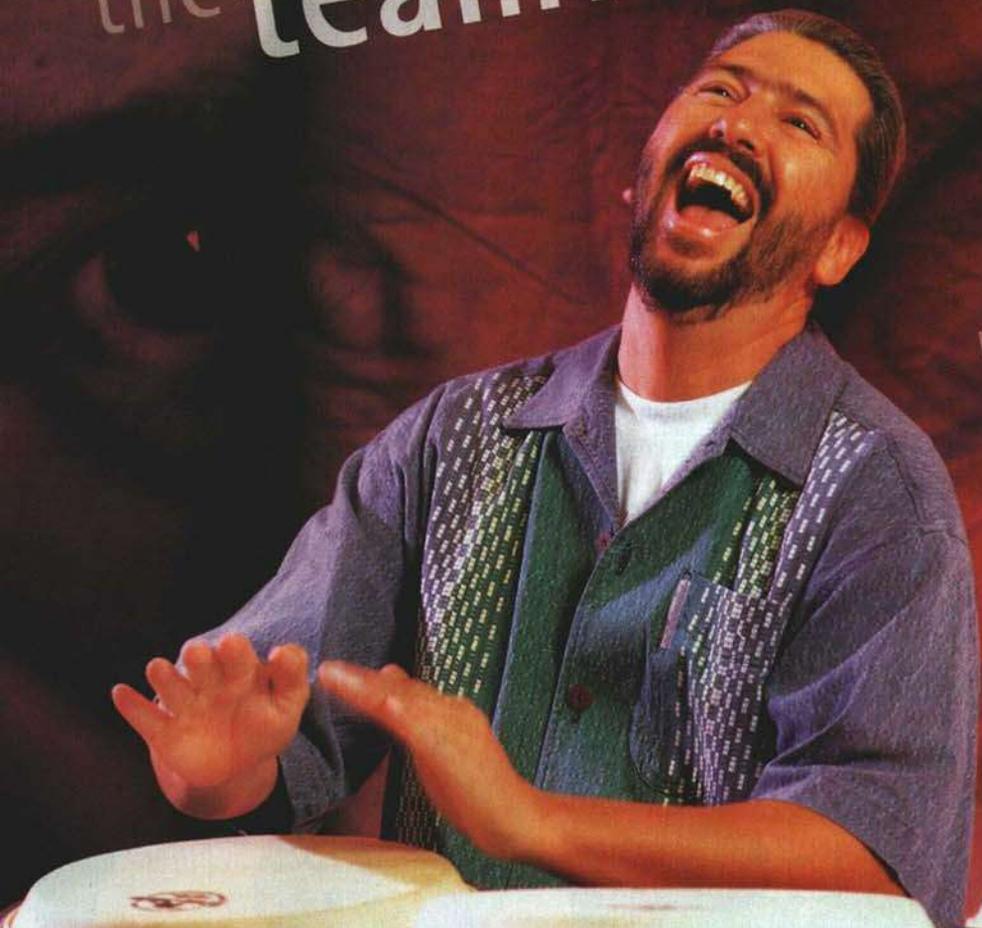
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**MEINL**  
ROLAND MEINL

member of Shakti, and in Mickey Hart's Planet Drum) would astound the festival audience. If he is unavailable there are many accomplished tabla players, such as Swapan Chaudhuri, who could expose the audience to the complex rhythms and multitude of sounds created on the tabla. Thanks for the consideration.

Alan Lerner  
New York, NY

favorite artist uses. Whether or not this is a wise idea is another story altogether, but it remains a marketing fact. On the other hand, drummers are not stupid, and I'm sure that not everyone buys something just because Dennis Chambers plays it.

I also have to believe that major artists don't want their names associated with junk. For that reason, it makes sense to pay attention to what they endorse.

Brett Gaynor  
via Internet

ride cymbal or hotshot drummer.

Edo Banach  
New York, NY

## RESPONSE TO ROSE

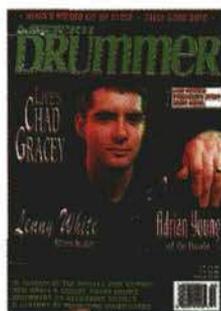
In your July *Readers' Platform*, Greg Rose wrote concerning endorsers of percussion products. Though I haven't played drums for as long as Greg apparently has, I still think that there is nothing wrong with having "big-name" artists endorse a product. I believe that those artists do play the equipment that they endorse. What good would it do for them to endorse something that doesn't last more than a night's performance?

I think the reason that the manufacturers want these artists "in their camp" is because, like it or not, people tend to want to use the same equipment that their

## PARADIGM SHIFTS

Kudos to Ron Hefner on an exceptionally well-written and well-researched article concerning "Paradigm Shifts" [*Concepts*, July '97 MD]. I hope that *Modern Drummer* continues to embrace such abstract, yet very important, types of articles. Only through a realization of the need for growth while remaining grounded, only through an analysis of drumming as part of a larger society and world can drumming continue to grow as an art form. These are issues that must be thought out, and they are just as important to me as the newest

## MORE CHAD, PRO AND CON



Thank you for your June '97 article featuring Live's Chad Gracey. I've been waiting a while to hear from Gracey, since I have considered him a prime influence since the *Mental Jewelry* days.

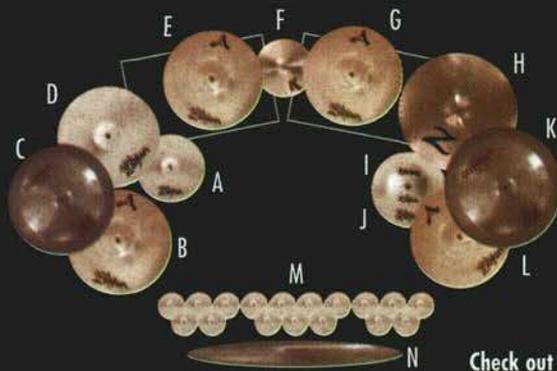
I wish I had more in common with him than never having had any formal drum training/lessons. Unfortunately, I have not progressed along the same lines as Chad, which is all too evident when I listen to anything from any of Live's albums.

I really enjoyed hearing Chad's take on things, and the way he lets the song rule his playing instead of vice versa. But just like the writer of the article said, don't let that philosophy fool you—he comes up with complex sequences that you could study

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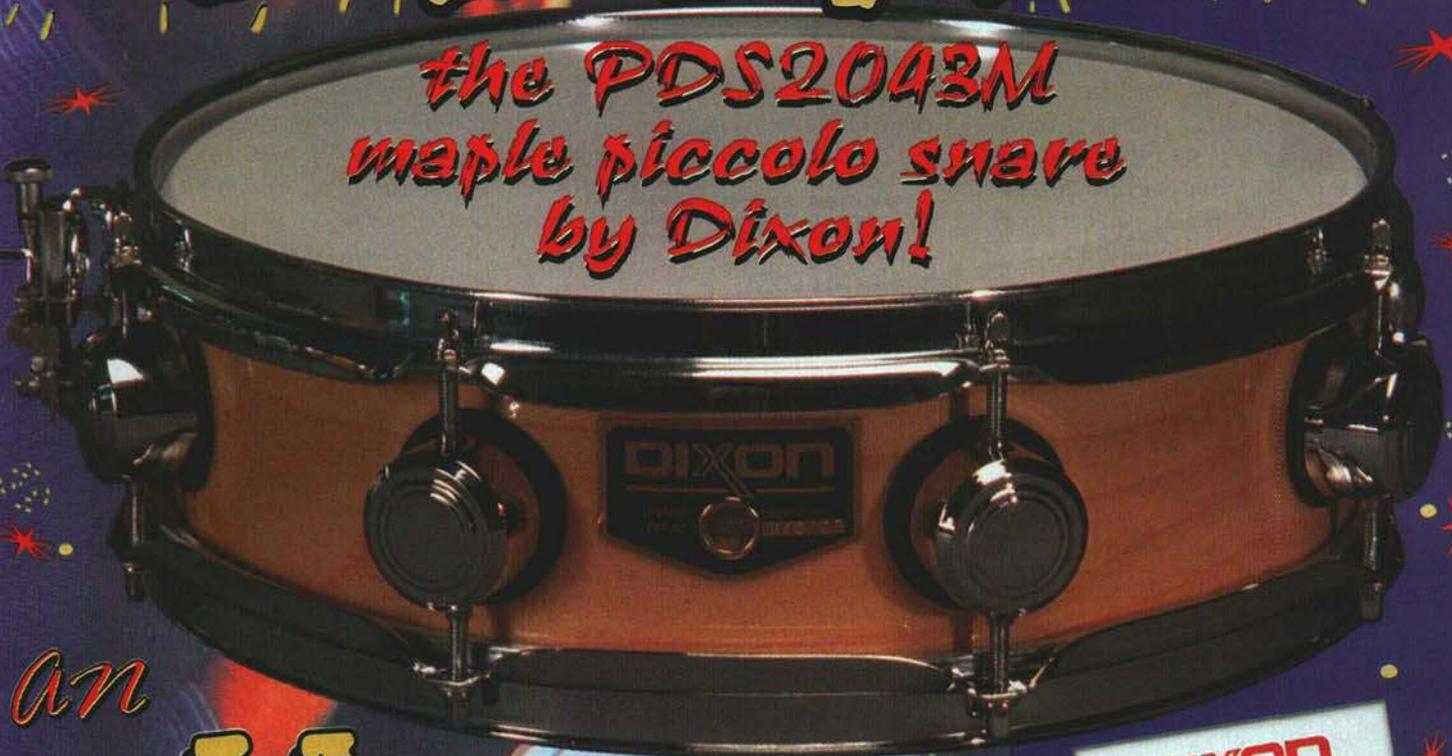
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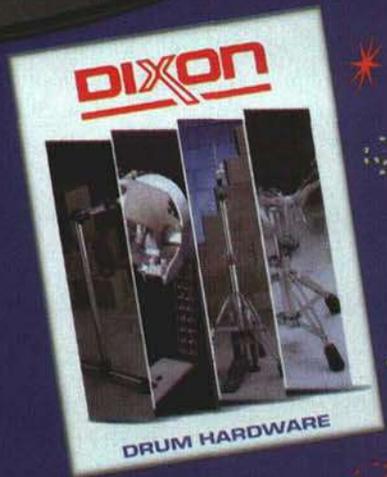
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for years and not duplicate. I also found his equipment setup interesting, with the drums in a triangle formation and the metal spread around that geometry.

Thanks again for your feature on Chad, and thanks to Chad for speaking out to his fans. There are a lot of them out there.

Michael Sugarman  
via Internet

Wow! Was I ever let down after reading the interview you had with Chad Gracey. As one who must constantly defend the concept that drummers are musicians and that playing the drums requires a great deal of practicing, I feel that Chad has done a disservice to drummers struggling to improve. He made it seem that anybody could just sit down and start playing the drums. Maybe some people can, but I prefer to practice and build on what I already know. I read *MD* to be inspired by great drummers who talk about how much they practiced to get where they are today. I give drum lessons, and the last thing I want is for my students to ask, "Why do I have to practice? Chad Gracey never did, and look where he is."

Larry Gravatt  
Mission Viejo, CA

## INSURING DRUMS

To answer Shannon Roll's question regarding the availability of insurance to cover damage or loss of drums or other instruments [*It's Questionable*, July '97]: Musicians can insure their gear simply by joining their local musicians union. One of the many benefits of being a union member is that you can purchase instrument insurance at a very reasonable cost. There are local chapters of the American Federation of Musicians all across the United States and Canada.

Barry James  
President, Local 389  
Central Florida Musicians Assn., AF of M  
Orlando, FL



## REMO MONDO REVIEW

I was fascinated by Rick Van Horn's review of the Remo *Mondo* drumkit in the June '97 issue. A radical new development in drum design like this is sure to get a lot of people thinking. In my case I realized that the review, excellent and thorough though it was, still begged a couple of questions.

First: Assuming that the *Mondo* heads are not pre-tuned, but are stretched over the bearing edges of the drums in the usual way, surely rimshots with sticks will strike onto the flexible head material straight against the bearing edges. Is this not likely to cause dents?

Second, regarding hand-playing applications: I've found that due to the much larger area of impact involved, the force of full-handed conga-style strokes such as a slap or a "heel" is considerably greater than that produced by a drumstick. Playing these sorts of strokes on a normal snare drum (even on a heavy-duty stand) or on a floor tom (on legs) can cause the drum to jump about quite alarmingly. This can be controlled by gripping the drum firmly between the knees, but this obviously severely restricts the simultaneous use of pedals. Also, the force and subsequent movement means that snares need to be slacked off beyond the normal "off position, otherwise they will still bounce up and rattle against the bottom head.

Applying hand playing force to tom-toms mounted on the bass drum has been a definite no-no for me, because there must be a

danger of breaking the tom-tom holder—or worse, of cracking the bass drum shell.

I was inspired to try hand-drumming on a kit by seeing Larrie Londin doing it on a *Zildjian Day* video some years ago. He was doing it rather well. However, I get the feeling that unless the issue of force and stability has been addressed to some extent by Remo, the *Mondo* drumkit would only be suitable for lighter hand-drumming techniques, which would make the relative volume differences between sticks and hands even more marked.

Simon Goodwin  
Brighton, England

*Editor's Note: Rick Van Horn replies: "All of your points are well taken. The Mondo heads used on this drumkit are pre-formed and, to a large degree, pre-tuned (although they certainly can be further tuned using the lugs on the drums). However, it's true that they do sit flush on the bearing edge of the drum, and that rimshots would be striking the surface of the drumhead and the bearing edge itself. Although I saw no evidence of denting, my testing period admittedly could not equal long-term usage. My feeling is, however, that between the exceptional hardness and durability of Remo's Acousticon shell, the thickness of the Mondo heads, and the likelihood that the very nature and design of the drums might influence a drummer to play fewer rimshots than on a 'traditional' kit, the dent-risk factor would be minimal.*

*"Regarding hand-playing technique: I did not approach the drums as though they were 'traditional' hand drums. I played them in the context of what they were: drums mounted on snare stands, floor-tom legs, and rack-tom mounts. As such, I probably did play with less impact force than one might use on a cradle-mounted conga drum. However, in doing so, I encountered no appreciable lack of volume or response from the drums. They were as loud as they needed to be for any musical application I tested them in (and the drums didn't bounce around at all). As you surmised, however, I did need to loosen the snares a bit to be absolutely sure that they wouldn't 'bounce up' against the bottom snare drum head."*

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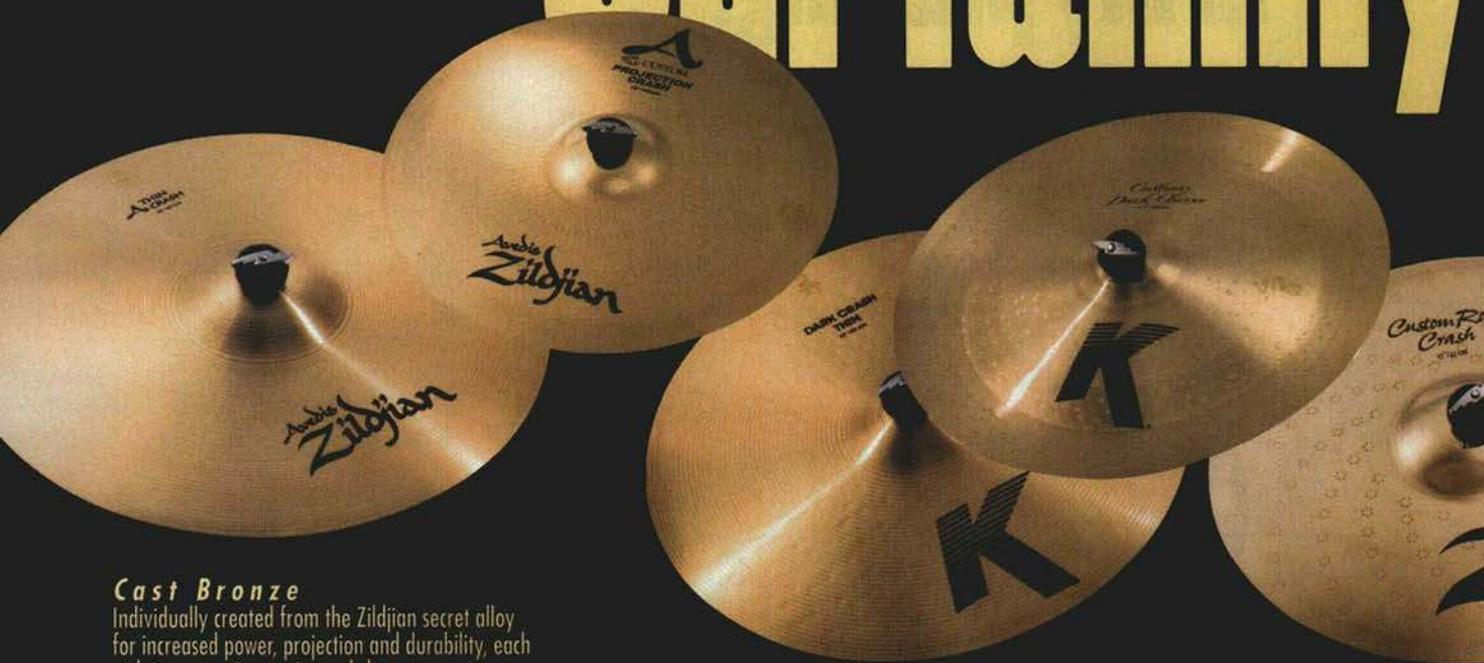


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# Jason Bonham

## Like Father

Many children of celebrities don't want to acknowledge their famous parent.

Jason Bonham is one of those rare offspring who not only admits it, but actively pays homage to his father, the late John Bonham. *In The Name Of My Father*, released this past spring, is Jason's tribute to his dad and the music of Led Zeppelin, recorded at New York's Electric Ladyland. "I really liked the fact that Zeppelin had worked there—and Hendrix," Jason says. "It's a great atmosphere, and you definitely feel the vibe."

The project came about when Jason found a new lead singer a week before his tour began. "We didn't have a chance to write anything. We just went out on the road, and each night we'd add another song. Basically we tried to capture the spirit of what Zeppelin had—the jam element. We never played it the same way any two nights. Obviously we had a framework, but the colors would change every night."

This musical framework inspired the drummer. "At a certain point we said, 'Wouldn't it be a shame if no one could hear this the way we've done it?' So we had an invitation-only audience in the studio, put a PA in the room, and played the set from start to finish. We recorded it totally live, no overdubs, no drop-ins. Someone said to me that it took a lot of guts to do it, not only because of the way we did it but because of the Zeppelin approach. But reviewers are always going to compare me to Zeppelin. If I did a *Beatles* tribute album, they'd compare me to Zeppelin."

In August, Bonham will be releasing an album of original material, which he describes as very earthy-sounding. "It's nothing completely new," he says, "but there are some cool things that I think people will like."

Robyn Flans

# BUN E. CARLOS

## SAME DRUMMER, NEW TRICKS

Back in 1973 the folks behind the scenes of Cheap Trick's budding stardom were saying things like, "Bun E.'s got to grow his hair long, that Rick kid has got to lose the hat gimmick, and for God's sake change the name!" It's nearly twenty-five years later, and Bun E.'s still got short hair, Rick still wears the kooky hats, and Cheap Trick is playing some of the most identifiable rock 'n' roll ever.

From Bun E.'s perspective it's come full circle: "I remember when we started out. It was like, 'Man, if we do good enough, some day we'll be these old farts we're opening for, who are only giving us thirty minutes.' Now that the tables have turned it's kind of neat to have been around this long."

With the release of their self-titled album, Cheap Trick has roared back to life. "We were pretty relaxed in the studio, and I think the album sounds good," the drummer says. "When you're relaxed and you're having a good time, I think you play better. One big difference, unlike the last three or four albums, was that we didn't use click tracks on any of the songs. So I wasn't in the position to play along with a machine or a keyboard part that had already been laid down. That sort of stifled things before."

That wasn't the only thing that changed. "I don't beat the tar out of my cymbals as much as I used to," Bun E. says, laughing. "I occasionally nit 'em with the tips of my sticks, instead of the shanks. I have more chops than I used to, because when I moved out of an apartment eleven years ago I was able to start practicing regularly, which I hadn't done since 1975."

While tunes like "I Want You To Want Me" were the benchmark of '70s rock, it's the track "Anytime" off the current release where Bun E. plays out of his head.

"That song is like a variety pack of drumming things. I start out left-handed with a little swing beat, which I heard Ginger Baker do at a clinic and I later messed around with at rehearsal. Then in the verses I switch over to right-handed, and it's pretty straight rock, like I usually do. Then in the end I get into this little tom-tom thing Mick Fleetwood inspired me to do. I'm proud of that song because there's probably more stuff going on there than I've done in years!"

Carlos's most recent work has even made Rick Nielsen compare his current drumming to the Bun E. Carlos of the past. "If I sound like the young Bun E. Carlos, that's great. I try not to lose sight of what I did back in the '70s; I try not to lose sight of what we did that's made us what we are."

David John Farinella



Michael Lavine

# JON FARRISS

On the afternoon after a Los Angeles show, Jon Farriss looks down at his hands and shakes his head. "It wouldn't be so bad if we were playing every night, but we've only played four shows in America. Half of the problem with me is trying to catch up with my hands, because every time I do a gig my hands get hurt." Then he laughs and rubs them together. Farriss and his INXS brethren have just finished a mini-tour before they head home to rest before launching a massive fall tour, and Farriss's hands haven't built up the necessary calluses to play on a consistent basis.

In between their last album and the recently released *Elegantly Wasted* Jon took time off from both his band and the drums. "I scared myself, because I didn't play for two years," he admits. "The first year I was confident, but when it got to eighteen months it started getting scary. I wasn't sure how I was going to be. When I got the call that the band was ready to record an album, I thought, 'I might as well play bass or keyboards. I'd be equally proficient.'" But luckily, with over twenty years experience and an extra special relationship with bassist Garry Gary Beers, Farriss came out on top, and this album shows it.

As with most of the past INXS recordings, the rhythm tracks on *Elegantly Wasted* contain a combination of sequenced and live drum tracks, although with the new album there was a bit of a change. "On this record we weren't so doctoring and so snippy," he explains. "It was like, 'Run the sequencer, play the drums, mix it.'"

There are other lessons Farriss has learned from maturity. "I used to hit really hard, but I don't think it made me a better drummer. It was something I did out of the excitement of the moment and being in front of 20,000 people. Then I realized that the only problem with hitting hard is that there's not much headroom for dynamics, so I brought everything down about twenty percent. Now I'm a little more laid-back, and when I want to I can really kick it in."

David John Farinella

## A Mature INXS

### NEWS

**Kevin Winard** is playing drums and percussion on the debut album from Murumba (a band he is in with percussionist **Kalani**). Winard is doing some dates with Sergio Mendez as well.

**Mike Shapiro** is on the road with Al Jarreau, alternating drums and percussion with **Michael Baker**.

**Gregg Bissonette** is on Steve Lukather's solo European tour.

**Taylor Hawkins** is on Alanis Morissette's ninety-minute video, *Jagged Little Pill, Live*. **Gary Novak**, of Chick Corea fame, has been playing select dates with Morissette since Taylor Hawkins left the singer to join Foo Fighters.

**Bill Conway** is on Duke Levine's *Lava*.

**Marty Richards** is on David Maxwell's *Maximum Blues Piano*.

**Steve Gorman** is working on a new Black Crowes record.

After spending over two years with Ben Harper's Innocent Criminals, **Oliver Charles** has moved back to LA to form a band (Ocean 11) and to get back to session work. Lately he's been working with composer Michael Skloff (NBC's *Friends*).

**Narada Michael Walden** co-produced, programmed, and played on Steve Winwood's recent release, *Junction Seven*. **Walfredo Reyes Jr.** is playing drums and percussion on tour with Winwood.

**Tal Bergman** has been on recent albums by Joe Zawinul, Herb Alpert, and Butchie Swaine & the Union. Tal also composed, played on, and produced the soundtrack to the film *Wedding Bell Blues*.

**Mat Marucci** is currently working with organist Jimmy Smith.

**Denny Carmassi** is on Sammy Hagar's recent *Marching To Mars* CD.

Congratulations to Athena and **James Kottak** on the birth of their son, Mathew James. Dad is currently working on a new Scorpions record.

Congratulations also to **Charlie Adams** and his wife Andrea on the birth of their son, Sean.

And congrats to Dream Theater's **Mike Portnoy** and wife Marlene on the birth of their daughter, Melody.

## Dawn Richardson

Former 4 Non Blondes drummer Dawn Richardson has been very busy over the past several months. In August 1996, she performed on the new CD from the Loud Family, *Interbabe Concern* (Alias Records), which was released this past August. Richardson then toured with the band in support of Aimee Mann.

In September of 1996, Richardson was asked to join Almo Sounds recording artist Gus on his national tour, first supporting Seven Mary Three and the Verve Pipe, then Primitive Radio Gods. Richardson has also been asked to perform on Gus's second effort for Almo Sounds, which she should begin recording within the next few months.

In January of this year producer Dave Jerden called Dawn to play on two demo recordings at his new El Dorado Studios in Burbank, one of which was for Holly Vincent, formerly of Holly & the Italians. According to Richardson, "I performed several showcases with Holly over the last few months, which resulted in a bidding war between several labels. Holly is now signed to Discovery, and we're about to record her album."

Jorge Spellman



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# MARIO CALIRE

Of

**THE WALLFLOWERS**

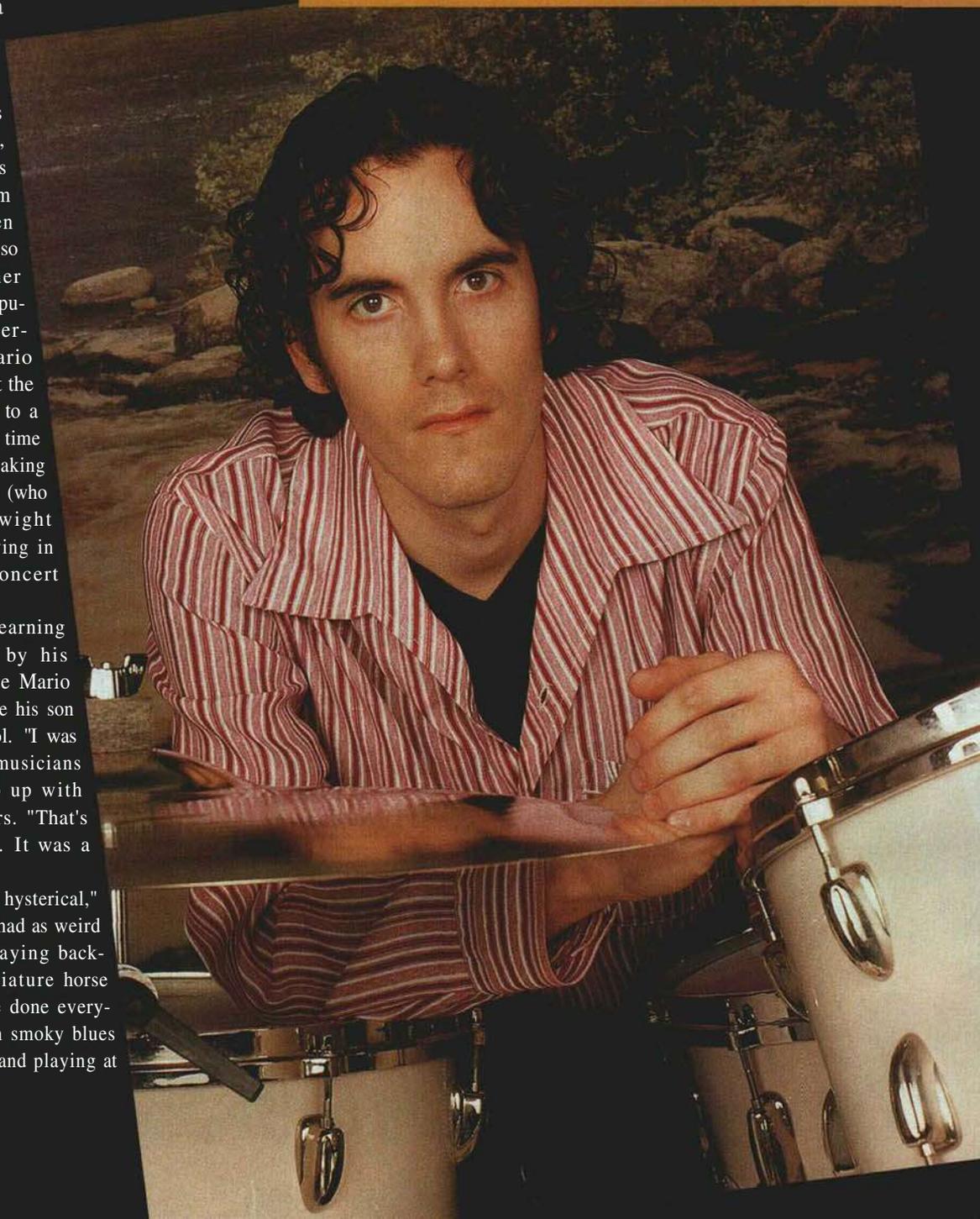
by Robyn Flans

Photos by Alex Solca

Wallflowers drummer Mario Calire always wanted to be a musician, like his dad. The Calires moved to California from Buffalo, New York when Mario was a youngster so his keyboardist father Jimmy could join the popular group America. Interested in the drums, Mario began on a practice pad at the age of six. He graduated to a drumkit at eight. By the time he was thirteen, he was taking lessons from Jim Christie (who now plays with Dwight Yoakam), as well as playing in the school jazz and concert bands.

But Mario's greatest learning ground was provided by his father, who began to hire Mario for *his* casuals by the time his son was in junior high school. "I was playing with excellent musicians and struggling to keep up with them," Mario remembers. "That's how I got better faster. It was a great education.

"My very first gig was hysterical," Mario recalls. "I haven't had as weird a gig since. We were playing background music for a miniature horse auction! Since then I've done everything from all-nighters in smoky blues clubs to putting on a tux and playing at a wedding.



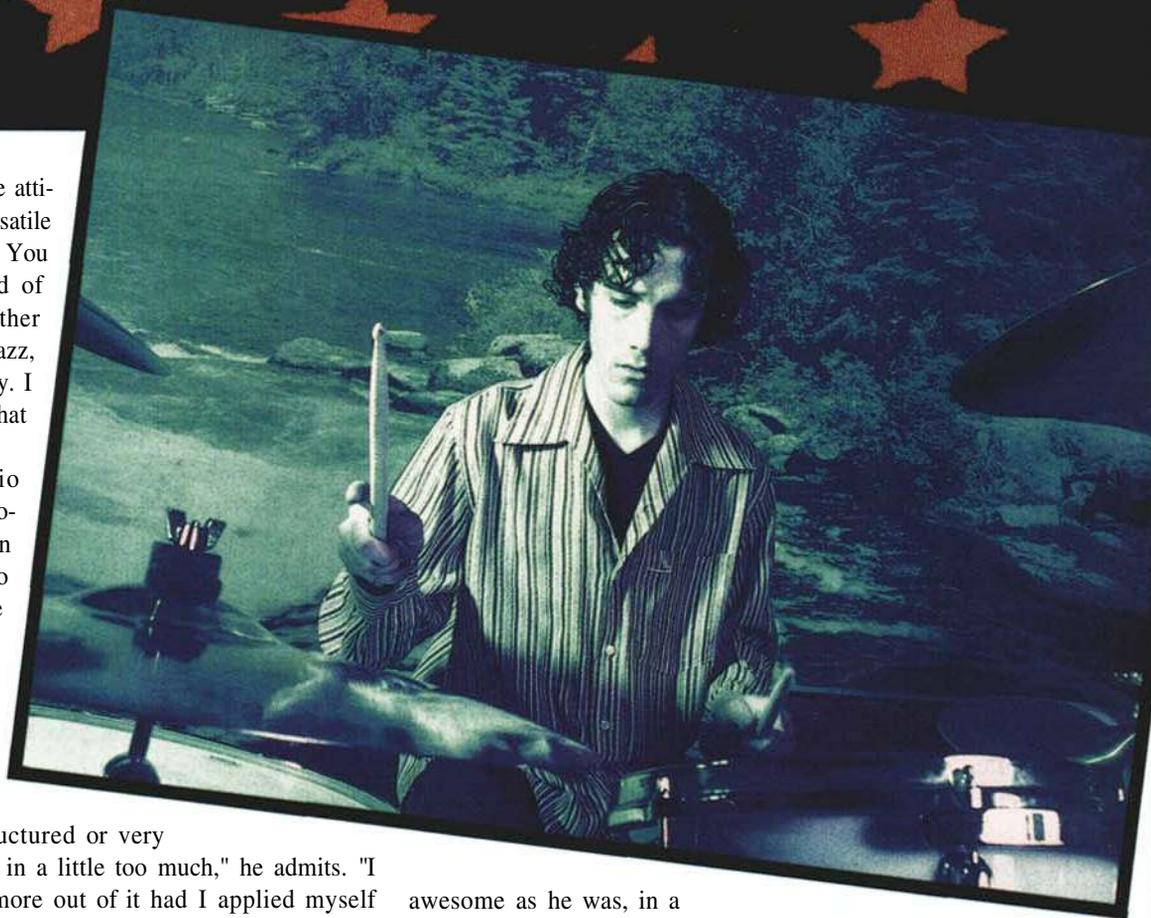
"My dad raised me with the attitude that you should be as versatile as you can in order to work. You can learn from every kind of music. It's all valid. My father was more of a blues, R&B, jazz, rock, funk, boogie woogie guy. I was raised on equal doses of that stuff, and I liked it all."

After high school, Mario chose to go to Cal Arts, a progressive arts college in Valencia, California. Mario was only sixteen when he auditioned for the school (having earlier skipped a grade), and now he realizes he was probably too young to have been handed the kind of freedom the school offered. "It wasn't real structured or very rigid, so I might have slept in a little too much," he admits. "I think I could have gotten more out of it had I applied myself more."

The focus on playing was most constructive for Mario, though. "I got to play a *lot*" he says. "Many of the ensembles were led by teachers, most of whom are excellent players. There was also the opportunity to play other kinds of music after hours. There was a lot of jamming going on."

The school also assigned mentors. During his first year at the school, Mario's mentor was Albert "Tootie" Heath. "Tootie comes from the bebop school," says Mario. "A lesson with him wasn't about getting analytical, it was hanging out with him, listening to music, and playing drums with him. It was more soaking up his experience, his feel, and his concept of how to play jazz. He turned me on to a lot of stuff."

"Tootie would send substitute teachers every now and then when he was on the road," Mario adds. "But he wouldn't tell us who he was sending. One day I showed up for my lesson and Billy Higgins was there. 'Are you Mario? I'm your teacher today.' The next thing I know, I'm jamming with Billy in my room. He's playing my funky drumset and I'm playing my roommate's, and I'm hanging out for an hour with him. Every substitute was just as



awesome as he was, in a totally different way."

Efrain Toro was Mario's mentor for his second year. "Efrain is a master of the Latin style on everything, including hand percussion and applying it to the drumset," says Mario. "We mostly concentrated on playing in that style and understanding the concept of clave, which was a

whole other world for me. That year, I played drums in a twenty-piece salsa band. I got to learn a lot of different feels—none of which I can remember now," he laughs. "I didn't get into hand percussion very much. I always felt like the drumset was my main instrument, and I had enough to work on with that. I didn't want to spread myself too thin. I saw a lot of people try to do a little bit of everything and then not be able to do any one thing well."

After two years at Cal Arts, Mario was informed that he would receive no further financial aid. Rather than go deeply into debt, he reluctantly decided to leave the school. His last day of school was a Friday, and by the following Monday he had inherited an entire roster of students at the local drum store. To this day he is not sure how the job came his way. "Probably God," he says with a shrug of the shoulders.

**"My very first gig was hysterical. We were playing background music for a miniature horse auction!"**

"I had to teach myself how to teach," Mario explains. "I had to figure out where all these kids were at and how to make sure they made progress every week. The first couple of weeks were very hard, because some of them were advanced and they were all in different books. I had to teach myself all the books just so I could read what they were reading."

From 3:00 to 6:00, four days a week, Mario taught eight- to eighteen-year-olds, and then he would drive from Ventura to Los Angeles to play a gig. It was during that time that the Wallflowers' management saw him playing (in a four-piece band called 2-Piece) at a club called the Mint. But he didn't hear from them for another six months. In the interim, he rehearsed with Martha Davis, formerly of the Motels. "We rehearsed a *lot*," Mario recalls. "And I played a different style than I would have normally chosen to play. It was more the straight rock thing. It was really keeping my chops up, though, because *just* teaching gets old after a while. When you're a player, you want to play."

In July of '95, Mario got a call from the manager of the Wallflowers, who

explained that the band had just finished an album and needed a drummer. "I had no idea what the music was," says Mario. "But the next day I received a tape with rough mixes of the album *Bringing Down The Horse*, plus a couple of cuts that didn't make it. I threw it on, and it blew me away, song after song. It was different from anything I had heard. I'm not a songwriter, but I know a good song when I hear it—and they were *all* good. That was the first thing that struck me. The second thing was how well it was recorded, how good everything sounded, and how good the rhythm section's playing was. Matt Chamberlain's drumming was awesome. He really served the music. He didn't play too much, and all the sounds were great. He had different snare sounds on almost every tune, and they were all interesting and all fit. The bass playing was excellent, too. I listened to the tape over and over, and then I called the manager and said, 'This is awesome. I want to do this.' Then it was just a matter of setting up an audition, which got moved around a few times because of everybody's different schedules."

Mario's teaching experience was instru-

mental in the preparation for his audition. "Besides teaching out of books, I would write out a lot of things for my students. Also, I would invite students to bring in tapes of any particular style they wanted to learn, and we would transcribe it.

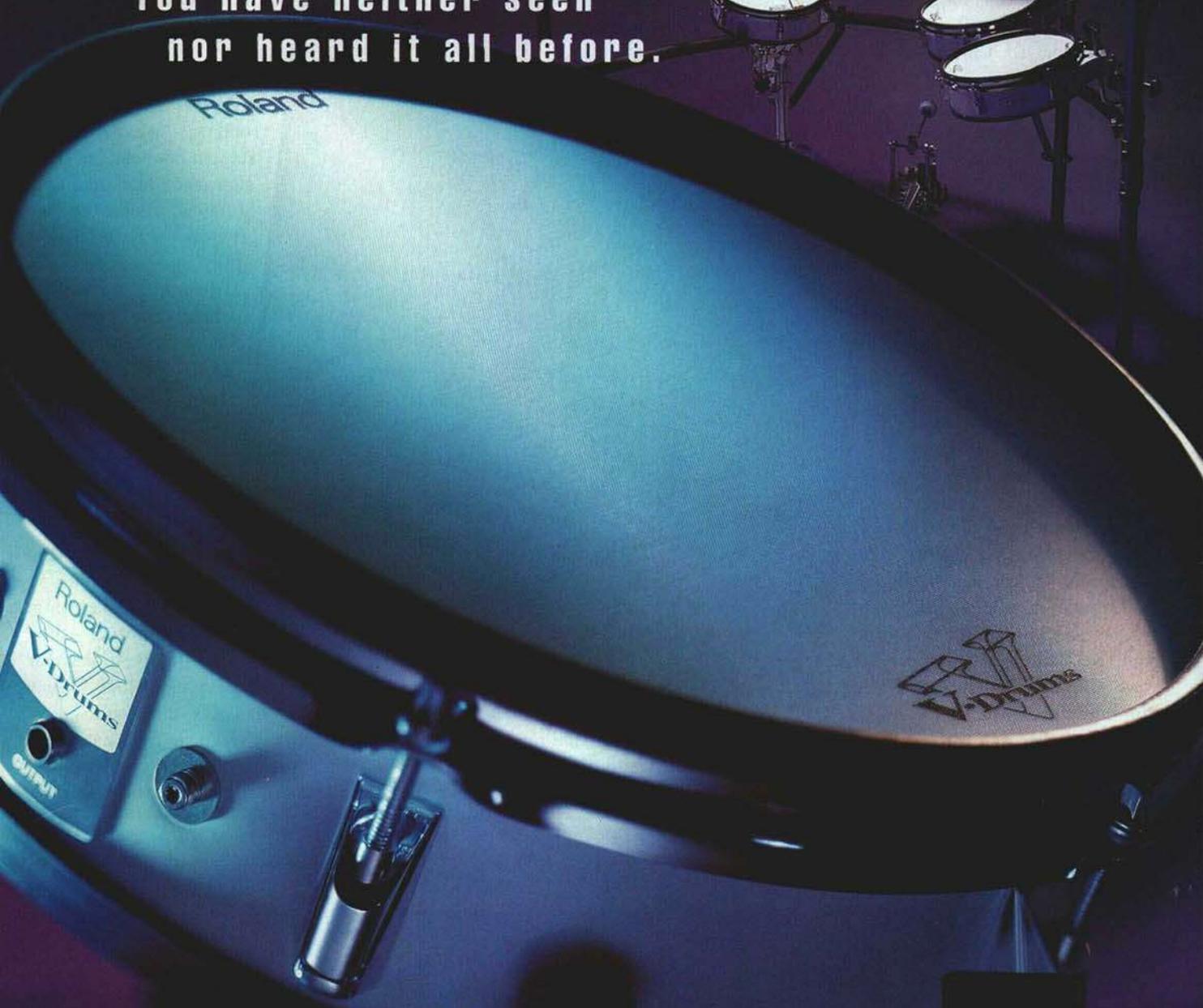
"For the audition, the one thing the manager said that made me a little nervous was, 'Can you play it *exactly* like that?' Of course I said that I could, not knowing for sure how I was going to pull it off. But because I had been writing so much as a teacher, I was able to transcribe a couple of tunes from top to bottom—every fill, every open hi-hat. Then I would cue up the tape to the song I was learning, set the chart out, and play along and read it at the same time. That helped me learn much faster than if I had just played along or listened. Some of the parts were deceptively tricky. Every drummer has different instincts, so what Matt would do wasn't necessarily what I would do. I had to learn his moves. By the time I auditioned, I knew the stuff really well.

"The bass player [Greg Richling] and I hit it off right away. We immediately started grooving, like a rhythm section. We played '6th Avenue Heartache,' 'One Headlight,' 'God Don't Make Lonely Girls,' and maybe something else."

What probably landed the gig for Mario was his hard-hitting approach. "[Wallflowers leader] Jakob Dylan mainly wants a drummer who hits hard," he says. "He obviously wants a drummer who plays well, but he really wants to feel it on stage. Apparently they had played with people who might have been great, but just didn't hit hard enough. It's not a heavy metal band, but he wants someone to dig in. I'm not sure if I knew that going in, but I laid into it and I got the gig."

Shortly after Mario landed the gig, the Wallflowers opened a tour for Chris Isaak. In retrospect, Mario sees that it took some time for him to make the album's material his own. "I didn't have a real handle on this style of music," he admits. "I was never into straight rock 'n' roll, so it was an education for me. Besides, I knew that what Matt played worked, so there was no need to reinvent it. From a rhythm section standpoint, what we're doing is just supporting the song and making it move. It isn't like Primus or some kind of funk band where what we're *playing* is the cool thing. To this day I stick pretty closely to what

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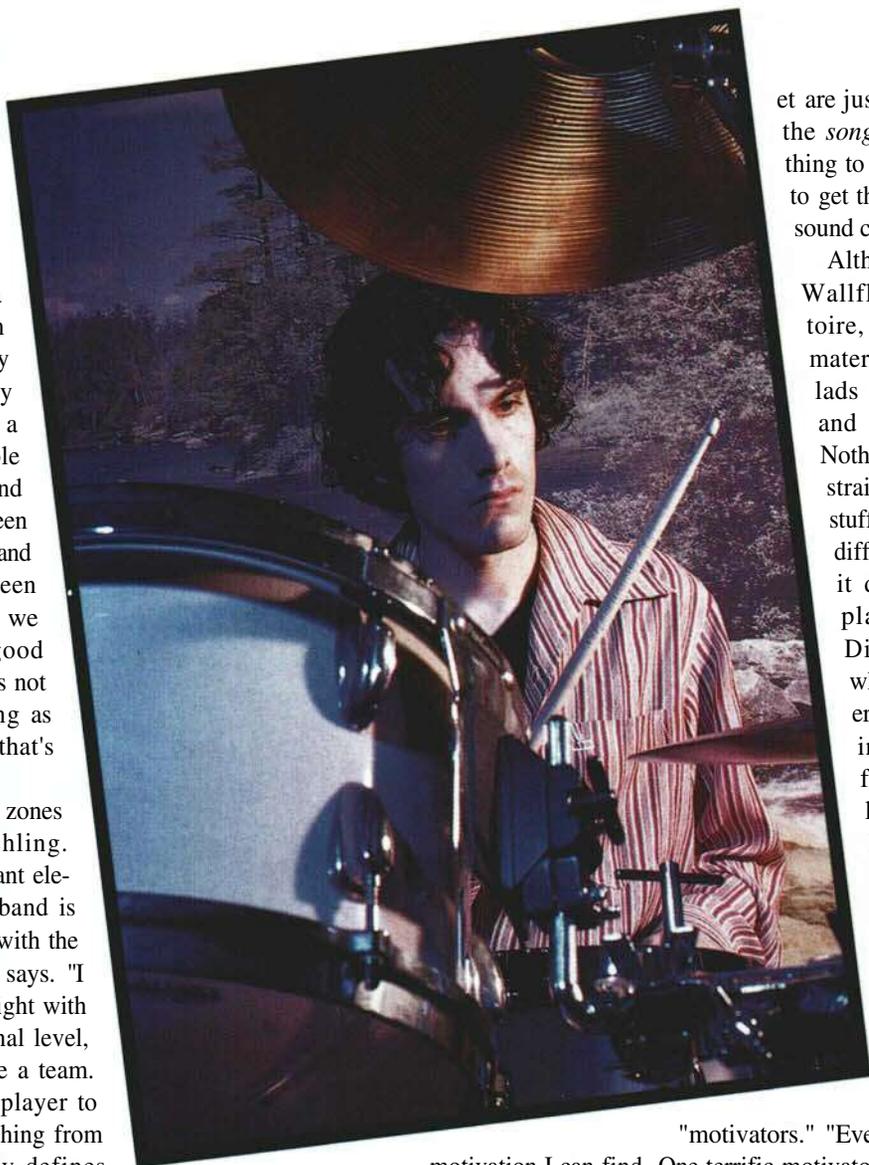


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Matt played, although I don't play *every* fill the way he played it, and I probably don't play *every* feel the way he played it either. If I hear something in the music that calls for a different drum part from what Matt played, I'll play it differently. I've gradually made it my own. It was a matter of being comfortable playing with these guys and gelling as a band. We've been a band for two years now, and part of our growth has been getting confident in who we are and that we sound good together. What we do live is not necessarily the same thing as what's on the album, and that's fine. It's been a process."

One of Mario's comfort zones is provided by Greg Richling. "Probably the most important element to me in joining a band is whether or not I get along with the bass player musically," he says. "I usually end up being real tight with the bass player on a personal level, too, because of that. We're a team. And Greg is a great bass player to work with. I get the same thing from him every night; he really defines consistency. He plays in time every night, and he's got a great feel, so if we don't sound good as a rhythm section, it's probably my fault. His time and feel and pock-



et are just *there*. And he plays the *song*; he doesn't do anything to show his licks. We try to get that out of our system at sound check," he laughs.

Although Mario loves the Wallflowers' entire repertoire, some of his favorite material to play is the ballads like "Invisible City" and "I Wish I Felt Nothing." "We play a lot of straight-8th-note, backbeat stuff, and those are a little different. It's nice to tone it down a little. I like playing the song 'The Difference' a lot, too, which is one of our rockers. It has a very pounding floor tom rhythm for the chorus. It's kinda primal," he laughs.

When a band is playing five or six nights a week on tour, the objective is to keep the fire burning on stage. To help him accomplish this, Mario looks for

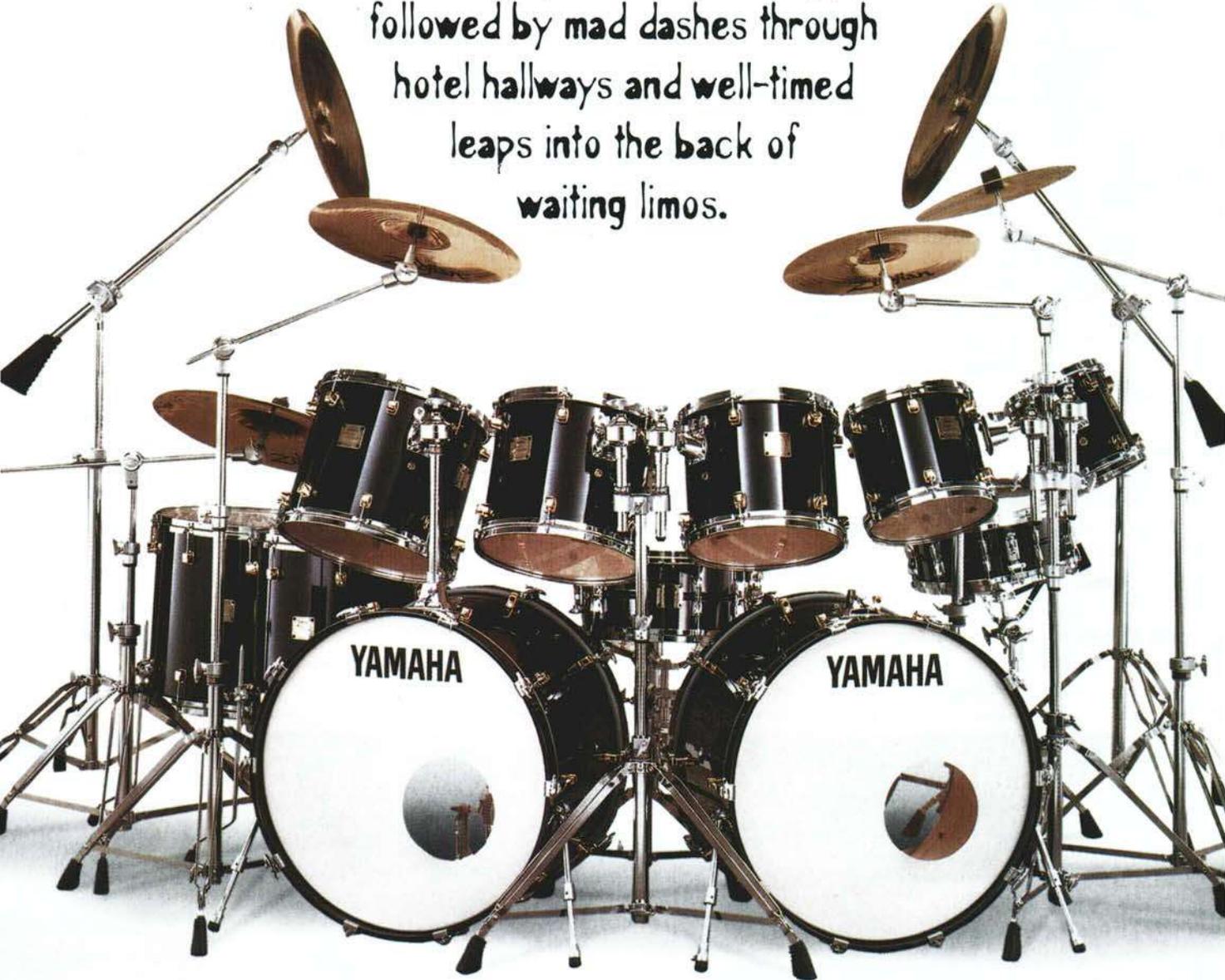
"motivators." "Every day I look for any motivation I can find. One terrific motivator is when you're out on the road with another band, and they're great. That makes *you* want to be great. We were out with Sheryl Crow's band for about a month, and we had to go out and really rock because we knew

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they were going to come out and play an incredible show. All her musicians are excellent. Another great motivator is when someone you respect comes to see you. A lot of times you're playing in front of nothing but strangers. The challenge there is to concentrate on the music. It may be the hundredth show you've played, but it's the first time those people have seen you. They're paying good money to see you play, so you owe it to them to do a good job."

It's important to Mario to be in the right frame of mind before a show. "I don't like the feeling of hanging out, doing this and that, and then all of a sudden being thrust on stage in front of a lot of people," he says. "That can be disorienting sometimes. If I feel like I need to settle down, I'll go off by myself for a while and focus on what I'm about to do."

Mario is also conscientious about keeping in shape on the road. "To get mentally ready for the gig, I have to take care of myself physically," he says. "I try to eat as well as I can, and I'm not excessive with anything. I don't really drink or smoke, so I'm not out there partying. I would fall apart if I did. Also, I exercise and stretch a lot. Luckily, most of the time we get to stay at nice hotels that have little gyms in them. I do some kind of work-out when I can. I don't lift a lot of weights, but I'll ride an exercise bike or something. Unfortunately my posture isn't great; I think that's part of why my back will sometimes hurt."

"I also had problems with my wrist on the last tour," Mario continues. "It's the same thing anybody gets from overuse and doing one repetitive motion, so lately I've really been trying to focus on playing through the set as long as I can with the lowest amount of energy spent. I don't want that to sound wimpy; what I mean is that I'm trying to conserve. We play an hour-and-a-half show, and my focus has been on not reducing what I put into the music, but getting more out of the energy that I *do* expend, by letting the sticks do more of the work than my arm, and using more wrist and fingers."

"If I can get through the first half of the set and not be sweating, then I've succeeded. My problem in the past would have been to overexert in the beginning. Many drummers will relate to this: If you're playing a set and by the second or third song you're sweat-

ing really hard, you can hardly hold onto your sticks, and you've pretty much lost all your finesse, then you've put too much into it. At that point, it doesn't matter how much harder you hit, you're not going to get any more sound out of the drums. You're just taking away from your body. Besides, trying to be dynamic within the set and within each song is really important to me. It's part of trying to be a musical drummer.

"I've been gradually sitting up higher, too," Mario continues. "I used to sit as low as I could, which is really hard on your back. I didn't really feel like I was digging in until I was sitting down real low. I feel better about sitting up higher now, although it's still pretty low. I'm trying to work out a more ideal setup for my body, which is an ongoing process."

Mario loves his new Slingerland drums. "I can't tell you how stoked I am!" he enthuses. "This is really my first endorsement. The drums have very thin maple shells with no reinforcing hoops, and die-cast rims, so they really sing. They practically play themselves. The bass drum is the best-sounding bass drum I've ever owned. And the finishes, which are done by Pat Foley, are awesome. I have a four-piece kit: a 12" rack tom, a 16" floor tom, a 22" bass drum, and a 6 1/2x14 snare. I feel real comfortable on that kit. I haven't played a five-piece in so long, I don't think I would know what to do. I'm sure eventually I'll move into some more toms, but I think you can get the job done on a four-piece." Mario's equipment also includes Vater sticks.

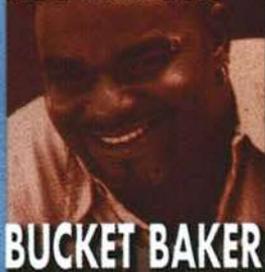
Calire is hoping he'll have the opportunity to be the drummer on the next Wallflowers record. "I don't worry about it, though," he says, frankly. "I just do the best job I can every day. I love being on the road; I'm young and unattached, and I'm seeing the world. But it can also be brutal. People's biggest misconception is that this life is really glamorous. They don't see you getting off the bus at 5:00 in the morning and stumbling into the hotel, feeling like hell. That's the reality of it. But I have nothing to complain about. I feel very blessed to be doing what I'm doing, and I don't take any of it for granted. This is my dream, and I'm living it. I always wanted to go out on the road and play music and do like my dad did."



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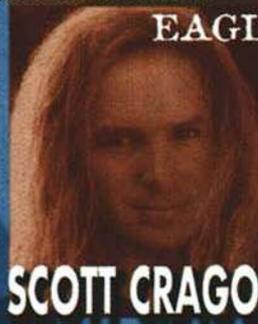


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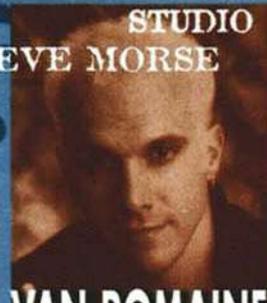
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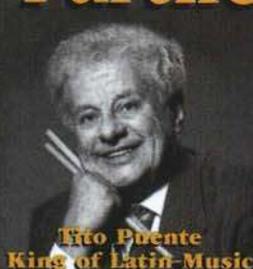


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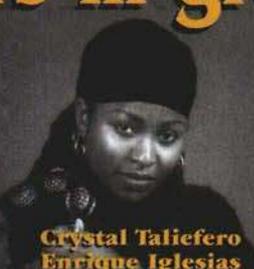
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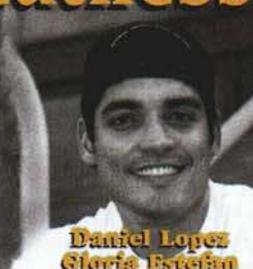
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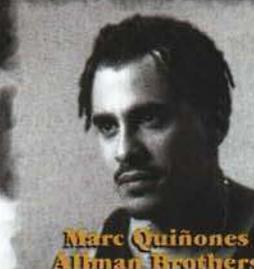
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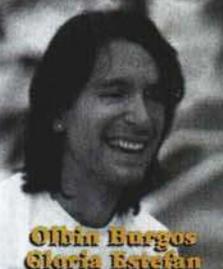
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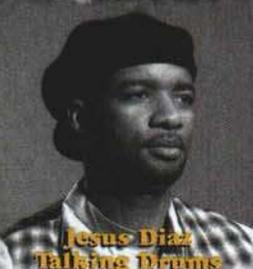
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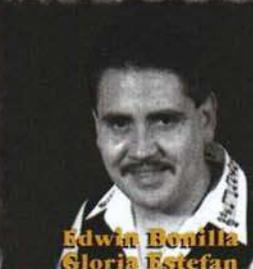
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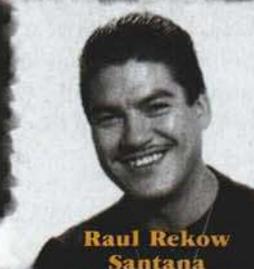
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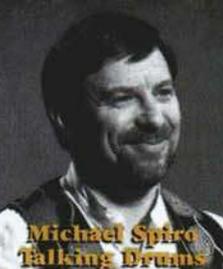
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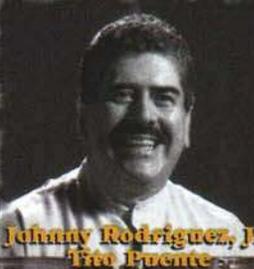
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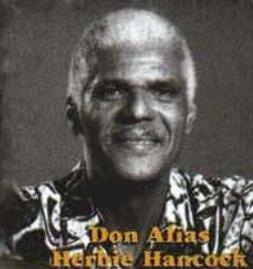
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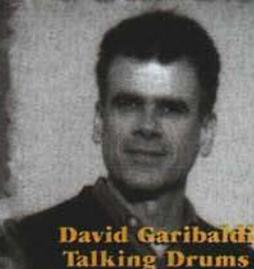
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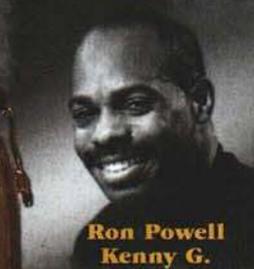
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**Q** I'm playing in a nightclub showband. Our music is all synced up to MIDI tracks on *Cakewalk* software. I play about thirty-five songs per night with the click track, and although my timing has improved immensely, I feel terribly regimented. I know you've toured with a number of acts where you had to play live to sequences or a click. Can you give me some tips on cutting loose while still using a click track?

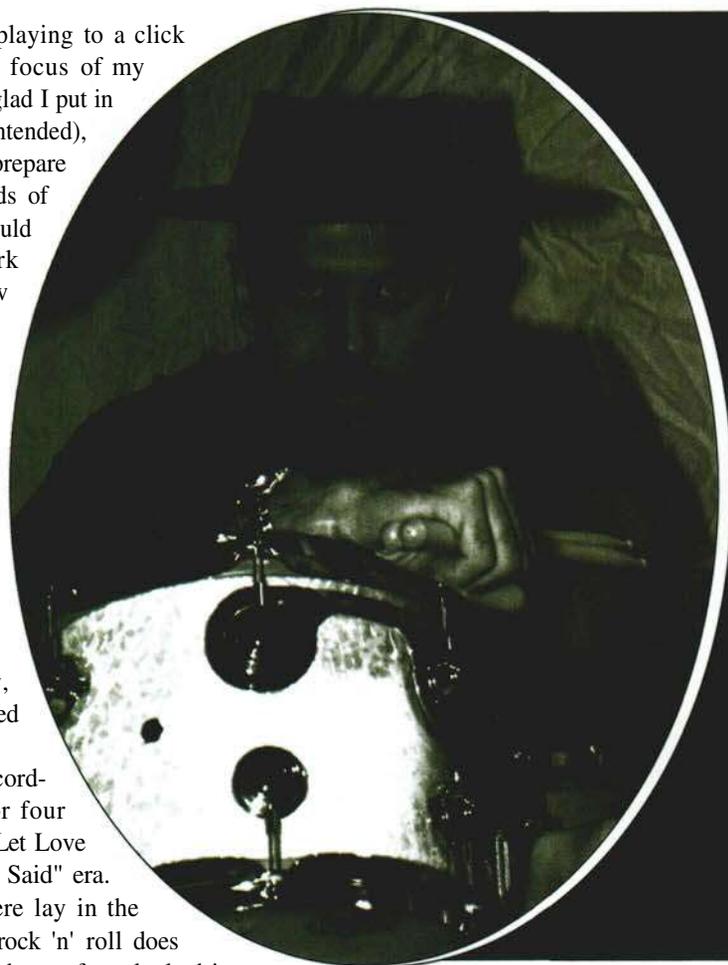
Sammy Kane  
Alameda, CA

**A** Playing to a click is fairly essential for any drummer planning to make a living in the modern music scene—especially in any commercial music genre. So it's a good thing you're already on the case! However, I can sympathize with your situation. Playing to a click can feel like having your hands tied behind your back. In fact, looking back, I remember when I felt scared to death at the thought of just having to play *time* with a click track. The idea of being able to "cut loose" and not get off beat was even more ridiculous. But most of the challenge was a mental one: learning to overcome the fear itself. Fear is what prevents most of us from reaching our full potential. Once I made the decision to conquer the click, it wasn't as hard as I thought.

To begin with, playing to a click became the main focus of my practice. And I'm glad I put in the time (no pun intended), because it helped prepare me for the demands of the artists that I would eventually work with. All the New Edition, Bobby Brown, and Jody Watley material I played, both in the studio and live, was played to a click. And much to the surprise of many musicians, even the guru of old-school technology, Lenny Kravitz, used a click.

I toured and recorded with Lenny for four years during the "Let Love Rule" and "Mama Said" era. The challenge there lay in the fact that "classic" rock 'n' roll does not lend itself to the perfect, locked-in time feel that is common in R&B. Of course, rock 'n' roll has to be in the pocket, but the feel has to remain loose—which is difficult to achieve with such a regimented approach. Unfortunately, there was no way

around the click because Lenny wanted various string parts, background vocals, sitar parts, etc. on tape to duplicate the sound from his albums. That scenario is



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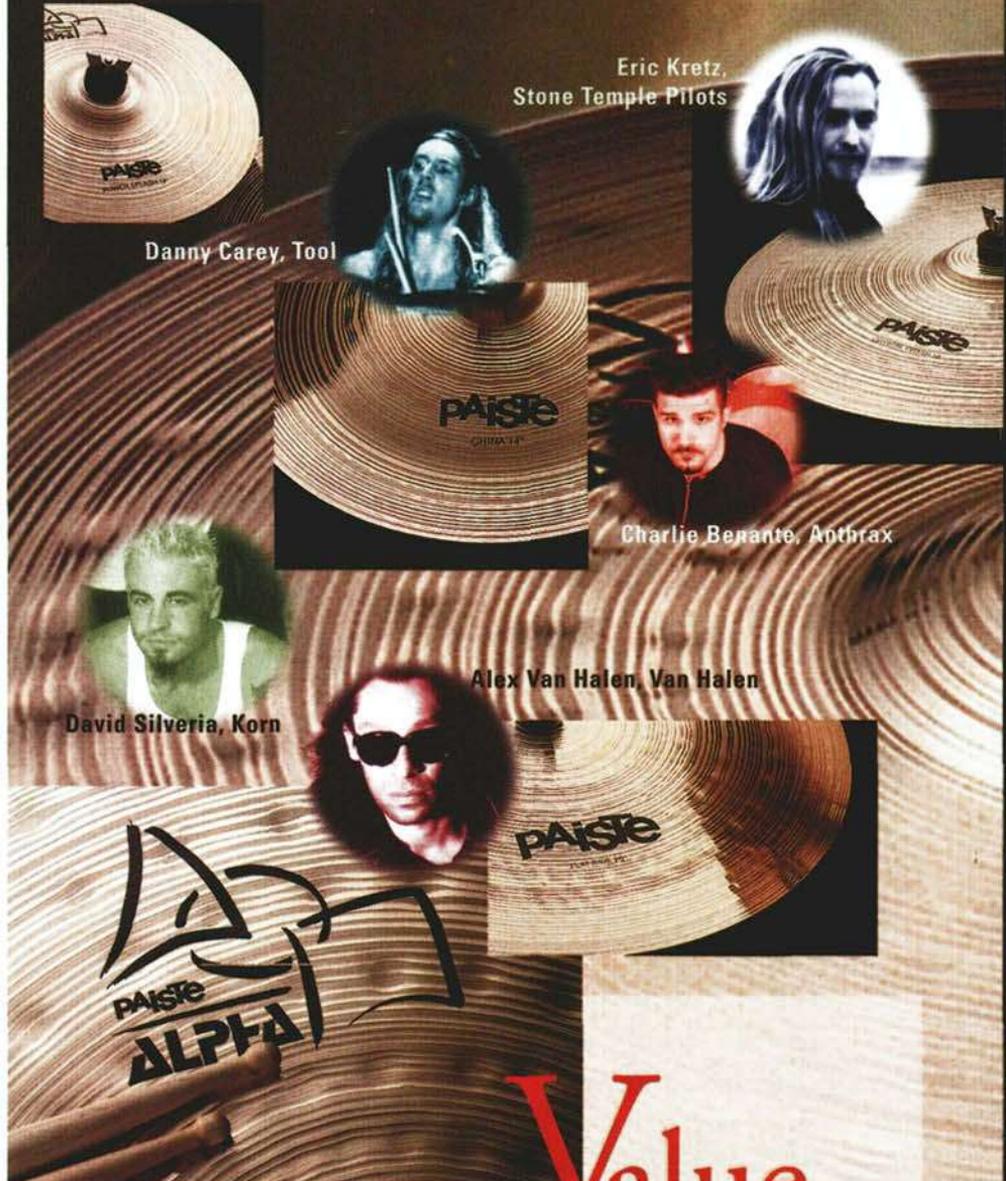
Remember, a drummer's fundamental purpose is to define the time in various forms. Whether it's grooving or going off on a drum solo, it's all about time. All the chops in the world are useless if you can't keep them within the framework of solid time. Based on all my experiences, here are some tips that I have found helpful on "cutting loose" with a click track.

1. Discipline yourself to do all your practicing to some kind of timekeeping device—a click track, a metronome, a drum machine, or a sequencer. Start by playing any kind of groove until you get comfortable with it, then practice "cutting loose" with the simplest subdivisions: quarter notes, quarter-note triplets, 8th notes, 8th-note triplets, 16th notes, 16th-note triplets, etc. When you are comfortable with all those subdivisions, begin to use combinations of all of them. Practice with both straight and swing feels, then practice short fills and longer solo ideas applying all the subdivisions. This will help you to learn how to hear and feel all of the subdivisions while simultaneously developing your "internal clock." You should first learn to feel short phrases (two to four bars), then longer phrases (eight, sixteen, and thirty-two bars). Eventually you'll learn to feel over-the-bar-line phrases just by experimenting with the time.

Start simply, then begin to take the time further out by using more creative combinations of the aforementioned subdivisions. When you get lost, go back to the groove and start over. Your ear will get better as you go.

2. The hardest thing about playing to a click track is making smooth transitions from one time feel to another. With that in mind, set the click to a given tempo (let's say 80 bpm). Pick a specific groove (rock, samba, shuffle, etc.), and practice going back and forth between common time, half time, and double time. The point of this exercise is to internalize the quarter-note pulse and to know where you are within that quarter-note groove—regardless of which time feel you're playing.

3. Many of us have trouble with the concept of playing space. In conjunction with practicing various phrases and subdivisions, practice playing very sparse patterns



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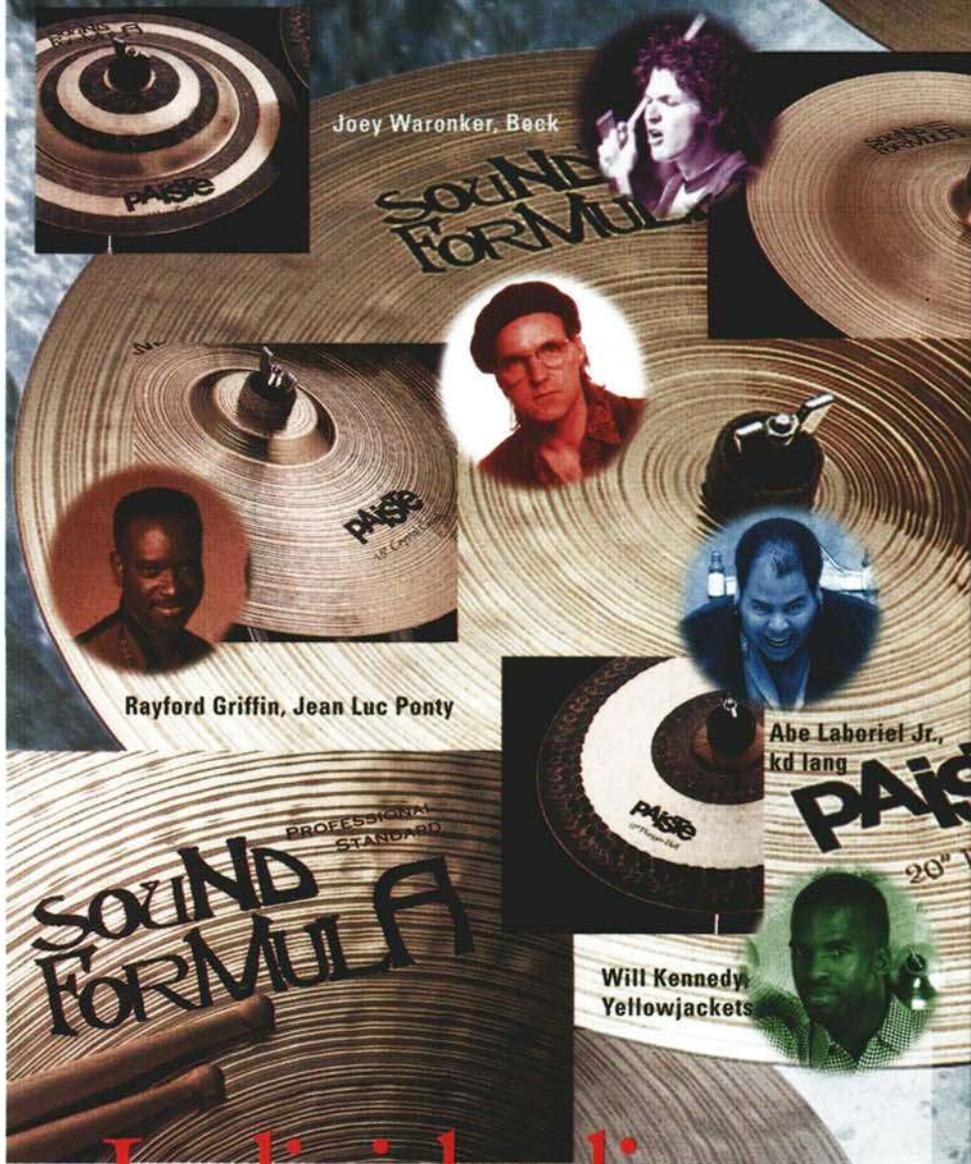
with lots of wide-open time between each lick.

4. We also often have a tendency to rush when we attempt to cut loose and deviate from the groove, because we get a little excited. The key here is to stay relaxed and keep the time laid back, even when the adrenaline starts to flow. Learning to control one's enthusiasm in a focused manner is just one of many mental skills that are required of a drummer.

5. I don't want to sound like a commercial, but a great practice tool is the Yamaha DTK drum trigger module. It has 100 preset songs built into its sequencer, along with 660 play-along patterns. Playing along with those songs is a practical (and fun) way to practice "cutting loose." Use the kicks, accents, and rhythmic figures of the tune as a means for developing greater control while playing to the click. You can also have the click play various subdivisions, which is especially helpful for keeping you in time and for helping you to hear the subdivisions of beats. You don't necessarily need any electronic pads to take advantage of this excellent practice technology. You can simply use the module to practice along with your acoustic kit.

6. The relationship between the click and the rest of the headphone mix is very important. In the early days of my career I would have the click very loud compared to everything else. But I found myself always chasing the click this way. You should keep the click lower in volume, so that it's not obtrusive. This way you don't sound so mechanical. Think of the click as just another member of the band—one who happens to keep good time that you want to "lock in" with.

7. As simplistic as it may sound, the more you practice "cutting loose" with the click track, the more comfortable you'll become with it. The key is to just keep chipping away at it and not get frustrated. If you make it a matter of priority, your increased ability and confidence is inevitable. Just go for it. You're always going to make mistakes; everyone does. But the more chances you take in your practice, the more at ease you'll feel on the gig. Best of luck to you!



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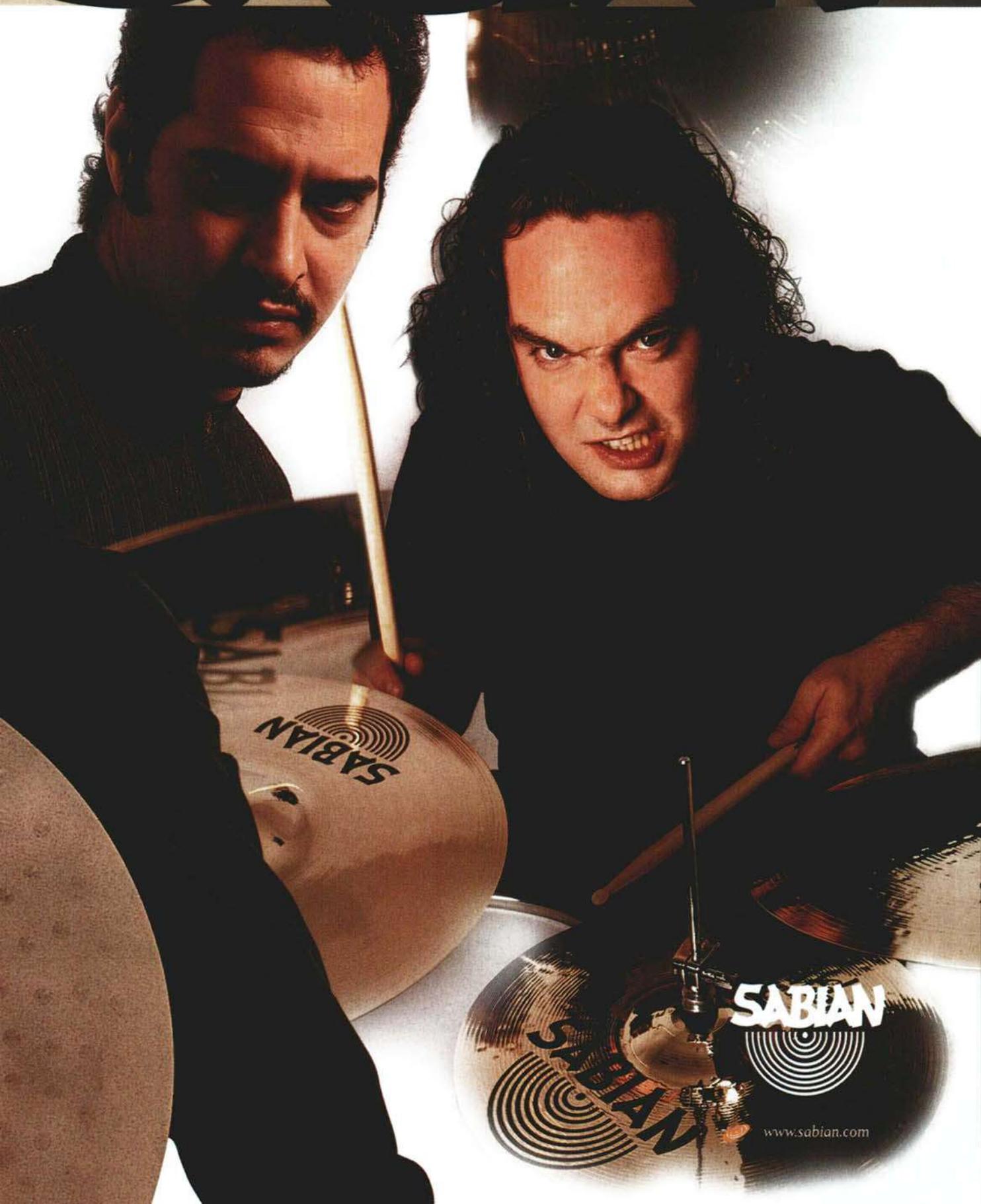
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## Einstein Recording

**Q** On page 32 of the June '97 *Modern Drummer* the reader refers to Jonathan Mover's band Einstein, and a recent CD. I am not aware of this CD, and being a fan of Jonathan Mover, I would appreciate any information you might have, such as the label it is on, the title of the CD, and whether to look for it in the "fusion" or "rock" section.

Kevin Schwartz  
Bakersfield, CA

**A** The self-titled album by Einstein is on Whirled Records, 36 West 37th St., 3rd Fl., New York, NY 10018. It should be in the "rock" section of record stores. See the review in September's *Critique*.

## Performance Fatigue

**Q** I'm a twenty-four-year-old drummer who's been playing for thirteen years. Recently, I've started playing out more often. While I love playing live, I'm finding

that I'm really getting tired at shows. I try to stay in the best shape I can and I don't drink or do drugs. I'll admit I'm a flashy player; I always have been. But I do know when to hold back and when to wig out. Is there anything I can do to increase my energy level besides eating more? Is this type of burnout common among drummers? Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

Patrick Handlovsky  
via Internet

**A** As with any strenuous sport or other physical activity, a good regimen of regular exercise will help to develop the stamina you need on the actual gig. Additionally, it's important to warm up well before launching into the gig itself, and it's a good idea to pace yourself, based on the length of the show.

You might also take a cold, hard look at your drumming technique. Is there a possibility that you might be using up a certain amount of energy unnecessarily? Could you play more efficiently, in order to accomplish the same ends with less effort?

You might find that sharpening up your technique will allow you to play harder, longer, and more creatively—and yet expend less energy than you have been.

## Studio Drumming

**Q** My question is very simple: How does one go about becoming a studio/stage drummer? I'm looking to play on a professional level and would like some advice. Would I need to hook up with a studio? How would I go about becoming a stage drummer?

Chris Callahan  
via Internet

**A** Unfortunately, your question isn't as simple to answer as it is to pose. It's like asking "How do I become a success?" A great deal of it has to do with your abilities, of course, but much more has to do with timing, opportunities, your dedication and perseverance, and no small amount of sheer luck.

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to go where there are studios. You have to let engineers, producers, and clients (artists) know of your availability, desire, and capabilities. Start by offering to cut demos for free as a method of "auditioning" for the people who run the studio. Some famous studio drummers got their start by literally "hanging around" the studio and sweeping the floor after sessions! The point is to make your presence known enough for someone to give you a shot. Having some sort of recorded demo of your own might also be handy, since you could give it to people involved, with the studio as an "audition" that doesn't actually involve their project.

Studio drumming also requires rock-solid time, excellent reading skills, musical versatility, and the ability to get along with people, even under stressful situations. A knowledge of electronics also helps, since a good deal of studio work these days involves triggering and/or the use of electronic pads and sound sources.

If by a "stage drummer" you mean a sideman for a touring artist (as opposed to a member of a band), that's a tougher nut to crack. You won't get a gig with a major

artist until you have established yourself as a "major" sideman. You do that by drumming for lesser-known artists with whom you can build a reputation as a responsible worker, a contributing factor to the act, and a talented drummer (in that order!). It takes time, but once you get a name as a "hired gun," the calls will start coming in to you.

## Movie Cymbals

**Q** In the Tom Hanks-directed movie *That Thing You Do*, the drummer in the movie plays this great little Ludwig four-piece kit, with three cymbals: a hi-hat, a crash, and something else. I can tell they're Zildjians by the color and the visible logo, but I would like to know what models they are.

Joe Jahnigen  
Cincinnati, OH

**A** According to Zildjian's John DeChristopher, "The cymbals in question were actually old *Avedis* (now called A) Zildjian cymbals made in the original Zildjian factory in North Quincy, Massachusetts during the 1930s. We were contacted by the properties master for the

movie, who requested cymbals that would best replicate the look of the cymbals from the time period of the movie: the early 1960s. The exact models were a 20" ride (about a medium-thin weight), an 18" crash (thin), and a pair of 14" hi-hats (light).

"Those specific models are no longer available. The best alternatives available today, in terms of their sonic properties, would be in our *A Custom* line. Thanks for your question and your interest in Zildjian products."

## Drum Machine History

**Q** I'm a fourteen-year-old progressive drummer. My question is: Who invented the drum machine?

Ken Owens  
via Internet

**A** The name of the true inventor of the drum machine has been lost to antiquity. However, we can provide you with some history.

Part of the answer to your question depends on what you define as a "drum machine." The first commercially available



*Chad Smith*

Chad Smith

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Bass Powerstroke 3 Clear/Ambassador Smooth White  
Toms Emperor Clear/Ambassador Clear



*Steve Smith*

Steve Smith

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Ambassador Clear/Ambassador Clear



*Marvin "Smitty" Smith*

Marvin "Smitty" Smith

Ambassador Coated Ambassador Snare  
Powerstroke 3 Clear/Ebony  
Ambassador Coated/Ambassador Clear

electronic rhythm-producing devices were attached to home organs in the '60s. They were usually called something like the *Rhythm Ace*, and they provided very stereotypical rhythm patterns for people to play along with on the organ. They were not programmable other than to select their speed and volume.

Stand-alone drum machines came into vogue in the late '70s and early '80s. At that time they often went under the more highfalutin name of "drum computers." Notable models on the market by 1983 included the Roland *TR-808*, the Oberheim

*DX* and *DMX*, the E-mu *Drumulator*, and the most influential of them all, the *Linn* drum (which was itself the successor to the original Linn *LM-1*). Although Roger Linn cannot claim to have invented the drum machine, his was the most successful and popular of the early models. It remained the leading studio tool until the advent of MIDI technology in the early '90s.

## Refinishing Covered Drums

**Q** I have a Tama *Granstar* kit, with a black covered finish. I've been thinking about

re-finishing it by removing the covering and putting a stained finish on the exposed wood. What would be the best way to take off the covering without damaging the shell? And how should I go about staining the shells?

Matt Burgie  
via Internet

**A** According to Tama's Paul Specht, "We don't recommend that an individual attempt to remove the finish from a covered drum and then stain it—unless that individual has a lot of experience *and* the right equipment. Just replacing a covered finish takes a great deal of practice and skill; staining requires even more experience and special talents.

"Even if you had the experience, skill, and equipment, there's another reason not to try staining a drum that had previously been covered. The reason a stained drum is more expensive than a covered one to begin with involves more than the additional labor costs. A stained drumshell's outer plies are more select—for cosmetic reasons—than those of a shell that will be covered. If you remove the covering on your drums, the wood that will be exposed will not be as cosmetically attractive as the wood that is visible beneath factory-stained finishes.

"If you're unhappy with the current covered finish on your drums, we can suggest two options. The first would be to re-cover the drums in a different covered finish. The second would be to remove the covering and re-finish the drums in a non-transparent painted finish. In either case, we suggest that you consult with an outfit such as Pro Percussion in Nashville ([615] 244-3786) or another such drum repair/specialty shop that has extensive experience in drum customizing and repair work."



## THIS DRUM IS NOT A PROTOTYPE

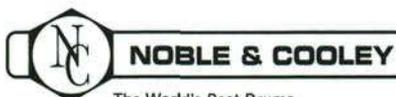
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## UNIONE FABBRICANTI ITALIANI PIATTI

## When Money IS An Object Dixon Drums

Drummers seeking "very good equipment at the most affordable price" might do well to investigate equipment from Dixon. The Taiwan-made line is well known in other parts of the world, but is only now being aggressively marketed in America. The focus of the line is on function and affordability. Says one spokesman. "Our intention is not to be the Mercedes Benz of the drum world, or to pretend that we are. But perhaps one day Dixon drums will be known as the 'late-model Volvos' of the drum world: dependable drums at a great price."

The company has recently added *Ultra-Phonic Little Giant* snare drum models to its line. With ultra-thin (4.5 mm) maple shells and 2.3 mm power *hoops*, the drums are said to deliver "a full-bodied sound with an abundance of projection." The 10" model lists for \$239.95; the 12" drum costs \$249.95.

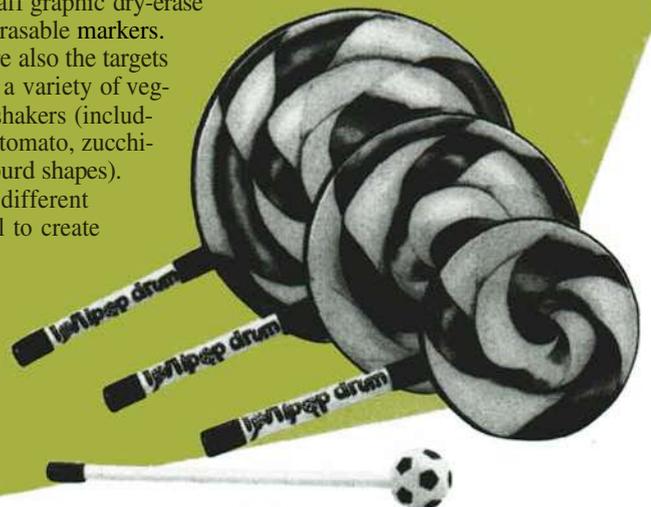
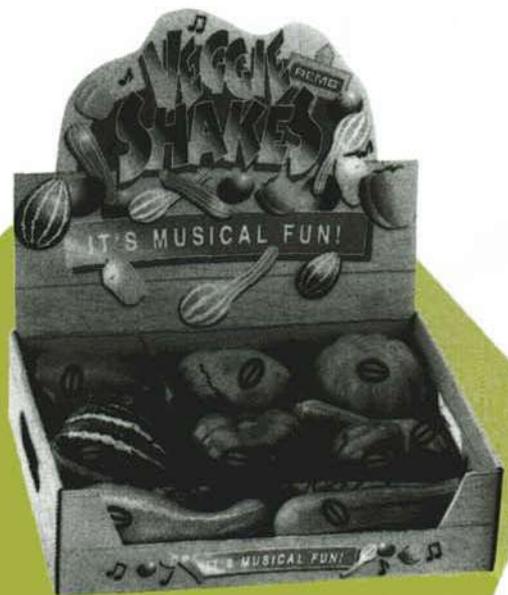


## Hearing Is Believing Sennheiser Wireless In-Ear Monitor System

Sennheiser has entered the in-ear monitoring arena with the 3050 series, which consists of the *SR3054-U* single-channel and *SR3056-U* dual-channel transmitters, and the *EK3052-U* receiver. With an operating range of 500 to 1,000 feet, the 3050 series allows artists to perform creatively with a "consistent, reliable monitor mix tailored specifically to their needs." The system employs Sennheiser's *HiDyn Plus* compansion system to provide the limiting protection necessary in an in-ear system, and is designed for use with most transducers, including the custom-molded type suggested by many audiologists. (The use of in-ear monitoring is said to not only improve the audio quality of a performance, but also to protect the user from vocal fatigue and hearing loss.)

## Pop, Doodle, And Shake Remo Lollipop Drums, Doodle Drums, and Veggie Shakes

No, it's not the sound of a new breakfast cereal. It's Remo's expanded Kids Percussion line, which now includes 6", 8", and 10" sizes of the popular *Lollipop Drum* and a 10" *Doodle Drum*. The latter comes complete with a musical staff graphic dry-erase head, a mallet, and two erasable markers. Kids (and adults too) are also the targets of new *Veggie Shakes*, a variety of vegetable-shaped plastic shakers (including pumpkin, squash, tomato, zucchini, bell pepper, and gourd shapes). Each shape contains a different amount of non-toxic fill to create unique sounds.



# New Weapons In The Battle Of The Budget

## Zildjian ZBT and ZBT-PLUS Cymbals

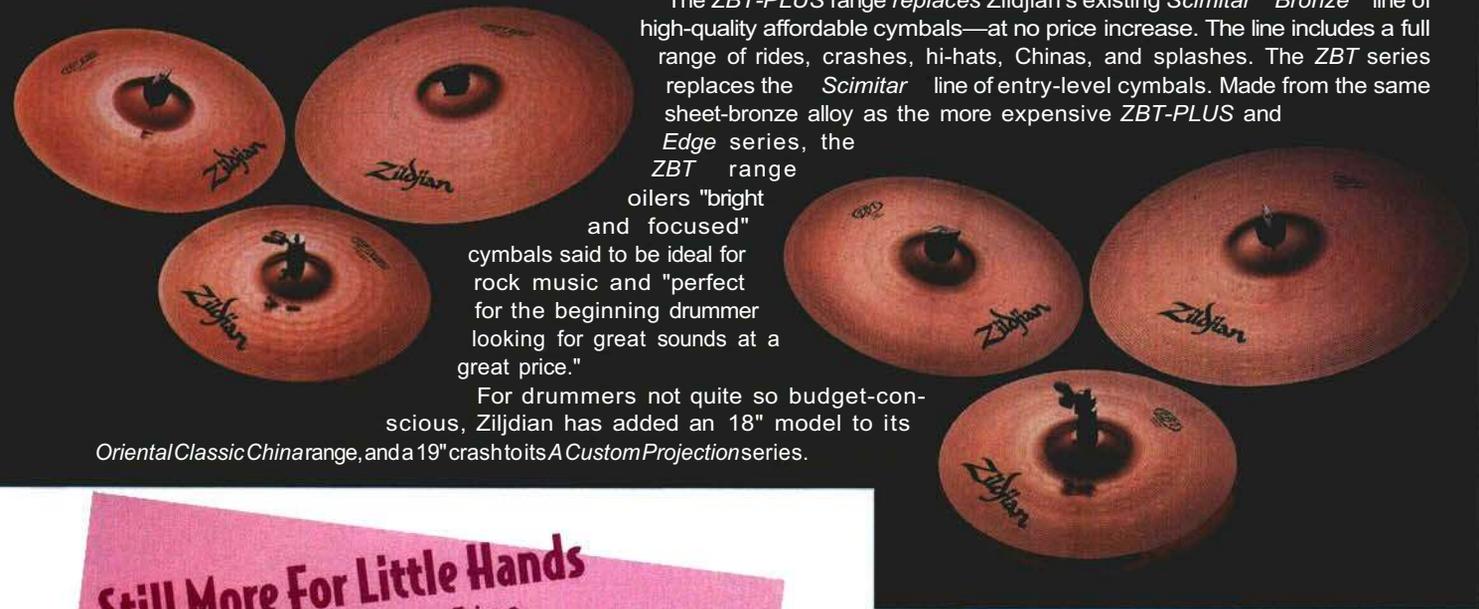
For drummers who complain that manufacturers spend too much time and effort improving their high-priced products while ignoring the needs of consumers on a budget, Zildjian offers their new ZBT and ZBT-PLUS lines. "ZBT" stands for "Zildjian bronze technology," which the company describes as "a series of advanced new manufacturing techniques that create cymbals with greatly enhanced character and versatility at a budget price."

The ZBT-PLUS range replaces Zildjian's existing *Scimitar Bronze* line of high-quality affordable cymbals—at no price increase. The line includes a full range of rides, crashes, hi-hats, Chinas, and splashes. The ZBT series replaces the *Scimitar* line of entry-level cymbals. Made from the same sheet-bronze alloy as the more expensive ZBT-PLUS and *Edge* series, the ZBT range

oilers "bright and focused" cymbals said to be ideal for rock music and "perfect for the beginning drummer looking for great sounds at a great price."

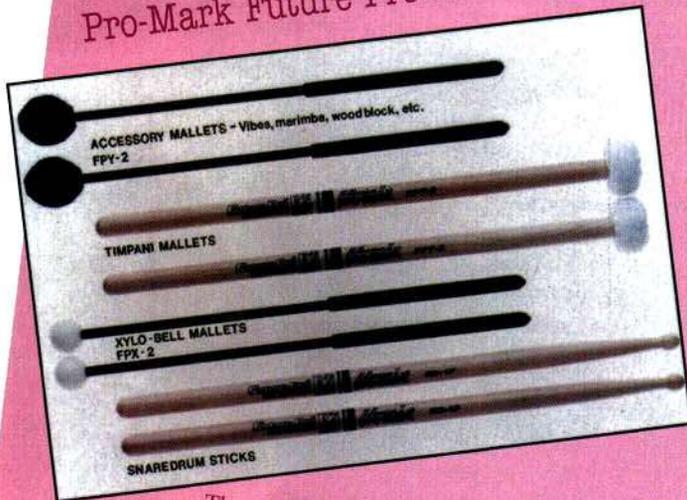
For drummers not quite so budget-conscious, Zildjian has added an 18" model to its

*Oriental Classic China* range, and a 19" crash to its *A Custom Projection* series.



## Still More For Little Hands

### Pro-Mark Future Pro Line



There's nothing like a "kid-sized" item to make a young person feel special. With that in mind, Pro-Mark has created its *Future Pro* line of professional-quality drumsticks and mallets scaled to fit the hands of students in the ten- to fourteen-year-old bracket.

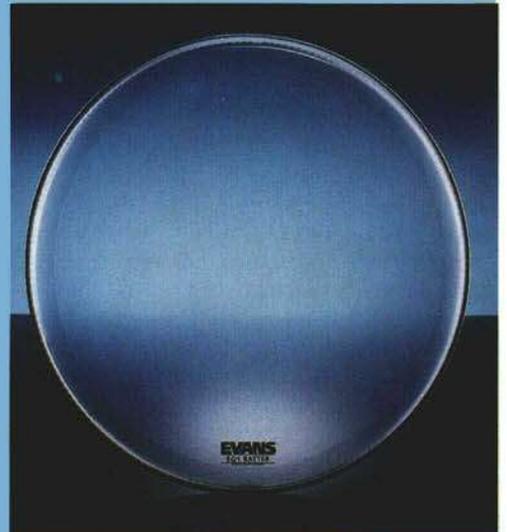
The FPX-2 xylo-bell mallet (\$24.95 per pair) is built with a "virtually indestructible" synthetic graduated-diameter handle. The 7/8" lexan ball is desirable for small bell kits. The FPY-2 yarn mallet (\$29.95 per pair) is designed for vibes, marimba, wood block, cymbal rolls, etc. The FPT-2 timpani mallet (\$29.95 per pair) features a medium-hard synthetic "felt" head (said to resist water and dirt damage) and American hickory handles. Finally, TXSD1-F drumsticks (\$9.95 per pair) are 14<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" long and 3<sup>7</sup>/<sub>64</sub>" in diameter, and are available in wood tip only.

## They're Baaaack

### Evans EQ1 Coated Bass Drum Heads

Due largely to "hundreds of requests" from drummers, Evans has reintroduced the EQ1 coated bass drum head. The single-ply, dry-vented head features an internal *E-ring* and a "coating" (the head is actually frosted) that slightly dampens the vibrating plane of the head. This, in turn, is said to produce less attack than on a normal EQ1 head, but also to give a much fuller low end and a very warm sound.

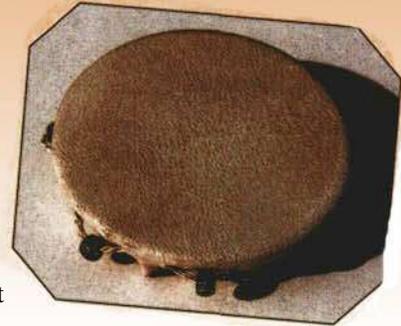
The heads are available in 18", 20", and 22" sizes.



## You Want Soy Sauce On That Drum? Shakee Drums



Ever see a drum intended to be played with chopsticks? Check out the *Shakee Drum*, from Atlanta Drums & Percussion. Available in diameters from 3" to 5", the drums are small bowls filled with "magic beans" and covered with natural hide heads. (Some drums are ornamented with decorative beads.) Various sounds can be achieved by using the drums as shakers, or by striking the head with the supplied chopsticks (or other small sticks, including the eraser end of a pencil). A flick of the wrist can combine the drum and shaker sounds. The drum can also be placed on a floor tom, conga, or other deep drum to give a "bass and snare" effect. The compact drums can fit into any pocket or drum case. They range in price from \$15 to \$40, depending on size and decoration.



## On The Road Again... For The First Time Road King Drums

The Road King Drum Company began formal operations in January of 1997, but has only recently begun to offer drums. Following a separation from the Tucson-based Razorback Drum Company and consolidation of all production and distribution to Nashville, Road King now offers a complete line of high-quality, hand-crafted drums.

All drums are made of 100% US maple and feature a unique "pure resonance" sound chamber (as opposed to standard vent holes) said to produce "the maximum possible dispersion of sound created by head vibration." Various transparent wood stain finishes are available, and all hardware is offered in either chrome or black chrome. One-piece steel or brass lug castings and RIMS mounts are standard on all drums; lightweight or heavy-duty double-braced hardware may be chosen with set configurations.

Road King also offers HCS (high carbon steel) snare drums in four sizes and a variety of standard and custom finishes. According to the manufacturer, the unique sonic qualities of this material produce a dynamic range of sound unequalled by any other snare drum. Road King drums are distributed exclusively by Boomtown Percussion.

## And What's More...

A new line of drum and gig bags is being offered by **Musicorp** under the *Wings* brand. All bags are constructed with 20 mm soft foam padding inserted between a PVC-coated polyester exterior and a soft velvet inner lining. They feature reinforced webbed handles, heavy-duty zippers, and padded straps.

The *Utility Shelf*, from **Webb's Welding**, is designed to mount to a hi-hat (or other convenient stand) to provide a place for drummers to hold drinks, ashtrays, drum machines, or other items that require easy access. The 7 1/2"x9" shelf is made from epoxy-coated steel with a matte black finish. A two-piece bracket facilitates easy mounting to any pole diameter, and is simple to remove for pack-up. The shelf can be ordered directly from the manufacturer for \$30.



New colors in the *Signia* range from **Premier Percussion** include dark walnut satin with gold accents, and purple metallic. The *Genista* range is now available in ochre (burnt orange) and solid yellow.

**NetWell Noise Control** offers the *Pyramid* acoustic foam absorbing panel system. These symmetrical 2'x2' square panels are offered in a variety of colors and thicknesses, with the standard 3"-thick panel boasting an NRC absorption value of 90%. Seamless installation and a professional look are said to "cater to the do-it-yourself installer looking to control the costs of finishing off any audio room."

**Correction:** The photo of Earthworks *TC30K* microphones (in use on Neil Peart's drumkit) that appeared in the August '97 *New And Notable* was taken by Steve Jennings.

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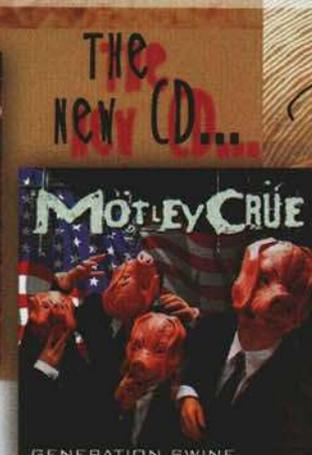
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# Kenner Natural Series Drumkit

by Rick Mattingly

Old-fashioned looks and contemporary quality distinguish this unique kit.

A lot of people associate wooden drum lugs with instruments made during World War II, when metal was scarce. Those drums were not considered very high-quality, and few have survived in their original state.

But the Kenner Drum Company is currently offering their *Natural* series of very high-quality drums with wooden lugs. Kenner believes that the use of wooden lugs reduces the amount of

metal bolted onto a drum, thereby reducing its weight and enhancing its resonance. The lugs also create a striking visual effect that gives the drums an aura of having been crafted rather than simply manufactured.

For review *MD* received a five-piece kit that included a 4 1/2x14 snare drum, 8x10, 9x12, and 14x14 toms, and a 16x20 bass drum. The toms and bass drum were finished in cardinal red with natural maple lugs and bass drum hoops. The snare drum was just the opposite, featuring a natural maple shell with cardinal red lugs.

The bass drum shell was of 8-ply maple. The four lugs on the bottom of the drum were machined from solid aluminum, for the sensible reason that they would likely encounter abrasion through the normal use of the drum. The rest of the lugs (all the ones that show) were machined from solid maple and fitted with nickel-plat-



### WHAT'S HOT

- use of wood for lugs and other appointments gives kit a unique appearance
- contrasting wood colors between shells and lugs adds to striking look
- drums offer high-tech, high-quality construction and excellent sound

### WHAT'S NOT

- large Gibraltar bass drum spurs seem out of character with other hardware on the kit

ed brass receiver tubes. Each lug was attached to the shell with a single bolt, and there were isolating washers between the shell and lugs.

The hoops were 10-ply maple, with a natural finish on the outside and a red finish on the inside. A piece of leather was glued to the bottom of the rear hoop at the point where a bass drum pedal would be attached. The claws were nickel-chrome-plated stainless steel, covered with maple tubes stained red to contrast with the natural finish on the outside of the hoops. The tubes have brass inserts so that the tension rods do not tighten against the wood. The rods, which were all drumkey-operated, had nylon washers to prevent metal-to-metal contact.

The one element that seemed out of place on the drum was the pair of large Gibraltar spurs, each of which was attached to the shell with four bolts. Obviously a bass drum needs spurs, and these are certainly quality ones. But those big hunks of metal seemed at odds with all that wood.

The drum was fitted with a Remo clear *Emperor* batter head and a Remo *Fiberskyn 3* front head, which had a five-inch hole cut near the bottom. Kenner had lined that hole with a split piece of plastic tubing, which added stability to the head and would also protect it when inserting or removing pillows, towels, or other muffling materials.

Played wide open, the bass drum was appropriately boomy. With a minimal amount of muffling (a very small pillow) it produced a warm, round thud with plenty of punch and more tone than the word "thud" might imply. Overall the drum had a bigger, fuller sound than I would have expected from a 20" bass drum.

The toms were also constructed from 8-ply maple and had the same lugs as the bass drum. They were fitted with Remo white coated *Ambassador* batter heads and clear *Ambassador* bottoms, and all three were suspended by RIMS mounts. They were as full and resonant as any toms I've ever played, and moreso than most—especially the 14x14, which sounded amazing. I found myself playing Steve Gadd's pattern from "Fifty Ways To Leave

Your Lover" (which I hadn't played in ages) just for the joy of hearing that big, fat tom note at the end of every other bar. I generally try to focus on timekeeping, but these toms made me want to play more fills.

The snare drum had a 10-ply maple shell and ten maple lugs. There was also a maple cover on the snare release lever. The drum came with a coated *Ambassador* batter and a hazy *Ambassador* snare head.

Like the other members of the kit, the snare was full and rich, producing fat, meaty backbeats and cracking rimshots. Snare response was excellent right to the edge of the head, and the drum responded well to fast patterns that required articulation. The 4 1/2" depth produced an excellent balance between body and responsiveness.

Each of the drums had a single air vent surrounded by a solid brass logo badge that was attached to the shell with two small screws in addition to the air-vent grommet. All of the lugs had nylon washers between the lugs and the rims, and the snare and tom rims were traditional triple-flanged steel.

While the wood lugs might cause some to regard Kenner drums



as having a "low tech" appearance, the drums are very high-quality in both construction and sound.

List price for the Kenner *Natural* Series five-piece kit as reviewed above (including RIMS mounts, a Gibraltar double-tom stand, and a Gibraltar cymbal/tom stand) is \$2,440. Individual drum prices are as follows: 4 1/2x14 snare—\$450; 16x20 bass drum—\$855; 8x10 tom-tom—\$347.50; 9x12 tom-tom—\$362.50; 14x14 tom—\$425.

All parts have a one-year warranty except the maple lugs, which have a three-year warranty under normal use. Delivery time is ten to twelve weeks after an order is made. For further information, contact Kenner Custom Drums, RT #1, Box 150, California, KY 41007, (606) 635-5218

# Evans G1 And G2 Coated Drumheads

by William F. Miller

Improvements in virtually every area of production make these new coated heads a definite must-try,

Two years ago, when the Evans drumhead company was purchased by D'Addario, one of the world's largest manufacturers of guitar strings, the music industry vibe was that D'Addario had the means to make Evans a major player. The question was, would they have the will—and the interest—to put in the effort required?

Well, the proof is in: D'Addario *has jump-started* Evans. Focusing its considerable resources on drumheads, the string manufacturer hired scientists, engineers, and machinists to find new ways to improve head production techniques. And several "name" drumset artists, along with percussion industry product designers, were consulted for their opinions regarding the performance aspects of heads. The result of all of this work is impressive: Simply put, the new products coming from Evans have raised the ante on drumhead design and quality.

Consequently there's a very positive "buzz" building about Evans. Several top artists have recently begun endorsing their heads, and you can find a wide selection of Evans products in

## WHAT'S HOT

- new coating is smooth and not too thick
- consistent tone
- G2s tune easily and sound amazing on toms

## WHAT'S NOT

- G1s are not as durable under medium-to-heavy playing

more drumshops and music stores these days, whereas a few years back that wasn't the case.

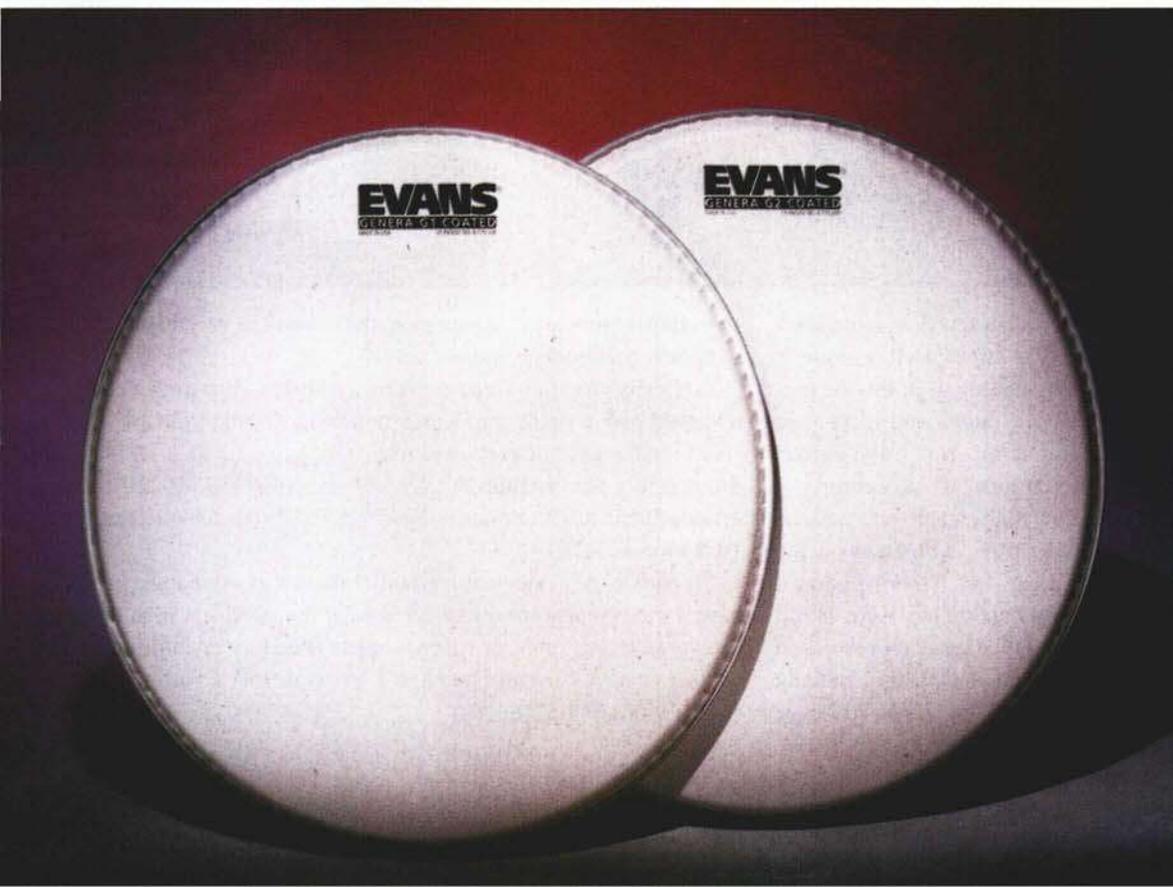
Certainly one of the most important factors driving this excitement about Evans is the new products the company is coming up with. Let's check out two of their latest offerings, models designed specifically for tom use.

## G1 Coated

Most drummers are familiar with this situation: You buy new heads for your kit, and after tuning them up one of the drums sounds a bit dead compared to the rest. No matter what you do—raise the pitch, lower the pitch, turn the head—that drum just doesn't sound the same as the others.

As I began placing the coated *G1s* on my toms, I was wondering if I'd have this problem. After tuning up the four toms—8", 10", 12", and 14"—in what seemed like record time, I was surprised at how consistent the sound was between drums. From drum to drum, the attack, timbre, tonal effect, and decay were *very* consistent. For once, the 8" had the same presence as the 14"! And my 12" tom, which for some reason has always been a pain to get consistent with the others, blended perfectly.

The heads also didn't seem to need to be "seated" on the drums, and there was none of that cracking sound



we're used to hearing when tensioning a new head, as the glue that holds the drumhead film in the hoop loosens up. In fact, I kept coming back to the drums after I initially put the heads on, expecting them to have detuned a little bit from the loosening of the glue and the seating of the head. It didn't happen.

*Gls* are single-ply heads, so you'd expect them to provide an open tone and to ring a bit. They did give the drums a nice, open tone, but there certainly wasn't too much ring. For comparison, I put clear *Gls* on the toms (Evans sent some along, recommending them as bottom heads in conjunction with the coated *G1* and *G2* batters), and the coated versions made the drums sound warmer.

Apparently Evans put a lot of effort into coming up with the coating on these heads. Their designers created an automated, pneumatically controlled "system" for applying the coating, which allows them to be extremely accurate with the amount placed on the head. In fact, it's impossible to see an imperfection in the coating; that's how well it's applied to the film. The coating is also water-based, environmentally safe—and very durable; during the two months I played these heads, the coating held up to *quite* a lot of abuse.

Evans was also careful in determining the *amount* of coating they apply. With other brands of heads, many drummers feel the coating is a bit thick. Some players even lightly sand the coating down to get the sound and feel they require, especially for brushes on snare drum heads. This is not necessary here. The coating is such that you can see light shining through the head—it's almost a translucent effect. Obviously this allows the drum to breathe and have a more open tone. It also helps drummers with their brush technique, preventing brush bristles from binding or catching on this surface. (That's certainly helpful for those of us whose brush chops can get a bit rusty.)

Given their characteristics, these heads would seem most appropriate for drummers playing in medium- to low-volume gigs, jazz drummers in particular. They're very responsive and give the drums that classic, open sound, but with a bit more quality and consistency from drum to drum. And the feel is wonderful.

I did find that the *Gls* didn't stand up that well to heavier playing, though. On a smaller club gig, the heads sounded great and held up well. But two days later, at a larger venue where the music required that I dig into the toms (okay, I was slammin' a bit), by the end of the night the heads were pitted. Not unexpected for a single-ply head, but something to be aware of if your playing style leans more towards Dave Grohl than Dave Weckl.

The list prices for *G1* coated heads are as follows: 6"—\$15.10; 8"—\$15.55; 10"—\$16.15; 11"—\$17.25; 12"—\$17.25; 13"—\$18.75; 14"—\$19.75; 15"—\$20.80; 16"—\$22.70; 18"—\$29.80; 20"—\$31.75.

### G2 Coated

Add a second ply to a *G1* coated head and you get a *G2* coated. You also get a drumhead that sounds absolutely terrific on toms. The *G2s* I placed on my drums tuned up even faster than the *Gls* did. With little to no tweaking, they sounded great. And again, the heads held their tuning, did not stretch, and were consistent from drum to drum.

The second ply of the coated *G2s* really fattens up the tone of the drums. And because of their high-quality construction, you can tune them *way* down and get a major-league FAT attack without worrying about detuning. I happen to like toms tuned up a bit higher, so I brought the tension up, and all of this beautiful yet controlled tone rang out. It's a nice combination of impact and tone—just a killer tom sound. (I was using clear two-ply heads previous to this review, and it's obvious that the coating adds something very positive to the sonic equation.)

I had the opportunity to hear another drummer play my drums with the coated *G2s*. It was at a gig where my band was asked to share gear with the band after us. Hearing my kit from the house was interesting, and the best part was the toms—they sounded beautiful. And the other drummer agreed: After the gig he joked with me about wanting to buy my kit.

As for the durability factor, I've used the *G2s* for about a month now on all sorts of gigs (even an outdoor gig, where I got a bit tribal), and there's not a dent on them. Also surprising is the fact that I've had to do very little retuning of the drums. These heads hold their tension!

The list prices for *G2* coated heads are as follows: 6"—\$15.95; 8"—\$16.40; 10"—\$17.00; 11"—\$18.25; 12"—\$18.25; 13"—\$19.75; 14"—\$20.80; 15"—\$21.85; 16"—\$23.95; 18"—\$31.50; 20"—\$33.40.



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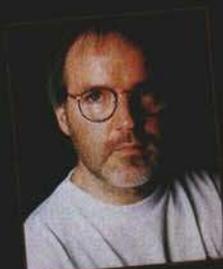
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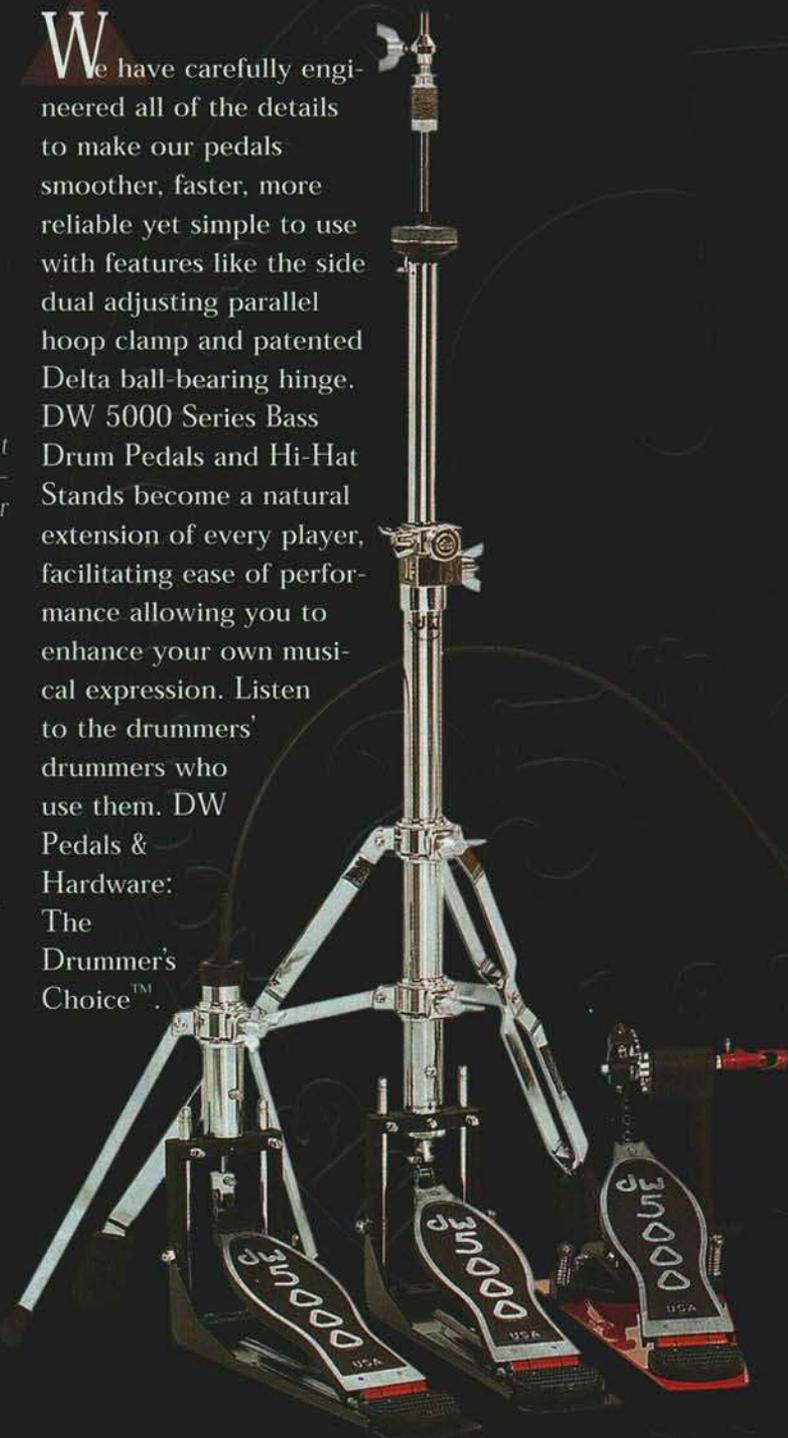
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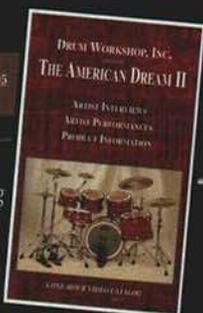
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# Sennheiser MD 504 And MD 421-II Microphones

by Mark Parsons

When it comes to dynamic drum mic's—especially those used to capture big, meaty tones from kicks and toms—Sennheiser has long been one of the heavyweight contenders. They've recently added a couple of new mic's to their stable, including a brand new model and a revision of an old favorite.

## MD 504

One of the classic Sennheiser drum miking combinations used to be the 421 on the kick and large tom(s) and the 409 on the rack

toms. While the venerable 421 is still with us (in an updated form), Sennheiser decided to retire the 409 a year or two ago. When this happened they didn't replace it with a newer version of the same thing but instead brought out a completely new microphone, the MD 504.

The first thing that strikes you about this mic' is its size: Its body is only 2 1/4" long including the XLR connector, with a diameter of 1 1/4" at the diaphragm end tapering to 7/8" at the connector. Molded into the body

is a small swivel with a threaded stand adapter. The whole thing is an incredibly compact package, and at a hair over two ounces it's equally *light*. The reason for this lightness is that it's made of a high-impact glass-filled composite, which is designed to withstand an errant drumstick.

## Sonic Design

The 504 is a cardioid dynamic mic' with a frequency response that should interest drummers. The frequency response graph supplied by Sennheiser is relatively flat from 100 Hz to around 1,500

Hz, where it very gradually slopes up towards 4 kHz or so before leveling off, then drops off at 18 kHz. This should sound fairly smooth yet still give good articulation of the stick sound.

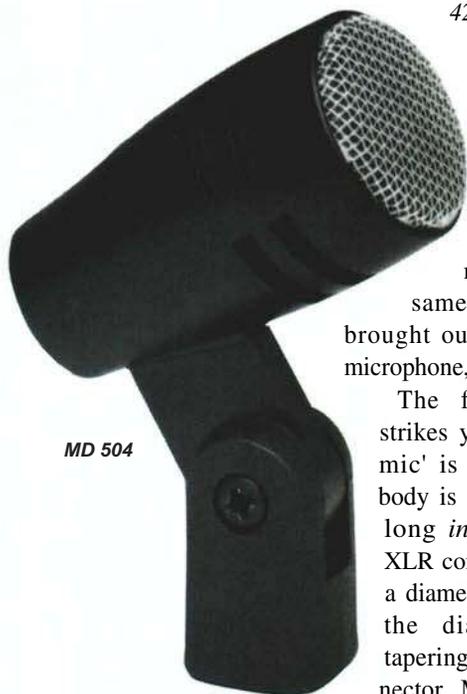
So far so good, but the graph also shows the mic's response at a distance of five centimeters (2") as opposed to the standard testing distance of one meter. The response is the same down to about 500 Hz, but the close-distance response shows a large, broad increase in the low end culminating in a boost of approximately 10 dB at 100 Hz. Knowing that 2" or less is the typical distance for close-miking toms, and that 100 Hz is where the "meat" of most toms exists, we can theorize that the 504 should produce a "big" sound when used in the typical close proximity location. So much for theory. How *does* it sound?

## Sound

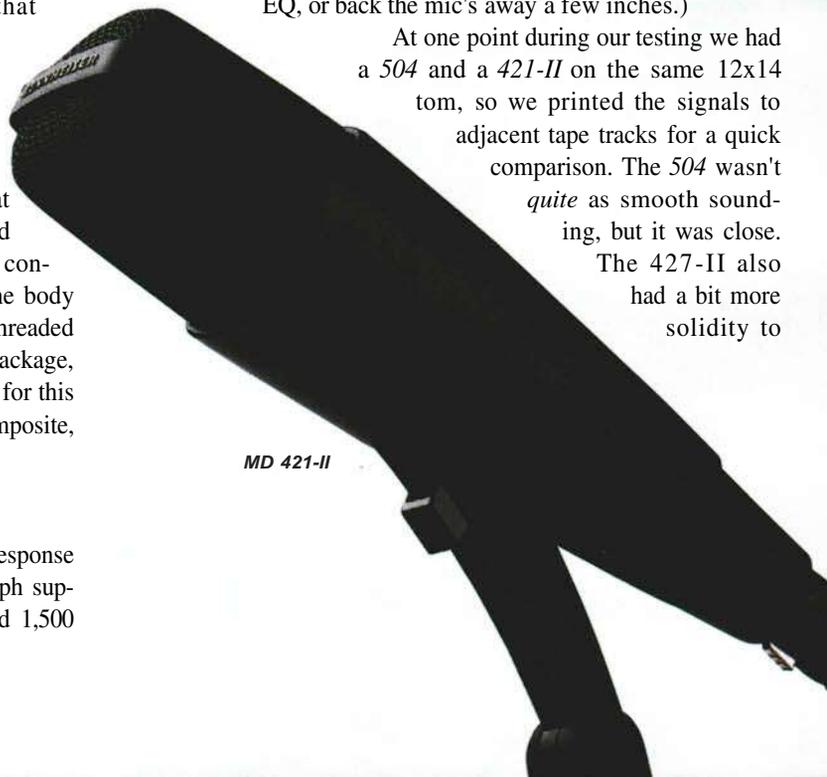
We tried the 504s on toms ranging from 8" to 14" in diameter. In the usual position (angled above the rim an inch or two off the head) it was easy to get a very nice sound—basically, just plug them in and play. The midrange was smooth and there was plenty of stick attack lending definition to the sound, while the bottom end had some of that big round *dooom* component that helps make drums sing. I find this quality almost essential in a live situation, and I enjoy a certain amount of it in the studio, too. (And if you want less of it you can always roll off a little with EQ, or back the mic's away a few inches.)

At one point during our testing we had a 504 and a 421-II on the same 12x14 tom, so we printed the signals to adjacent tape tracks for a quick comparison. The 504 wasn't *quite* as smooth sounding, but it was close.

The 427-II also had a bit more solidity to



MD 504



MD 421-II

the fundamental, but again the difference was not huge, which is somewhat of a moral victory for the *504* at a third the size (and price!).

It might be nice—especially in a gigging environment—to be able to use a small, light mic' on your snare drum, so we tested the *504* in this application too.

The snare also had the usual "studio workhorse dynamic instrument mic" hanging over it, so we were able to reference the *504* to a known standard. The basic difference was that the *504* was *slightly* smoother in the upper mids (i.e., it had less of a presence peak), but I'd defy anyone to tell the difference in a live mix. All in all, the *504* performed admirably in every application in which we tried it. (And not that this has much to do with drums, but it also sounded pretty damn good shoved up against the grill cloth of a raging Marshall amp!)

### MZH 504 Clip

To me, one of the most intriguing features of the *504* was its ability to be easily mounted on a drum hoop via the optional *MZH 504* clip, thus avoiding use of a mic' stand. After all, what's the big advantage of a small, lightweight microphone if it still requires a big boom stand to use it, especially on stage, where space is at a premium?

I give Sennheiser an "A" for the concept, but only a "B minus" for the actual design. Yes, the *MZH 504* goes on or off the drum literally in seconds, and yes, it holds the mic' securely while still allowing it to pivot. So what's not perfect? My main beef is that it places the mic' too far in from the edge. With a snare (or *any* drum 14" or larger) this wouldn't be critical, because even with the mic' intruding into the playing area, there's still room to move. But with smaller drums it becomes problematic. (On a 10" drum it's going to get hit occasionally, and on an 8" drum it ends up near the center of the head.) Also, many folks prefer the sound of a drum miked from nearer the edge, with the mic' angled toward the sweet spot instead of hovering over it.

Another potential problem is that the *MZH 504* won't fit on drums with *RIMS* mounts. (Although this may not be a representative sampling, I had four kits in my studio this past month, and three of them used *RIMS* on the toms.)

A more minor gripe is that the threads on the mic' (it uses a 3/8" insert inside of the standard 5/8" female thread when attached to the *MZH 504*) are made of a fairly soft plastic, which tends to become cross-threaded unless you're very careful. This is not really that big a deal, because anyone using the *504s* with the clips would likely install them once and leave them on since they fold up into a compact package.

### Conclusions

My harping on the seemingly minor accessory of a simple rubberized clip is because Sennheiser's approach is *so* good (much better than anything else I've seen), it's a shame they didn't nail it. (It makes me wonder whether there was a drummer in the house when this thing was designed!) If they could modify the shape so that the mic' can be positioned back a couple of inches, and make the clip fit *RIMS* mounts (and perhaps beef up the mic's threads), we could (except for overheads) get rid of the forest of mic'

booms surrounding our drumsets.

After completing my review of the *MD 504* and *MZH 504* I learned that Sennheiser will soon offer a small swivel, which, when used in conjunction with the clip, is said to take care of the placement problems. This is indeed good news if it works as anticipated, but clip or no clip, the *MD 504* can certainly stand up to the competition on its own merits: It's small, lightweight, and inexpensive, and its characteristic sound is nicely suited for close-miked toms. The *MD 504* with soft pouch lists for \$169, and the *MZH 504* clip is \$29.

### MD 421-II

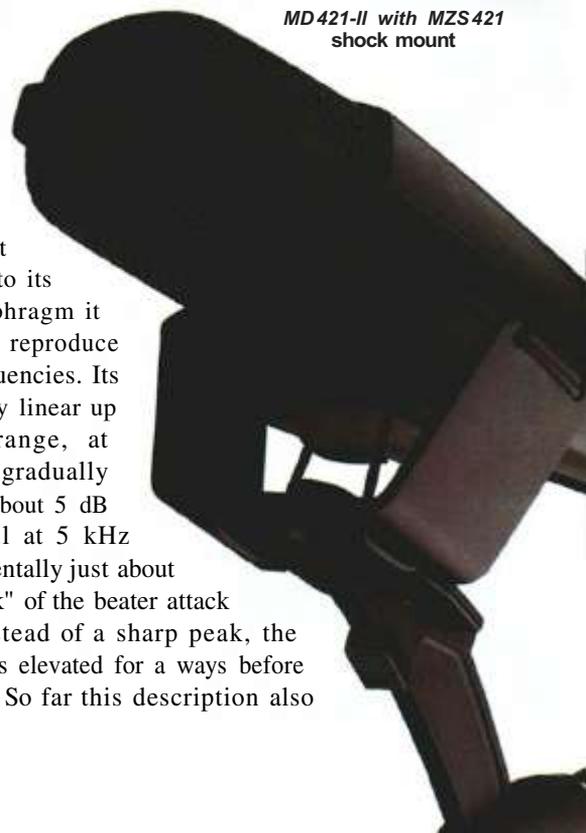
For many drummers, engineers, producers, and soundmen, the Sennheiser *MD 421* is *the* mic' of choice for kick drums and/or toms. Many mic's have come and gone during the thirty-odd years the *427* has been in production, but none of them has dethroned the king. Until now.

On first glance the *421-II* looks identical to its predecessor, but closer inspection reveals the newer mic' to be almost an inch shorter than the old model, along with some minor cosmetic changes. Still in place, however, is the same idiosyncratic mic' clip that accompanied (cursed?) the *421*, only the new version has plastic threads (see my comments regarding *504* threads) instead of the metal threads of the old clip. The two clips are interchangeable, though, so hang on to the old ones. And for those who need increased mechanical isolation, Sennheiser now makes the *MZS 421* shock mount.

Also unchanged are most of the things people have *loved* about the *427*: the extremely rugged construction, the five-position rolloff control encircling the mic's XLR connector, the ability of the mic' to take outrageous sound pressure levels, and (thankfully) the mic's sonic personality. Does this mean the *427-77* sounds identical to the *427*? Not exactly—read on.

### Sound

The *427* has always been known as somewhat of an "aggressive" mic', but there's more to it than that. Due to its very large diaphragm it can accurately reproduce the lowest frequencies. Its response is very linear up into the midrange, at which point it gradually lifts until it's about 5 dB above nominal at 5 kHz (which is incidentally just about where the "click" of the beater attack lives). But instead of a sharp peak, the response remains elevated for a ways before coming down. So far this description also



MD 421-II with MZS 421 shock mount

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applies to the 421-II. It's in the high end that subtle differences arise, but rather than talk about frequency extension and transient response, let's take a look at how these mic's respond to real drums.

We placed the 421-11 and a 421 on a 14" hanging "floor" tom. The 427 sounded very solid on the bottom—not the mid-bass "jukebox boom" you sometimes get with smaller mic's, but the palpable feeling of actually hearing the lowest tones the drum can produce. The stick attack was clear, and the sustain of the note was smooth. Listening to the drum through the 421-11 produced a similar sound, except the top end was more open and transparent. It had more air to it and was generally more "present," but in no way did it lose any of the fullness at the bottom end. Or, to put it in highly technical terms, it had a big fat sound that really killed.

Many people are fond of the way the 427 enhances a kick drum in a manner that works well in contemporary music. Well, the 427-77 added the same sort of character to a kick, only more so. Again, the bottom was solid and realistic, and the typical "427 punchiness" was only helped by the improved high end. If you're looking for beater articulation that'll let your kick patterns be intelligible in a dense mix, this is the mic' for you.

## Conclusions

There is an old adage that states: "Better" is the enemy of "good." As a general rule this is wise advice—the world is full of examples of manufacturers who felt the burning need to "improve" a product, only to realize that the public preferred the original version. (The Ford *Mustang* and *Coca-Cola* immediately come to mind, along with dozens of music-related products.)

In the 427, Sennheiser certainly had a good product—a classic, even. So why make it "better"? I'm not sure—maybe they realized that technology had advanced to a point where they could actually improve it without killing its character; maybe it had to do with input from the end users; maybe it was market pressure due to increased competition from other mic's specifically designed for the same application. I suspect it was a little of each.

Regardless of their motivation for the change, in this case it is an improvement. I must admit that when I first got wind that Sennheiser was "revising" the 427, I made plans to purchase more of the old ones, fearing the end of a once-great drum mic'. Well, my fears are groundless. There's nothing the 427 had that its successor doesn't also have, and with the 427-77 you get the added bonus of increased clarity in the upper register. The king is dead. Long live the king.

The MD 427-77 (with foam-lined hard case) lists for \$485. The MZS 421 shock mount is \$50. For more information contact Sennheiser Electronic Corporation, 6 Vista Drive, PO Box 987, Old Lyme, CT 06371.



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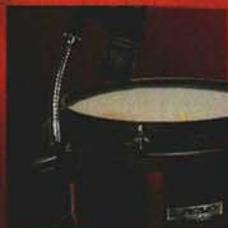
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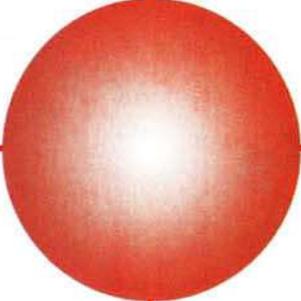
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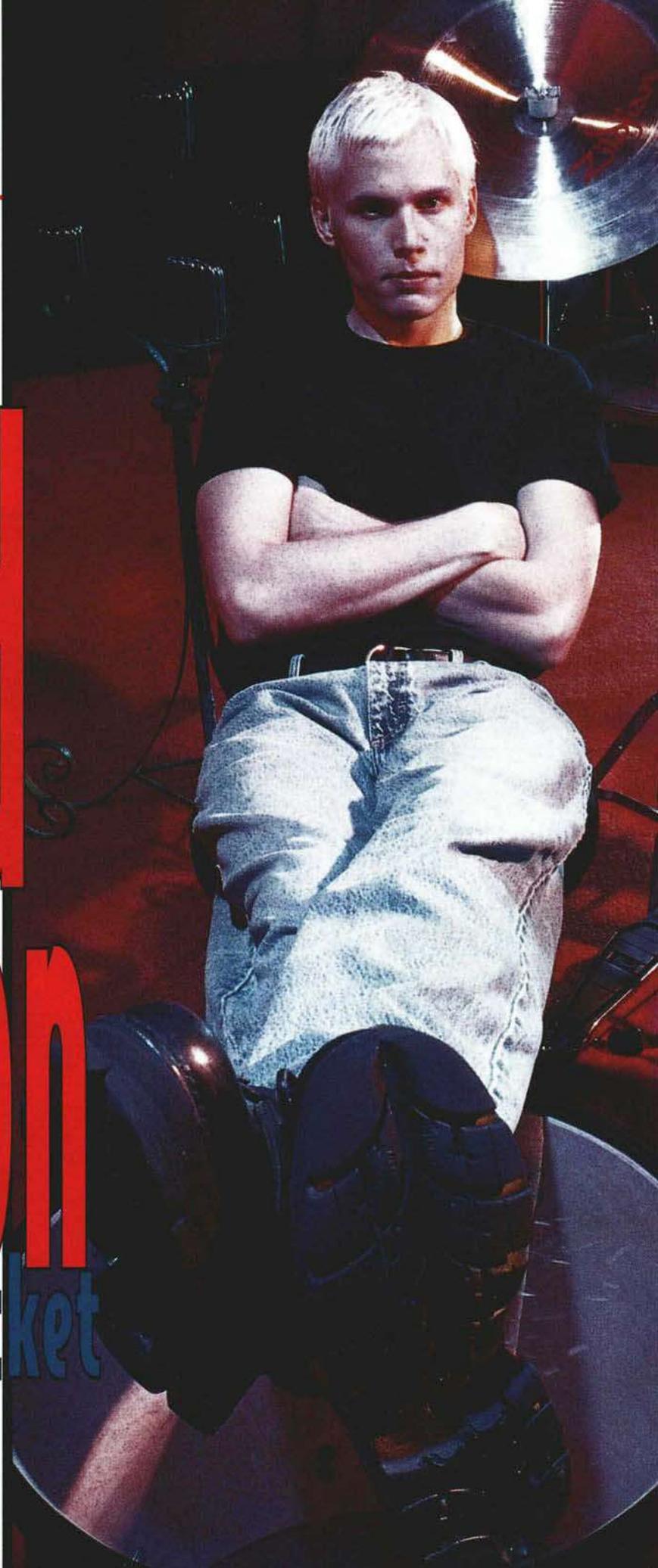
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# 311's Chad Sexton Power Pocket

by Jim DeRogatis  
photos by Alex Solca







as the home of the Allman Brothers), 311 has released three albums: *Grassroots* (1994), *Music* (1995), and *311*, or "the blue album" (1996). The latter reached Number 12 on the *Billboard* Top 200 albums chart, racking up certified sales of more than two million, and scoring MTV and

When the readers of *Modern Drummer* voted 311's Chad Sexton as the best up & coming player in the 1997 Readers Poll, it had a special meaning for the twenty-seven-year-old drummer. Before the band took off, Chad used to work at Joe Voda's Drum City in Omaha, Nebraska, and he'd while away the time between customers by flipping through the magazine, imagining what it would be like to be included in its pages. "I'm really honored, and there is nothing but positivity surrounding it," he says of his place in the Readers Poll. "It's like a dream come true."

Born in Lexington, Kentucky, Sexton moved to Omaha when he was one year old. His parents were musicians who traveled from state to state; Dad played guitar and mom played keyboards in what Sexton describes as "a pop band—real melodic '70s music." Young Chad gravitated to the drums, and he spent several years in drum corps before starting to play covers of bands like R.E.M. and the Cure with his friends Nick Hexum (who played the bass back then) and guitarist Tim Mahoney. In 1990, Hexum and Sexton formed 311, taking their name from the Omaha police code for "indecent exposure." Hexum moved into the role of lead vocalist, P-Nut (Aaron Charles Wills) took over on bass, Mahoney replaced original guitarist Jim Watson a short time later, and rapper/scratcher S.A. (Doug Martinez) completed the group.

Since relocating to Los Angeles and signing to Nashville-based Capricorn Records (a label best known

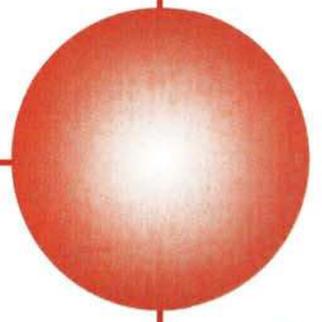
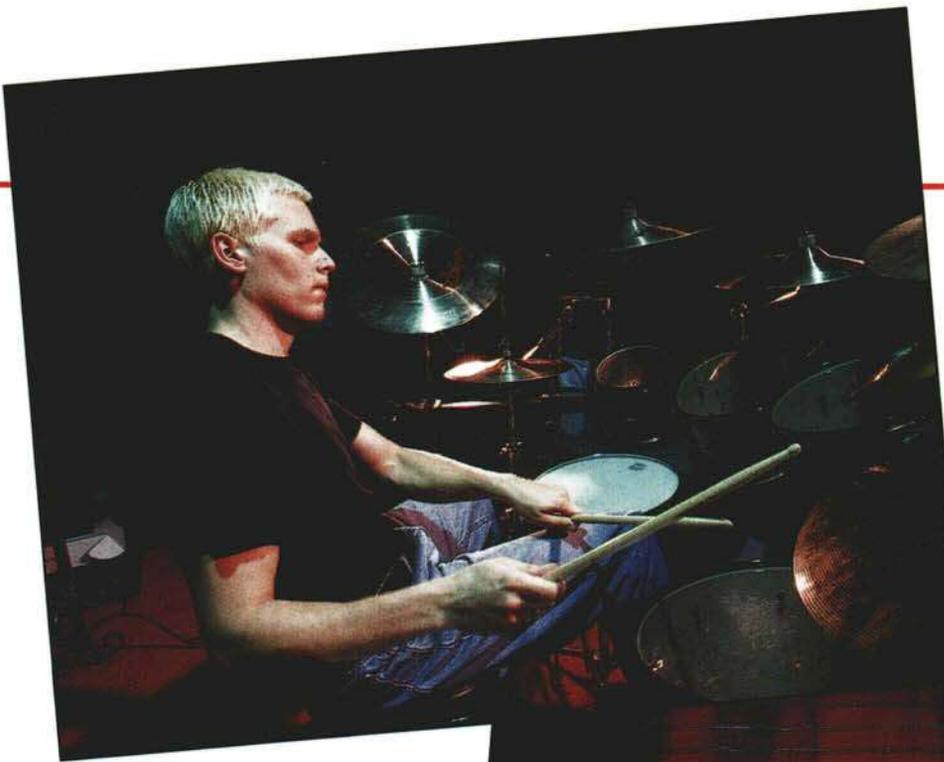
modern rock radio hits with "Down" and "All Mixed Up." All the while, the band was building a loyal and ever-growing following with its intense, energetic live shows. The group played both the H.O.R.D.E. and Warped tours in 1996, proudly displaying its self-proclaimed "Omaha style"—a diverse mix of reggae, funk, hip-hop, and anthemic alternative rock.

When I first met Sexton, 311 was midway through recording its fourth Capricorn album, *Transistor*, at LA's NRG studios. An ambitious collection of twenty-nine tunes, the album displays significant musical development for the group, and Sexton was clearly a big part of that maturity: In addition to drumming, he wrote nearly a third of the tunes. Listening to playbacks with his bandmates and offering his opinion about vocal takes, it was clear that Sexton was respected not only as a timekeeper and a groove master, but as a musician.

Sexton and I spoke again on the phone a few weeks later, when the album was in the final mixing stages. He was enthusiastic and thoughtful, speaking in a style that was part California surfer and part midwestern farm boy. In both conversations, the only time he struggled for an answer was when I asked if success has changed him.

"Well, I am buying a house...but that's a hard question," he said. "I don't know if it's changed me or if I've just changed on my own. It's just been a natural progression. This band is my whole life, and I'm in it so deep, I can't really tell."

"I try to let drum parts come to me naturally. I figure since I've had all this rudimental training pounded into my brain, I should let whatever feels natural just come out onto the set."



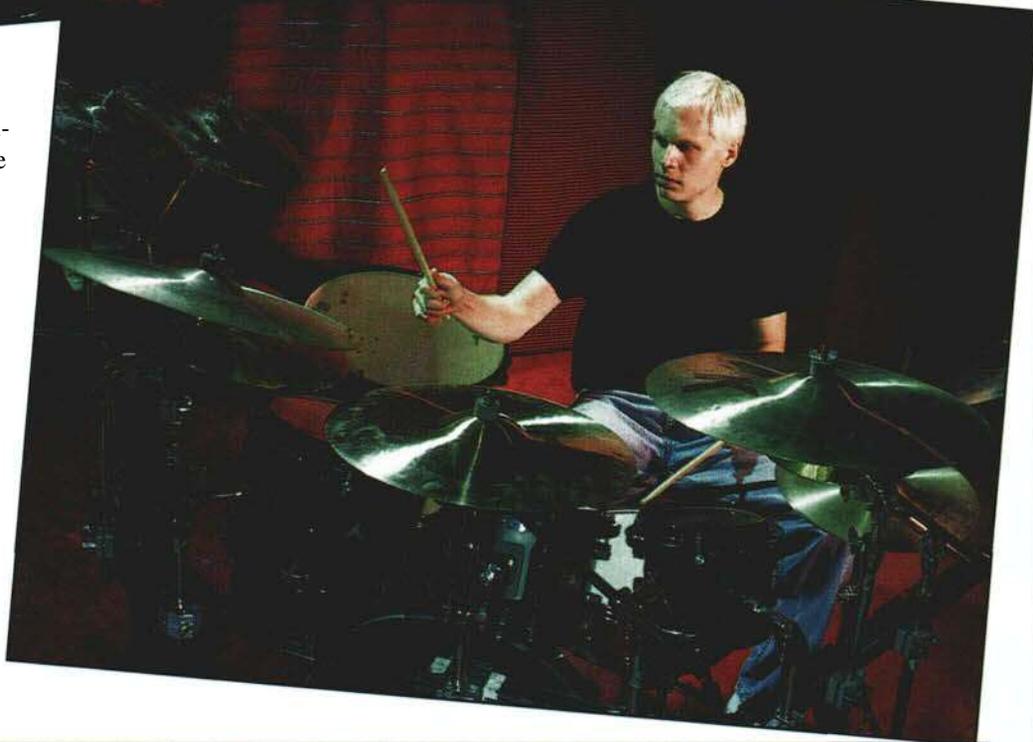
in maybe the sixth grade, around 1980 or '81. From there I had numerous teachers.

Starting in 1983 and '84, I started drum corps. I marched for five years, and that is probably the thing I can credit most for my style: five years of drum corps and seeing how beats are layered—not only

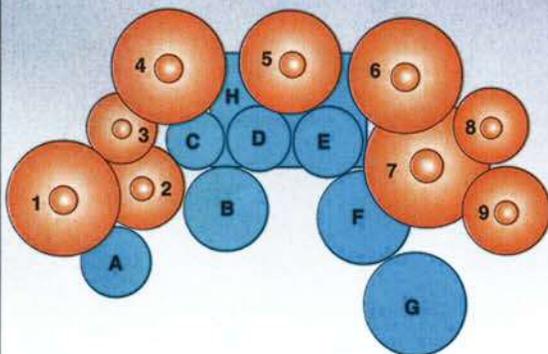
**JD:** Let's talk about your early influences. You grew up in one of those "musical households."

**CS:** Yeah, music was always around me. I remember getting my first set of drums at the age of four. It was given to me by a guy who was friends with my parents. He had an extra red sparkle Gretsch drumset, and he said, "Hey, I think this kid could use it."

I started studying at a very early age—probably too early. Second grade was my first drum lesson. I did that for five or six months. After that time, the teacher told my parents that I was probably too young to start any type of focused lessons. I picked up training again



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- C. 7x8 tom
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- E. 9x12 tom
- F. 14x16 tom
- G. 16x18 tom
- H. 18x22 bass drum

**Hardware:** Pearl, including their P 201 double pedal and H 885 hi-hat stand

**Sticks:** Vic Firth 3A model with wood tip

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

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2. 14" *Rock* hi-hats (two bottom cymbals)
3. 11" *Oriental Trash* splash
4. 20" *Pre-Aged K Light Dry* ride (used as crash)
5. 18" *K Custom Dark* crash
6. 20" *K Custom Dark* ride with rivets (used as crash)
7. 22" *A* medium ride (with brilliant finish)
8. 13" *Azuka* crash
9. 15" *Azuka* crash (with rivets)

**Heads:** Remo coated falams on main snare batter, coated *Emperors* on soprano snare batter, clear *Emperors* on tops of toms with clear *Ambassadors* on bottoms, *Powerstroke 3* on bass drum

"I think a lot is demanded of me and my drumming just because of the different styles we play. When you're in a band playing different styles, not only do you have to play the styles well you have to play them confidently to get the musical mood across."

how to layer them, but how to layer them in certain ways so they are really powerful.

**JD:** Obviously you learned all of the rudiments.

**CS:** I did learn all the rudiments, and I could play all the rudiments, but I was never very good at applying the rudiments to the drumset. I never sat there and did exercises like, "Okay, let's do flam taps now in a fill." I never really applied it to the drumset like that.

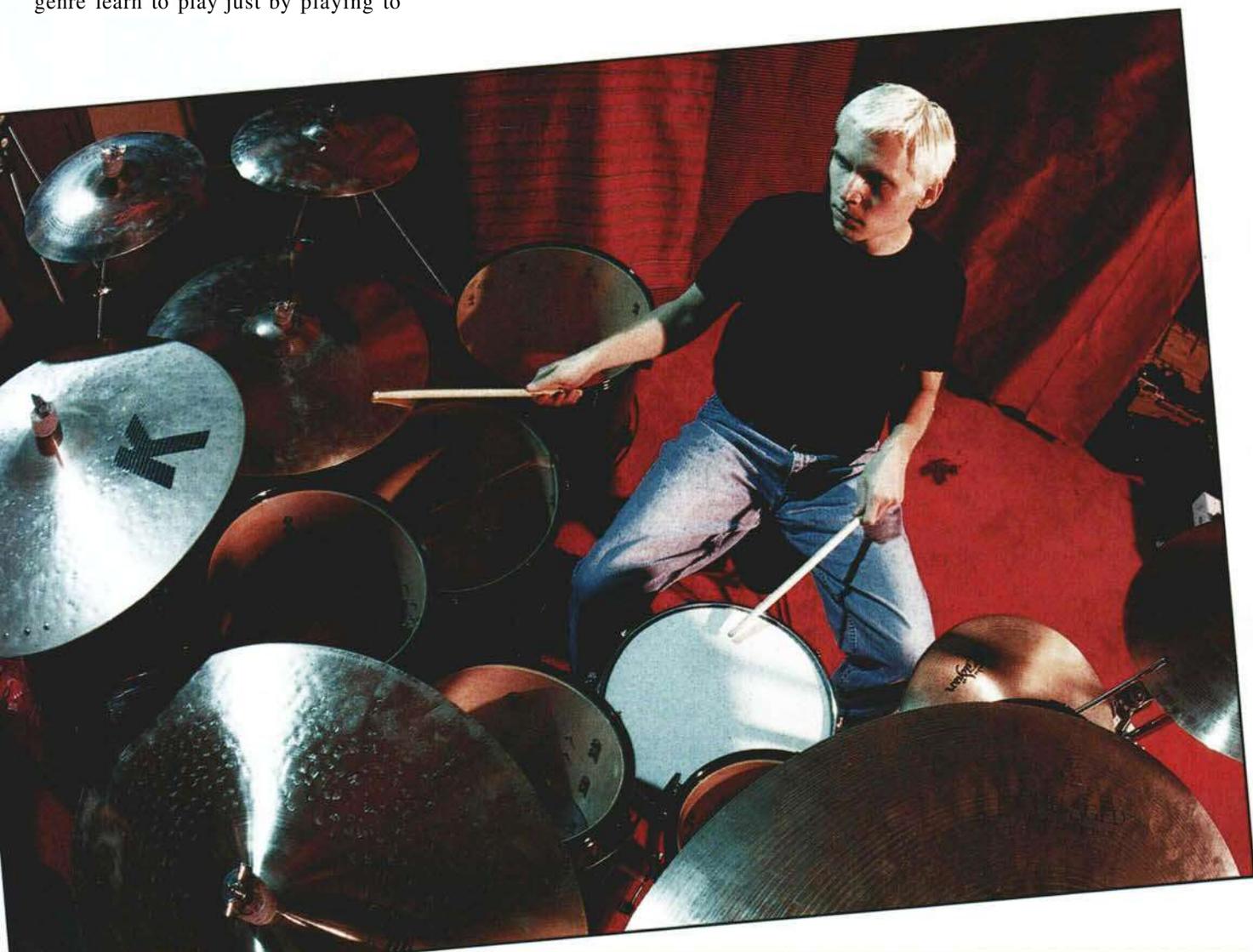
**JD:** Still, you're describing a background that's out of step with a lot of alternative-rock players. A lot of drummers in this genre learn to play just by playing to

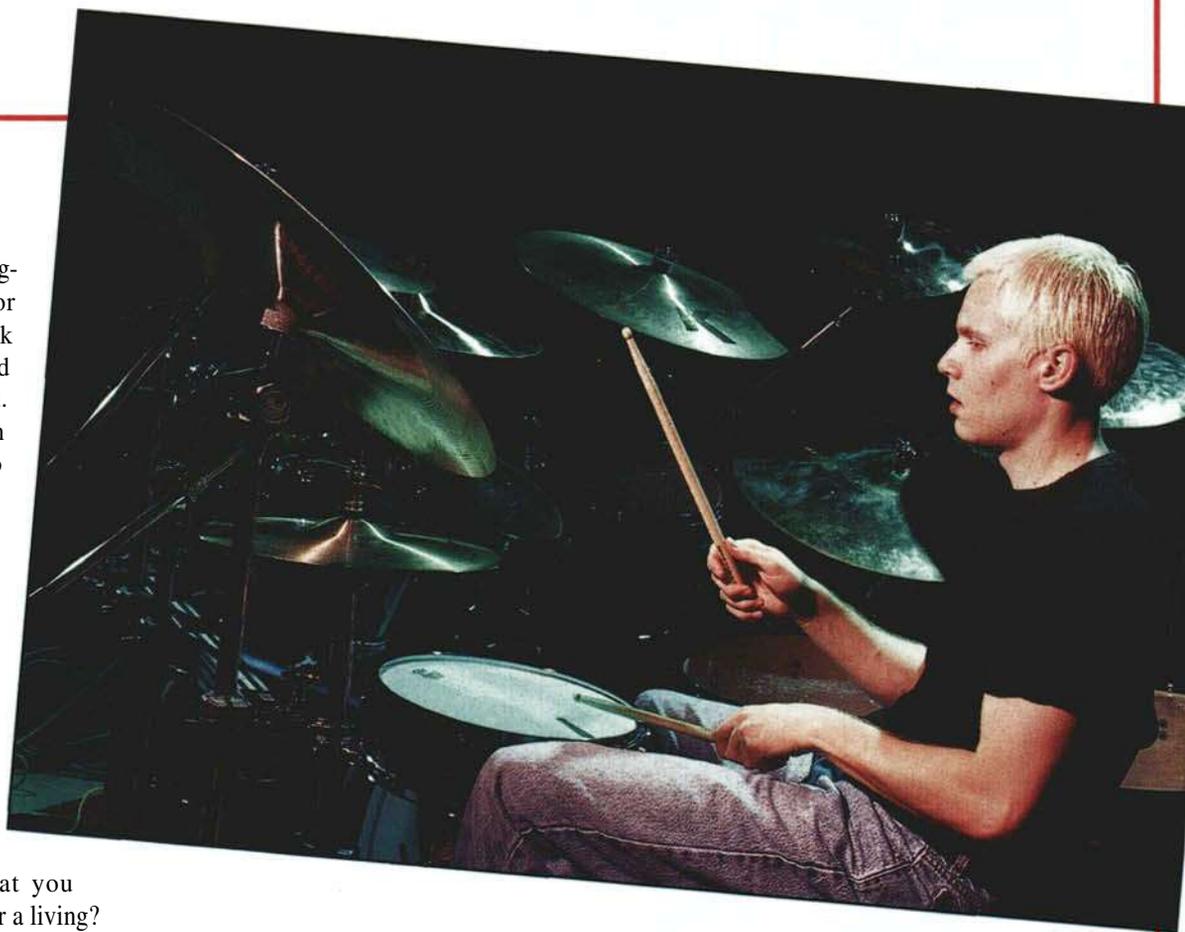
records.

**CS:** Most alternative drummers did grow up that way. I used to do that as well: play with Mahavishnu Orchestra albums and loud jazz stuff. I always got a kick out of playing that stuff rather than A Flock Of Seagulls or whoever was popular at the time.

**JD:** Tell me about some of your early influences.

**CS:** One of the drummers I've never mentioned before—and it's been a big mistake that I've forgotten to credit him—is Narada Michael Walden, when he was playing with John McLaughlin in the Mahavishnu Orchestra. I love his playing. I think it's one of the coolest styles of playing ever, and it sounds like he is just going off the entire time. Of course, the Mahavishnu Orchestra allowed him to go off, but even on albums like Jeff Beck's *Wired*, I just love his style. Another guy I would have to give thanks to is Dennis Chambers.





A lot of people like dogging Dave Weckl for some reason; they think he's really technical and they say he has no soul. But when I was in high school I would play to Dave Weckl. When I was in junior high, a guy I listened to but never thought influenced me was Neil Peart. Now I'll listen to Rush and it's like, "Oh yeah, *that's* where I got that!" Those are my four biggest influences.

**JD:** At what point did it become obvious that you wanted to make music for a living?

**CS:** I think there were two of those points. One of them was when I was really young, in the sixth grade, when I started taking lessons again. This sounds so funny to everyone I tell it to, and it will probably sound funny to you, but I was watching this Loverboy video for the song "Working For The Weekend." In the video, the drummer [Matt Frenette] has these cymbals on boom arms, and I believe they're upside-down. Instead of the boom arm being under the cymbal, the boom arm is on top and the cymbal is hanging down. So when it came to the chorus—*dum dida-dum dida-dum*—he would hit three crash cymbals right in a row. *Pshh! Pshh! Pshh!* And I thought that was the coolest thing ever! I was like, "Man, look at him! He just hit those cymbals! They're all in a row and just hanging up there—that is *so* great!" Right then I was like, "I *have* to do that!"

**JD:** You're a brave man to own up to liking Loverboy, those guys with the handkerchiefs on their heads!

**CS:** I know. The other turning

point was when I was in college and I was debating with myself about what I was going to do with my life. Nick had been telling me to move out to California and

give it a try. So finally at the end of my first year in college, instead of going back, I decided to move out to California and be in a band.

## Grassroots And Branches

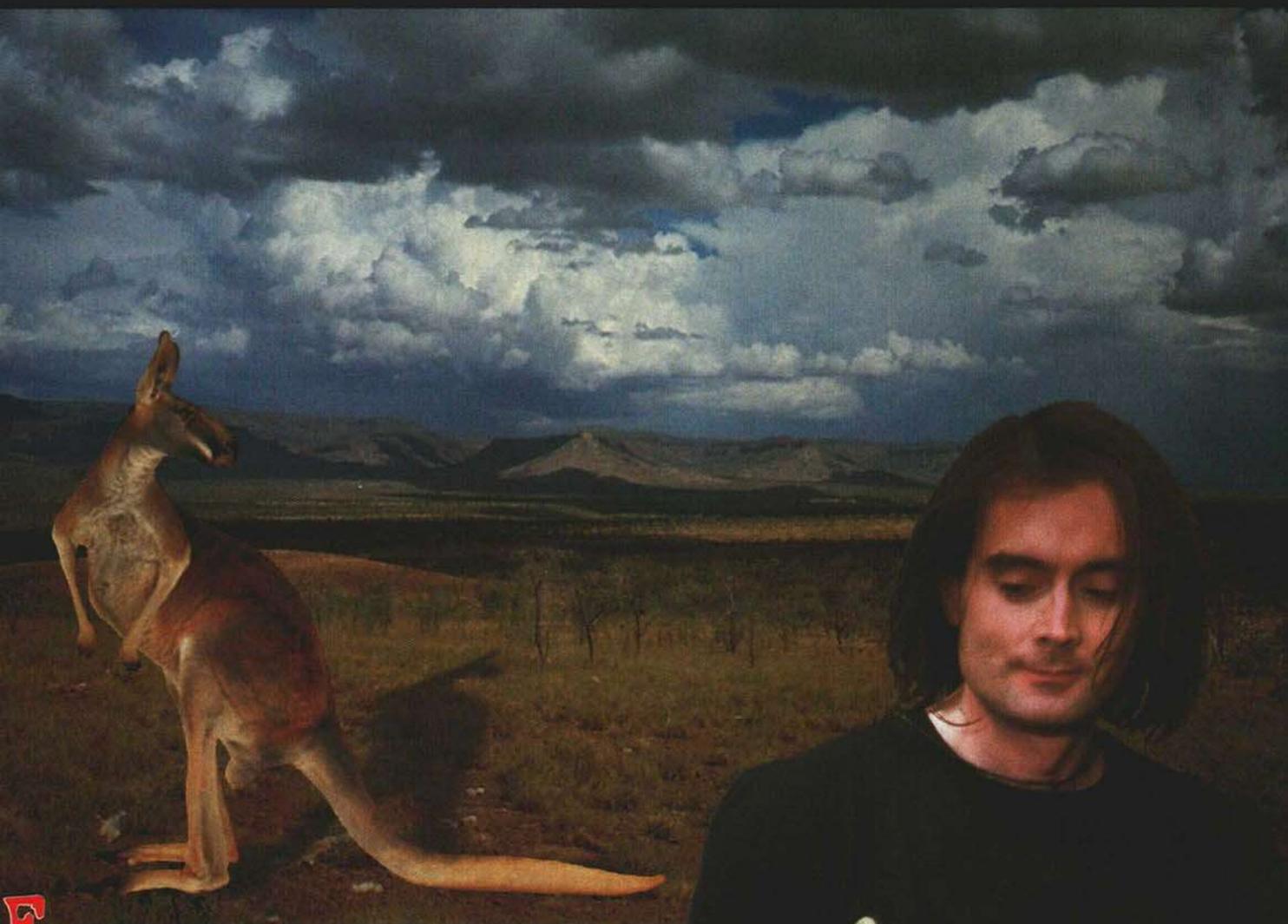
Here are the albums Sexton lists as most representative of his drumming.

Artist	Album Title	Drummer
311	Transistor	Narada Michael Walden
311	Grassroots	Earl Hudson
311	311	Peter Erskine
311	Music	Joey Baron

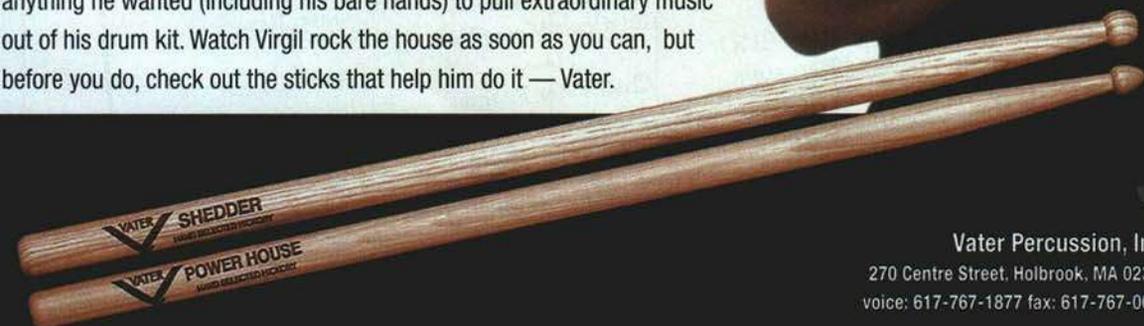
And here are the albums Chad listens to most for inspiration.

Artist	Album Title	Drummer
Mahavishnu Orchestra	Visions Of The Emerald Beyond	Earl Hudson
Bad Brains	God Of Love	Peter Erskine
Jaco Pastorius	Invitation	Joey Baron
Carmen McCrae	Live At The Great American Music Hall	Earl Hudson
Human Rights (H.R.)	I Luv	various
Leonard Bernstein	Chichester Psalms	none
De La Soul	Stakes Is High	Brother ?uestion
The Roots	Illadelph Halflife	

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**JD:** Had you gone to college to study music?

**CS:** No, I wasn't even in the college band then. I just felt that I wouldn't be excited doing anything I could do with a degree in music. Before I got into college I used to teach high school drum lines. I enjoyed doing that immensely. And that is something I always picture myself doing, either writing for a drum corps or high school drum lines.

During the second semester of college, Nick had been calling me every two weeks and saying, "All the drummers here are the same. Come out here!" We had already had a band in Omaha for about three or four months called Unity; it was with Tim, Nick, me, and a keyboard player. We broke up that band at the end of the summer in 1988. Nick went out to California, I went to college in Omaha, and Tim went to college in Arizona. But Nick finally talked me into joining him in California. It was a really hard decision to make, but it turned out great, and I felt good about it.

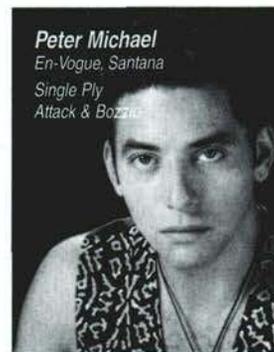
**JD:** But it didn't really turn out great—your guys wound up moving back to Omaha. Was it difficult to come back home as a "failure"?

**CS:** Well, my mental state was so screwed up at the time that I didn't care about being a failure. Because to talk myself into going out there, I had to convince myself that, "Okay, this is what's best. If you don't try it now, it's most likely never going to happen." I was proud of the fact that I gave it a try.

That group we had in California was also called Unity, and we were going for about six months. We had already played the Roxy and Coconut Teazer—some of the clubs on the Strip—and we had a pretty good band. But we were so young—just eighteen—and we didn't even have enough money to buy healthy food. Between working and the band, there was hardly any free time, and when we did have free time, it was hard partying.

Those were probably the worst times in my life; I can look back and say that now. I remember how I felt, and I just wanted to get out of there. I hated it. But even when I was going back to Omaha, I never felt like a failure, because I knew that I was never going to get away from music. I knew that I was always going to be playing drums,

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either for a national act or for myself or writing for other people.

**JD:** When you went back to Omaha, how long was it before 311 really started to roll?

**CS:** I moved back in October of '89. In December of '89, I hooked up with P-Nut, our bass player. I met P-Nut through S.A., who I went to college with my first year, and he was one of the first people I stopped by to say hi to on my way back from California. I mentioned that I was looking for a band and that I had to get a new bass player, and he was like, "You have to meet this kid P-Nut. He's fifteen but he is supposed to be really great." In a couple of weeks P-Nut and I were playing covers of different bands to see what each other could play. From there, we got Jim Watson, who is our old guitarist. Right then we formed a band.

Nick had been in touch with me as well. In April of 1990, he told me, "Hey, I've looked around for other players, but we may as well keep the team together because it seems that it always works." Which it did: We always worked musical-

ly, that wasn't the problem in LA. The problem was what I said before, it was just a crazy time. I think Nick got back to Omaha in late April of 1990, and we played our first show as 311 on June 10, 1990. We started putting originals together, and by the end of 1990 we were recording a demo. That's when we got rid of Jim and got Tim. During the summer of '91, S.A. became the last member of 311.

**JD:** Before P-Nut, Nick had played bass, and you hadn't really played with many guys besides him. Since P-Nut was so young, I suppose you two developed together as rhythm players.

**CS:** It's just like a basketball team, really: You start reading what that person is going to do. We have a good sense of how everyone in the band is feeling. We are really tight as a rhythm section. Probably where we lack is when we are going to solo. That's when you can really tell our limits.

**JD:** I'm glad you mentioned soloing. There aren't a lot of players in the "alternative" style who are doing drum solos, but you're out there taking one every night. What was the impetus for you soloing?

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**CS:** Well, the song "Applied Science" off of our *Grassroots* album has a twelve-measure percussion break. All those percussion instruments are overdubs, so when we got there in a live setting and there are just drums being played with this groove, it was kind of boring. It was actually the band that kind of encouraged me to take a drum solo: "You gotta bust it! You gotta bust it!" I was like, "No, no." It's a little scary busting a drum solo in front of people, especially when you haven't done it before. I said, "Okay, next tour." So when the next tour came around, I was stuck having to do the solo—which I am thankful for, because I can solo better now than I ever could. I've sucked sometimes, too. I'm human like everybody else.

**JD:** Do you draw on your drum corps training in the solo?

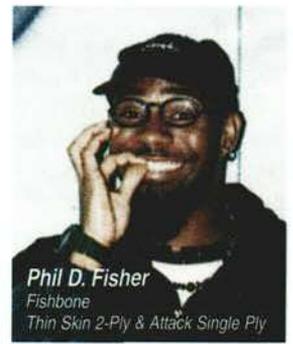
**CS:** I really draw on the drum corps stuff when I am writing for the songs. As far as the rolls I do, those chops are strictly from drum corps. Sometimes I will pull out a simple exercise from drum corps that sounds cool just because of how the beats are laid out, but it's mostly off the top of my head. In the past, I've had a certain outline for the solo, but hopefully this year I won't have any outline and I won't be afraid to try out weirder stuff.

**JD:** You're always emphasizing the importance of the groove. There are so many elements of different musical styles in what you're doing. How do you define what's special about the 311 groove?

**CS:** I really love playing with these guys because it allows me to play all different varieties of music. How I go about writing drum parts is that I try to let it come to me naturally. I figure since I've had all this rudimentary training pounded into my brain I should let whatever feels natural to me just come out onto the set. We start the song and I try out different grooves. As I try different grooves, I'll learn how one verse locks to the chorus, and if I don't like that, maybe I will go back and change the first part. But I try to let it come to me as naturally as possible and not really think about the direction, and then I refine it. Refining on the road is a non-stop process.

I think a lot is demanded of me and my drumming just because of the different styles we play. When you're in a band playing different styles, not only do you

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have to play the styles well, you have to play them confidently to get the musical mood across.

**JD:** So how does a young white drummer from Nebraska come to play dancehall reggae so well?

**CS:** I think it's easier than people think. Whenever I listen to Sly Dunbar and Robbie Shakespeare—and you can get their records in any state, any city—I just look at their parts as some of the most badass grooves available, and those grooves are not that technically hard to play.

**JD:** How about your approach to hip-hop? So many drummers seem alienated by hip-hop rhythms because they're often programmed by non-drummers.

**CS:** The issue is, what is the idea behind it? On my listener's guide [see sidebar], I was asked to list albums that I get inspired by. There is a lot of electronic stuff that I put on there, and there is some stuff I put on the list that I probably don't even listen to the drums on. I just listen to the music, because that is really where my inspiration comes from—from a performer like Perry Farrell or Chuck D. I learn a lot from those

people, more than I do from watching drummers sometimes.

**JD:** After you moved to LA the second time and 311 was signed to Capricorn, you made your first major-label album with producer Eddie Offord. Did the stuff he did with Yes years ago mean anything to you? Were you a fan of Bill Bruford?

**CS:** Yeah, I listened to Yes and Emerson, Lake & Palmer. I was aware of Eddie Offord's work, and I did enjoy it. During the first record it was great: It was such a joy to be able to create. Eddie took us under his wing. He helped us out, but he let us do exactly what we wanted. That album turned out great: It was organized, but it had time for creativity, and the producer/band relationship was perfect. But when we got to the next album, it changed drastically. Eddie became our enemy and totally went off the deep end, and we just couldn't deal with that.

**JD:** Were you playing to a click track on those early albums?

**CS:** Yes, we played to a click on the first two records, *Music* and *Grassroots*. *Music* was executed better. *Grassroots* is a little

more rushed because we were having problems with Eddie. *311* is not done to a click track; basically it was all done live. For the new album we've gone back to the click.

**JD:** Did you find it hard playing to a click at first?

**CS:** For me it took a little longer because I really loved listening to the groove. I remember on *311*, when I would cut a track and go into the control room to listen to it, it would be great except for this one measure where I slowed down. I'd have to redo the track, and it just took a little longer to not speed up during that one measure.

When you first write a song and a drum part for the song, and then you put that to a click track, it's always difficult to put a new beat to a metronome and line up different beats to it. With a click track I can tell if it's wrong or right. I don't mind playing to a click track as long as it doesn't sound like I'm playing to a click track. On the new album, *Transistor*, I think we've done a really good job of it.

**JD:** You've also started experimenting more with electronics.

**CS:** I'm not doing that much, really, because it always comes down to the amount of time that we have to make the record. Every year it's been something different in terms of how much time we have to record. *Music* was a great record—we took our time on that—but *Grassroots* was super-rushed. *311* was great, but the attitude we wanted was just straight-up rock, so there was no real creativity besides the bass parts. For *Transistor* I've done some electronic stuff, but all of it is in the sequencing. None of it is triggering.

For live purposes, we have all the electronic stuff on DAT tapes, and I am going to sample as much as I can into my ddrum unit. When we need to, I'll trigger some parts live—drum loops, and maybe even weird noises.

**JD:** For *Transistor*, you made the decision not to use an outside producer and to work with Scott Ralston, your live sound engineer.

**CS:** That is something we have wanted to do for a long time. It's been a great natural progression because there are no outsiders

saying, "Well, the first time I heard that song, I thought you should take out the first chorus." Of course the first time you hear a song you might think that. But with our music, you have to listen to it maybe three times to see where we are coming from. And Scott really knows our music well.

**JD:** The band took a unique approach, recording the album in two halves and completing the first half before moving on to the second. Was that for your benefit, so you wouldn't have to do all of your drum tracks at one time and then just sit around?

**CS:** It was for everybody really. We didn't want anybody getting burned out. I can drum all day, but by the end of the day I'm done. Tim and P-Nut can record all day as well, but if you get a vocalist, they're good for maybe four hours before their voice starts to go. We did break it up into two parts, but actually those two parts were broken up into a few songs each. I would do several songs on drums, then we'd add the bass, guitar, and vocals. We just had a cycle going like that through twenty-nine different songs.

CHAD SEXTON

311

PHOTO / LISSA WALES

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TAYLOR HAWKINS / FOO FIGHTERS  
DAVE GROHL / FOO FIGHTERS  
ERIK SANDIN / NOFX  
ABE CUNNINGHAM / DEFTONES  
JOHN PESSONI / THE URGE  
DAN MUELLER / PHUNK JUNKEEZ  
ADAM ZUCKERT / RED 5  
ANDREW GONZALES / REEL BIG FISH  
BARRY CHENAULT / GAP BAND  
MARK HARISMENDY / SAVE FERRIS  
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DARRIN PFIFFER / GOLDFINGER  
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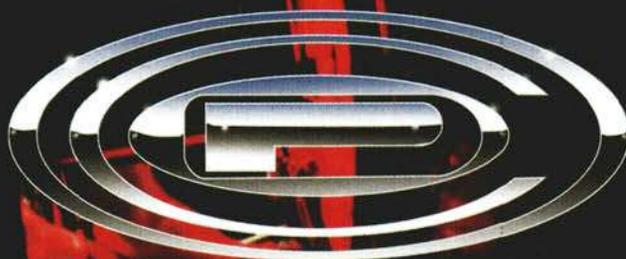
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**JD:** Many of the tracks on the new album have a more experimental and psychedelic bent.

**CS:** When we started mixing the first nine songs on the album, I thought it sounded...not soft...but softer than we were. It's a little less aggressive, a little more funk. We're getting into more groove. Maybe we are maturing a little bit, but we aren't going to stop writing rock music. We'll always write kickin' tunes as well.

**JD:** Still, 311 is known for having one of the wildest mosh pits in rock 'n' roll. Do you think the kids in the pit will be disappointed by the mellower grooves, or are they ready to go to the next level with the band?

**CS:** I'm online all the time. We have a weird connection to all of our fans, and I would say they are ready. They're all pumped up, they're ecstatic, and they really seem like positive people who are ready to grow with us.

As far as my playing on the record, I think it's a step up. I don't know how every drummer that is a fan of mine is going to react to it. I hope they're going to think it's really bad-ass, and if they've been in it for the long haul, they can see where I've developed from the last stage to this stage. To many people it might be more simplistic, but our music is based on lining up rhythms on top of each other, and I think we've done that better than ever.

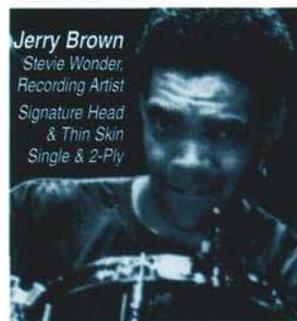
**JD:** If somebody said to you, "Hey, Chad, tell me what some of your trademark drum licks are," what would you point to on this album?

**CS:** Every once in a while, I will definitely pull out a big-ass roll on the snare, not on the toms. But I guess my trademark is kind of weird, because it would be a variety of styles. If you are going to see a 311 set, then you can definitely expect a large variety. Maybe my specialties are playing a couple of different styles of reggae—like on "Inner Light Spectrum," there's reggae as well as the dancehall groove, which I am super-stoked about.

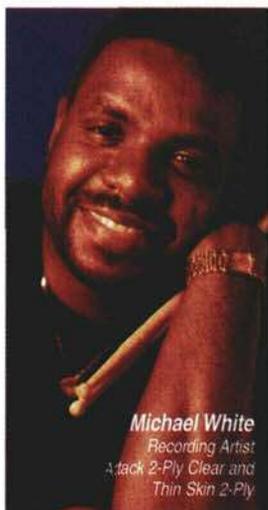
**JD:** Let's talk about your songwriting. You've contributed eight or nine songs to the new album, and you wrote four or five tunes on each of the last two albums. When you sit down to write a song, how do you do it?

**CS:** My songwriting process starts in my head with a riff or an idea. It almost always

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starts with a melody idea rather than a drumming idea. Any riffs that come flying through my head that I like I'll record on tape, and I will do this process for months. Later on, I'll kind of find parts that match other parts in terms of groove or the key that the parts are in. From there, I go into my home studio and put together a sequence. I make a drum loop and I put the riffs over it and see how they sound, and go from there. It's like a little road map.

Once you start making the song on a sequencer, you can see better where to go and what to do with it. I mostly figure the songs out on guitar. The drums are usually the last thing that comes.

**JD:** How does the *Transistor* tour differ from past tours?

**CS:** We're doing our own shows, and we're taking a step up. We're playing 9,000-seaters and more, and it's turning out really good so far. Red Rocks sold out, and Detroit seats 12,000. We're really glad there is excitement out there to see our band.

**JD:** What kind of challenges are there when you're playing venues that big?

**CS:** I'm pretty used to it now, but when we

first started to do those places it was kind of weird. You're like, "Here I am in front of all these people," but then you have to zone in and concentrate on the music. So it's almost like, "I will enjoy these people later; now I have to drum." But it's definitely worse for the musicians who are standing on stage, because they go from being really tight-knit to being spread across the stage, so they feel almost naked. We enjoy playing small places because if we're tight-knit, we can project our energy and play super-tight. When we're spread out, it's so much harder to have that same intensity and energy.

We like to set up a little tighter on big stages than other groups might. This year, we knew we were going to be playing bigger places, and I always had this idea about having a curved backdrop on top of a rectangular stage. You get rid of the excess corners, and you can bring the stage in a little tighter. Not only that, it might enhance the sound on stage.

**JD:** What are you listening to on stage?

**CS:** Basically in my monitor I listen to my bass drum and my toms—just my drums. I don't really need any bass, guitar, or any-

thing else. For me, it helps me execute my stuff better if I can hear the actual attack of my bass drum and the attack of my snare drum, and with guitar and bass in there, it's hard to hear if I am hitting where I want to hit.

**JD:** So you're just getting enough of everybody else ambiently on stage?

**CS:** Yeah, pretty much. I've been playing the songs for so long I really don't even need them. That's how I record as well: just me and a click track. I play to that because I have all my parts memorized—the road map of the songs as well as the specific parts. I find I can execute best when I can focus on one thing. If I hear bass and guitar in there, I can hear little fluctuations in the tempo. My brain is being pulled this way and that way, and it's harder to control it to just stay right there.

**JD:** You told me you don't do anything to stay in shape while you're touring. You're not working out and you're not doing particular exercises.

**CS:** Before sound check each day, I'll kind of warm myself up—just sort of hit the drums to warm the muscles up to get ready to play. But no, I don't really practice. I don't really practice on my off time, either. Playing live is the best practice I can get. I do bring my bike on the road and keep in shape that way. It's probably more healthy mentally to go on a bike ride or do other stuff and get away from the buses and the venue.

**JD:** What sort of drums are you playing?

**CS:** Orange County. The story behind them is that this guy, Dan Jensen, had a drum shop where he was making his own drums.

They became so in demand that he quit his job altogether and just started making drums. There are some pretty good players using them. I love his drums because I love his edging, and it's a real custom company—you can get any type of lug casings you want, any color or any type of wrap you can possibly dream of. You can have your own badges made up. He'll even do weird stuff for you. I have a thirty-ply snare drum; it's just huge. The wood is so thick that sound goes right through the drum. When you hit a rimshot it's like a gunshot.

**JD:** I saw a lot of piccolos lined up in the studio.

**CS:** Yeah, I do have a lot of piccolos as well. "Light Years" is a good example of a tune where I used a piccolo, just for more ring and a slap-type sound. It really depends on the song as far as which snare I use.

**JD:** There was also a pretty big goodie box of percussion in the studio. Do you play most of that on the record?

**CS:** I do. A friend of ours, Bobo, plays percussion with Cypress Hill, and he came in and laid down some tracks as well. Anytime you hear a lot of intense bongo work, it's Bobo, but the rest of it is me. We put a few tambourines on and a lot of shaker. That helps the listener. If you just heard drums, guitars, and bass, you could tell the fluctuations of where I might be catching up to the click track and where I might be behind. With the shaker, it's harder to notice another human rhythm part on top of that with another flow in the same tempo. They're not loud, they're just kind of 16th-note parts down in the mix.

**JD:** Do you worry about the physical demands of drumming? Have you read about carpal tunnel syndrome?

**CS:** I'm not too worried about it now, but I was about a year ago. I turned twenty-five and I was like, "Man, I can really tell the difference. I can't play like I used to. I don't have the energy." But I am a big basketball fan, and I watch Michael Jordan, Scottie Pippen, and Karl Malone. Those guys are in their mid-30s, and they're running up and down the full court. I'm inspired by athletes. Jerry Rice said, "I'm thirty-five and I'm still in my prime. I've never played this good in my life."

That tells me that if you want to play as good at thirty-five as you did when you were twenty-two, you'd better take care of your body. If your legs are stiff, you should walk and exercise and make sure that they're well-oiled so they're ready for that type of stress. I try to eat right and avoid hard drugs, so I'm pretty fit. There should be nothing stopping me from being a better physical player every year.

**JD:** Do you still feel like you're growing all the time as a player musically?

**CS:** I really do. I feel like I'm playing better than ever. I'll be playing in the studio and I'll go, "Drum solo—right now!" I'll solo off the top of my head, and it'll be way better than it was last year.

I'm anxious to put the songs together live, because we've been doing it in the studio for a couple of months, and we've only played these songs for a couple months before that. I think putting the songs together live is going to be a little more challenging than we think, but I'm ready for the challenge.



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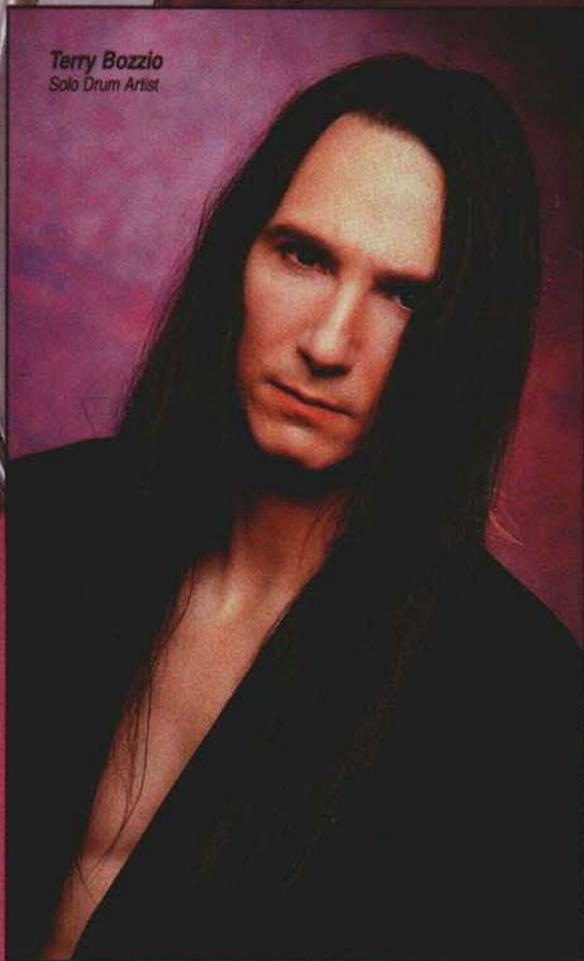


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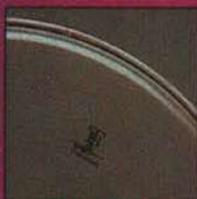
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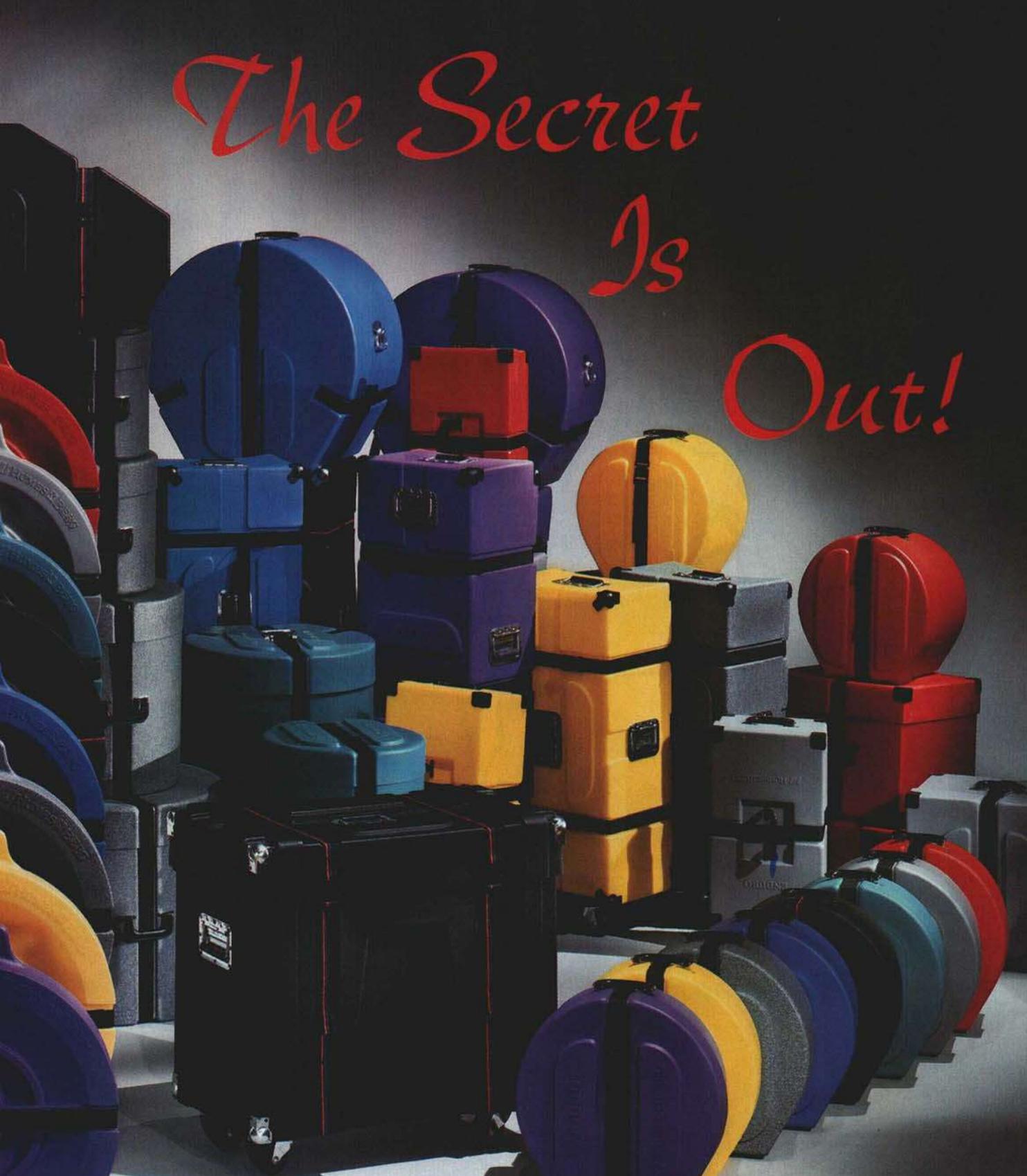
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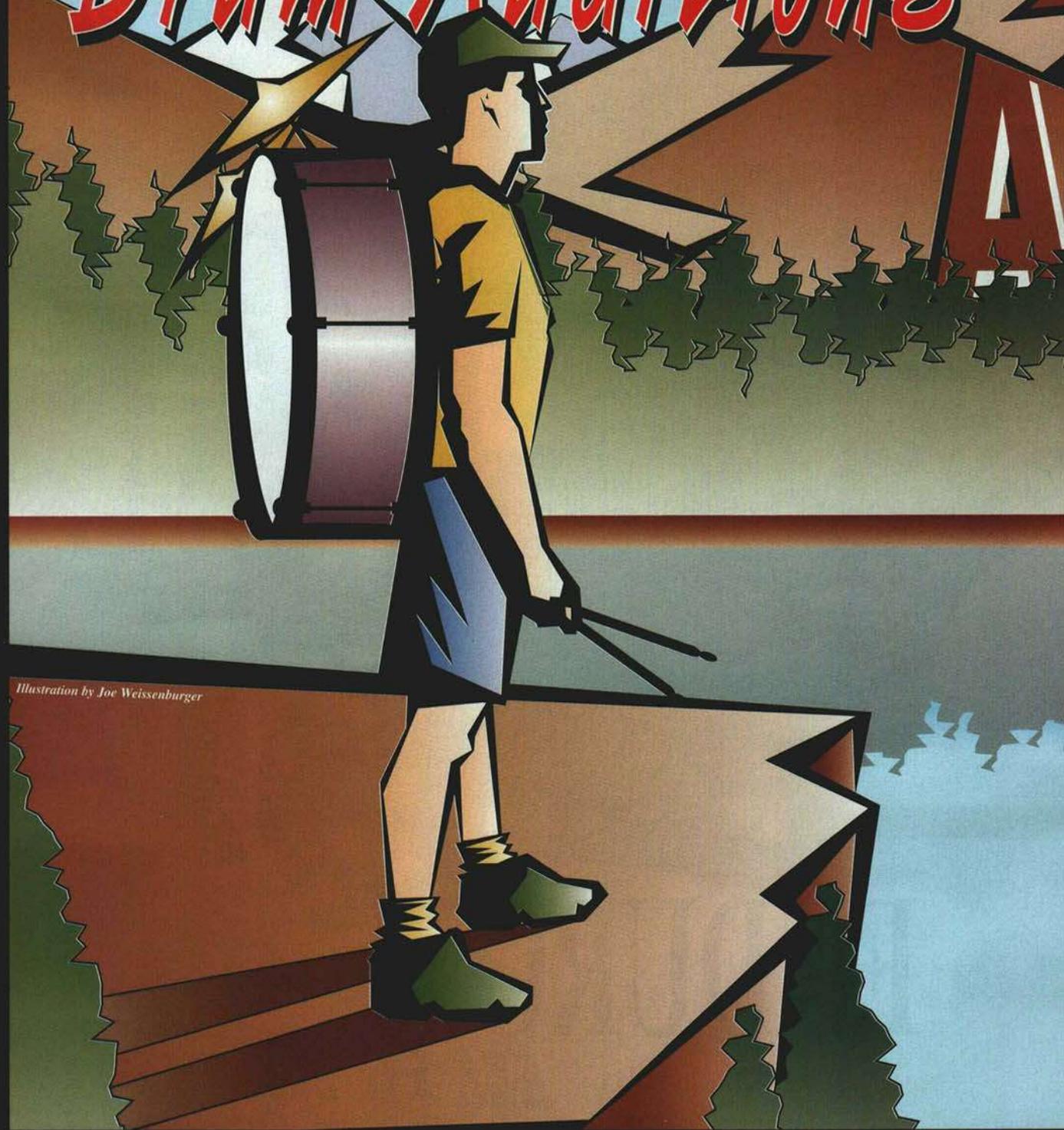


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# SURVIVING DRUM AUDITIONS



*Illustration by Joe Weissenburger*



by Robin Tolleson

*Some drummers break into a sweat at the mere thought of the big "A" word; many feel awed or just plain odd at the audition. They could think of a million things they'd rather fa doing than going through the tension and disrespect that is frequently part of the audition experience. Other drummers view the cattle call as a learning tool, a valuable gauge of their musical growth. They love the challenge and will leave one great gig to try to bag another. Either way, like it or not, the truth is that auditioning is a part of what we do.*

*Through the experiences of some very worthy drummers—Tim "Herb" Alexander, Tommy Igoe, David Rokeach, Doane Perry, Ndugu Chancler, Danny Gottlieb, and Rod Morgenstein—we'll share some tips to, first of all, help you get the audition, second, get through the process, and third, feel better about yourself after it's over. Remember, even the big names blow 'em sometimes.*

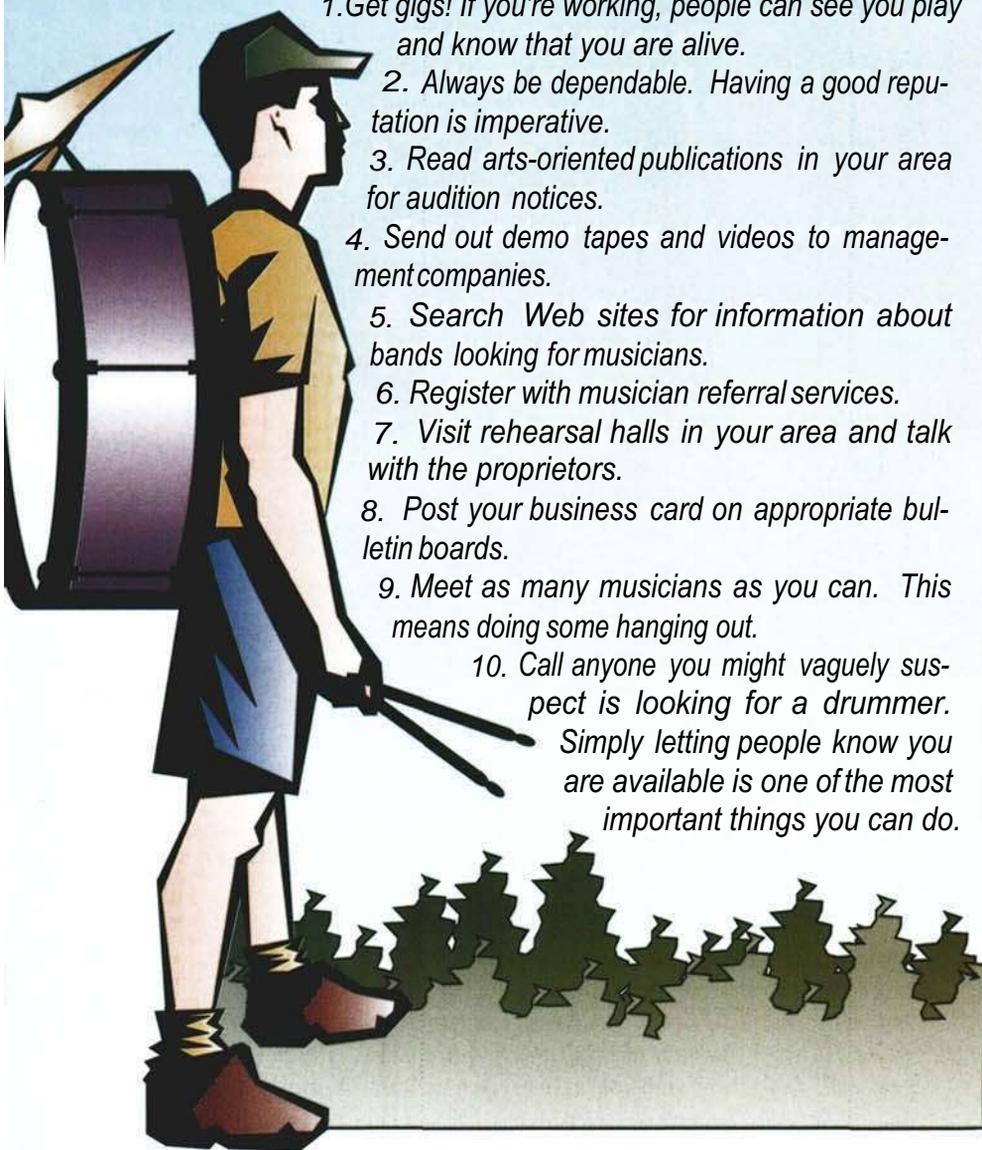
**T**im "Herb" Alexander got his first break in music by going on an audition. Among other things, his story proves that it's better to audition than do nothing at all. "At seventeen I had worked differ-

ent jobs around Phoenix and was *not* having a good time," Tim recalls. "My mom suggested I look in the *Yellow Pages* for recording studios to see if anybody needed a drummer. I was thinking, 'Yeah, sure.' But then I said, 'Okay.' The second studio I called gave me an audition. The only thing I could play was this song by Rush with lots of odd meters. It didn't show any kind of studio versatility, and they were like, 'Well...we don't know what we can do with that, but thanks for coming.' I didn't have any auditioning experience, and obviously they weren't too thrilled, but a guy in the next room there knew a club band called Major Lingo that was looking for a drummer."

Alexander made it to the Major Lingo audition the best he could. "I packed my drums in pillowcases and a couple of cardboard boxes, threw them on a Greyhound bus, and took the bus up to Flagstaff, three hours away. My girlfriend's dad picked me up in his pickup truck and drove me to Jerome, a ghost town in Arizona where the band lived. I showed up dragging these pillowcases and cardboard boxes, looking like I was living off the street. I set up and played, and they loved it. They auditioned other people later that week, but they wanted me."

Alexander got another break when a friend in the San Francisco Bay area tipped him that Primus was looking for a new drummer. "I had never heard of

# Tips On Getting Auditions



1. *Get gigs! If you're working, people can see you play and know that you are alive.*
2. *Always be dependable. Having a good reputation is imperative.*
3. *Read arts-oriented publications in your area for audition notices.*
4. *Send out demo tapes and videos to management companies.*
5. *Search Web sites for information about bands looking for musicians.*
6. *Register with musician referral services.*
7. *Visit rehearsal halls in your area and talk with the proprietors.*
8. *Post your business card on appropriate bulletin boards.*
9. *Meet as many musicians as you can. This means doing some hanging out.*
10. *Call anyone you might vaguely suspect is looking for a drummer. Simply letting people know you are available is one of the most important things you can do.*

Primus, but when I went to the audition we just jammed on a bunch of Rush songs and had a good time—we had all grown up on Rush. After my audition, Les [Claypool] told me that they were going to audition other drummers, but that he liked me. And they decided they wanted me.

"The drummer before me in Primus was Jay Lane, who comes from more of a funk background, so when I joined it turned into a heavier rock-funk thing. If a band is looking for a new drummer, they don't necessarily want you to copy the last drummer. If you play well, have good time, and are tasteful, people will like you. Don't try to

show off, because as soon as you blow a bunch of notes out, there's nothing left to do. If it feels and sounds good you're more likely to get it, no matter how many paradiddles you do and how fast you do them. Don't go in there all cocky. Be nice. That'll get you a lot further. No one cares how cool you are."

"Try to serve the music as best as you possibly can," agrees New York session drummer Tommy Igoe. "Definitely don't overplay. You want to do what's right and be a team player. Don't show off. If they ask you to play a ten-minute drum solo, then feel free to blow your chops all over

the place. There are funny stories about chops guys who have gone on pop auditions and ended up blowing fusion licks all over the top of these power ballads. And immediately it's, 'Next.'

"Art Garfunkel told me that one thing that

*"Most often you never know where things are going to lead, so you do five or ten things that seem like they're wasting your time. But if you don't do all of those things, the lucky break won't happen."*

**—Rod Morgenstein**

impressed him was that I didn't overplay or try to ram the time down his throat," Tommy continues. "And he was impressed with how professional I was with the equipment that I had to use. He said, 'You were the only guy that just set up, never said a word, and was ready to play in five minutes. That's a real professional.' I never gave it a second thought, but a good professional attitude can really impress people."

Igoe began answering audition ads at sixteen, just to get the chance to play. "I've learned something on even the worst auditions," he says. "When major pop acts are going to make a switch in the rhythm section, they'll listen to a whole mess of people. I hear about certain auditions, and I'll go and play if I'm in town. Even if you don't get the gig, you might meet some other musicians, and it's usually good experience."

David Rokeach prevailed in a 1991 cattle-call type audition for Ray Charles, a notoriously tough auditioner. "One drummer auditioning for Ray was a friend of the trumpet player, and he told me, 'Yeah, they paid my plane ticket.' He played first, and I could tell he was good, but he got real nervous. I was standing behind him watching the chart, and he was saying, 'Damn, I could read before I came here.' The more nervous he got, the more Ray picked up on it and started to lean on him. Ray likes to put pressure on and see how well you'll do. The more Ray leaned on him, the more

nervous the guy got, until I could tell he was totally frustrated. Then Ray left, and there were two or three more of us to play that day, and they taped our auditions for Ray. It worked out well, and I got a call from the bandleader the next day saying, 'Ray wants to play with you first.' I was nervous, but we got along musically and personally. And he said, 'That feels pretty good, doesn't it?'"

Doane Perry's audition for Jethro Tull was as successful as one can get, if fifteen years in the band is any indication. The story also contains many of the popular audition elements, such as luck, heavy shedding, quick thinking, bad equipment, pressure, intrigue, and some measure of social interaction.

Perry had been a Tull fan for years when a friend of his spotted an audition announcement Ian Anderson put in the *Village Voice*. Perry called a VP at Chrysalis, who told him to get a package together ASAP. "I took tracks from different records that demonstrated a variety of styles that I was able to cope with. They told me they had gotten about 500 tapes and were sending the last box to England." Anderson liked Doane's tape and tracked him down by phone at his great aunt and uncle's home on Long Island one Sunday afternoon. Two long phone calls later, Anderson asked if he could hear Doane play in person in London.

"I got on the plane feeling reasonably prepared with the music," the drummer recalls. "I brought a trap case with some of my cymbals and pedals, and a snare drum. I was expecting the rehearsal hall to be some unbelievable studio. It was actually quite big, but the drumset was very broken down. The drums were far from classic, with these

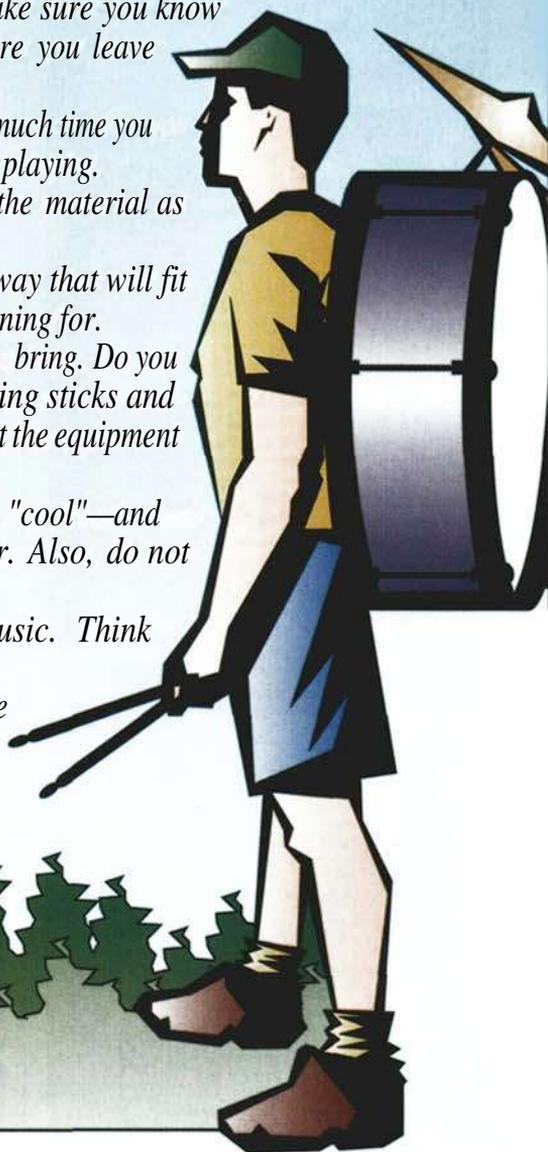
fairly dubious foot pedals, cymbals, and snare, but I just tried to keep everything from falling over and moving away. Unfortunately my trap case got held up in customs, so I just set it up the best I could.

"First we played the material that he had asked me to prepare. Then they threw some material at me that they were writing for the *Under Wraps* album. It was typically Tull, quite intricate with a lot of changes, and very unusual forms. So they gave me a

half hour with the tape while they went off and had tea. I wrote out a quick chart for myself where all the time signature changes were, where the form was changing, and what to do. I think that was a good thing, because they were able to see that I could come to grips pretty quickly with a complicated piece of music. It really helped to have a guide part. Then Ian said, 'How are you in general with odd times?' We played something in seven or nine, and that

## Tips for a Good Audition

1. Drive up in a van!
2. Be on time for the audition. Make sure you know exactly where the audition is before you leave your house.
3. Try to find out ahead of time how much time you will have and what music you will be playing.
4. Do your homework and learn the material as thoroughly as possible.
5. Be clean, and try to dress in a way that will fit with the type of band you're auditioning for.
6. Find out exactly what you need to bring. Do you need to bring drums? Always bring sticks and cymbals. Also, don't complain about the equipment provided.
7. Be friendly—don't try to be too "cool"—and make friends with the bass player. Also, do not badmouth other musicians.
8. Don't overplay. Serve the music. Think "time."
9. Don't underplay. You are there because somebody liked the way you played.
10. Keep a good attitude and be positive.

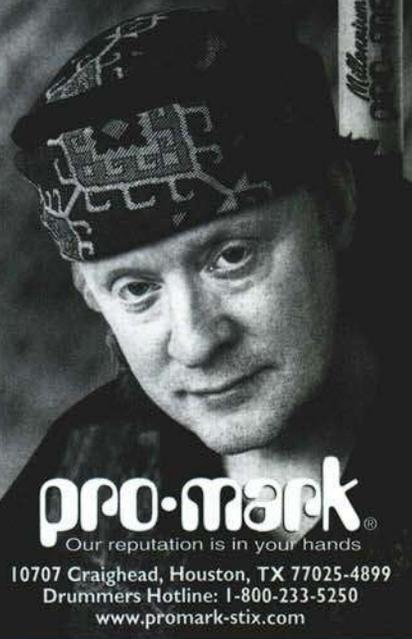


*"The drummer before me in Primus was Jay Lane, who comes from more of a funk background, so when I joined it turned into a heavier rock-funk thing. If a band is looking for a new drummer, they don't necessarily want you to copy the last drummer."*

—Tim "Herb" Alexander

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went okay. Then we did something where I had some sort of solo, and that seemed to go alright, although in auditions you always feel that you could have played better.

"I had a day to audition with them, to play a lot of different material. At that point Ian thought that I was a serious contender, and since I came from America, he was going to give me more than an hour to play with the band. I think he also recognized that I had a lot of enthusiasm for the music, that I really loved and knew it, more than having just learned it. [Early Tull drummer] Clive Bunker having been a very early influence on me, I remember really examining the parts closely, and I think Ian saw that I had an ability to keep the flavor of the original parts and convincingly play the parts, even if I changed the way they were played to a more comfortable way for me.

"To me that was crucial—getting or losing it on my own strength as a drummer and musician. I would have felt bad not getting the gig because I'd gone in and played just like Mark [Craney], Barrie [Barlow], or Clive. So I felt good about putting what I did forward, and thought that would work in the context of what

they were looking for."

The last part of Doane's day—not part of the audition, per se—was *very* significant. "They really wanted to see what kind of person I was," he recalls. "With the English, the social aspect of working in bands is as important as the musical aspect. Social interaction is part of what gives certain musicians that sympathetic approach to working with other people, and people love working with musicians who have those kinds of ears and an 'open' personality. So we got to this pub and they brought out a plate of what looked to me like cartoon food. They put it in front of me and said, 'You can do the honors.' There's this thing that looks like a black balloon that's tied on both ends, so I delicately sliced it open, and this stuff oozed out the top like lava. 'Don't worry, Doane,' Ian said, 'It's haggis, Scottish health food.' It's got oats and barley but also blood and guts of sheep, and the black thing is the sheep's stomach. I served it up and like a good sport I ate it, and found that it really didn't have a bad taste. I was back off to the US the next day, and a week later Ian called and said, 'Well, you've got the job.'"

Danny Gottlieb only recalls coming out on top of one audition, for Gary Burton's band in 1976. "That's because I was the only one who auditioned," he laughs. "I also auditioned for Horace Silver and for Brian Setzer of the Stray Cats, and I was one of the seventy-some-odd drummers who auditioned for Journey when they were looking to replace Steve Smith."

The Journey audition of 1986 remains one of the most fabled auditions in modern history. "No Offense to Journey, but I got the feeling that they didn't have a clue as to what they were looking for," Gottlieb says. "That made it difficult to make a decision, and therefore it put us auditionees in an uncomfortable position. It was almost like we were play toys for them, like, 'Let's try out seventy drummers.' To my ears, if you can't play with Vinnie Colaiuta, you're in big trouble—or with Omar Hakim, or Rod Morgenstein. I'm very good friends with Steve Smith, and I stayed at his house when I came out to do the audition. I was so out of it, I even told Steve Perry, 'If you need me, I'll be at Steve Smith's house,' not knowing that they had had a bitter split. And they all looked at me like, 'Are you crazy?'"

"My audition was very comfortable in



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terms of the sound. They had a big, beautiful drumset, and a sound guy. They gave me an hour to set up the drums before anybody was there, so I was able to get a great sound. To this day it was the best monitor mix that I've ever had, anywhere. I had spent two weeks learning the songs and knew most of Steve's fills and phrases. I was happy with the way I played. Any time you're really shedding some music, it's positive, even if it's just learning some new grooves and sounds. I was actually led to believe that I was heading towards getting that gig, especially when the phone call came to go out there for the second time. That second time, I played half of one tune, and Steve Perry stopped and said, 'I've heard enough. It sounds great to me.' And then they all left. I flew from New York to California to play one tune! At that time I was a couple days away from going on tour with John McLaughlin, and I even mentioned to him that I might get this other gig, which created some weird vibes from him.

"They're entitled to be as quirky and wacky as they want, but a proper audition would have been one day per person to really see if it would work," he concludes. "They didn't give it that much time."

Rod Morgenstein had his Journey experience too, and it was a case of too much preparation backfiring on him. "I had two days to learn eight Journey songs, and the drum part for 'Don't Stop Believin' is like a song in itself. I tip my hat to Steve Smith for composing that. I spent a long time on that song and was ready to nail it for those guys. As in a lot of auditions, you're under the gun, because the guys are all facing you and Steve Perry was ten feet away on the microphone, and I remember him saying, 'So Rod, what do you feel like starting with?' And I said, 'Let's start

with 'Don't Stop Believin.'" He said, 'Great.' So we played it through and I did a pretty good job of playing it like Steve Smith composed it. We finished it and Perry says, 'That was really good. Those are the right notes and all, but you know what? That was yesterday, and this is today. Let's count it off again, and you compose your own drum part.' Just like that. My brain just short-circuited. I couldn't believe it. Like, 'You're giving me three seconds to refigure this whole song?' I didn't say anything—you have to keep a smile on and just say, 'Great, okay, let's do it again.' So I played it really simple, just 2 and 4, and I was bumming all the way through it."

There it is. You work on a song until you know the drum part inside and out, and then the band wants something completely different. So is it really worth putting in the hours listening to tapes, talking to other musicians, investing the serious time to consider what the leader(s) might be looking for, when it may just go haywire anyway? Well, yes. "I have never really enjoyed auditioning, and I don't know if anybody does," Morgenstein says. "But if you're going to do it, be as prepared as you possibly can. Don't think that this is a forum to show off as a drummer for other drummers. You're being asked to be supportive for the vocalists in most situations."

And whether you like auditioning or not, chances are that "just doing it" will make you better at it. When Morgenstein hooked up with Kip Winger and Reb Beach several years after the Journey audition, he was a wiser drummer. "My background was with the Dixie Dregs and the Steve Morse band, but I tried to convince them that I grew up listening to Led Zeppelin and Jethro Tull, and

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felt like playing rock. I auditioned, and was careful sometimes to play just a real hard, simple, in-the-groove backbeat. Then I asked if they wanted me to do some crazier kind of stuff, and they said 'Yeah, go for it.' I think part of the reason that they invited me to join the band was to separate themselves from the tons of metal bands around that time, and they thought one way to do it was to have the drums step out and do stuff that is not the norm in that genre."

Preparation is still the key, agrees LA session drummer Ndugu Chancler. "Familiarize yourself with who you're auditioning for, the style of music, and the drummers who have played and recorded with that artist before you," says Ndugu. "Live with the material before going in. That helps you deal with the personalities and makes you comfortable and confident. If you don't think 100% that you're the one for the job, don't go. Don't use an audition as a gauge just to see where you are as a player. Use an audition to get the gig. Let them say 'no' because you don't look the part, but never based on playing. First cover the bases that have already been covered. When people call you, sometimes they'll tell you what they're looking for.

They liked the guy they had, but.... Those 'buts' are the voids you need to fill before you do your own thing. You must do your homework before you go to an audition—that's the bottom line."

One way of learning about what an artist likes is to ask current or past bandmembers. "Jeff Ballard was the drummer with Ray Charles before me, and he said to check out Count Basie and Sonny Payne. That was real helpful," recalls Dave Rokeach. "When I initially thought about the gig, I would listen to all Ray's vocal tunes, but he auditions you on the big band instrumentals that the band plays. I only played his vocal tunes *after* I got the gig. Ray is famous for really slow tempos, but we didn't audition any slow tempos. He'll audition to see if you've got the chops to play fast, and playing slow is something he feels he can teach you.

"If you can read and swing, then he throws the street stuff at you. He'll say, 'Okay, the first time that "& of two" accent happens, play that with your snare drum, and the second time I want to hear it with the bass drum.' After all the reading stuff, he might sing a rhythm and have you pick it up. He'll do that on the gig sometimes, start playing something and turn around and expect you to get it with no chart or previous warning—just pick stuff up by ear."

There will certainly be surprises like that during auditions, as well as times when you won't have a chance to consult bandmembers or sit down with some tapes. So Tommy Igoe takes a different approach to preparation. "My goal is to keep my skills up all the time, and just go and play," he says. "Very rarely do you get a chance to know the music beforehand."

Many artists would rather keep auditions limited to drummers they hear about from a bandmember or friend than take out ads, sift through five hundred cassettes, and listen to fifty drummers play. And some artists prefer to offer gigs to well-regarded drummers as a sort of paid audition. Manhattan Transfer auditioned Danny Gottlieb by flying him to Las Vegas for a week of gigs. "They weren't committing to other dates until after I did the week in Vegas. That's a considerate way to try you out, to give you a week and see how it works, see if it blends. And they were considerate people. If there was anything that they wanted from the drums, instead of freaking out or being cryptic, they were

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very direct."

Bluesman Charlie Musselwhite invited Dave Rokeach out on tour before ever playing with him. "That's the way he auditions, 'cause he hardly ever rehearses," says Rokeach. "What is important for him is not just your playing, but how you get along with everybody in the van. You had to put the adrenaline thing aside and just go do the gig. A lot of auditions are about the moment, getting up for it right then. This wasn't about that."

So how can you be "in the loop" and hear about the auditions and learn about the openings when they appear? Getting inside may take a lot of work, but start by getting your name in all the local musicians' referral services you can find. "A manager could call a service like Radio Registry in New York and ask for different drummers' names to line up auditions," says Gottlieb. "But chances are that someone in the band will recommend somebody they know by reputation and want to try out. If you're in a small town and haven't found the band that you want to play with, you've got to move on if it's in your heart to do it. Go to a bigger talent pool, whether it's at a college, in a city, or wherever. The more people you know, the more possibilities that someone's going to recommend you for something."

"A lot of it is being in a place where those things happen," agrees Ndugu. "Let's get real. There aren't going to be that many auditions coming through Boise, Idaho, so you may hear about things late. I know guys who walk in and out of the rehearsal studios periodically just to get a feel for what's going on. A lot of things go on that no one knows about except those that are right there, and they keep it kind of secretive and clique-ish."

"The music business is a horror for people who want to be on the inside," laughs Morgenstein. "How do you get on the inside? Well, you gotta be on the inside. For most people, it's just getting a lucky break and being prepared for the moment when it happens. Most often you never know where things are going to lead, so you do five or ten things that seem like they're wasting your time. But if you didn't do all of those things the lucky break wouldn't happen."

Morgenstein has some practical advice for audition hunters. "Befriend people who are on the inside," he says. "Hang out in the clubs where musicians do jam sessions. Circulate. Put together a videotape of yourself playing a song or two and soloing for a few seconds, and send it to every management company in the country. Most often no one's looking for a drummer, but obviously at some point *everyone's* looking for a drummer. Your package might end up on the desk at some management company right around the time that some drummer died, is having drug problems, quit, or was fired. It's a one-in-a-million chance, but if you don't do it, now you have a zero-in-a-million chance. These creative things can help, and also make you feel better about yourself. You have to be a self-promoter. Maybe there's a way of getting your name out there using the Internet. I don't know if having your own Web site would help, but surfing around onto different Web sites could lead you somewhere."

Igoe suggests you seriously check out whatever arts-oriented paper there is in your community for ads put in by management companies or aspiring bands. "After you start reading the ads you can weed out the bad ones by the language they use," he says.

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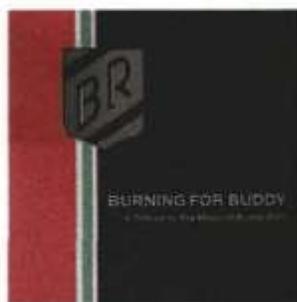
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Some auditions may hinge on the type of vehicle you own. Roll up in a van, and in many "garage band" situations the gig is yours. And there are other factors that can play as strong a part in the auditioner's final decision as your playing. "You can completely nail it and still not get the gig," says Igoe. "I'm 6'5", and once they didn't want a guy that tall in the band. When you go for some pop gigs they have publicity people there, and they're thinking about anything but the music. Maybe they didn't like your shirt, or the guitar player has a cousin that they want to use. And if you walk in after they've listened to a bunch of players, a lot of times the other musicians are beat and not playing their best. They're getting a little slack, and the artist who you're auditioning for is getting pissed because the music is not tight anymore. It makes your audition suck, because there's no way you're going to be able to overcome that."

"A few years ago when heavy metal was going strong, image was just as much a part of it as the ability to play," says Morgenstein, recalling an audition he did for Billy Idol. "I walked in wearing a pair of jeans and a music store T-shirt, and the decision was already made. There's Steve Stevens in his stage clothes with his hair three feet in every direction, and there's Billy Idol looking like he's ready to concertize. He's got the sneer on and his hair is greased up. I was not for this band because I did not fit in. I looked like some kind of jazzier. The look, and living the image, was a very big part. I thought that audition went pretty well musically. I hadn't gone through enough of a rock experience of just laying things down hard and simple in the pocket at that time, so maybe I'm just making myself feel better, but in my heart I do feel like the way I looked had a major part in why I didn't get the gig."

"A good audition is where you have a lot of time to interact with people," says Gottlieb, "where the music is being taken

seriously, where you're given a chance to do what you can do, and someone is listening to you for a specific musical reason. And there's usually more to it than just the drumming. Sometimes it can be the appearance, the drummer's presentation. Knowing that you're going to be cooped up in a van for a year, you want to find somebody whose personal habits you agree with. But a lot of times it's like a cattle call, where people are getting ten minutes apiece to play three songs with the band, and then move on. That always seems very bizarre to me.

"Brian Setzer was looking for a drummer when he left the Stray Cats. I went and played and thought I killed it, and they just thought I was a jazz guy, and really didn't even have any use for it," Gottlieb says. "I was a little bit dismayed that I didn't get that gig. Not that I was the perfect drummer for it—but what I realized is that you just have to keep plugging away. You come across people that don't call you back or leave you hanging or lead you to believe that you have a gig when you don't, and it's very upsetting. I think the way to combat it is to try to be good communicators ourselves so that we don't treat people that way, because it really isn't great."

Tommy Igoe cautions drummers not to take it personally if they don't "win" an audition. There are too many other factors involved beyond your control. "You just try to keep a good attitude and move on. The worst thing you could do is go around like, 'Oh, man, I got ripped, I could toast that guy.' There's nothing less powerful in the world of music than opening your mouth and shooting it off. Just go out there and show it with your sticks."

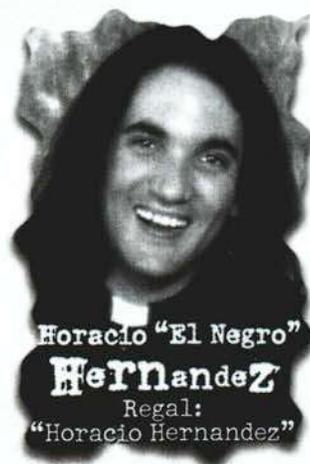
"Don't be discouraged by the daunting prospect of a small or big audition, or feel like, 'Oh, I couldn't get that gig. I'm not good enough,'" says Doane Perry. "I was aware at the time of the Jethro Tull audition that there were better-known drummers that they could have gotten to do the job, and here I was, 6,000 miles away. The odds of me getting that gig were pretty remote, but it was a combination of right time, right place, being prepared—all of these things. What's important is that you feel you have something to offer. Why *shouldn't* you be the one?"

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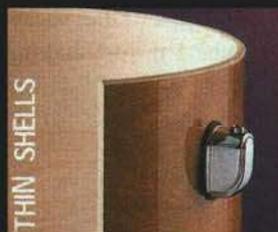
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# Highlights Of MODERN DRUMMER'S 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary FESTIVAL WEEKEND

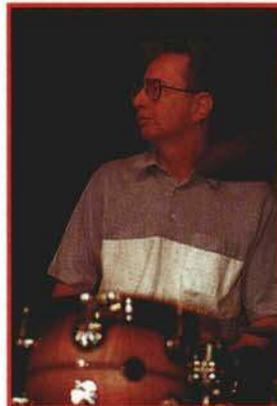
## Percussion Originators Ensemble



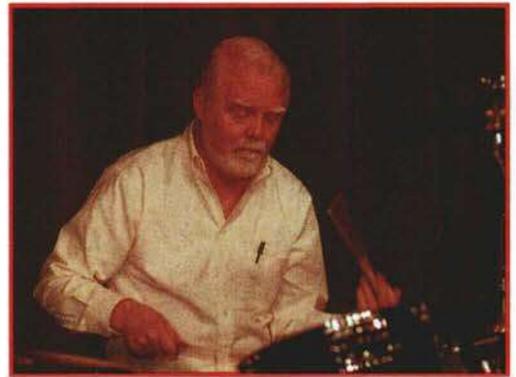
Ron Spagnardi



Herb Brochstein



Don Lombardi



Roy Burns

**M**odern Drummers 10th Anniversary Festival Weekend—held on Saturday, May 17 and Sunday, May 18, 1997—surpassed all previous Festivals in the level of enthusiasm and excitement it produced. For the tenth time, Montclair State University in Upper Montclair, New Jersey saw travelers from across the US and as far away as Argentina, Finland, and South Africa gather together to enjoy the educational value, inspiration, and camaraderie of this singular drumming event.

The show got off to a rousing start with the performance of the **Percussion Originators Ensemble**. This group—brought together expressly for the Festival—featured names well-known within the percussion industry, but not necessarily as performers. Drum Workshop president **Don Lombardi**, Pro-Mark founder **Herb Brochstein**, Aquarian president **Roy Burns**, Boston Symphony Orchestra timpanist (and drumstick manufacturer) **Vic Firth**, and *MD* editor/publisher **Ron Spagnardi** combined their talents in a once-in-a-lifetime drumming display that convinced the audience that industry leaders can be *players*, too!



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# Virgil Donati

**Virgil Donati** astounded the audience with his combination of blistering chops and musical creativity. Using printed examples previously distributed to the audience as a study guide, Virgil

explained and demonstrated his use of double strokes within his uncanny double bass technique. He also utilized a drumkit set up with his back to the audience to demonstrate his amazing crossover hand stylings.

Although Virgil's name wasn't known to every audience member at the start of his performance, he had made it well-nigh unforgettable by the time he concluded.



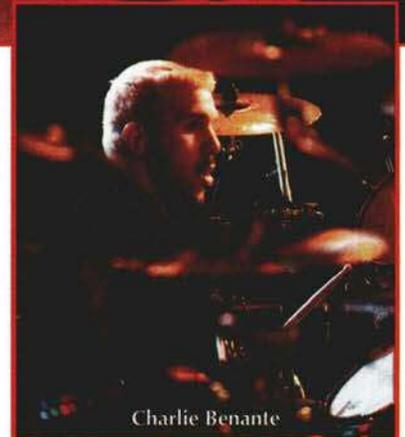
Virgil's performance was sponsored by **Premier Drums** and **Vater Percussion**.

# John Tempesta

**John Tempesta** impressed Festival-goers with his ability to play creative grooves and solo patterns over highly involved loops and recorded patterns—a key element of his work with White

Zombie. John also proved himself an imaginative and technically proficient soloist. And when surprise guest **Charlie Benante** came on stage for a double-drumset finale with John, the energy kicked up

even higher. The two traded licks, played duet patterns, and finally built to a thunderous conclusion that left the Festival audience on its feet and cheering.



John's performance was presented by **Tama Drums**.

# Steve Gadd and Giovanni Hidalgo

**S**teve Gadd and Giovanni Hidalgo came on stage to a standing ovation—a testimony to the reputations that preceded both of these percussion giants. In yet another historic performance (the two had never even met prior to agreeing to perform at the Festival),

Steve and Giovanni wove a tapestry of rhythms, sounds, and dynamic levels into a seamless performance—two players with but a single purpose. Notable moments included Steve's performance on conga drums, Giovanni's unique "rudimental" stylings on his own

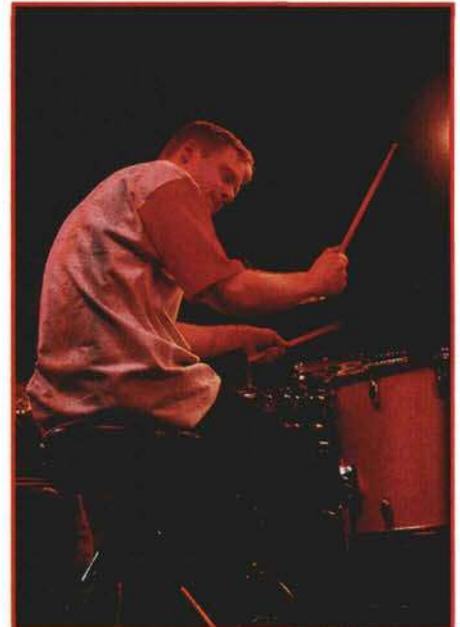
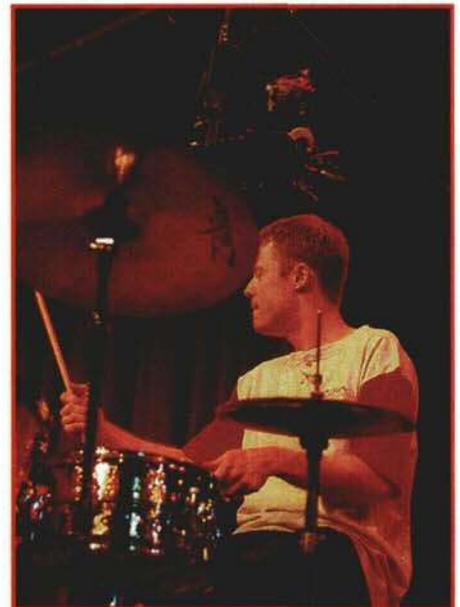
congas, and both players sitting at the edge of the stage playing "body percussion." The sheer joy displayed by these two gentlemen at the chance to work together was mirrored by the Festival audience's joy at being present for this unprecedented percussion event.



Steve and Giovanni appeared through the courtesy of Audix Microphones, DCI Music Video / Warner Bros. Publications, LP Music Group, Vic Firth Drumsticks, and Yamaha Drums.

# Bill Stewart And His Band

Saturday's show came to a tasteful conclusion with a performance by one of contemporary jazz drumming's leading lights, **Bill Stewart** (along with *B3* organ virtuoso Larry Goldings and guitarist Peter Bernstein). After a brief introduction, Bill quickly demonstrated why he has caused such a buzz among drummers—and become so popular with many of jazz's leading artists. In a set that offered everything from cool bop to funky swing, Bill blended creativity and musicality with his own inimitable style around the kit. When the group concluded its expressive set, the audience rose to display their admiration and respect for this young drumming star.



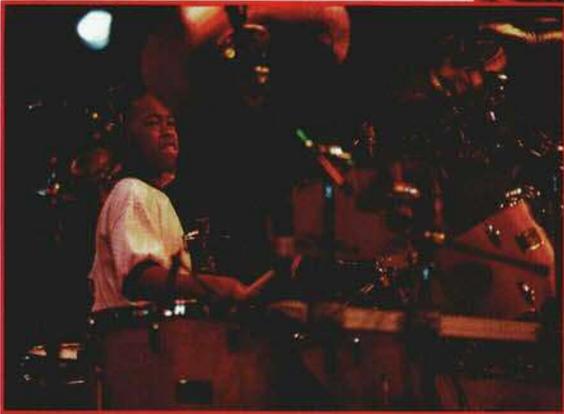
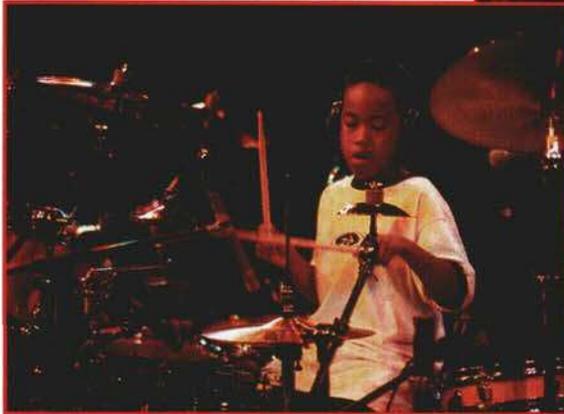
Bill and his band were sponsored by **Zildjian Cymbals and Drumsticks.**

# Tony Royster Jr.

Sunday's show opened with a view of the future: twelve-year-old drumming sensation **Tony Royster Jr.** Barely visible behind his kit, Tony nonetheless demonstrated a technical facility and a musical imagination that belied both his size

and his age. Following an opening segment played to a high-energy fusion track, Tony performed an impressive drum solo dedicated to the memory of Tony Williams. Then, after confidently fielding questions, Tony concluded by

drumming to another intense recorded track. The phenomenal youngster's performance earned him three standing ovations from the genuinely awestruck Festival audience.



Tony's presentation was sponsored by **Pearl Drums, Vic Firth Drumsticks, and Zildjian Cymbals.**

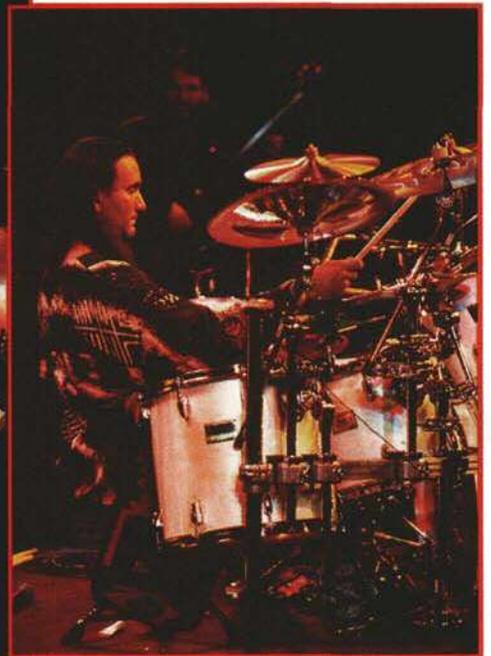
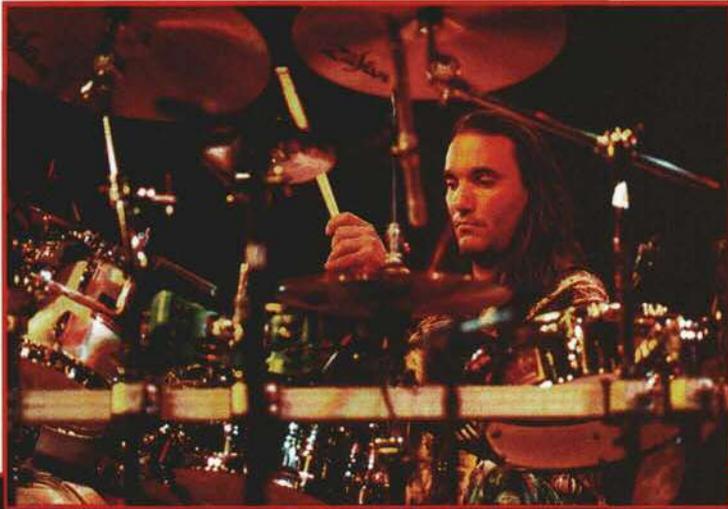
# Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez

**H**oracio "El Negro" Hernandez greeted the Festival audience by saying, "I must tell you about the last fifteen hours of my life." He then explained how he had played a gig with Santana the night before—in Venice, Italy—then flew from Venice to Paris, caught the Concord to JFK, and had come directly to the

Festival. There he was to make his first-ever drum video, "while playing at the greatest drumming show in the world!"

Horacio's enthusiasm was matched only by his incredible energy on the drumkit. Performing both alone and with guest artist John Patitucci on bass, Horacio explained and demonstrated his

unique rhythmic concepts. He also used a pedal-operated cowbell to establish clave patterns, which he then soloed over on the drumkit. Horacio's amazing ability to sound like an entire drum-and-percussion section at one time prompted one onlooker to ask, "Who else have you got up there with you?"



Horacio appeared through the courtesy of **Regal Tip Drumsticks**.

# Paul Wertico

Unquestionable originality—and a lively sense of humor—characterized the performance of **Paul Wertico**. Stressing that drumming should have no boundaries, Paul performed a highly varied set: playing the drums with

traditional sticks and with the Pro-Mark plastic *Tubz* devices that he designed, playing with a bedsheet over the drums, utilizing a variety of esoteric percussion instruments, and getting an amazing array of sounds from an uncharacteristically (for

him) minimal cymbal setup. Paul's genuine love of the drums and his dedication to musical creativity were readily apparent, and were rewarded with a standing ovation by the appreciative audience.



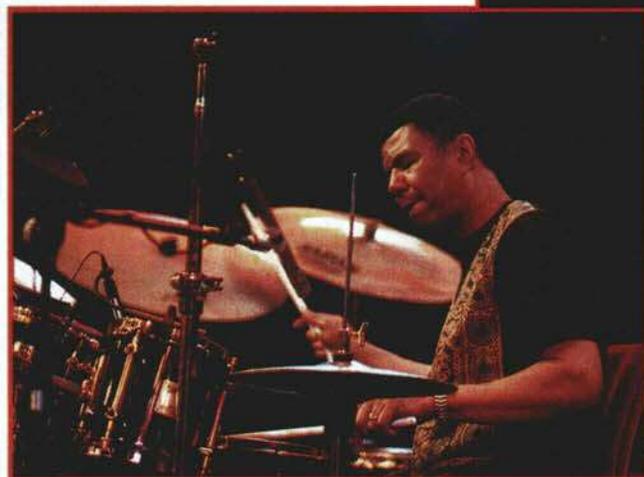
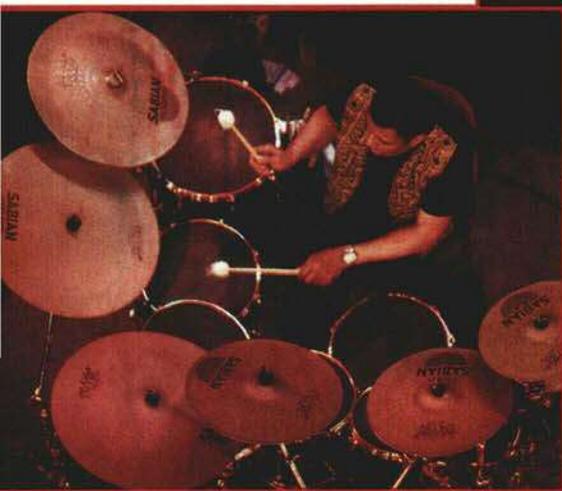
Paul was presented by **Drum Workshop and Paiste Cymbals**.

# Jack DeJohnette

Both contemporary and "classic" jazz drumming were well-represented in the person of **Jack DeJohnette**. Playing first on his familiar large kit, and then on Sonor's new, diminutive *Jungle* kit,

Jack amply demonstrated why he is regarded as one of the most *musical* drummers of all time. Using sticks, mallets, and brushes, Jack transcended mere soloing on the drums, and instead presented drumming

*compositions*. His use of the melodic elements of the kit, combined with his impressive technique, left the Festival audience on its feet in a demonstration of admiration and respect.



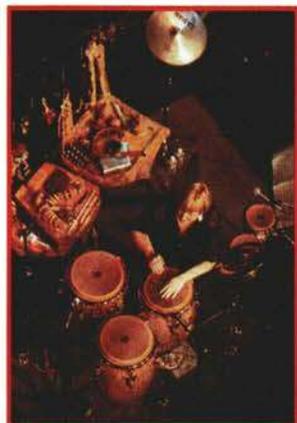
Jack's performance was sponsored by **Sonor Drums**.

# Steve Ferrone And Musical Guests

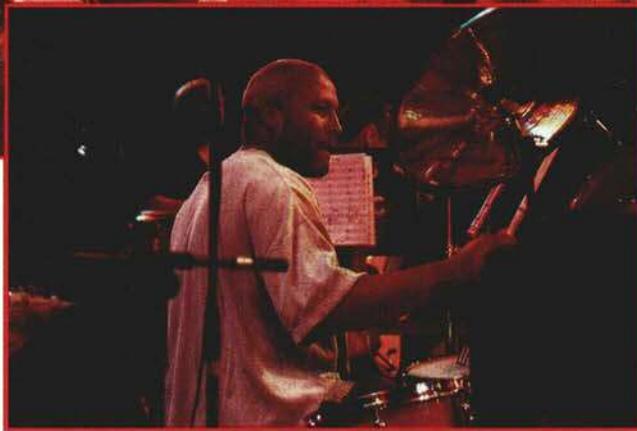
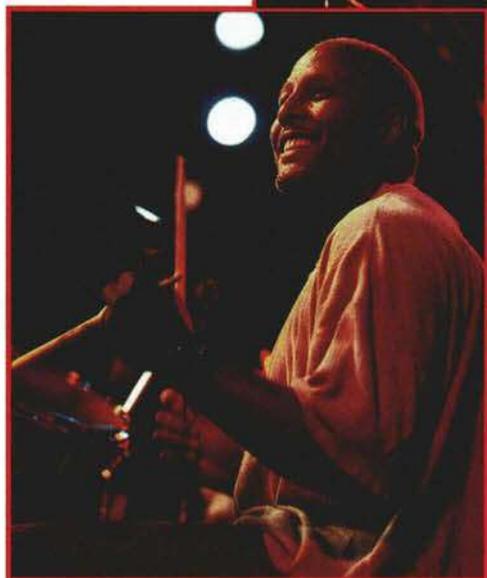
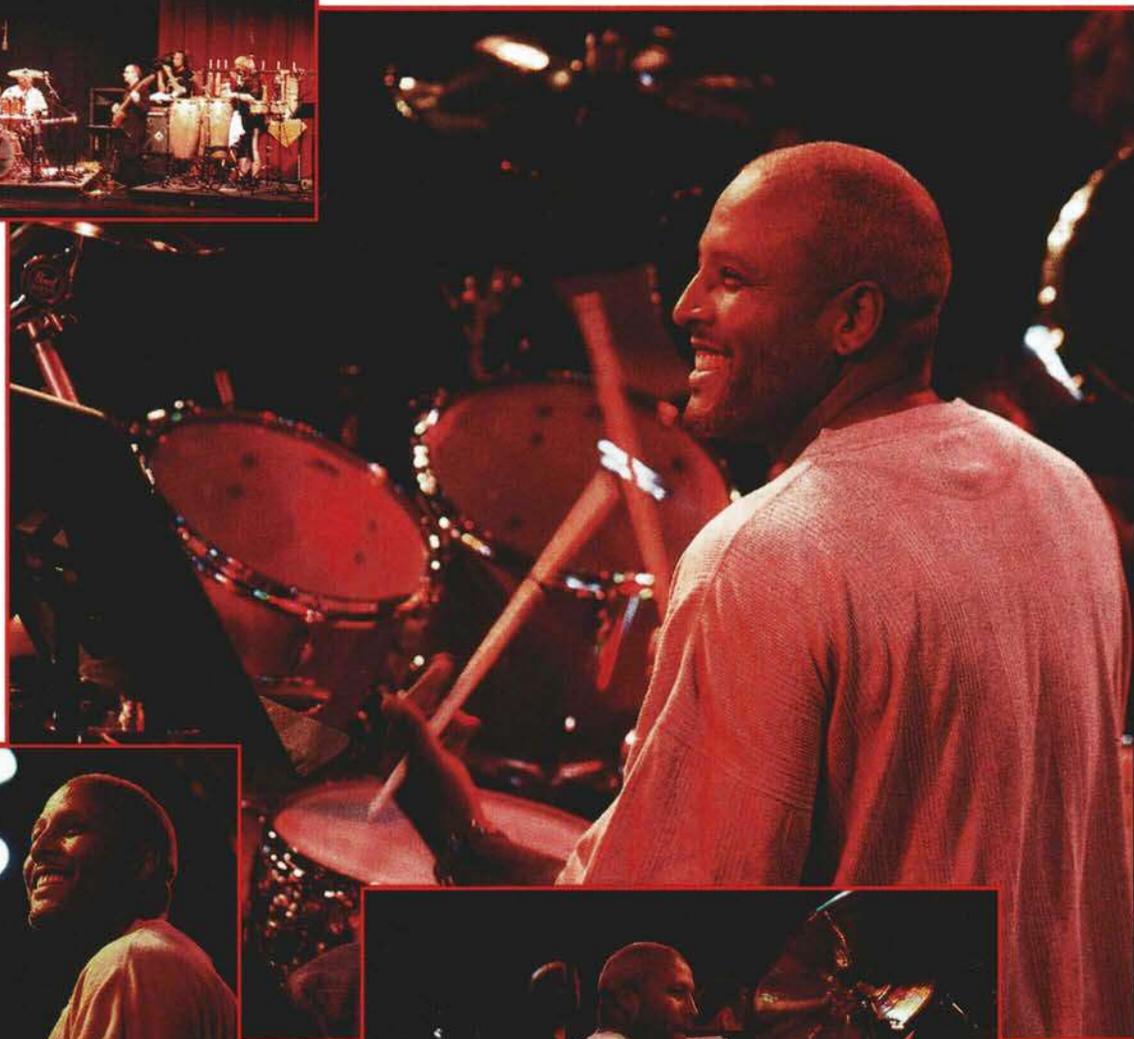
The Festival concluded with a stunning performance by **Steve Ferrone and Musical Guests**. In addition to its leader, the group featured a line-up of stellar studio artists including keyboardist David Garfield, bassist Lincoln Goines, guitarist Jeff Golub, and percussion-

ist Carol Steele. From the moment the band kicked off, the Festival audience was comfortably wrapped in the solid feel that Steve is famous for. Eschewing "drumistics" for a demonstration of funky grooves and creative timekeeping, Steve nonetheless impressed the audience

with his ability to play just the right fill or pattern for each tune. Some lively percussive interplay with Carol Steele added yet another element of fun to the set, helping to bring the entire Festival Weekend to a rousing conclusion.



Carol Steele



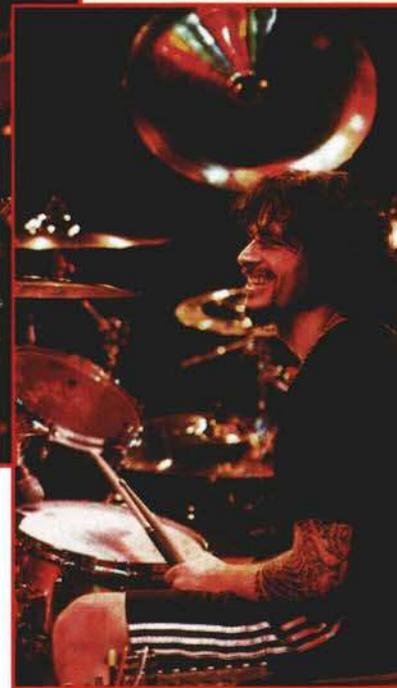
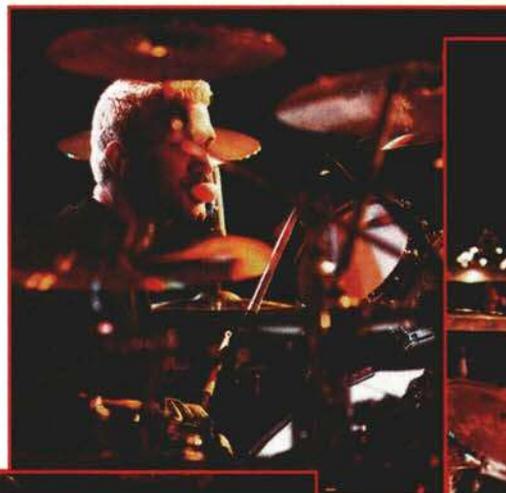
Steve and his Musical Guests were sponsored by **Sabian Cymbals, Pearl Drums, and Pro-Mark Drumsticks.**

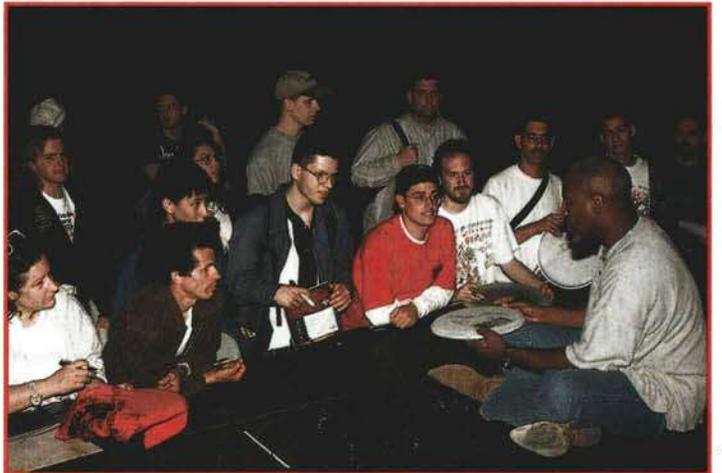
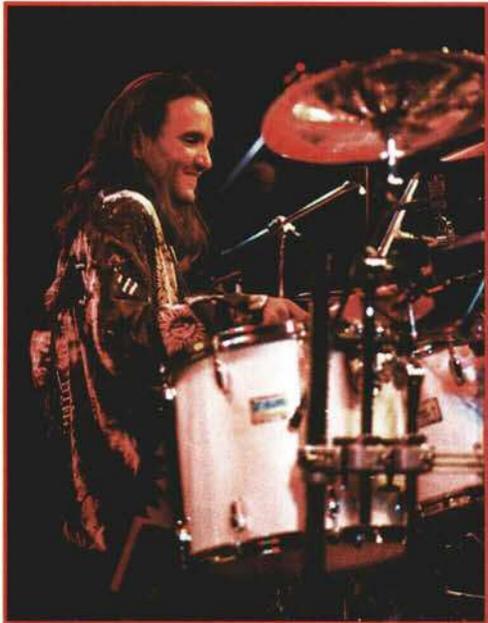
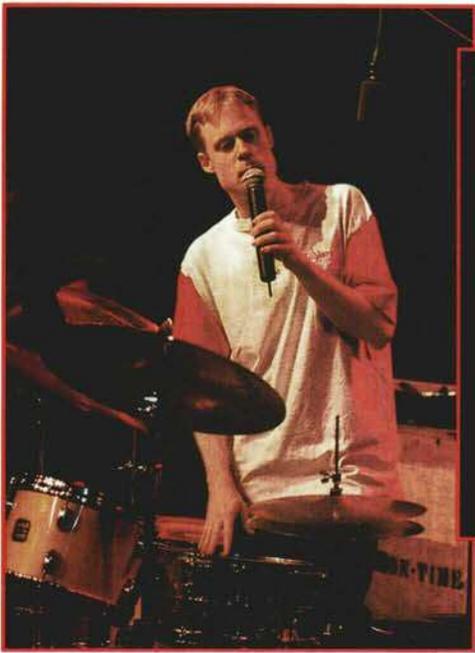
# ...And More Highlights

Over the course of the Festival, audience members were given the opportunity to win thousands of dollars' worth of door prizes, including drums, cymbals, hardware, microphones, videos, and a wide variety of accessory items. *MD* also continued its tradition of recognizing drummers who traveled the farthest distances to reach the Festival by presenting them with "Duron Johnson Commemorative Long-Distance Traveler Awards" (named in honor of the Anchorage, Alaska drummer who has never missed a Festival). And on Saturday *MD* was honored to be able to present Festival alumnus Mike Portnoy with a plaque commemorating his 1997 Readers Poll win as best progressive rock drummer.

Many of the Festival performers—as well as a host of visiting drum stars including Steve Smith, Tim Alexander, Mike Portnoy, Will Calhoun, Joe Morello, Adam Nussbaum, Cindy Blackman, Ed Thigpen, Andrew Cyrille, and Jojo Mayer—spent time with the audience signing autographs, offering tips, and sharing the good feelings that are always a part of this annual get-together of the drumming community.

In special recognition of the Festival's tenth anniversary, this year's event was videotaped by DCI Music Video. A "highlights" video will be released shortly, and additional videos of selected performances are also planned. (Watch for an announcement elsewhere in this issue.)

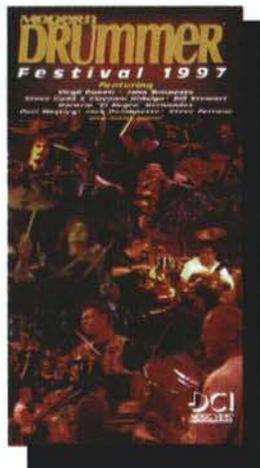




# MD's 10th Anniversary

# Festival Weekend...

In commemoration of Modern Drummer's 10th Anniversary Festival, DCI Music Video recorded the entire weekend of historic performances on video. If you were lucky enough to have been there, this six-tape series will serve as a great memento. If not, then these tapes will give you the feeling of having been there yourself!



## *MD Festival Weekend '97 video:*

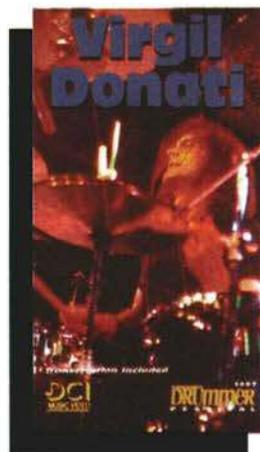
Excerpts of each great clinic and performance, plus backstage footage, interviews, and more! Artists include:

- The Percussion Originators Ensemble
- Virgil Donati
- John Tempesta
- Steve Gadd and Giovanni Hidalgo
- Bill Stewart and his band
- Tony Royster Jr.
- Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez with John Patitucci
- Paul Wertico
- Jack DeJohnette
- Steve Ferrone and musical guests

Running time: 95 minutes

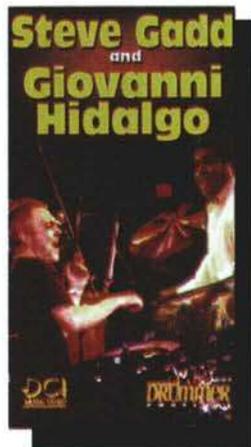
## *Virgil Donati:*

The complete clinic performance of this fiery double bass virtuoso.  
Running time: 55 minutes

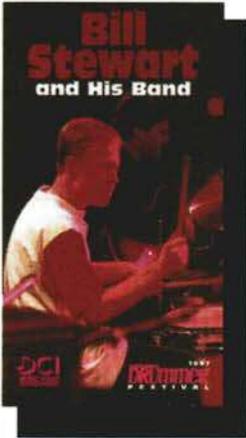


## *Steve Gadd and Giovanni Hidalgo:*

Steve and Giovanni performed together for the very first time at the 10th Anniversary MD Festival. This video features their historic performance plus fascinating footage from their three-day rehearsal and preparation.  
Running time: over 95 minutes



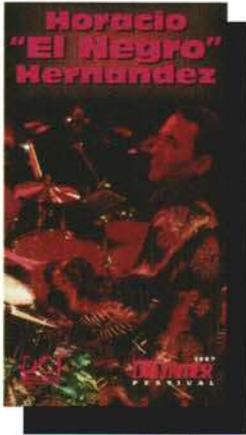
# Now On Video



## Bill Stewart and his Band:

A beautiful performance by one of today's most creative jazz drummers, with Larry Goldings on organ and Peter Bernstein on guitar.

Running time: 70 minutes



## Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez:

A clinic by Santana's drummer and a master of Afro-Cuban styles, featuring the great bassist John Patitucci.

Running time: 45 minutes



## Steve Ferrone with Musical Guests:

An incredible performance by one of the funkier drummers in the world. Also features David Garfield on keyboards, Carol Steele on percussion, Jeff Golub on guitar, and Lincoln Goines on bass.

Running time: 58 minutes

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	Steve Ferrone with Musical Guests	\$29.95	

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# Progressive Independence

## Part 3: Snare Drum And Bass Drum

by Ron Spagnardi

In Parts 1 and 2 of this series we focused on ways to improve your jazz-time coordination, first by concentrating on the snare drum and then the bass drum. This month we'll combine snare drum and bass drum independence patterns.

### Quarter-Note Patterns

We begin here with basic quarter-note snare and bass drum combination exercises. Practice each exercise slowly and methodically, and do not move on to the next exercise until the previous one has been mastered.

### 8th-Note Patterns

The following examples use snare drum and bass drum 8th-note combinations. Again, it's essential to phrase all 8th notes with a jazz conception. By this point both the ride cymbal and hi-hat parts should be functioning on their own with little or no conscious thought involved. If you're still having problems, go back and review the material in Parts 1 and 2.

## Triplet Patterns

The one-bar triplet independence exercises in this section have the snare and bass drum falling on various notes of the triplet. Alternating triplet patterns between snare drum and bass drum can result in some dynamic polyrhythmic effects. Repeat each exercise as many times as needed until you've achieved a smooth, natural flow.

Eight musical exercises for triplet patterns, arranged in two rows of four. Each exercise consists of a snare drum staff and a bass drum staff. The snare drum staff shows a triplet of eighth notes on a specific beat, while the bass drum staff shows a triplet of eighth notes on a different beat. The exercises alternate between snare and bass drum triplets across the two rows.

## Triplet Partial

Triplet partials alternating between snare drum and bass drum can present a real coordination challenge. Take these exercises very slowly at first, and do not move on to the next exercise until the previous one has been mastered.

Eight musical exercises for triplet partials, arranged in two rows of four. Each exercise consists of a snare drum staff and a bass drum staff. The snare drum staff shows a triplet of eighth notes on a specific beat, while the bass drum staff shows a triplet of eighth notes on a different beat. The exercises alternate between snare and bass drum triplets across the two rows.

## Summary Exercise

Summary exercise consisting of two rows of musical notation. The first row is labeled '1' and the second row is labeled '5'. Each row contains four measures of music, alternating between snare drum and bass drum triplets. The snare drum staff shows a triplet of eighth notes on a specific beat, while the bass drum staff shows a triplet of eighth notes on a different beat.

This article was excerpted from Ron Spagnardi's new book, *Progressive Independence* (© Copyright 1997, Modern Drummer Publications). The book contains many more exercises and tips for developing your coordination skills.



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# Ostinatos With Fill-Ins

by Joe Morello

Transcribed by Marvin Burock

The following exercise involves playing an ostinato with one hand while filling in with the other hand. This exercise is excellent for developing the arms and wrists as well as for developing good accent control.

You should begin by playing the ostinato with the left hand while filling in with the right. Each example should be repeated twenty times. Once you've become proficient at playing the exercise this way, try playing the ostinato with the right hand while

filling in with the left.

Eventually you should try playing the ostinato with the accent on the last note of each triplet, and, if you're really ambitious, try playing the ostinato with the accent on the middle note of each triplet. Playing the exercise this way is quite difficult, so don't get discouraged if you have trouble at first.

As always, start out slowly and gradually work up the tempo. Be sure to keep your arms and wrists relaxed at all times.

1

LRL L

2

LRLRL L

3

LRLRLRL L

4

LRLRLRLRL L

5

LRLRLRLRLRL L

6

LRLRLRLRLRLRL L

7

LRLRLRLRLRLRLRL L



# Chad Sexton: "Transistor"

Transcribed by Chad Sexton

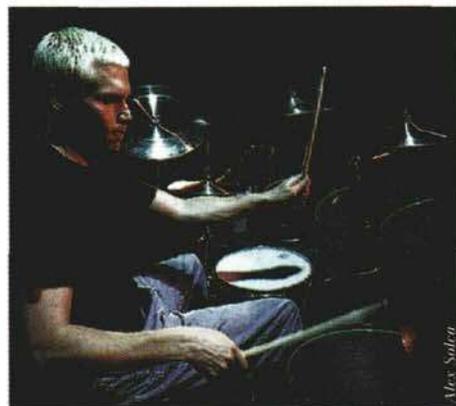
**MUSIC KEY**

Open	O	CC
H.H.	X	X
S.D.	(S)	(S)
F.T.	(F)	(F)
B.D.	(B)	(B)
	Ghost Note	

When Chad Sexton was asked to write a few musical examples (to accompany his cover story) that would best showcase his playing style with 311, he went one step further: Chad transcribed his entire performance on the title track of the band's new release, *Transistor*.

Sexton picked a good tune to transcribe; "Transistor" features a lot of Chad's best drumming abilities—out-of-the-ordinary patterns, excellent (and fast) bass drum technique, accurate performances, and beefy, phat grooves!

Chad wanted to point out three things about the chart. First, he varies how tightly he holds the hi-hat cymbals together to change the timbre of the different sections of the tune. Second, there's a tempo and feel change at letter D to watch for. Third, Chad rides on his crash cymbal at letter E to create a powerful and washy effect.



♩ = 76

**B**

**C**

**D**

$\bullet = 127$

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff shows a series of eighth-note triplets, some with accents and some with a circled 'o' above them. The middle staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), followed by a series of eighth-note triplets and a repeat sign. The bottom staff continues with eighth-note triplets and a final triplet with an accent mark.



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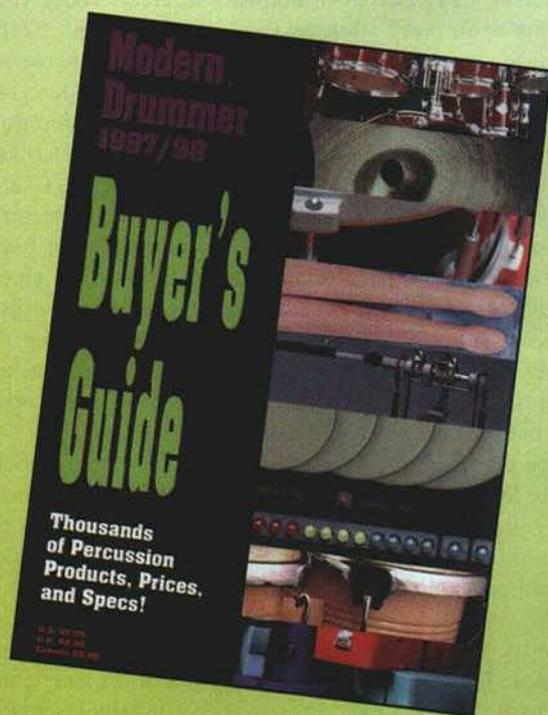
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# Single-Note Ghosting

by Brian Stephens



**F**unk, or more commonly, funky, is a term originally used to describe something that smells bad. It has been said that Earl Palmer, "The World's Most Recorded Drummer," was the first to use the word as an adjective in regards to music. Earl used it to characterize the inflection that a drummer, or any musician for that matter, can place upon a groove to create added feel. New Orleans drummers such as Palmer and Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste, among others, have become famous for harnessing this ability for the purpose of propelling the groove of a tune to higher heights and deeper depths. This legacy has trickled down the bloodline and through to other drumming greats such as Clyde Stubblefield, Steve Gadd, Herman Ernest, and Dennis Chambers.

In my years as both drum educator and musical spectator, I have witnessed many misconceived demonstrations of the funk style. When evaluating potential students, I ask them to play an example of a funk groove. What usually results is a disjointed display of rudiments and a linear stream of consciousness, none of which grooves. Specifically, I have found the most misused technique is the ghosted note. In this article, we will look at just one of the many methods of ghosting, the single ghosted note.

Since the majority of today's players come from a rock background, let's begin with a concept that should be very familiar, the 8th-note rock groove. Any 8th-note rock groove that you play can be "funkified" with strategically placed ghost notes. In this approach, a single ghost note is inserted between primary groove notes.

Primary groove notes are the parts of the groove that are most important. This usually includes the main hi-hat, snare, and bass drum parts. The additional ghost notes are usually inserted at least one 8th note away from any previously ghosted note. Remember that ghost notes should be played with significantly shorter stroke lengths and lower volumes than their primary-note counterparts. (Ghosted notes should be played 1/2" to 1" off the head; primary notes should be 3/4 to one full stroke.) This technique gives the time more forward motion without making the groove seem too busy or disjointed.

Let's first work with a common 8th-note groove:



There is one important idea that I must stress before we go on. Any note that is added or taken away from a groove can potentially change the feel or lope of that groove. Listen carefully to each

example as you play it. Always be sensitive to the effect that each added note has on the groove.

Getting back to our groove, let's insert a ghost note between the first two hi-hat 8th notes, on the "e" of 1. By filling every 16th note in beat 1 with a sound source, we begin to feel more motion pushing the groove forward. When played correctly, this new groove, like all those that follow, should sound considerably different.



Using the idea of filling each 16th note of individual beats with a sound source, let's move to the next groove pattern. The next logical spot to place a ghost note would be on the "e" of 2. But, so as not to take away from the "fatness" of the backbeat on 2, we will allow it to retain its full 8th-note value. So the next open space would fall on the "a" of 2, between the next two bass drum notes. Placing a ghosted snare note between the two bass drum notes links them more closely together and allows for no apparent sonic space between them. The ghost note also serves to fatten the downbeat of 3 by clipping the preceding bass drum note's value from an 8th note to that of a 16th note. The groove is thus transformed into the following:



The next location to place a ghost note would be on the "e" of 3. The placement of a ghosted note here with no other drum surface following it has an effect much like a comma in a written sentence. A noticeable pause is created within the musical sentence, leaving the listener hanging in wait for beat 4. An idea like this would best find its home in the second bar of a longer phrase (such as a two- or four-bar phrase). The resulting groove would look like this:



The last place that we will insert a ghost note can be somewhat deceptive. Remember, our original intention in this approach to

groove embellishment was to keep the basic groove intact while adding notes. With this in mind, one would not want to put a ghost note on the "a" of 3 or the "e" of 4 because, at certain tempos, it would require us to deviate from the current sticking pattern. So our only remaining choice would be to place a ghosted note on the "a" of 4. The new groove would look like this:



The use of the ghosted note on the "a" of 4 is a nice embellishment to any groove, because a note in that space leads us back into the downbeat of 1 with a certain fluid quality.

Our purpose in using this ghosting technique is to push the groove along without screaming to everyone, "Hey, I'm trying to make this cook!" The subtleties of this ghosting concept can be easily trampled on by the bludgeoning of a heavy snare hand. So keep your ghost strokes down between 1/4" and 1/2" above the head.

One more thing: Practice all the examples in this article so that you are able to go from one example to any other freely and without loss of pulse or meter. Also, experiment with different tempo and dynamic ranges. Each example takes on different qualities depending on the speed and loudness at which you play it. Try to use your ear to get inside each groove, listening for the sonic quality of each note. This and other ghosting techniques become second-nature only through repetition and study. The "greats" do not have to think when they are creating the music, because they have done all of their thinking and training ahead of time in the practice room. They have listened intently to themselves as they practiced and have trained their bodies to respond to the decisions that their ears make.

*Brian Stephens is a noted educator/clinician and freelance musician. He is currently a part of the Atlanta Institute of Music's teaching facility and director of the school's Weekend Intensive Program. This article has been adapted from a forthcoming method book by Brian (title undetermined at this date, © copyright 1997). This text may not be replicated or republished without expressed written permission of the author.*



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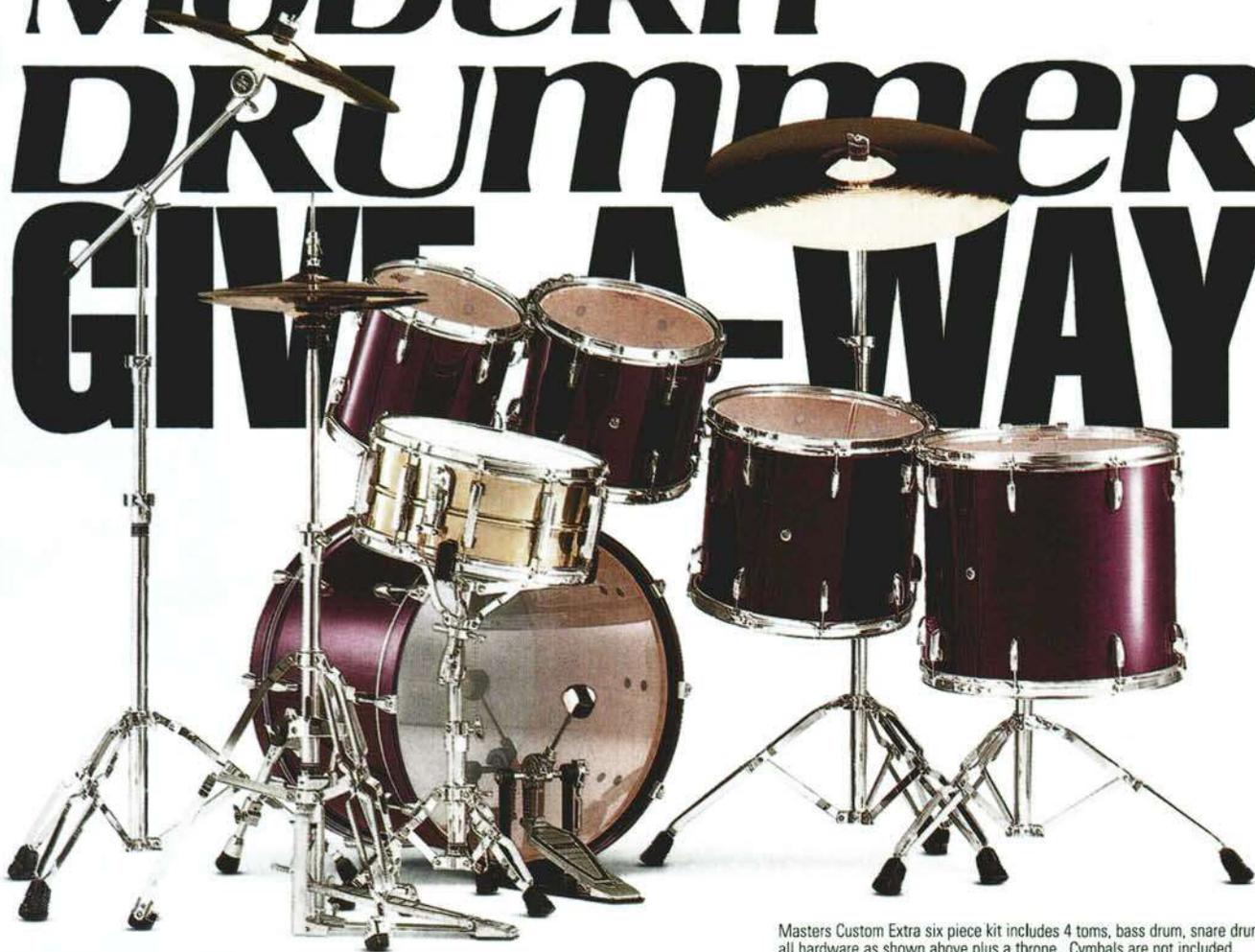
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# Papa Jo Jones

by Mark Griffith

In jazz drumming, the name "Jones" comes up quite often. Possibly its most important bearer is the legendary "Papa" Jo Jones.

Papa Jo made his name in the Count Basie Big Band, which he joined in 1934. This Basie rhythm section would soon become known as the "All American Rhythm Section," and would set the standards for all rhythm sections to follow. Possibly the most remarkable thing about this section, and the band as a whole, was their consistency. All of their recordings from this era are remarkable, embodying the very essence of swing.

It may be helpful to study the Basie band and the "All American Rhythm Section" chronologically, since many recording collections have been organized this way. However, I would suggest focusing on a particularly spectacular three-disc set covering 1937-39, *Count Basie: The Complete Decca Recordings*. Its digital remastering is superb, its selections are mostly Basie standards—and most important for drummers, every tune features the superb and swinging support of Papa Jo Jones.

Another comprehensive collection, *The Chronological Count Basie And His Orchestra*, covers 1936 through 1942. Papa Jo plays on the majority of these seven discs, as well as on the outstanding *The Essential Count Basie Volumes 1, 2, and 3*. On volume 3 of this set, check out Papa Jo's solo on "The World Is Mad."

The dramatic changes that occurred in jazz because of the Basie band can be best appreciated in their musical context. Most of the bands before Basie didn't have the swagger or the rhythmic lilt we know as swing. Listening to Basie with Papa Jo on the drums provides a veritable textbook study on the evolution of swing.

A key relationship that grew from the Basie band was the one between Jo Jones and saxophonist Lester Young. Whenever these two would hook up, greatness was sure to follow. This pairing of musicians has been documented several times, but the two spotlighted here are *Lester Young Meets The Jazz Giants*, and the Lester Young-Teddy Wilson Quartet's *Pres And Teddy*. These records were both made in 1956, at the end of the swing period of jazz. On *Pres And Teddy's* "Prisoner Of Love," Jo's military drum training comes through, yet his deadly precise rhythms and articulations never sound stiff. By examining this solo closely, you can hear many of the brush "tricks" that people still use

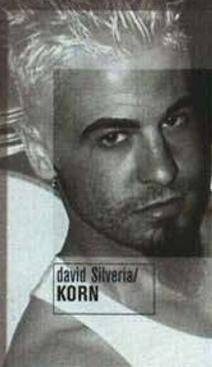
today. The fours he takes on "All Of Me" display his great restraint and taste. While Papa Jo was not the original showman, nor the best showman, he was possibly the *most musical* showman, incorporating cross-sticking and other tricks seamlessly into the music. Papa Jo was also one of the first drummers to incorporate a left-hand floor tom—using it mostly for cross-sticking extravaganzas.

In 1957, Papa Jo's unhurried pulse benefited the effortless swing of another saxophone giant, Coleman Hawkins. *The Hawk Flies High* is an excellent record featuring great soloists and another swinging rhythm section. Also check out Hawkins and his All Stars' *Timeless Jazz*. For some interesting drumming comparisons, listen to the 1957 live recording *Count Basie At Newport*, Lester Young's *The Complete Lester Young*, and *The Big Three*:

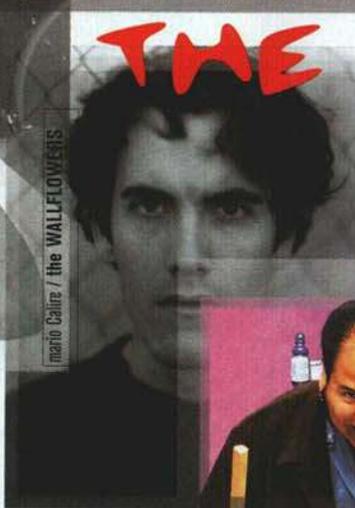


Tom Copi

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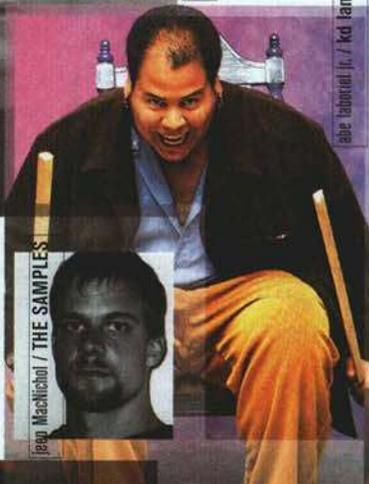
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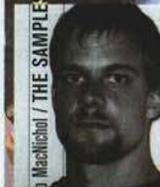
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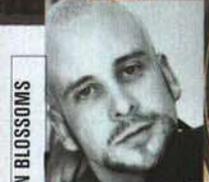
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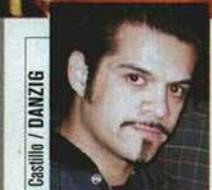
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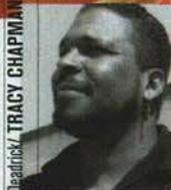
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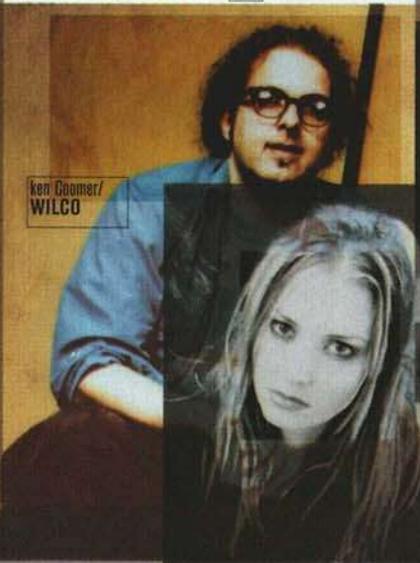
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Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Ben Webster. On *Basie At Newport*, the drumming is evenly split between Jones and Sonny Payne. While Payne was a great drummer in his own right, listen to the way the soloists and the band respond to Jones. *The Complete Lester Young* features Lester playing with two of his fantastic groups, the Lester Young Quartet (in 1943 with Big Sid Catlett playing drums), and the Kansas City Seven (in 1944 with Papa Jo on drums). Each group gets equal time on the disc. In this context and time period the vast differences between the two drummers' styles becomes very apparent. *The Big Three* features the three saxophonists playing with their own groups: Ben Webster's with Big Sid Catlett in 1946, Coleman Hawkins' with Max Roach in 1943, and Lester Young's with Papa Jo in 1943. Here you can not only study the three drummers and their differences, but also the three original giants of the tenor saxophone.

Because of Papa Jo's mastery of the brushes, he was very popular with pianists. One of the greatest was the leg-

## Tracking Them Down

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

**Count Basie:** *The Complete Decca Recordings*, GRP 3611; *The Essential Count Basie Volume 1*, Columbia, CK 40608; *Volume 2*, 40835, *Volume 3*, 44150; *The Chronological Count Basie, 1936-38*, Classics Records 503; 1938-39, 504; 1939, 513; 1939 Vol. 2, 533, 1939-40, 563; 1940-41, 623; *Count Basie At Newport*, Verve 840 815-2. **Lester Young:** *Lester Young Meets The Jazz Giants*, Verve 825 672-2; *The Complete Lester Young On Keynote*, Mercury 830 920 2. **Lester Young-Teddy Wilson Quartet:** *Pres And Teddy*, Verve 831 270-2. **Coleman Hawkins:** *The Hawk Flies High*, Riverside OJCCD 0272; *Timeless Jazz*, Fresh Sound Records FSR CD-88. *The Big Three: Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster, Lester Young*, Signature AK-40950. **Art Tatum:** *The Tatum Group Masterpieces Volume 6*, Pablo Pacd 2405 429. **Jo Jones:** *The Jo Jones Trio*, Fresh Sound Records FSR CD40; *Jo Jones Sextet*, Fresh Sound Records FSR CD144; *The Essential Jo Jones*, Vanguard CD 101-2-2; *The Drums*, Jazz Odyssey 008 (out of print); *The Main Man*, Pablo 2310-799; *Our Man Papa Jo*, Denon MJ 7047. **Jo Jones & Milt Hinton:** *Percussion And Bass*, Fresh Sound Records FSR CD204. **Duke Ellington & Johnny Hodges:** *Back To Back: Duke Ellington & Johnny Hodges Play The Blues*, Verve 823 637-2.

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

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endary Art Tatum. This perfect pairing of musicians was regrettably under-recorded, but they did finally record, along with bassist Red Callender, in 1956. On volume six of *The Tatum Group Masterpieces* series (which can be purchased separately), you hear much of the restraint about which Papa Jo felt so strongly. Jo never tries to match virtuoso's virtuoso Tatum note for note; instead, his restraint and taste prevail.

In 1959, Papa Jo made the definitive brush recording, *The Jo Jones Trio*. With Jo playing brushes on the whole record, and with his snares turned off for most of it, you can clearly hear the true sound of the brushes played by the master. Papa Jo can also be heard playing with his hands. He did this a lot, though rarely on record. In 1960, he made *Jo Jones Sextet*, a disc featuring standards and Jo Jones compositions. Both of these recordings are priceless examples of Jo's intensity, musicality, and virtuosity.

One month later, Jo Jones and bassist Milt Hinton made probably the most "out" record that either had ever made, a duo record simply called *Percussion And Bass*. This is a completely improvised recording featuring the brushwork and hi-hat playing that Papa Jo was famous for, as well as vibes, tambourine, and other percussion, all played by Papa Jo.

Jones recorded two LPs that are now unfortunately out of print, but which are excellent, and deserving of an inquiry at your local used record store. One was released under two names: *The Essential Jo Jones*, and *The Jo Jones Special*. The other is a 1973 drum instruction record simply called *The Drums*.

In 1959, Papa Jo recorded with yet another legend of jazz. When Duke Ellington and Johnny Hodges made a rare small-

group recording called *Back To Back: Duke Ellington & Johnny Hodges Play The Blues*, consisting of all blues compositions, Papa Jo was called on to contribute his gritty swagger behind the drums. There are no drum solos here, nor burning tempos on which Jo could strut his stuff. However, he demonstrated what brought him to the forefront of drumming in the '30s and '40s: that he could be one quarter of a tight and selfless rhythm section.

Due mainly to health problems, Papa Jo didn't record as much during the '70s and '80s. But in 1976 he assembled an octet of Basie alumni and close friends to record *The Main Man*, the last of the great records led by Papa Jo. "I Want To Be Happy" features an extended brush solo and some of his famous hi-hat soloing. On this record, as in the Basie days, Papa Jo rides on a half-opened hi-hat, building so much tension that when he switches to his ride cymbal, it has an enormous effect on the music, opening up the rhythm section and freeing up the soloist.

In 1983, Jones made *Our Man Papa Jo*. This is a loose program of jazz standards, and doesn't show Papa Jo at his best, but the feeling of the music is enjoyable nonetheless.

Although he lived into the 1980s, through many changes in jazz, Papa Jo Jones never lost the feeling of swing that he helped bring to the world in the 1930s and '40s with Count Basie. His use and mastery of the hi-hats, and the sound he produced with a pair of brushes, as well as his brash and cutting wit, deep love and respect for music—and most importantly his deft sense of swing—will never be forgotten.



# Iron Cobra!



## RECORDINGS

## Kip Winger

This Conversation Seems Like A Dream (Domo)

⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ½

drummer: Rod Morgenstein

with: Kip Winger (bs, gtr, kybd, perc, vcl), Marc Shulman, Andy Timmons, Rich Kern (gtr), Robbie Rothchild, Mark Clark (perc), Alan Pasqua, Noble Kime (pno), Chris Botti (trp), Jonathan Arthur (fl, vcl), Greta Rose, Beatrice Winger, Paul Winger, Nate Winger (vcl), Helios String Quartet



Rod Morgenstein plays some of the choicest drum tracks of the year on *Conversation*. Reunited here with Kip Winger, Rod more than ever plays a rocked out Vinnie to Kip's Bowie/Sting, beginning with the intricate weavings of "A Kiss Of Life." "Monster" shows off a tight pop snap (with a tasty splash in the perfect spot), and Morgenstein's syncopated beat on "Don't Let Go" gives that song its needed kick.

Rod's great feel is in ample evidence here. While it's likely he played along with a click on many tracks, he nevertheless makes the time sound natural. Whatever situation he's in, he builds a drum track musically, creating a song within the song. A perfect example is "Endless

Circles," where Rod's off-beat hi-hat complements Rothchild's percussion on the second pass through; on the next refrain he lays down a nice 6/8 rock pulse over the whole kit.

Morgenstein adds a lot of musical notions to Winger's first recording since 1993. Bravo! (Domo Records, 245 South Spalding Dr., Suite 105, Beverly Hills, CA 90210)

Robin Tolleson

## Tito Puente

Special Delivery (Concord Jazz)

⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ½

percussionists: Tito Puente, Jose Madera, John Rodriguez, Jimmy Delgado, Louis Bauzo with Ray Vega, John Walsh, Michael Philip Mossman, Wayne Bergeron, Bobby Shew (trp) Michael Philip Mossman, Jorge Reynaldo, Lewis Kahn, Tom Garling (tbn); Mario Rivera, Bobby Porcelli, Mitch Frohman, Don Menza (wdwns), Sonny Bravo (pno), Ruben Rodriguez (bs), Maynard Ferguson (trp), Hilton Ruiz (pno)

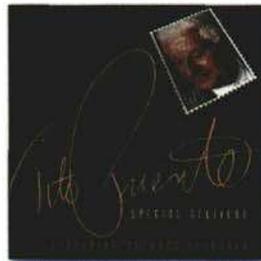
The "King Of Latin Music" has done it again with another monster recording featuring a top-rate group of musicians. *Special Delivery* marks the 108th album by Puente, a pioneer in the marriage of jazz with Afro-Cuban rhythms, and the man responsible for bringing the timbales into the spotlight as a solo instrument.

This CD is one of Tito's most jazz-dominated recordings, with tunes by Horace Silver, Gerry Mulligan, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, Lionel Hampton, and Benny Golson. It also features Maynard Ferguson, himself no stranger to Latin music, having recorded with the orchestra of Perez Prado in the '50s.

On *Special Delivery* the tunes "Be-Bop," "Misterioso," "Stablemates," "Flying Home," and "Where You At?" are played in the traditional combination of bongos, tumbadoras (congas), and timbales. "Tito's Colada" is the most traditional tune here, featuring Puente on marimba in a montuno/descarga with added mambo riffs in the horns. "On Green Dolphin Street," arranged by Jose Madera and Tom Garling, starts off as an afro, goes to a mambo feel at the bridge, and then moves to a cha cha cha on the solos. Other Afro-Cuban rhythms heard throughout the recording are the bolero, guaguanco, and 6/8 bembé.

Puente is featured throughout the recording not only on timbales but on vibes and marimba. The whole album is a wonderful study in clave, with its horn lines and bass/piano tumbaos (rhythmic patterns) expertly moving behind the rhythmic drive of these percussion masters.

Victor Rendon



## SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

Code Name: The Energizer. **JOSH FREESE**'s heart is clearly in pounding out furious power pop rhythms, and on Slider's latest, *Sudden Fun* (A&M), the young ace proves why he's so sought after: For pure pop adrenaline, he's the guy.

One of the more interesting tours this year was the Tuatara/Minus 5/Mark Eitzel traveling party. **BARRETT MARTIN**, the drummer behind Tuatara's *Breaking The Ethers* (see August *Critique*) and Eitzel's *West*, also shares drum duties with **JASON FINN**, **JOHN CRIST**, and **JON AUER** on The Minus 5's *The Lonesome Death Of Buck McCoy* (Hollywood), one of the best jangly, melodic pop albums to come down any chute in a long time,

Boston-based **JON HAZILA** delivers some of his finest jazz drumming yet due to a fortuitous team-up with gifted pianist/composer Consuelo Candelaria on their Consuelo-Jon Quintet venture. *Last Sunday Morning*. (Accurate, PO Box 390115, Cambridge, MA 02139)

Drummer **SCOTT WILLIAMS** provides just the right amount of energy and fancy stick work to guitarist Scott Bradoka's melodic instrumentals on *Swamp Party*. (Speechless Music, PO Box 20702 Lehigh Valley, PA 18002-0702)

**BILL BRUFORD**-philes should check out National Health's *Missing Pieces* (ESD). Bill navigates the sometimes cool/sometimes aimless compositions with the sounds and grooves fans of his late Yes/early solo period will likely recognize. (The under-recognized **PIP PYLE** appears on one track of *Missing Pieces*, Interested parties might also want to check out National Health's *Complete*, and ex-NH bassist Dirk Campbell's "world"-ly *Music From A Round Tower*, both also on ESD.)

## Rating Scale

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

## Steve Turre

Steve Turre (Verve)



**drummers:** Horacio Hernandez, Portinho, Victor Lewis

**percussionists:** Milton Cardona, Kimati Dinizulu, Herculano Federici, Manny Oquendo

with Steve Turre, Robin Eubanks, Jimmy Bosch, Prank Lacy, Douglas Purviance (tbn, shells), Quartette Indigo (strings), Andy Gonzales (bs), Stefon Harris (mallets), Cassandra Wilson, Graciela Perez (vcl), Willie Rodriguez, Stephen Scott (pno), Jon Faddis, Randy Brecker, Alfredo Armenteros (trp), Romero Lubambo (gtr), and others

Turre cites his inspiration for this disc as "The Three Branches of the Tree"... and the common ground shared by all." For each branch, the adventurous leader has chosen major drum ambassadors: Victor Lewis represents the jazz branch; Portinho,

the Brazilian; cutting-edge kitman Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez, the Cuban. This drumseat rotation alone marks the release as a major rhythm session. As a bonus, the rich, inspired drumming is enhanced by the spark of stellar percussionists.

But the big payoff is the "common ground" Turre embraces. This disc brings together the multi-influences of his three previous releases: Large ensembles (most between eleven and

fourteen players) offer a joyous textural palette, alternating between vocals, string quartet, strong soloists, brass, multi-trombones, and conch shell "choir." Turre is a brilliant bone soloist, but most importantly, it's his keen compositional vision that ringmasters this ambitious project into glorious unity.

Jeff Potter



composer and bandleader on *Kingdom Of Charrpa*, a suite of tunes inspired by his experiences living with his wife and her family in Vietnam. In the liner notes, Blake paints a picture of the country's contrasting extremes—of "infinite sadness" and "great joy," of frenzied urban life and the embracing of family values. Indeed, these extremes are reflected in the music, which unites a distinctly Eastern sensibility with modern jazz.

Blake's sense of melody is strongly represented on this adventurous yet sonically unified album, as each piece has a central melodic motif that is beautifully supported by the formidable backing group. Scott Neumann manages to coax a wide range of beats and patterns out of his small jazz kit, bringing something different to every tune. The opening cut, for example, features a loose feel punctuated by strong bursts of snare drum flutters, while on "Purple City," Neumann plays a crisp cross-stick groove while swinging tightly on the ride cymbal. Widening the timbral palette still further is Billy Martin (with his exotic array of shakers, bells, and other devices), whose role as percussive colorist is just what Blake needs to highlight his musical hybrid of East and West.

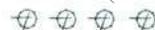
If *Kingdom Of Champa* reminds you of Miles Davis's *Sketches Of Spain*, this is no coincidence—both albums, in addition to being outsiders' musical depictions of foreign lands, were produced by legendary sonic architect Teo Macero, who has once again aided in the creation of a bold, high-fidelity work of art.

Michael Parillo



## Caribbean Jazz Project

Island Stories (Heads Up)



**drummer:** Mark Walker

**congas, percussion:** Pernel Satumino

**steel pans:** Andy Narell

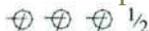
**marimba, vibes:** Dave Samuels

with Paquito D'Rivera (sp, al sx, dr), Oscar Stagnaro (bs), Dario Eskenazi (pno)

For an all-star band that was not expected to last, CJP's second release is a confirmation that this cohesive project is only getting stronger musically and creatively. *Island Stories* is a blend of tropical melody and jazz-flavored improvisation. Narell, Samuels, and D'Rivera share the improvisational spotlight (as

## Michael Blake

Kingdom Of Champa (Intuition)



**drummer:** Scott Neumann, **percussionist:** Billy Martin

with Michael Blake (tn, sp sx, bs el), Steven Bernstein (trp), Thomas Chapin (fl, piccolo, bar sx), Marcus Rojas (tb), David Tronzo (slide gtr), Rufus Cappadocia (cello),

Brian Carrott (vbs), Tony Scherr (bs)

Saxophonist Michael Blake, best known for his role as John Lurie's foil in the Lounge Lizards, makes an impressive debut as

## GOING UNDERGROUND

More musical madness from the far side of the rock 'n' roll galaxy.

Oooh, I love a drumkit bathed in reverb. Mix in some brushes here, a bit o' coolly detached vocals there, some dense, filtered, unidentifiable rhythmic loops... everywhere... and you've got

Polar Bear's self-titled debut five-song EP (☆☆☆ 1/2, Dry Hump Recordings, 7211 Santa Monica Blvd., #500, Los Angeles, CA



90046). Featuring ex-Jane's Addiction bassist Eric Avery and ex-Ethyl Meatplow drummer **BIFF SANDERS**, Polar Bear wisely fuzzifies the timbres to contrast with the sometimes goose-stepping rhythms. Pretty neat.

Ghost is an unusual group of Japanese musical explorers. On their latest release, *Lama Rabi Rabi* (☆☆☆☆, Drag City, PO Box 476867, Chicago, IL 60647), they seem intent on finding some common ground between trancy world music and early Pink Floyd and Can. The layered rhythms by percussionists



**IWAO YAMAZAKI and FUJI** are appropriately human (with all that implies), and provide odd and colorful backdrops to the druggy aural daze.

Morphine meets Nick Cave in odd times; that's not such a bad way to think of The Valentine Six, whose self-titled debut on PCP (☆☆☆ 1/2, PO Box 1689, New York, NY 10009-8908) features the reliable pop, purr, and pop of drummers **TONY CORSANO** and **SOUPY SESSA**. Pull down your favorite poison, dim the lights, and dig these twisted but groovy dudes.

Adam Budofsky



well as the writing credits) in equal fashion, creating a constant shift in ethnic styles.

The well-arranged harmonic structure of each melody between sax and tuned percussion creates a gentle sound that is unique and pleasing to the ear. The rich combination of calypso, Afro-Cuban, and Caribbean rhythms propel the dance-oriented material with Pernell Saturnino and Mark Walker interacting in traditional fashion.



"Andalucia," a complex piece that shifts from swing to 12/8, allows the trio of soloists to excel. Narell's "Calabash" is a fun calypso tune that jumps ship at times and floats in exploratory waters. The Dave Samuels piece "Grass Roots" moves in several interesting directions as

well. With the drums and percussion holding the underlying feel of 12/8 and song-style grooves, they create a half- to double-time motion, allowing Walker to stretch a little. D'Rivera's "Bluellespie" is the strongest jazz-influenced tune here, once again alternating with Afro-Cuban dance rhythms, giving Walker some tasty solo spots on drums.

CJP is a spicy combination of ethnic styles that taste good no matter how you slice them. (*Heads Up, Box 976, Lynnwood, WA 98046.*)

Mike Haid

## The Jason Bonham Band

In The Name Of My Father (MJJ Music)



drummer; Jason Bonham

with Tony Catania (gtr), John, Smithson (bs, kybd), Charles West (vcl)

If anyone has the right to trample on sacred Zeppelin ground it's Jason Bonham, son of legendary drummer John Bonham. On *In The Name...* Jason pays tribute to his father with a choice collection of Zep tunes including "The Ocean" and "Communication Breakdown." Jason is attempting to tackle quite a monster here, as this may or may not entertain loyal Zeppelin fans. It would have been interesting to note whether or not these were his father's favorite tunes.



Jason's DW kit sounds thick and powerful here, complementing his overall solid time. His fills sound a bit rushed at times, though, and he seems cautious in his playing, at least compared to his father's genius of recognizing the opportunity to explore and create uncharted patterns on the drumkit, especially in a live setting. But Jason's band was obviously not interested in exploring this material in traditional live Zeppelin fashion. Rather they seem intent on recreating the basic trademarks of each member of the original quartet. Listening to "Ten Years Gone," "The Rain Song," and the well-thought-out "Whole Lotta Love" medley reminds us of how extremely creative and talented the original members were as songwriters and players. At times they do come strikingly close to sounding like Zeppelin. But I'm sure even Jason will agree with the phrase "Ain't nothin' like the real thing." (*MJJ Music, 550 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022.*)

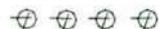
Mike Haid

## VIDEOS

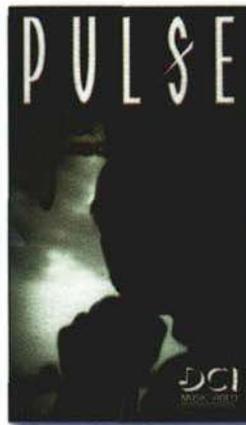
### Akira Jimbo

Pulse

(DCI Music Video)



level: advanced  
40 minutes, \$39.95



Incredible accuracy, clean execution, crazy independence, and a highly developed system of triggering melodic/harmonic sequences are Akira Jimbo's claim to fame, and *Pulse*, the follow-up to his first video, *Metamorphosis*, certainly highlights those gifts.

DCI chose to concentrate on performance rather than explanation here, likely because Akira's native language is Japanese. No matter; the combination of DCI's predictably great camera angles and sound with Jimbo's wealth of musical ideas will leave viewers with plenty to learn about on their own.

Added bonuses include the

appearance of Akira's bass partner Tetsuo Sakurai, as well as the drummer's short written explanations of his triggering system, his attention to the quarter-note pulse, and descriptions of the individual pieces.

An intimate and absorbing study of a contemporary monster.

Adam Budofsky

## BOOKS

### Beyond Bop Drumming

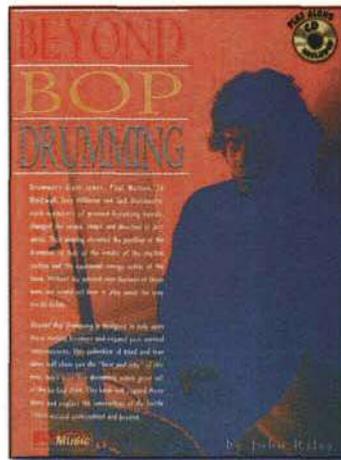
by John Riley

(Manhattan Music)



level: intermediate to advanced  
\$24.95 with CD

In *Beyond Bop Drumming*, jazz drummer/author John Riley presents a lucid, inside-and-out look at late- and post-bop jazz drumming as embodied by the discipline's innovators and icons: Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, Mel Lewis, Paul Motian, Ed Blackwell, Roy Haynes, Bob Moses, and Jack DeJohnette. Riley's ample, richly woven text focuses on these masters'



unique and varied approaches to time feel, illuminating the genius of their musical choices and their watershed effect on the genre. Black-and-white photos and quotes from the drummers (and one from Miles) bring the spirit that moved them—and us—even closer. And on the accompanying 72-minute CD (which is sparkingly recorded even by Manhattan Music's standards) Riley demonstrates the book's exercises, solos, and transcrip-

lions of some of the giants' landmark drum parts and full tunes in squeaky-clean fashion either alone, with a bassist, or with a fine sax-led quartet.

The book's main sections, including comping, up-tempo studies, implied time/metric modulation, and solo ideas are logically and coherently divided into friendly-sized subtopics such as broken-time playing, implying various meters over others, and solo theme and variations. In addition to a comprehensive log of drummers who influenced the style and an itemized list of recommended books and videos, Riley serves up track-by-track listening tips and analyses of three seminal albums: McCoy Tyner's *The Real McCoy*, Herbie Hancock's *Empyrean Isles*, and Chick Corea's *Now He Sings—Now He Sobs*.

This, John Riley's "sequel" to *The Art Of Bop Drumming*, is the best book I've seen for showing upper-intermediate to very advanced players why today's best jazz drumming sounds the way it does, and how to incorporate these concepts into their own playing. If you aspire to jazz drumming's heights, this book offers a map, if not a ticket, to the great "beyond."

Rich Watson

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# The Drummer As Recording Artist

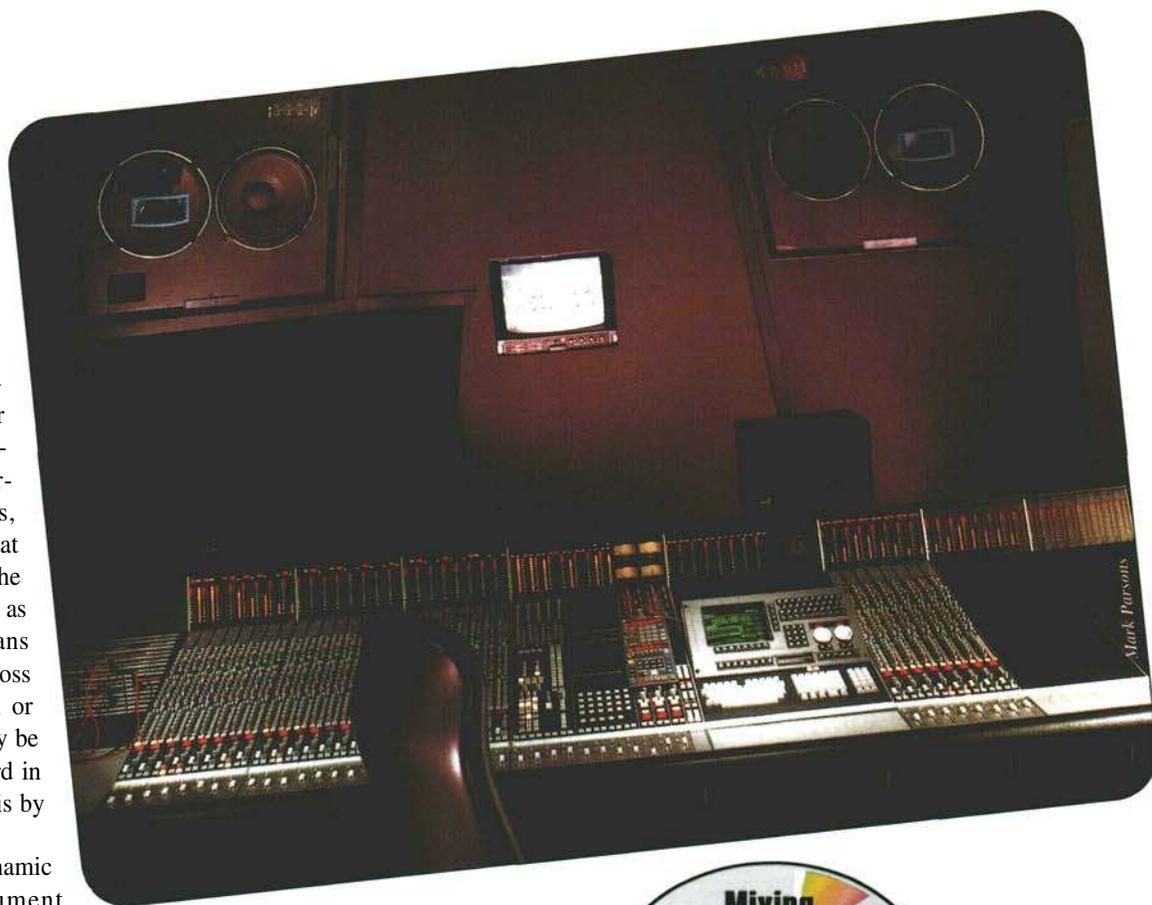
## Part 5: The Recording Process, Continued

by Hal Howland

The typical modern multitrack recording setup places each instrument in its own environment, isolated from the others to prevent leakage of one instrument's signal onto another track. Usually in this situation the drumset is surrounded by microphones, one for each drum and at least two overheads for the cymbals. To play together as an ensemble, the musicians rely on visual contact across rooms, through windows, or on video screens. This may be the preferred way to record in a loud rock setting, but it is by no means the only way.

Testing the tone and dynamic range of each instrument requires patience on everyone's part. As the player of the instrument that takes the most time to test, you will have arrived long before your sidepersons anyway. (As the leader on the date, you will remain attentive to their needs long after yours are met. Prepare to put in many hours functioning as coach, referee, caterer, custodian, medic, entertainer, and friend.)

Once the instruments are tuned and tested (the engineer having allowed for the probability that the actual performance will be more intense than the sound check), recording begins. You will want to hear the first song or two played back immediately, to catch technical problems and make final adjustments. But resist the temptation to listen to every take; establish a flow and ride it until you need to take a break. You and your engineer should keep accurate records and be certain that everything you meant to record is on tape; you should not have to call someone back into the studio days or weeks later (when all the adjustments have changed) to fix a note or to record a forgotten harmony part.



The mixing sessions are your opportunities finally to realize your vision. The only people present at these sessions should be you and your engineer (and your producer, if you are not producing). Mixing by committee, with other bandmembers present, may invite self-serving suggestions and disagreements that can ruin your concentration. Similarly, an engineer may try to seduce you with frivolous and time-consuming sound effects. It is your record: Make the record *you* want to make.

You may have entered the studio with a preconceived selection and sequence of tunes. Be open to change, and, if there is time, record a few more takes of tunes than you expect to need. Your final running order should offer both variety of mood (especially avoid adjoining two songs in the same key) and satisfying wholeness; an album is more than a fancy demo.

Since a CD can hold seventy-four or more minutes of music, many contemporary musicians are dredging their vaults and making albums that are simply too long. Be sure your listener will want to start with the first track and stay through the last.

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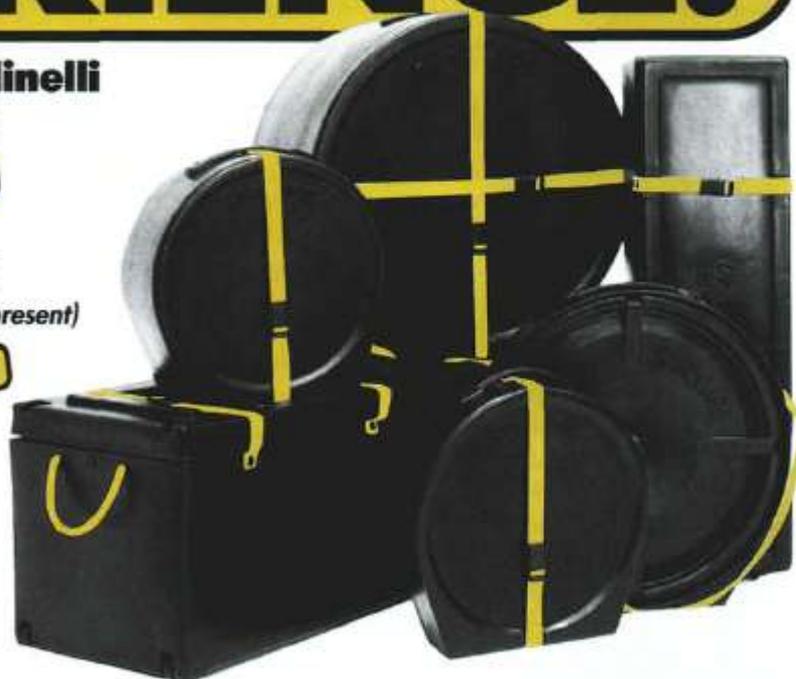
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## Mastering

Your master tape will be prepared for CD manufacture by converting it to three-quarter-inch U-Matic videotape, prepared in Sony PCM 1610 or 1630 format with a sampling frequency of 44.1 kHz (the universal standard). In English, that means your master will be very good: digital copies will sound identical to it. The loss of signal caused by successive generations of analog tape is a thing of the past.

You may be present at your mastering sessions, and the mastering engineer will ensure that everything sounds the way you want it. He or she also will document sequences, times, and other data to rigorous industry standards and will make a safety copy of the master in case the first is damaged or lost in shipment.

## Options

Multitrack recording is the most common method because it is safe and flexible; instruments can be added or subtracted, mistakes fixed, effects intertwined. But there are simpler, more exciting, and, for some artists, more satisfying ways to record. Many folk, blues, jazz, classical, choral, and solo performers prefer recording the old-fashioned way, direct to two-track: two microphones, one tape recorder, everyone together in one room, performing and mixing at the same time. This method produces warmth, presence, and a sense of spontaneity that cannot be achieved in the multitrack environment; it offers great flexibility in location and setup; and it is of course the least expensive way to record. It also assumes you have your act together.

Other recording methods include two-track with a mixer and, the riskiest of them all, direct to disc.

You may know an auditorium, church, or other location in which you would prefer to record. Investigate the interior acoustics, outside noise level, availability, and cost. Before proceeding, revisit the place with an engineer who specializes in

mobile recording.

A small project studio, usually located in someone's home (and used more often for jingles and demos than for albums), can produce professional results on a tight budget. Listen carefully to that engineer's previous work and consider whether any financial savings would justify long, uncomfortable hours and the remorse of having compromised your art.

## The Big Picture

Recording studio hourly rates vary widely, from \$20 or \$30 for little studios to \$200 or more for professional facilities. Rates may include free time for setup and breakdown and the provision of microphones and large instruments. Mixing often costs less than recording. Rates often are lower during off-peak hours.

The studio will charge you for its tape. The cost varies depending on whether you record a number of tracks onto a two-inch reel or a digital audio (DAT) cassette, direct to a two-track master, or by another method. The cost can be substantial.

The engineer is paid by the studio unless brought in as a freelancer, paid by the day.

You probably will not need to hire an arranger, but if you do, expect to negotiate a fee based on musical duration and the size of the ensemble.

Pay your musicians, even if they are old friends grateful for any chance to step inside a studio. Pay everyone at the same rate. Be very clear regarding copyright ownership and the division of royalties, the band's future should label offers come pouring in, and so on. Get all agreements in writing.

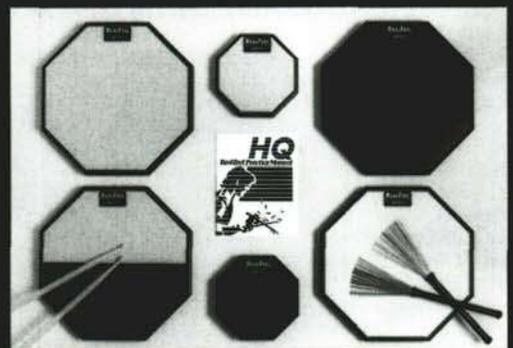
As a self-produced artist you are just that: self-produced. If you need an objective ear at your recording or mixing session, hire a producer. This person may charge an hourly fee or a flat fee for the whole project; an agreement may be based on future sales or on label interest. Producer royalties run 1% to 3% of the wholesale CD price; hourly rates start about \$35. Expect to pay more for someone who has produced hits. For a fee your engineer may dou-

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Certain companies cater to the indie market and offer conveniently priced package deals that take much of the mystery out of design and manufacture. Two of these firms are Discmakers and Oasis Recording [whose addresses appeared in Part 3 of this series].

Again, do not wait until the clock is ticking to learn about studio protocol. Visit as many sessions as you can to see how things are done and how long they take. (Stay out of the way.) Attend courses or seminars at local studios or colleges. Subscribe to *Mix* (6400 Hollis St., #12, Emeryville, CA 94608, tel: [800] 233-9604) or a similar magazine. Make demos of all your arrangements, and rehearse them *cold* ahead of

time. Play your demos for music professionals and take their advice to heart. Be comfortable playing with headphones and reduced eye contact. Test your precision in pitch and tempo. Especially let singers learn to relax and sing consistently in tune. Book just enough studio time to do your work without burning out (three to six hours per session). Know whether your group gets quick results or takes a while to wake up. Learn when to go for one more take and when to move on to the next tune. Plan to leave each session with a rough mix for future reference. Plan to arrive on time. See that everyone else's gear is as well maintained as yours. Plan to bring only essential personnel to the studio. Plan to relinquish control to the studio staff and to hold your questions until after the session. And know when to step back and realize that your work is finished: imperfect, off-schedule, and over-budget, not quite the masterpiece you will create next time—but finished.

In Part 6 we'll conclude with some comments and suggestions by drummers who have traveled the road ahead of you.



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# Aquarian

## *Accessories*

by Rick Van Horn

Aquarian Accessories was born in 1980, when drummer/clinician Roy Burns and engineer Dave Donohoe (who were working for the Rogers drum company at the time) met Ron Marquez. Ron operated a powder-coating business in Anaheim, California, and Roy and Dave were investigating whether powder-coating could replace chrome on Rogers drums. Ultimately that didn't happen. What *did* happen, however, was that Roy, Dave, and Ron saw a potential for a working triumvirate to create percussion accessories. Some seventeen years later they are still partners—and friends. Dave (who, regrettably, was not present for this story) is the designer, Ron oversees the manufacturing, and Roy represents the "drummer's perspective."

"I know absolutely nothing about designing or manufacturing products," says Roy. "But Ron's got the manufacturing thing covered, and Dave's a terrific engineer, so I don't need to duplicate their efforts. My job, I feel, is to be willing to answer the phone whenever a drummer calls with a problem or wants information. With my background as a player—and through all the articles I've written for *Modern Drummer*—a lot of guys know my name. Besides, I really believe that a customer should be able to call a company and talk to one of the owners.

"Although musicians usually know what they like," Roy continues, "they don't always know what makes it happen—because they don't have the engineering background. That's why a lot of times I'll go to Ron and say something like, 'The drummers out there want a pre-muffled bass drum head. How are we going to do that?' Ron will talk to Dave, who'll usually say, 'Well, I don't know. I don't think we can do it.' The next day he'll come in with some incredible design that works great. Then Ron's got to figure out how to manufacture it. We're a team, and that's our strength."



Ron Marquez (left) and Roy Burns are two members of Aquarian's guiding trio.

Aquarian first entered the percussion market with a variety of small, innovative accessory products—which they pitched primarily to smaller drumshops and music stores. Says Roy, "The smaller stores were more open to our ideas because they needed products to compete against the really big merchandisers—and they weren't looking at such big numbers. So that really became our customer base."

From small accessories like the *Cymbal Spring*, through synthetic and wood drumsticks, and more recently to a complete line of drumheads, Aquarian has continued on a slow but steady growth pattern. "We are in thirty-seven countries right now," says Roy. "We still sell virtually everything we've ever made, but our main focus right now is drumheads. According to what we can ascertain, we are the second-biggest seller of drumheads in the United States. Considering that we've only made drumheads for eight years, that's amazing."

Roy attributes this "amazing" success to certain physical and



**Ron Marquez demonstrates how a drumhead hoop is formed by bending aluminum extrusion around a sizing pyramid. The tool will make any hoop from 6" to 26".**

philosophical elements that go into the manufacture of Aquarian heads. The most important physical element is Aquarian's patented *Safe-T-Loc* hoop, which Roy says is "the first new hoop design for a plastic drumhead in over forty years." The *Safe-T-Loc* system locks the drumhead into specially contoured aluminum-extrusion hoops, securing them with epoxy that flows through a perforated channel at the edge of the drumhead film. "Our design allows the epoxy to flow through holes in the bottom of the channel," says Roy, "rather than on the side. The epoxy then locks into the T-channel at the bottom of the hoop extrusion. The epoxy, the head collar, and the hoop all become one piece. That means there is no movement of the head inside the hoop, and the collar height is always accurate. The advantage here is that not only will it not pull out, it will also never detune."

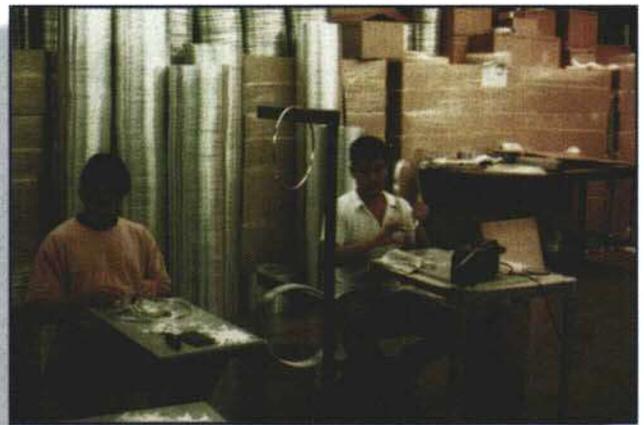
Previous Aquarian heads had been made by wrapping the edges of the heads around a steel ring that was then pressed into the aluminum hoop with a 110-ton press. But this method proved unsatisfactory in the long run. "The wrap-around method involves a pressed fit," says Ron Marquez. "When you wrap your outside extrusion around a steel ring, you can only wrap it until you *get* to the steel ring. That's all the force it has. We found that at times the drumhead would slip just a little—not out of the hoop, but enough



**The ends of the extrusion are cut to exact size so that each hoop is perfectly round and accurate. (A digital machine that will both form and cut the hoops will shortly replace the present two-step operation.)**

to cause horrendous tuning problems."

Roy adds, "At first I couldn't understand how a head that was put together with 110 tons of pressure could slip. No drummer could put that much pressure on the head by playing it. But Dave, being the engineer, figured that it wasn't the amount of pressure, it was the constant vibration. It's like when you have a thousand people on a dance floor. If they're walking aimlessly, there's no problem. But if they all start bouncing up and down in rhythm, the whole floor can go at any moment. A drummer might easily play a backbeat in a regular rhythm for a fifteen-minute tune. That's when the head will start to slide inside the hoop. The minute *that* happens you get a higher collar on one side than on the other side. Tightening the rim down between tunes helps, but you're still not playing on the same shape that you started out with. It would be like playing on a cymbal that changed its shape from tune to tune depending on how hard you hit it. You would constantly be getting a different sound. What we have done is eliminate any movement so the head retains the same tone quality all the time, until you just wear it out.



**The ends of the hoops are currently joined manually, at the rate of 150 per hour. This operation will shortly be replaced by a machine that will weld the hoops at the rate of 400 per hour—helping Aquarian to increase their production rate from 2,000 to 5,000 heads per day.**

"Joe Porcaro is a consultant for us now," Roy continues. "He's been recording for over thirty years. He made an album with Emil Richards recently, and he didn't have to use any muffling in a single drum. The sound guy was deliriously happy, and Emil was very happy. And Joe told me later, 'We recorded for over six hours. I didn't have to tweak any of the heads.'"

The second major design element of Aquarian heads is their lack of a pre-formed collar. As Roy explains, "Up until the early '80s or so, bearing edges on most drums were round, and very forgiving. And drummers never seemed to have trouble getting a good drum sound or staying in tune. Listen to recordings of Art Blakey, Max Roach, Buddy, Louie, or Gene. They've always got a nice drum sound.

"But today, bearing edges on drums are cut very sharply," Roy continues, "and many have a counter-cut toward the outside of the shell. Because of that, a drumhead with a pre-formed collar will often sit up a sixteenth of an inch above the bearing edge. Our *Sound Curve* collar is a little shallower, so that doesn't happen.

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After a day filled with slapshots being fired at him in every direction, Professional Goaltender Dominic Roussel winds down behind his drum kit, far from the action of the NHL. "You don't have to spend time in a band to appreciate the influence of music in every-day life; playing the drums really helps me to focus and to relax. I love playing hockey – and I love playing music."

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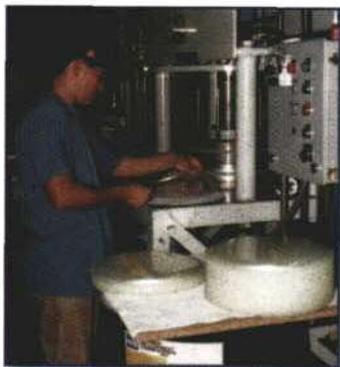
**SABIAN**



Rolls of polyester film are cut into "blanks," from which circles of film are stamped to be turned into drumheads. The scrap polyester film left over from the operation is sent overseas, where it's turned into fibers for carpet.

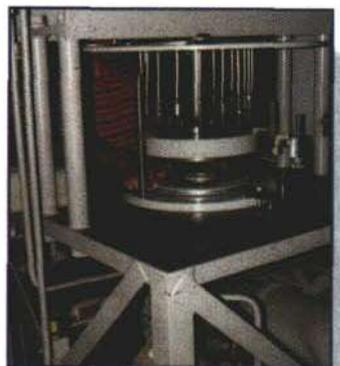
The bearing edge of the drum finds its own spot within the curve of the head."

A third unique element of Aquarian's drumheads is the polyester film from



The stamped-out circular blanks are still flat. This heated press is used to form a collar on each head. The heads will then be trimmed and pierced with holes in their edges. The holes will be penetrated by the resin that gets poured into the extrusion.

which they're made. Aquarian has dubbed it XR (extra-resonant) film, and they came upon it almost by accident. "We were



Heads are inserted into their hoops on a head-forming press that presses the polyester film into the outer T-channel. Once pressed into place, the head film can't move.

happy with the film we had been buying through a distributor," explains Roy. "But we couldn't always get delivery. This was a real problem, because some drum companies were talking to us about supplying heads for their drums. They were concerned about our ability to supply them in the quantity they'd need and in a timely fashion.

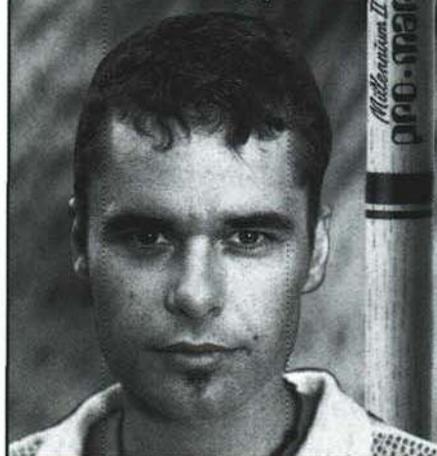
"Fortunately, there was a young drummer—who happened to work for a polyester film manufacturer—who loved our stuff. In late '95 he suggested to his employers that they might want to supply our needs for drumheads. When they called here I said, 'If we make a change, we want to make sure we're going to something better than what we've got now.' This was important, because to deal directly with a mill you have to buy a *huge* amount of stuff—tens of thousands of pounds per order—or they won't set up the run."

The supplier was actually able to beat Aquarian's stringent specifications, and a deal was struck. Aquarian agreed to buy all of their polyester film from that company, and the company agreed not to sell the same material to anyone else. So between this exclusive film, a unique collar, and a patented new hoop design, Aquarian feels that their drumheads have something genuinely different to offer the drum consumer.

"There are other factors, like the coating that stays on longer than anybody else's and doesn't chip off," adds Roy. "Additionally, we've done something that no one else has ever done with two-ply heads. The biggest problem with two-ply heads is the minute amount of air that gets trapped between the two sheets of head material. That trapped air is what creates the 'rainbow' effect you see on two-ply

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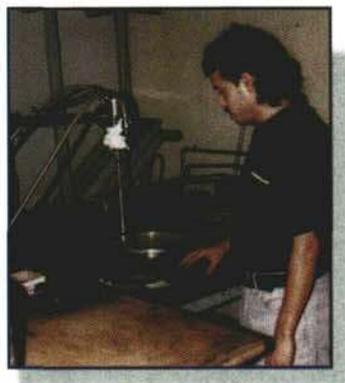
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heads. Some people think this is oil; but it's just air between the plies. This same trapped air makes it very difficult to get a pure tone from the head. But Ron and Dave came up with a way to vacuum the air from between the two plies. With our process there is never an air bubble—ever."

Aquarian offers two series of heads using this new process. The *Response 2* series is simply two 7-mil plies of head material sandwiched at the collar. "It reacts like a traditional two-ply head," says Roy, "in the sense that you have two 7-mil plies working together to get a nice [slaps hands] attack, and good mid-range."

Then there is the *Performance II* series, in which the edges of the heads are sealed with glue. Explains Roy, "Instead of reacting like two 7-mil plies, it reacts like one 14-mil head—but it's much more flexible than such a head could ever be. It has tremendous depth and pure low-end fundamental tone."

"When Joe Porcaro was here we had two floor tom-toms set up—one with each type of head," Roy continues. "He hit the one with the *Performance II*, and it sounded



**Hoops are filled with resin on a computer-controlled machine. (At one time Aquarian's resin was colored black, but the company found that it had better performance if left its natural color.) In only forty seconds the resin is cured to the point that the head can be handled. Depending on the model, the head might be given a coating, a dot, or a studio ring.**

very deep; he liked it a lot. Then he hit the one with the *Response 2* and said, 'Oh, this is much thinner.' I said, 'Believe it or not they are *exactly* the same thickness.' The two plies are the same, it's just a different method of manufacturing. But the beauty

of that is that a drummer can choose from either sound type and still get the tonal benefit of the vacuum process."

Tonality is a key selling point of Aquarian's heads, as Roy emphatically explains. "What's the point of expensive advertising and fabulous packaging if the consumer takes a drumhead out of the box and taps on it and it goes 'splat'?" he says. "You can't play a head into sounding better than it was to begin with. In order to get a good sound you've got to *start* with a good sound. Of course, the rest is up to the player. But our idea is that when a drummer opens that box and taps on an Aquarian head, he hears *music* right away."

Aquarian has experimented with heads for hand percussion, marching drums, and timpani. However, Ron Marquez's main concern at the moment is keeping up with the orders and keeping the quality up. "We're completely focused on the drumset at the moment," says Ron. "We're going to stay on this program until that is done. Then we'll move on. We do have plans—some of which are being implemented right now, because R&D can take months or

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even years. It's important to make sure that you are starting out on the right track."

The "right track" includes a tremendous amount of field testing. "You can't test anything accurately in the factory," says Roy, "because you never do it long enough to set up those vibrations we were talking about. So we only *begin* our testing process here—using a variety of drumkits so we're not always testing on the same kit. If the product seems good, we then send it to key endorsers, to a few key dealers, and to some local drummers who will tabulate how many hours they play, how hard they



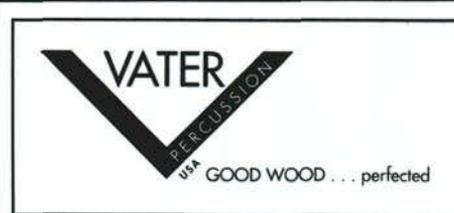
The final step in head production is the silk-screening of the familiar Aquarian black ring and logo—a task accomplished by this machine at the rate of 264 heads per hour. (The ring, by the way, is strictly cosmetic; it does nothing acoustically for the head.)

are playing, and how the product holds up versus something else. Once we are to a certain point we'll have Joe Porcaro take the item into the studio. That's really trial by fire."

Ron Marquez feels that Aquarian's ability to develop products "in-house" allows them to address the particular needs of drummers. "Of course we buy all of our raw materials from outside sources," he says. "But other than that we are totally self-contained in terms of product development and manufacturing. That allows us to do all the experimenting we want. Dave and I will often spend a weekend here—when no one is bothering us—developing something like a different model of drum-head. We are always looking to give drummers—who have been overlooked in every band since time began—a real *quality* product.

"As we've worked on all these things," Ron continues, "we've come to the conclusion that the best characteristic a manufacturer can have is perseverance. The development of our coating is a good example. It's very difficult to get anything to stick on untreated polyester film. So finding something that would stick tenaciously—especially with impact—took us *three years* of experimenting with different materials and techniques. The application of the coating is pretty standard; it's what

we do to the actual coating material that sets it apart from other coatings on the market. It doesn't chip off in the center after two weeks. You can play it for six months, easy. It will get a little thinner and



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a little smoother, but it doesn't chip off."

Aquarian's dedication to development is mirrored by their attitude towards quality control, as Roy explains. "If I wouldn't play on a product, then I don't want it out there. Fortunately, Dave and Ron are as quality-oriented as I am. If something doesn't work out the way we envisioned it when it gets to the field, we immediately go back to the drawing board. I truly believe that we react faster than anybody in the industry. When I was at Rogers, we would have a meeting and decide upon a plan—and a year later it would still not be implemented. At Aquarian, a new plan is implemented within five minutes after the end of the meeting. There's no interdepartmental politics here; there's no jockeying for recognition or position. We are three owners. We can't be promoted, we can't be fired, and nobody gets any more credit than anybody else. We either sink or swim together.

"Right now we have capabilities of doing 2,000 heads a day," says Roy. "I want to get up to 5,000. Developing our

production has been a constant growing process—just like developing our market has been. We've tried to cater to the drum shops who cater to the drummers, and the smaller stores were the easiest area to tap into initially. But we're now getting recognition from bigger stores in the US, and a bigger share of the foreign market all the time. On the other hand, the worst thing that could happen to us is uncontrolled growth. You don't want to go so fast that you lose control of your own ship. Then you get a reputation for poor delivery, poor quality control, and things of that nature.

"We feel that our timing has been really good," Roy continues. "Because our business has picked up so much, we now have the most up-to-date, high-tech drumhead facility in the world. And for a little company, we have a lot of patents, too. But we're not trying to come up with gimmicks that will take off; we're in it for the long haul. We want to make the best products we can. We'll worry about the other stuff later."



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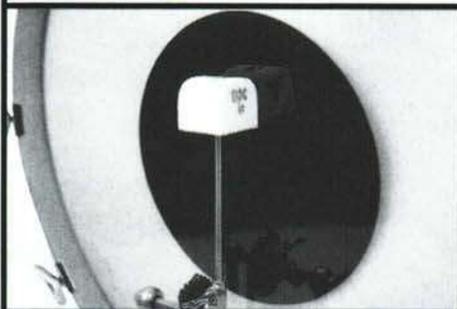
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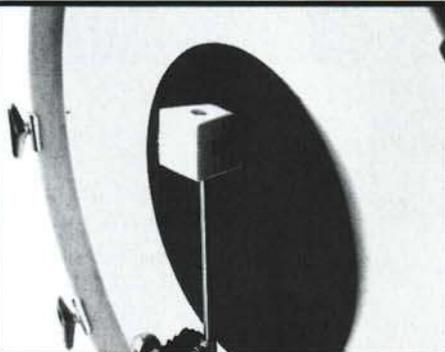
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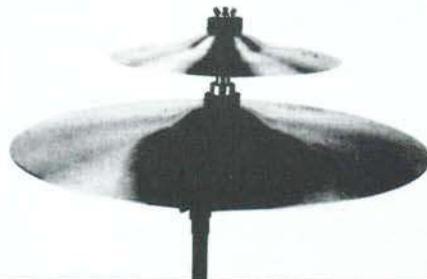
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# David Garfield's Tribute To Jeff Porcaro

by Robyn Flans

**A**ugust 5, 1997—the fifth anniversary of Jeff Porcaro's death—saw the US release of *Tribute To Jeff Porcaro*. Spearheaded by top LA studio keyboardist David Garfield, the CD features seventy-eight musicians—including Toto alumni and Porcaro family members—and drum tracks by such notables as Jim Keltner, Richie Hayward, Abe Laboriel Jr., Gregg Bissonette, Steve Gadd, Bernard Purdie, Steve Ferrone, Tris Imboden, Carlos Vega, Joe Porcaro, Simon Phillips, and Vinnie Colaiuta, not to mention an incredible array of percussionists, and such vocalists as Michael McDonald, Bill Champlin, Boz Scaggs, Don Henley, and Richard Marx. With a 40-page booklet that includes personal photos as well as drawings actually done by Jeff, this obviously isn't a run-of-the-mill project. A lot of the performances were donated, and Garfield is splitting the royalties with Jeff's children. There is no doubt that the project is David's heartfelt tribute to a musician and a friend.

David Garfield worked with Jeff from 1983 until the drummer's death in 1992. Between his involvement in the LA session scene and the recording of this project alone, Garfield is able to offer a comprehensive perspective on working with Jeff and with a multitude of today's leading drummers.

**RF:** What was the genesis of this project?

**DG:** I had always wanted to do something in Jeff's memory, but I didn't get an idea for the CD until I was approached by a Japanese company wanting to do a tribute recording. I realized that somebody was going to do it anyway, so I felt it was important that I rise to the occasion to make sure it was done right.

We planned it for almost two years. I felt if I were going to do a record about Jeff, it obviously needed to be oriented toward drummers. But it needed to be a drum *groove* record, not a drum *solo* record. My idea was to pick the drummers Jeff was influenced by, along with guys who were his peers, and have them each play on a song.

**RF:** What was magical about playing with Jeff?

**DG:** When we first started playing together, what blew me away the most was that he really put out all of his energy when he played. He was not a laid-back studio player. Although Jeff *sounded* laid back and in the pocket on the



records, when he played he put everything into it. That's what made him different from all the other guys.

**RF:** How did it make it different for you as a musician?

**DG:** The kind of energy and focus he would put into his take would often inspire a great performance out of me.

**RF:** Do you remember the first thing you ever did with him?

**DG:** In 1983 he came into the studio to play on one tune on my first CD. He was almost a larger-than-life character, even back then. Being around him was a thrill. Over the next few years, we would occasionally play on a session together or we'd do a gig at the Baked Potato. When I started producing some things in the later '80s and started using him in the studio, what really blew me away about him was how he would get the take before anybody else. He would get there early, learn the

song, and get his drums all tuned up with fresh heads. Then, when it came time to put the red light on, he would just *naïl* it. He'd keep playing great on the second or third takes, but he had already done it. I learned to save his first takes, because they were impeccable. He would go to all the right sections at all the right times. He wasn't like some guys who would say, "Let me punch that in" or "Let me do that again."

**RF:** How did you come up with the list of drummers and the music for the *Tribute* project?

**DG:** That was pretty easy. Jeff was crazy about Jim Keltner, Bernard Purdie, and Vinnie Colaiuta. And, of course, his dad was somebody I felt was a must. I've played with Joe a lot more since Jeff passed away. Steve Gadd's name came up as one of the drummers who Jeff respected a lot on the other coast—someone who would not normally be doing a session with us. Then there was Carlos Vega, who was like Jeff's sidekick; he came up right behind Jeff and was tremendously influenced by him. Simon Phillips was a logical call since he's with Toto—and from what I have heard, Jeff really admired and respected him. Then there was Richie Hayward, who Jeff really dug. Steve Jordan came in through Jeff's wife, who told me Steve was a friend of Jeff. We started out with a list of nine or ten, and every time we'd run into someone, the list grew. Abraham Laboriel Jr. was a protege of Jeff. He wasn't on the original list, but I went down to Florida and did some sessions with him and it turned out that he really reminds me of Jeff. He grew up in the studio watching Jeff, and he plays like him. I realized that guys like him should be represented as well, because they're the next generation.

I started calling everybody, and I asked them each to pick out a song that Jeff played on that they particularly liked and would want to remake, or to pick out a groove Jeff played that they really liked and that we could do a new song around. Gregg Bissonette wanted to do something based on a groove he played when he played with Toto. We based the whole arrangement of "Big Bone" on the "Rosanna" groove and then transcribed some of Jeff's fills



Left to right: Joe Porcaro, Steve Gadd, Jim Keltner, and Gregg Bissonette

from "Africa" and a few other songs and inserted them. We actually planned out certain drum fills, and it ended up being very subtle.

**RF:** Had you played with these drummers in prior situations?

**DG:** All but three or four of them.

**RF:** I'd like to take each drummer on the project and have you talk about his special qualities and what it's like to work with him.

**DG:** In the order of the record, I'll start with Carlos Vega. Carlos is a master of understatement, which is something he learned from Jeff. He learned how to say it within the groove and without too much flash and too many cymbal crashes. Carlos is just a very subtle, tasty drummer with smooth timing and finesse, who plays for the song. I was half expecting him to be the one to take Jeff's place in Toto. He was always Jeff's stand-in; he can play so much like Jeff.

Next was Steve Ferrone, who wanted to do Paul Simon's "Trains In The Distance," which Jeff played on. He was captivated by that song, and he said he thought Jeff probably played brush with one hand and bass drum. He loved Jeff's subtleties. From my experience working with Ferrone, I would say he plays for the groove, with no flash. He likes to keep it on the back side of the beat, too—real relaxed and solid. I personally like the way he held everybody down on "Let's Stay Together," which is what we ended up doing instead of "Trains," because we ultimately wanted to do an R&B classic.

Abe Laboriel Jr. amazes me. He is just like Jeffrey in the sense that he can get a song on the first take. When I recorded with him down in Florida, he'd get everything on the first take and then go off while everybody else was repairing the rest of the band's tracks. He focused on the song, learned the arrangement, and then nailed it. And once he nailed it, it was nailed; there was no question about it. Believe it or not, when he came into the project, he had never heard "Lowdown"—he's that young. We studied Jeff's track and transcribed certain licks. On the bridge, he plays the "Mashunga" beat. This record is filled with little, subtle, musical Jeff things. Abe is very powerful. He's what I consider to be the

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brightest rising drum star. To me, he's the next Jeffrey—ready to take over the studio thing. He plays very tastefully; he's an excellent musician. He's got a really big sound with 18" hi-hats, which is different, and he uses very few drums. He does use a few drums that Jeff gave him, too.

We did "If Six Was Nine" with Simon Phillips. I think he's a wonderful musician, and he's done a great job with Toto. But to me, he represents the opposite of Jeff. To begin with, he uses a ton of drums. If I work with Simon, I require a full three-hour session just to get his drums sound-checked properly. And he *used* every one of those drums on that song, too. Simon's also an excellent soloist, whereas Jeff never liked to solo.

Simon also has a very strong concept of how he thinks the drums should sound, and it's very identifiable. "If Six Were Nine" was the only song we did more than three or four takes on. Most of the time we only did three takes—usually we kept the first or third—and occasionally we did a fourth take. But in Simon's case we ended up doing six takes. But he has the enthusiasm to keep it going.

"Bag's Groove" is Joe Porcaro, who is one of the swingiest drummers I get to work with. The first time I heard him, at Dante's back in the '70s, I thought, "This guy sounds like Philly Joe Jones." We hit it off musically, and I love playing with him. We get into all kinds of McCoy Tyner/Elvin Jones kind of stuff. He's a great musician, and he's been like a surrogate father to me. He doesn't mind playing a little solo, either. There are three drum solos on the record: Simon's, Steve Gadd's, and Joe's.

"My Heart Wants To Know" is a new song we wrote about Jeff in his honor. It was a collaboration between four people, and the track has Tris Imboden on drums. Tris and Jeff go way back; they were contemporaries in local bands back in the early '70s. Tris reminds me a lot of Jeff in his playing.

I had been on the road with Tris right before we cut the record and we were planning to cut this song that I had written with Jason Scheff, John Pena, and Larry Lee. The lyrics are all about Jeff, and the song is one that Jeff would have played the hell out of. We decided to cut the song with

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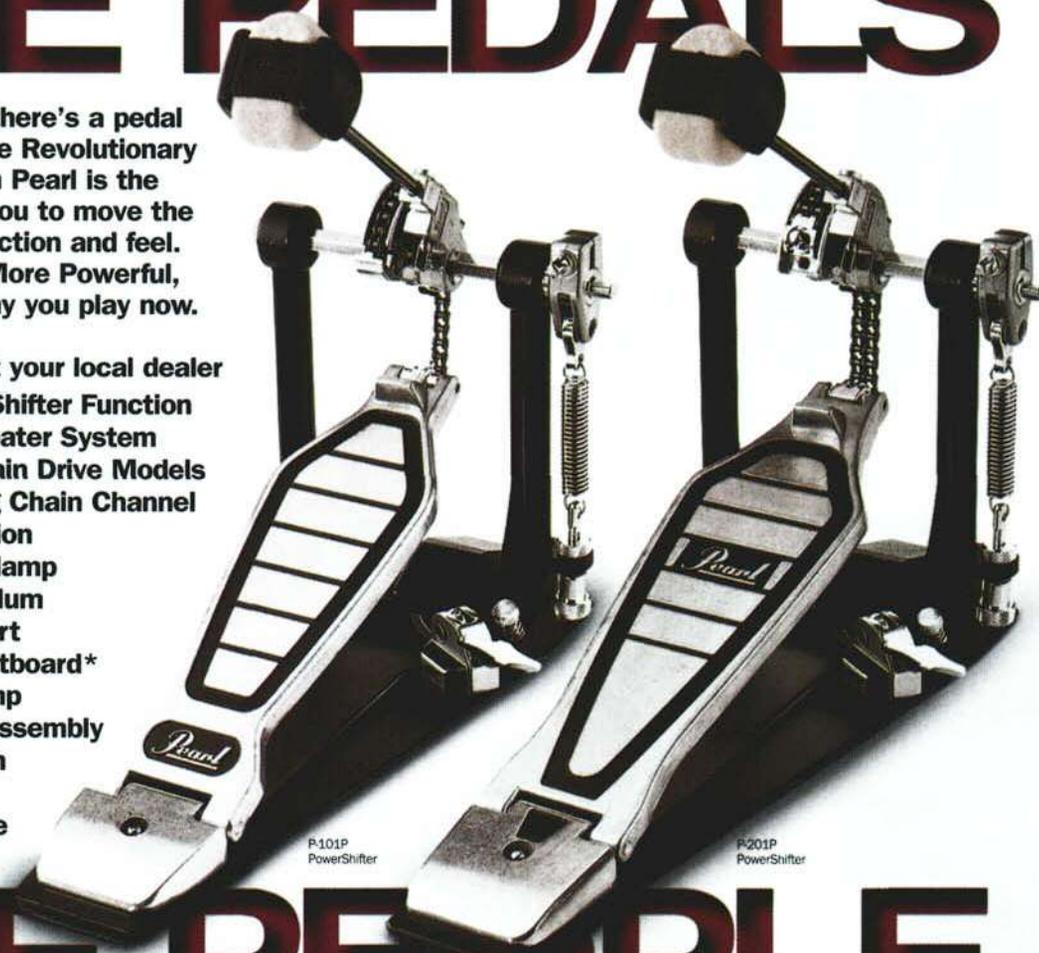
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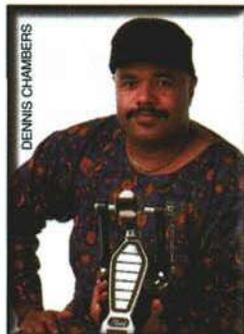
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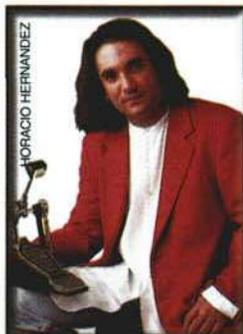
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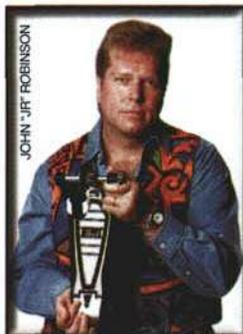
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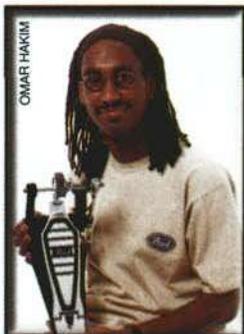
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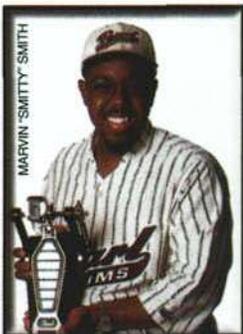
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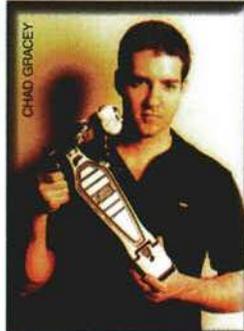
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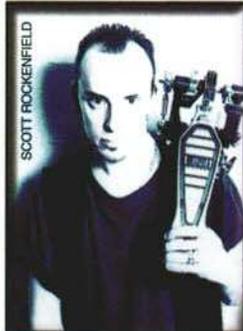
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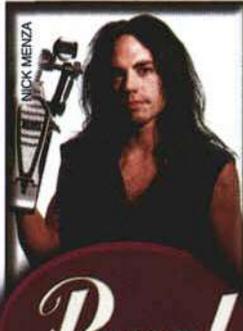
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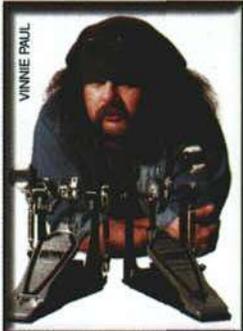
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Jason Scheff singing, along with Bill Champlin and Jay Graydon and some other guys—sort of a reunion of that contingent that used to work with Jeff. The stories and the jokes were flying, but it was a very cohesive unit. This particular track is like an LA hip-hop/funk track, and Tris really nailed it. What impressed me about Tris is that he took the demo tape home, learned the song, and came into the studio completely prepared with a whole little part worked out—which was a little different from what someone would normally play.

There are a couple of 2/4 bars and odd phrases, and he had them all worked out in advance, which was quite impressive. The groove he put down was very solid, but he can get a little flashy if he wants to.

"It Takes A Lot To Laugh, It Takes A Train To Cry" is a song Boz Scaggs picked out. The drummers on it are Richie Hayward and Jim Keltner. Boz had wanted us to do something from the Mad Dogs & Englishmen era because he said Jeff was really influenced by that and we didn't have anything on the record representing

that. On this cut, we got three guys from Little Feat and Jim Keltner, Boz, and organist Mike Finnigan—an eclectic mix. Jim is like a magician. He comes up with the most off-the-wall, creative stuff. He showed up early with his special Chinese tea in his thermos, and he had his sunglasses on and his arm bands. He's so incredible. Jim and Richie are very different drummers, but I figured they would play together great. Jim decided he wanted to do something with brushes, so the two of them are playing brushes and it really gives it a nice feel. Richie had the tendency to get a little busier than Jim, but together it was a good balance.

It's hard to explain Richie. I'm a big fan of Little Feat, and I know Jeff was too. This was the first time I got to work with Richie, and because of the two drummers and the size of the session, it was hard for me to really focus exactly on what he was doing. He's a wonderful guy. He's got a great vibe and a great sense of humor. The gathering of guys on that session was unbelievable, and Boz sang his vocal live. We didn't punch in one note. We had the two

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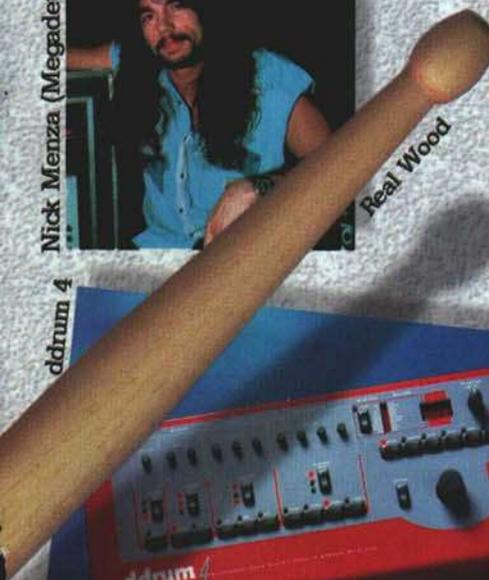
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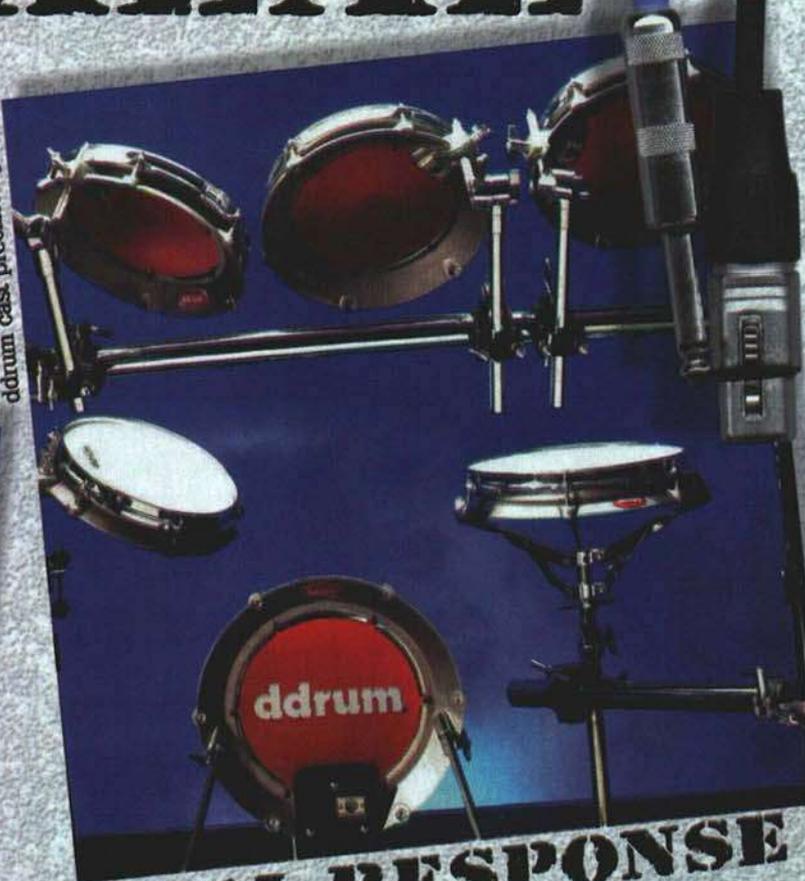


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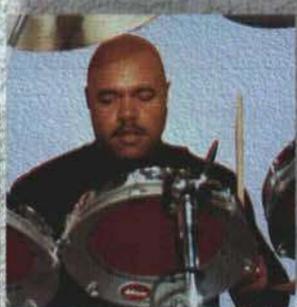
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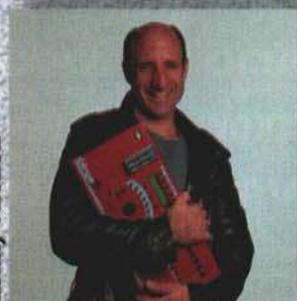
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guitar players from Little Feat. Fred Tackett has been working with Boz a lot with Jim Keltner, so we had those guys together and then Paul Barrere and Richie, also from Little Feat, and Neil Stubenhaus. It was an interesting mix. Jim was the bandleader in charge of tempo and the count off. Once we got the track, I had Jim do some overdubs on tambourine and tomtoms. The kind of stuff he comes up with is magical.

Next is Bernard Purdie. I had heard so much about Bernard and the "Rosanna"

beat and- "Babylon Sisters" from Jeff. When I was doing Jeff's instructional video, he wanted to do "Babylon Sisters," but we couldn't get it together in time because it was too complicated. So I felt I owed it to Jeff to cut that song on this record. I did the chart and got Bernard out here. He ended up playing a very strange kit with an 18" bass drum. He told us exactly how to mike it. He had very specific orders on how to get a sound. Bernard was a pleasure to work with. His groove was impeccable. His enthusiasm was great

and he was very supportive. When you're producing and playing at the same time, certain musicians can get you down and drain your energy. Other guys can energize you, and Bernard was like that. He was a trip: He was counting off the song before I was even sitting down at the piano. He was no-bullshit; it was, "Let's get the track." When we were sitting in the booth later, I played him a tape of Jeff talking about him that he had never heard, which brought tears to his eyes.

**RF:** When you worked with Bernard, could you see where Jeff got some of his stuff? Could you feel that connection?

**DG:** Oh yes, definitely. The Purdie shuffle was one of Jeff's favorite grooves. And then he took it somewhere else.

After that were the Gadd tracks. We did two tracks with Steve, mixed together like one big piece. To work with this guy was the biggest thrill of my life. I've always loved his playing, plus he's a neat guy. I picked him up at the airport the night before and took him to the Hughes Market so he could get some yogurt and stuff to take back to his hotel. The whole day in the

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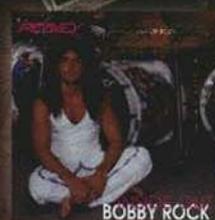
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studio was no-nonsense, all music. He was so easy to play with. He's got to be one of my favorite players in the world. He came in and got his stuff working—very relaxed and very professional. Every time we played, he would dig in, kinda like Jeffrey. His time and his whole concept was incredible, and I would have to say in terms of his attitude, he's the most like Jeffrey.

Then there's Gregg Bissonette. Gregg is such a scholar of the drums. He knows so much about everything to do with drums—what people played and how they played it. On his track, we arranged all these different grooves and sections. We rearranged a song Jeff wrote with me for the first Lobotomies record, called "Big Bone." We rearranged it based on the beat Jeff played on the end of "Rosanna," and then we transcribed some of Jeff's fills from various songs, so the whole tune



David Garfield (top left) and Joe Porcaro (center) share a moment with Jeff Porcaro's sons Miles (left), Christopher (right), and Nico.

is crafted around Jeff. Gregg is so scholarly like that. If you look up the word "drummer" in the dictionary, there will be a picture of Gregg in there. He's one of my best friends and one of my favorite drummers. If you recall, Gregg filled in for Simon in Toto when Simon was ill. On Gregg's track, I brought in Mike Porcaro and Steve Lukather, so it was almost a Toto reunion with Gregg. Luke and I had played on the original of that tune.

The last track is Vinnie. It's a ballad called "Long Time No Groove." We came up with this piano and synthesizer thing between David Benoit and myself. Then I went down to Nashville, and David Hungate put fretless bass on it. It's a beautiful piece. Hungate was telling us all these old stories about Jeff from when he was first working with him. He said that at the end of a ballad, Jeff used to wave his brushes in front of the mic's and move them

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left to right—and they used to sound like birds flying away. Jeff used to do this all the time, so we were instructed by Hungate to make sure to have that done on this tune. Originally we weren't going to have any drums on this song. Besides that, we didn't think Vinnie would be able to play on the project at all because he was out with Sting. But the project dragged on longer and longer, and we were able to get Vinnie on "Long Time" when he came in to play on "Twenty-One Drum Salute." We had him overdub some cymbals and colors, and

then we had him throw that brushes thing on the end. Vinnie had never done it before, but when he did it, it sounded exactly like we thought it would—and it's the last thing you hear on the record. Jeff's sister was down there that day and she recognized that thing Jeff used to do. It's more of a musical statement of "We miss you" than a drumming statement.

**RF:** Who is on the "Twenty-One Drum Salute" that you haven't mentioned yet?

**DG:** Peter Erskine, Ralph Humphrey, John Guerin, Dave Weckl, John Ferraro, and

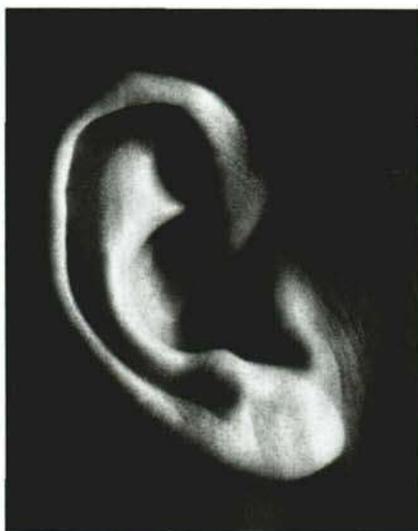
Mike Porcaro. We got Mike to play something on there because Jeff always talked about what a great drummer he was. Then Jeff's three kids played, along with his nephew, Chase, who is really a good drummer. As far as Jeff's kids go, Miles is the real drummer of the three, and he sounds good.

Then Steve Jordan played the cocktail drums. That was a trippy experience. He played a very cool part. Steve had very strong feelings about Jeff and about what to play. We kinda crafted his part in sections. We turned off a lot of the other guys' parts and he listened primarily to Gadd's part and got in time with him. I'd love to work with Steve again. He was very articulate with the music, very refined, and not afraid to have opinions.

Working with Dave Weckl was cool. He wanted us to come up with an effect to make him sound like a drummer in the distance. He had some very neat ideas, and he played only groove. Everyone thinks of him as a chops guy, but his attitude was, "This is about Jeff, and Jeff was about groove," so he locked into this great pocket and stayed there. We put him through this telephone filter that made it sound like a loop. So he's got his own sound, and we kinda put him off to one side.

Peter Erskine was also terrific to work with. He's just a great guy and a great musician. He came in with a piccolo snare and set up some cymbals, and it was a pleasure. Then John Guerin came up with a really cool tom-tom part. He was very melodic.

Everybody was a pleasure to work with. But most important of all, when you listen to this record and look at the booklet, you can't help but remember all the good things about Jeff.



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# PAiSte

## Terry Vinyard

Twenty-eight-year-old Atlanta native Terry Vinyard recently relocated to New York City in an effort to further his already well-established career. While in Atlanta, Terry played professionally for over fifteen years. He performed and recorded in virtually every musical genre, including rock, jazz, country, big band, and Top-40, and in venues from clubs to churches, and from weddings to outdoor festivals. He also managed to maintain an active teaching schedule, capitalizing on his degree in music performance from Georgia State University. (Terry cites a drum duet he played with Max Roach while a member of the college jazz band as a highlight of his life.)

Terry takes being "on the move" literally, since he moved to New York specifically



"to further myself as a musician in New York's culturally rich environment." He's since made an effort to play in as many situations as possible, calling on his diverse influences (Tony Williams,

Elvin Jones, Steve Smith, Terry Bozzio, Neil Peart, Jeff Porcaro, and Eddie Bayers, just to name a few) to help him fit into any potential gig. He's also busy building a teaching practice again. Says Terry, "Teaching younger players is the only way we as musicians can ensure that the rich legacy of our instrument will never die."

Terry's demo indicates that he is well-equipped, musically speaking, to meet virtually any drumming challenge. He's also well-equipped literally, with both a six-piece Pearl *Masters Custom* kit and a 1960s Ludwig four-piece jazz kit. He employs various Sabian and Zildjian cymbals, a bevy of both familiar and custom-made snare drums, and electronics that include Fishman triggers and an Alesis *D4*.

## Eric Adams

Eric Adams discovered his love for rhythm at the age of seven, when he played bongos while on a family vacation in Barbados. He began studying drums immediately upon his return, and he was playing in various bands and musical projects by the age of twelve. Throughout his teenage years he attended New York's Drummers Collective, where he gained insight from Horacee Arnold, Kim Plainfield, Robbie Gonzalez, Kenwood Dennard, Rick Considine, and the late Frankie Malabe. Additionally, Eric cites Greg Errico, Steve Gadd, Steve Smith, Omar Hakim, Robbie Ameen, Dennis Chambers, and Rick Marotta as major influences.

Since starting his professional career, Eric has worked with such recording artists as Will Downing, Regina Belle, saxophonist Marion Meadows, ska band Urban Blight, and R&B singers/rappers Vertical Hold. Demos of his work reveal Eric to be a drummer of taste, creativity, and versatility. He's currently touring with



Will Downing, along with keeping busy in the New York studio scene and backing a variety of performers regularly at Greenwich Village's historic Cafe Wha? He endorses GMS drums, Sabian cymbals and Vater drumsticks.

On the subject of playing style, Eric says, "I like to let the music around me dictate my part. No matter what style of music I'm playing, I try to let my ears do most of the work. What comes out might not always be *authentic*, but it's always totally *me*." As for goals, he says, "I want to keep my ears open and continue to improve. Hopefully, one day I can hang with the big boys."

## Todd Harrold

Todd Harrold's interest in music began at an early age, with an eclectic record collection that included the Beatles, Nat "King" Cole, and African music. After trying piano, guitar, and trumpet, Todd settled on the drums at the age of eleven. By fifteen he was also writing songs. His desire to take musical risks became evident when he was fired from his first band (at seventeen) for suggesting that they play more than Rush and J. Geils Band covers.

Todd studied music at Indiana University and Chicago's American Conservatory, and took lessons from Carl Allen, Peter Erskine, and other notable drummers. At the same time, he polished his

performing skills in various rock, jazz, reggae, ska, and soul bands. In 1989 he was acknowledged in *Downbeat* magazine for his songwriting and arranging skills.

In 1992 Todd formed his own band and recorded a CD called *Feels Like Rain*. Critical praise for this debut effort led to 1995's *Crow*. Single tracks from that recording received considerable Midwest airplay. In January of 1996 Todd restructured the band, and the new lineup released *Back From Dreaming*—a CD that demonstrates Todd's drumming, writing, and singing skills in a hard-edged, experimental approach. The band is con-



tinuing to tour in support of this new recording, combining their own work with that of King Crimson, Living Colour, and other like-minded groups.

Todd performs on drums from a 1985 Tama *Superstar* set originally made for Neil Peart and customized by the Fort Wayne Percussion Center. He also plays a Pearl free-floating piccolo snare and Zildjian cymbals.

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

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

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





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# Al Jackson Jr.

## King Of The Stax Studios

by Jim Payne

In the 1960s, when the term "soul" music was born, much of the attention focused on the South, home of soul's gospel and R&B roots. In Memphis, the Stax studio house band, Booker T. & the MGs (short for "Memphis Group"), featuring Al Jackson Jr. on drums, churned out hits like "Green Onions" and Rufus Thomas's "Walkin' The Dog." Wilson Pickett's "In The Midnight Hour," recorded at Stax in 1965, broke the scene wide open.

I met Al Jackson when I visited Stax in 1969. He was very congenial and friendly as he arrived for the day's session. His drumset was situated on a riser, which was leveled off to compensate for the slanted floor of the converted movie theater that served as the Stax studio. It was a very simple set with, I believe, a 20" bass drum, one rack tom, one floor tom, and two small cymbals—the largest was about 18" and very dead-sounding. A grand piano, a Hammond B-3 organ, and guitar and bass amps were spread out fairly close to the drumset, with some temporary baffles set up for the horns. Just two microphones were in place for the drums.

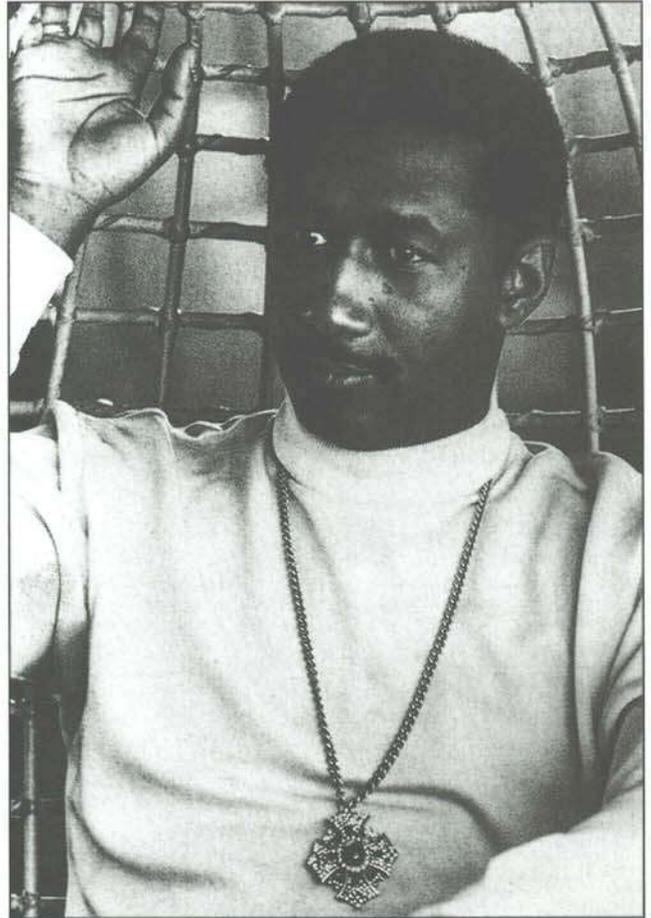
When Al sat down to warm up he played some very fast rolls and fills, and I realized that what he played on records was just the tip of the iceberg.

As the accompanying selected discography shows, Memphis-born Al Jackson Jr. became one of the most important and influential drummers of the entire soul era. He played on all of the classic soul hits that came out of the Stax studios, by artists such as Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, Eddie Floyd, Wilson Pickett, and many more. In the '70s, before his death, Jackson was responsible for the drumming and part of the songwriting on most of Al Green's greatest hits, recorded at Willie Mitchell's Hi Studio on the other side of town.

Al was the son of big band leader Al Jackson Sr. He began playing drums on stage with his father's band at the age of five. In 1962, after playing with Willie Mitchell's band, he was recruited by Booker T. Jones to play his first session at Stax.

Al was a few years older than the other members of the Stax session team, which included Steve Cropper (guitar), Duck Dunn (bass, who replaced Lewis Steinberg), and Booker T. Jones (keyboards, sometimes replaced by Isaac Hayes when schoolwork called). The younger players respected Al's experience and looked up to him. They relied on him to "put a pocket on it," as he called it—find the appropriate groove that would transform a good song into a great song that would *also* become a dance hit. This he did with a regularity that has yet to be surpassed.

Jackson's style was powerful, groove-oriented, and deceptively



simple. Many have imitated his playing, but few have captured its strength and feel. For the better part of ten years he came to work every day cranking out solid, creative grooves. His drumming became easily recognizable and an integral part of '60s and '70s soul.

Following are excerpts from an interview with Al Jackson's long-time partner at Stax, Steve Cropper.

### Al's Contribution In The Studio

"Everybody sort of pinned on Al. As writers and producers, we all had our ideas, and we all woke up in the morning knowing what we wanted to hear that day. We'd have arguments about it sometimes, but when it all came down, we usually keyed on what Al thought.

"I remember something with Sam & Dave's 'Hold On! I'm Comin'.' It was a good song with a good lyric and all that, but we

worked on that thing for about three hours, and just as we were about to say, 'Well guys, we better try this again tomorrow,' Al looked at me and I looked at him and he said, 'Let's go out there and put a pocket on this thing.' So we went out there by ourselves and sat down and basically came up with a new feel—that kind of funky thing in the chorus. And they came out and said, 'That's it! That's it!' Two or three takes later, you had your record. We used to do that a lot.

"Al contributed a bunch to the way things turned out. A lot of the writers had great songs and great melodies, but they didn't know what pocket to put them in to really make good dance records. It usually took Al to do that."

### The Stax Sound

"A lot of the drum sound was, I think, accidental. You know, bring the drums in and put a mic' on 'em. Move the mic' around till it sounds good.

"What a lot of people probably don't understand is that the drums Al played stayed there 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with the same microphones on them. It was that way for a long time, when we were cutting all the mono records, 'Green Onions,' the Rufus Thomas stuff, and all of that. Al never changed those drums. I think he had a Ludwig and Rogers combination, kind of a mix 'n' match. He had a medium-size kick drum, 20" I believe, and he had a Rogers floor tom, grey pearl, and then a little 12" tom. It was a little black drum.

"The other thing that Al used to do that was different—he wasn't the only drummer who ever did it—but when he came down to do a session, the first thing he did was reach in his back pocket, and pull out this big fat billfold, and plop it on the snare. The old records didn't have a lot of decay time; the snare didn't ring too much and there's not a lot of cymbals, because we didn't mike the cymbals."

### Drum Rhythm Concepts

"Probably one of the funkier rhythms I ever heard was the one Al used on 'Crosscut Saw' by Albert King. It was kind of like a Latin thing with cross-stick. Also, the double of the beat on "Try A Little Tenderness" by Otis Redding kind of took everybody by storm. As far as I remember that wasn't worked up. Al just started doing that and everybody said, 'Yeah, Al, Yeah!' and fell right in. That's how creative he was. He had all those chops. He could cut all the riffs with the horns, too. He could have been anybody's drummer."

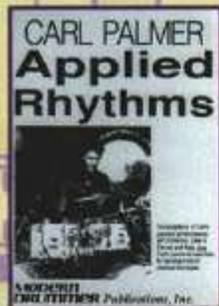
*Jim Payne is an author, drummer, and drum teacher, living in the New York City area. He has played and recorded with a variety of R&B and funk artists, including Maceo Parker and Fred Wesley. This article is based on information in his new book, Give The Drummers Some!, a 280-page book/CD package available through Warner Bros./Manhattan Music. Used with permission.*

## "Put A Pocket On It" A Selected Discography of Al Jackson Jr.

Artist/Title	Year	Chart Peak R&B	Chart Peak Pop	Label
<b>Booker T, &amp; the MGs</b>				
Green Onions	1962	1	3	Stax 127
Hip Hug-Her	1967	6	37	Stax 211
<b>Otis Redding</b>				
These Arms Of Mine	1963	20	85	Volt 103
Pain In My Heart	1963	61	61	Volt 112
Mr. Pitiful	1965	10	13	Volt 124
I've Been Loving You Too Long (To Stop Now)	1965	2	21	Volt 126
Respect	1965	4	35	Volt 128
I Can't Turn You Loose	1965	11	85	Volt 130
Satisfaction	1966	4	31	Volt 132
Fa Fa Fa Fa Fa (Sad Song)	1966	12	29	Volt 138
Try A Little Tenderness	1967	4	25	Volt 141
Tramp (w/Carla Thomas)	1967	2	26	Volt 216
(Sittin' On) The Dock Of The Bay	1968	1	1	Volt 157
<b>Wilson Pickett</b>				
In The Midnight Hour	1965	1	21	Atlantic 2289
Don't Fight It	1965	4	53	Atlantic 2306
634 5789	1965	1	13	Atlantic 2320
Ninety Nine And A Half (Won't Do)	1965	13	53	Atlantic 2334
<b>Eddie Floyd</b>				
Knock On Wood	1966	1	28	Stax 194
<b>Arthur Conley</b>				
Sweet Soul Music	1967	2	2	Atco 6463
<b>Sam &amp; Dave</b>				
You Don't Know Like I Know	1966	7	90	Stax 180
Hold On! I'm Comin'	1966	1	21	Stax 189
You Got Me Hummin'	1966	7	77	Stax 204
When Something Is Wrong With My Baby	1967	2	42	Stax 210
Soul Man	1967	1	2	Stax 231
I Thank You	1968	4	9	Stax 242
<b>Albert King</b>				
Laundromat Blues	1966	29		Stax 190
Oh Pretty Woman	1966			Stax 197
Crosscut Saw	1966	34		Stax 201
Down Don't Bother Me	1966			Stax 201
Born Under A Bad Sign	1967	49		Stax 217
Cold Feet	1968	20	67	Stax 241
(I Love) Lucy	1968	46		Stax 252
<b>Al Green</b>				
Tired Of Being Alone	1971	7	11	Hi 2194
Let's Stay Together	1972	1	1	Hi 2202
Look What You Done For Me	1972	2	4	Hi 2211
I'm Still In Love With You	1972	1	4	Hi 2216
You Ought To Be With Me	1972	1	3	Hi 2227
Call Me (Come Back Home)	1973	2	10	Hi 2235
Here I Am (Come And Take Me)	1973	2	10	Hi 2247
Livin' For You	1973	1	19	Hi 2257
Let's Get Married	1974	3	32	Hi 2262
L-O-V-E (Love)	1975	1	13	Hi 2282



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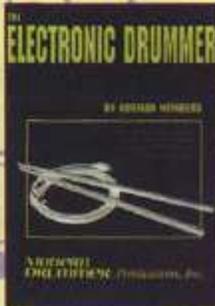


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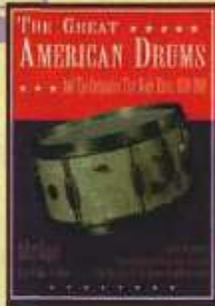


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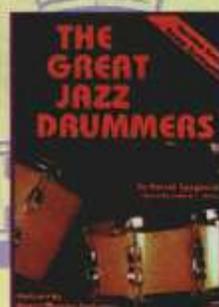
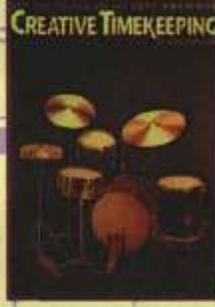


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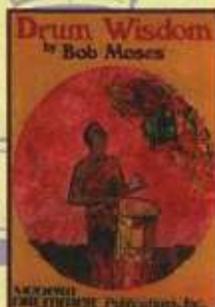


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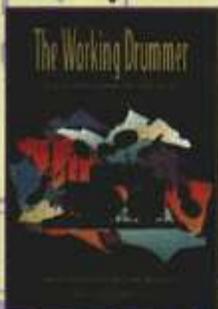
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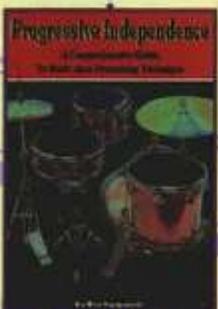
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MOD7

# Browsing For The Beat

by Matt Peiken

When technicians first developed the Internet as a channel of communication between our nation's computers, nobody envisioned that, among other things, people would eventually use it to sell drums. And while the World Wide Web probably hasn't directly resulted in many sales, by now, every major musical equipment manufacturer has established at least some presence on this low-cost global pipeline, pitching their wares from America to Argentina.

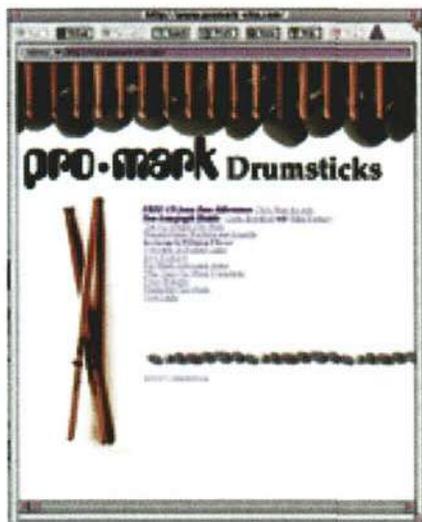
For drummers, an obvious benefit is the ability to compare makes, models, and prices of kits, cymbals, and accessories without leaving the drum throne—provided, of course, that your throne is set up in front of your personal computer. Within an hour, you can easily browse a dozen Web sites and come away with impressions and opinions about the various equipment that best meets your needs.

There is one universally significant shortcoming. The information you receive (through images, text, and sound) is limited by the information each company places onto its Web site. Some companies go for glitter, others for substance, while some settle on simplicity. As with all forms of marketing, a manufacturer that hires professional Web designers, writers, and graphic artists can make a better impression than the company that puts up a no-frills site.

Still, as seasoned Web surfers know, content is key. So with that in mind, let's take a look at the pictures a handful of drumming-related companies are painting on the World Wide Web.

## Pro-Mark ([www.promark-stix.com](http://www.promark-stix.com))

An avalanche of drumsticks welcomes you to Pro-Mark Online, a modest yet visually striking site with features



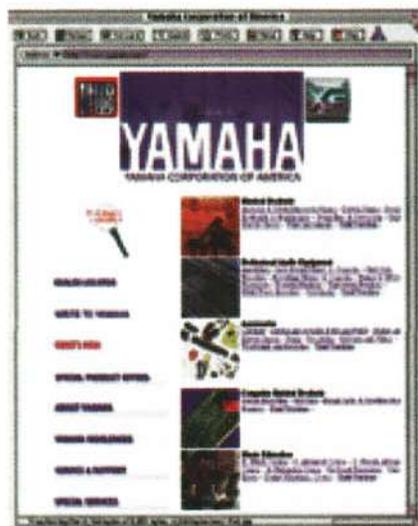
stretching beyond the company catalog. As with all other companies mentioned in this column, Pro-Mark roots its site with details about its entire product line. Here, you can learn about the manufacturing process and the various wood types that give each line of sticks its unique characteristics. There's a link to Pro-Mark's many endorsers and, at the time of this writing, you could register for a free sampler CD of Dave Abbruzzese's new band, Green Romance Orchestra.

## Yamaha ([www.yamaha.com](http://www.yamaha.com))

Yamaha gets more than 5,000 visitors a day to its site, where a link to the company's drum line is just part of a vast site profiling

Yamaha's wide spectrum of musical equipment. Once you navigate your way to the main page for drums and percussion, you have your choice of six avenues of attention: sets and hardware, concert percussion, drum machines, electronic percussion, snare drums, and student percussion.

Here you can check out photos,



product specifications, and sound characteristics of products throughout the Yamaha drum line. The site could use more personality—for instance, you won't find endorser profiles or features—but if you're simply after the facts about Yamaha products, they're here in volumes.

## Gretsch ([www.gretsch.com](http://www.gretsch.com))

Gretsch has sort of taken the opposite approach with its site, which could appeal as much to general music fans as to drummers interested in Gretsch's product line. The best aspect of this site is the links to Web sites dedicated to some Gretsch endorsers,

including Vinnie Colaiuta and Phil Collins.

While a bit light on product information, the site features a brief description of the manufacturing process behind Gretsch drums. You can also check out and order Gretsch wear and other accessories.



### Slingerland (www.gibson.com)

Tucked deep inside the general Web site for Gibson's array of stringed instruments is a button leading you to an impressive corner of the Web dedicated to Slingerland drums.



A vintage photo of Gene Krupa and a bit of company history greet visitors, who can then avail themselves of a behind-the-kick view of Slingerland's *Studio King* drumkits. You also get detailed descriptions of what goes into

these drums, down to the lugs, hoops, and badges. There's also brief information about the setups of Bernard Purdie and other featured endorsers.

### Drum Workshop (www.dwdrums.com)

Drum Workshop drapes a clean, attractive industrial-tech motif over its Web site, which features a small but fun array of diversions.

A button on the home page beckons you to check out DW's *25th Anniversary Collection*. Along with details on the company's drums

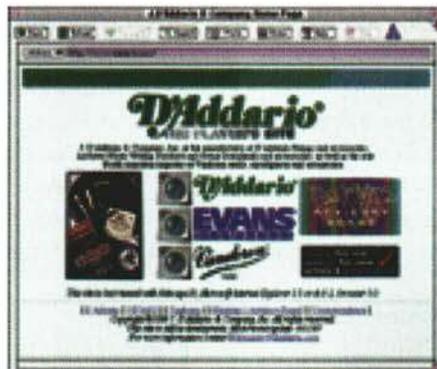


and hardware, you get nice close-up photos showing the differences between DW's *Collector's*, *Vintage*, *Edge*, and *Craviotto* shells. On the latter, you can peek over Johnny Craviotto's shoulder to see how he cuts and shapes a shell from scratch.

While you're checking out the setups preferred by an array of DW endorsers, don't pass up the opportunity to gawk at Bobby Rock's insane rig. Unfortunately, the diagram doesn't explain how Rock actually *uses* his eleven pedals.

### D'Addario (Evans Drumheads) (www.daddario.com)

From there, you might want to check out Evans drumheads by



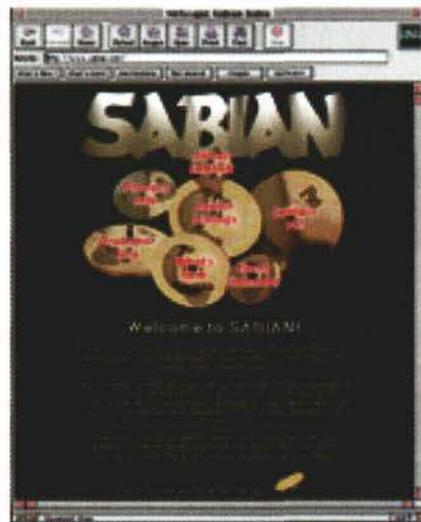
connecting to the site put up by D'Addario. Along with profiles and biographies of its endorsers, you get descriptions, sonic properties, and recommended musical applications for each type of head. And unlike other sites mentioned

here, Evans lists retail prices throughout its product line in an easy-to-read, color-coded chart.

### Sabian (www.sabian.com)

Of course, you can't complete your kit without cymbals. At Sabian's Web site, you not only get charts comparing the prices and pitches throughout Sabian's cymbal line, but access to "Smart Cymbal Tips" for keeping any cymbals crack-and smudge-free.

There are also listings for Sabian dealers and the company's clothing line, though you have to wonder how current the information is when you see that the profile for Jimmy Chamberlin still lists him as the drummer for Smashing Pumpkins.



Matt Peiken has contributed features and reviews to *Modern Drummer* magazine since 1990. His own Web site is at [www.pioneerplanet.infi.net/~mapeiken](http://www.pioneerplanet.infi.net/~mapeiken). Reach Matt by e-mail at [mapeiken@pioneerplanet.infi.net](mailto:mapeiken@pioneerplanet.infi.net).

# SPEAK OUT: Extracurricular Activities

*Modern Drummer Online (at [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com)) features a section called "Speak Out," where drummers are invited to give their opinions on various drumming-related topics. This month's topic focuses on extracurricular activities. We asked drummers to speak out about some of the activities that they're involved in outside of drumming that they feel help their playing.*

The perfect activity for a drummer is weightlifting. I lift four times a week and it helps my stamina and speed. My friend Bobby Rock is a good professional example of what weight training can do for you.

Albert C. Moyer Jr.

I am an avid hunter of several types of animals. When going after an animal you must work on quick responses and fluid movement along with following through to be successful. It takes some practice; like playing drums, it is easy to learn but hard to master. Other hunting skills that I apply to drumming are patience, precision, and taste. Well-learned skills and techniques will always bring home your rewards!

Robert Clark

One extracurricular activity that has helped my playing immensely is studying martial arts, Jeet Kune Do in particular. Any martial arts, if properly taught, will improve a drummer's stamina and self-discipline. Jeet Kune Do is a martial art that was developed by Bruce Lee. I feel that JKD's concepts concerning economy and conservation of motion and its "One Inch Punch" technique can be of particular value to drummers. The quickest path between two points is a straight line. JKD emphasizes linear movements that do not require an excess expenditure of energy.

Phil Galante  
Copenhagen, Denmark

I have been an avid bowler for eight years now. I'm nineteen years old. I carry an

overall average of 190. My highest game to date is 279. My highest three-game series is 733 (222, 244, 267). The feature that really stands out the most about bowling is concentration. I hate to hear from people who feel bowling is just a bunch of fat, beer-drinking forty-year-olds with nothing else to do for fun. If some people think that is true, try bowling twelve strikes in a row and see how easy it is. Anyway, concentration is what I'm trying to stress here as far as drumming is concerned. Even though I've been drumming for only six months, my concentration has played a big part in my drumming. Some people think I've been playing for years, which surprises me.

Brian Daniels

Besides drumming—a passion of mine since the fifth grade school band (I'm twenty-seven now)—I'm also an artist, hot rod owner/builder, and avid pool player. Each activity calls for its own level of talent, creativity, finesse, and attention to detail. And each one has helped my drumming in ways felt inside, which is heard outside. Creativity isn't limited to one area, it's incorporated into everything you do. The goal is to tap into that endless pool of energy and imagination. Express your hobbies through your playing. If it's a powerful emotion like driving a 400 hp car, then express that. The rumble, power, car shake, tire screech, smoke—any activity has its own feelings it bestows upon you. Feel it, harness it, play it.

Michael Attardo

What I like to do besides play the drums is play guitar. If I wanted to learn to copy Lars Ulrich's playing on a Metallica song, I would learn the song on guitar. That helps me to really "feel" the song.

Scott Brooks

One activity that I do besides drumming is playing the piano. I just started lessons, and I would highly recommend it to other drummers, for several reasons. For

one, the piano has been a big help in toning and strengthening my fingers. We all know how important finger control is in drumming. Finger strength comes in quite handy when playing fast singles, doubles, rolls, and anything else.

Another reason is that the piano has helped my music reading, which has also helped my ability to read drum charts. Drummers may not read definite-pitched notes, but we do play on different drums on a drumset. Reading piano music and having to quickly play whatever note I'm looking at has strengthened my ability to quickly read a note in drum music and respond by hitting the right drum.

Spencer Vliet

I feel the most important thing I do other than playing is exercising. Running is especially beneficial to me since I use my bass drum a lot. My legs used to cramp up, but now I can play for hours.

Disco King

I find that racquetball is a sport that allows me to work out my entire body at once. Such as in the case of drumming, every part of your body is being utilized to play. Racquetball is a great way to stay in shape and have fun.

Vinny Commisso

Golf is a great activity away from drumming, and it's certainly a complement. Attributes that are inherent to solid drumming—for instance, relaxation, focus, and solid tempo—are three things necessary to hitting a golf ball successfully. I feel any enforcement of these qualities away from the drumset is important. As an added bonus, it's nice to get away for four hours to the peace and quiet of the outdoors so your ears can stop ringing!

Scott Burkholder



# Chad Smith

by Robyn Flans



*The unfortunate thing about having to commit a Chad Smith interview to paper is the risk of losing something in the translation. Chad's personality is animated, he's funny, and he often speaks with his tongue firmly in his cheek, so you just never know quite what he's going to say next. It's refreshing to see someone of Chad's stature within the music industry who still maintains the enthusiasm of an avid fan. Hopefully,*

*that comes across in this interview conducted at NRG Studios in North Hollywood, California, where Chad and Chili Peppers bandmate Dave Navarro were working on their own side project.*

**RF:** Let's first talk about previous Chili Peppers drummer Jack Irons.

**CS:** Jack played on my favorite Chili Peppers record, *Uplift Mofu Party Plan*. I really enjoyed the drumming that Dave Abbruzzese did with Pearl Jam, but I think that Jack has injected a new sort of maturity into that band, which I enjoy on their new record. Jack has always been very supportive of me with the Chili Peppers. If I ever needed to ask him how he played a certain part of a song or something, he was always cool. He's a great guy, and he has the raddest tattoos of any guy that I know. He has got some bold, bold whales on his back that are just the coolest. Jack is a very inspiring person, and a good friend.

## Steve Jordan

**CS:** Steve Jordan is a rock star! I really enjoy the stuff that he did with Keith Richards' band, the Ex-Pensive Winos. I saw them play and I was blown away; I thought Steve was great. I really enjoyed seeing *Hail Hail Rock And Roll*—the Chuck Berry concert movie where Chuck used Keith's band and Steve was playing. I also enjoyed watching Steve play on the David Letterman show. I thought it was really cool how he had his cymbals way up high.

That was probably not the most physically economical way to play, but it looks good.

Steve is a really solid player. He's got the old-style rock, bluesy type playing down hard, and he always has a really good popping high snare drum sound. I just think he's a wonderful musician. I don't know him personally, though.

## Zigaboo Modeliste

**CS:** Zig-man? Zigaboo could be one of the funkier human beings walking the face of the earth. The playing he did with the Meters was groundbreaking. When I first joined the Chili Peppers, Anthony [Keidis, singer] gave me a Meters record and said, "Listen to this. If you can pick up anything through osmosis, this is the kind of funk we're into." That record was my first hardcore exposure to Ziggy. The feel that he has is indescribable; I don't think anyone else has it. Any musician, not just a drummer, owes it to himself to listen to the Meters and to Ziggy. He's the man!

## Phil Rudd

**CS:** God, Phil Rudd plays 2 and 4 like nobody else. I had the privilege to see AC/DC track their last record, because Rick Rubin produced it and we work with Rick a lot. I think Rick was somewhat instrumental in getting Phil back in the band. They had gone through some other drummers, which goes to show you how changing one person—and certainly the drummer—will change the sound of even a very simple band like AC/DC. *Powerage* is one of my favorite records; Phil's drumming goes to show that although you may be able to play a bunch of notes, what's important is being able to play 2 and 4 and make it feel like that. Phil has a definite feel in his simple way of playing. He's very inspiring to me. He and Charlie Watts, as far as playing rock 'n' roll music, are two of the guys who can play really simple with incredible taste and personality, and as solid as a rock. Phil is the man! He's the man again! He really is. He is one of the many men. [laughs]

## John Bonham

**CS:** That's an easy one. John Bonham is probably the greatest rock drummer who ever lived. Everybody knows it, so everyone tries to emulate his sound. But no one can do it. It's too bad that John Bonham is not alive, because I'm sure he would still be making amazing music. Bonham was very funky. A lot of people think of "the John Bonham sound" as the loud, big drum sound, so they just try to play real loud to sound like him. But John Bonham didn't just hit the drums really hard; it's *how* he hit them. That goes to show that how you hit the drums, and how you mike your kit, is really a big part of your sound, and he was the guy for that.

## Art Blakey

**CS:** He's another innovator, from the bebop era. The cool thing about Art is that he played right up until he died. But he was always staying fresh; he always wanted to know about new things. He didn't say, "Here's my jazz thing. This is what I do, and I'm stuck here." He was always growing as a musician, as all musicians should. Art Blakey and Elvin Jones are probably the two jazz

guys for me. I mean Elvin was kind of the John Bonham of his time, for that kind of music.

Art Blakey was another guy whose personality came through the drums. I saw him at Catalinas two years before he died. He was so exuberant and had so much life and was so into it. He preserved and helped put out the greatest American music, which is jazz. He took it everywhere. He was also a great bandleader. A lot of people think of drummers as the guy in the back, but Art Blakey was a *leader*. He had a sense of humor—and that voice. He was just a character, man. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing him. Kids often listen only to what's going on today, but they should go back and listen to any records he was on. They are in for a treat if they check him out.

## Richie Hayward

**CS:** Richie's a great guy and a great drummer. I dig his sort of unorthodox style. There is something about the way he comes up with stuff. I don't think he's a schooled guy, and you can't teach that kind of stuff anyway. I think it's the same with the drummer from Sly & the Family Stone, Greg Errico. It's not about the technical, it's the way he played and came up with stuff that made it sound that way. I'm certainly an advocate of taking lessons and studying, but sometimes when people just play from feel and are self-taught it's very original and unique. I think that Richie is one of those guys. The way he plays sounds really original to me.

## Robin Goodridge

**CS:** I'm not that familiar with Bush, but what I hear on the radio sounds cool.

## Gene Krupa

**CS:** I love Gene Krupa! Drummers would simply not be where we are today if it wasn't for Gene Krupa.

**RF:** Why?

**CS:** Because he brought the drums to the forefront in the '30s. Gene Krupa was kind of a teen idol, like a movie-star type guy. I mean he was handsome. A lot of his playing was overlooked because he was really into being a showman, and people focused on that. But the stuff he did with Goodman was great. He was a simple but powerful drummer. What do I like about Gene Krupa? He really had style, man. And he was another bandleader. And again, although he played until he was really old, he was really into keeping up with what was going on. He's the guy that made people pay attention to the drums.

## Keith Moon

**CS:** John Bonham, Mitch Mitchell, and Keith Moon were probably my three major influences when I was a kid. For Keith Moon, the drums were like a lead instrument. I had never really heard that before—certainly not in rock music. He is the guy I really think had the most personality.

**RF:** And showmanship.

**CS:** Oh, totally. He was all about the show. I had never heard anyone incorporate crashes in the middle of fills. Usually drummers crashed when they finished a fill. I thought that was really cool. Obviously, less was not more with Keith Moon, which I think was a reflection of his lifestyle as well. He was a pretty excessive guy.

It's a shame that it took its toll on him.

So many drummers sound generic these days. But Keith Moon had so much personality, and you really heard it in his drumming. He had a sound and everything, but it was more the *way* he played and how he approached the music—not just keeping a straight little beat—that influenced me.

## Stephen Perkins

**CS:** Stephen Perkins definitely has his own thing, which is hard to do these days. He has a very original style. I think the drumming he did with Jane's Addiction was some of the best rock drumming in the last ten years. Obviously, since I'm playing with Dave [Navarro, former Jane's Addiction guitarist] I always get, "Well, what would Perkins do?" So I say, "Why don't you call him and get him down here!" No, Stephen's a great guy—we're friends. He played on our last record. I love to watch him play. Again, he's a guy who's always into new stuff. He's triggering and doing crazy stuff, and he always has some crazy new setup. We're going to do something together one of these days. That could be really fun.

## Matt Cameron

**CS:** Matt is one of the latest and greatest. Soundgarden and the Peppers played together on Lollapalooza '92, which was a real treat. I would always get there in time for their set, because I always wanted to watch them play. Obviously Matt has a jazz background, but he still plays with conviction. He does that odd time thing so seamlessly, which I find amazing. I would be lost. And it doesn't sound like he's playing odd time. Matt is one of the best guys going today. If I was a kid, I would listen to those Soundgarden records and play along to them because he has a really good feel.

## Brad Wilk

**CS:** Brad Wilk from Rage Against The Machine. I think the word "Machine" is part of their band name because Brad *is* a machine! He hits *hard*. We played with them last summer at some festivals, and they played right before us. I'd go out and watch them and think, "Man, these guys are hittin'! We gotta get out there and really....," you know. It really made us want to play well, because they're a really powerful band.

I like the way that Brad plays. He plays a lot of beats with his crash. He's simple and powerful. He gets a good sound, and he's ferocious. I definitely hear John Bonham in his playing. He's fierce: When he plays, he *means* it, and I like that. I like to see guys with real conviction. I'm kinda from the same school, so I enjoy that. Kids, go buy those Rage Against The Machine albums, and check them out. They're doing a cool thing right now, and Brad drives their band, no doubt about it.

## David Garibaldi

**CS:** That "East Bay grease" funk that he came up with really inspired me, although I got turned on to it in 1982, long after it came out. Stuff like "What Is Hip" and "Soul Vaccination" blew me away. I tried to play along with "What Is Hip," but it was like, "How is he doing that?" He took the James Brown/Clyde Stubblefield/Jabo Starks funk, and did it in a whole different way. I mean people *sample* his stuff, and they *still* can't figure out how

he did certain beats. I've had the pleasure of doing some clinics with him and hanging out with him, and he's a very sweet guy. I feel like such a groupie sometimes, just picking his brain. He's always really cool.

David is definitely one of the big influences on me as far as funk drumming. He's obviously a real student of the drums, and he's another one of those guys who's always striving to be a better musician. I really admire that. When I went to make my video for DCI, they sent me some videos to study, and I thought that his were some of the best. He's really good at conveying; he's a good teacher. It's pretty funny when we do clinics, I get out there and go, "Yeah, yeah, this is what I do. I just play in this band and here it is...ba dap psst." He's like, "Let's start on beat 4 after the "&" of 2. Okay, we're all gonna do that together now." We certainly have different styles of expressing our love for the instrument. But I suppose the balance is good.

### Adrian Young

**CS:** He's really good. We played with No Doubt in England last year. I didn't know too much about their band. All I knew was that that girl was kind of cute, so I went out front to check her out. But while I was checking her out, I saw what a really good up-and-coming drummer Adrian Young is. I met him at the NAMM show, and he was very nice. I said, "God, you guys are doing great," and he was going, "Yeah, I know. I can't believe it. Isn't it great?" instead of, "Oh yeah, man, cool, like, my new car...." He was like a kid. He was genuinely excited about it, which is really refreshing. And I dig his hairstyle when he puts the little horns....

**RF:** The horns are gone, I think.

**CS:** He lost the horns? I always enjoyed the horns. Oh well, he's doing great. Obviously people are digging the record, so he must be doing something right.

**RF:** Six times platinum.

**CS:** Really? Good for him. God bless him. Save your money, dude!

### Patty Schemel

**CS:** I think Hole is a good band. I don't know that much about Patty, and I've never seen her play, but she sounds good.

### Chad Gracey

**CS:** Any guy named Chad is okay with me. I think he gets a good sound out of his drums. He's solid, man. I'm not a huge Live fan, but what I hear I like. I met Chad once when I was walking my dogs. He seems like a nice kid.

### Peter Criss

**CS:** Oh man! I loved KISS when I was a kid. Not really anymore, but I liked them when I was nineteen. They were definitely influential to me, with the whole showmanship thing—the big show and the entertainment factor. I loved that. And Peter always seemed to play what was right for the song.

**RF:** Any particular song that sticks out in your mind?

**CS:** Their first record is the one that I like the best. "Strutter," "Cold Gin," "Fire House," all those songs. My brother used to say, "Why do you like KISS? Those guys stink. They can't play, their songs blow. You like Led Zeppelin. They're really good." I'd say,

"I know, but KISS is cool, man. They breathe fire and spit blood, and they wear makeup." Besides that, Peter was the big-drumset guy. I probably liked Pearl drums because he used to play Pearl drums. So, it's actually all his fault that I'm playing Pearl.

### Vinnie Colaiuta

**CS:** Young Vinnie! He can do anything. And he does it with feel. He can go from the most complicated, crazy Frank Zappa stuff to groove playing with Sting. I can see why so many drummers want to emulate him, because he's so smooth and tasteful. You know, I always marvel at guys who play with such great technique, but also have really good feel. I think that he is definitely one of those guys. I would just like to rub up next to Vinnie, hopefully some of his talent would come through his pores and get onto me. Then maybe I could do some of the stuff he does, 'cause he's great.

Before we close, I'd like to add Dave Grohl. People wrote in to *Modern Drummer* saying, "Why did you put Dave Grohl in the magazine, and blah, blah, blah." Let me just say that right now, to me, Dave Grohl is the best rock drummer going. Period. End of story.

**RF:** Why?

**CS:** Because he *is*. I can't believe those people who wrote in. Just listen to how he played with Nirvana and on the Foo Fighters records. He's the best rock drummer going.



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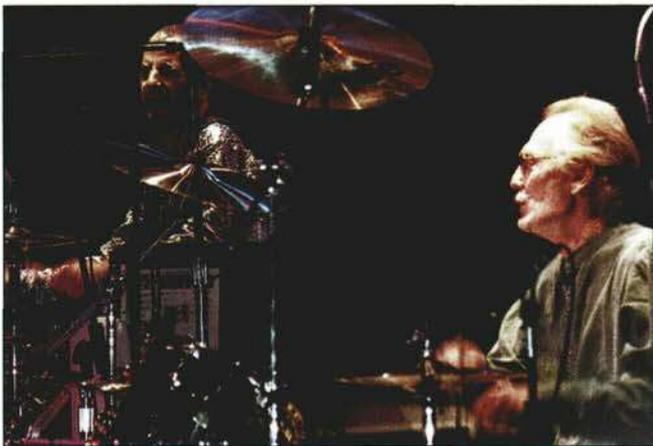
## Mark Craney Benefit CD

Mark Craney, whose performing, recording, and touring credits include Jethro Tull, Gino Vannelli, Jean-Luc Ponty, Eric Burdon, Tower of Power, Jeff Beck, Caldera, Dweezil Zappa, and the late Tommy Bolin (among many others), is seriously ill and in need of a kidney and pancreas transplant. As part of fund-raising efforts to assist Mark with his recovery, a unique compilation CD of music by recording artists with a link to Mark was released on August 1 on Laughing Gull Records. Titled *Mark Craney & Friends: Something With A Pulse*, the CD features live and studio recordings, many with Mark performing. All of the contributing recording artists are waiving payment, and all proceeds from the sale of the CD will aid Mark directly.

The compilation represents a wide spectrum of recorded performances ranging from board-recorded cassette tapes and DATs from live gigs to studio pieces recorded specifically for the project. As a consequence of the various sonic environments and recording formats, every effort has been made to even out audio inequalities using high-tech mastering and restoration.

Artists appearing on the compilation CD include Ian Anderson (solo), Jethro Tull, Eric Burdon, Tower of Power, Mark's Brothers, Gino Vanelli, Talking Drums, Fairport Convention, Mike Keneally, Miller/Craney/Miller, Terry Bozzio, Thread, and James Taylor. *Mark Craney & Friends: Something With A Pulse* is available for immediate purchase via the World Wide Web courtesy of Vie Records, at [www.ginov.com](http://www.ginov.com).

## Ginger Meets The All-Starrs



Karen Loucks

Ringo Starr & His All-Starr Band performed to a packed house at Fiddler's Green Amphitheater in Denver, Colorado on June 7. The band—Starr on drums, Jack Bruce (of Cream) on bass, Peter Frampton on guitar, Gary Brooker (of Procol Harum) on keyboards, and Simon Kirke (of Bad Company) on drums—performed hits by each member, as well as Ringo's Beatle and solo songs.

The highlight of the evening came when Colorado resident (and former Cream drummer) Ginger Baker sat in with the band on Cream's "White Room," playing drums side-by-side with Ringo. The two stellar drumming figures wowed the crowd (and the rest of the band) with their unrehearsed, drum-heavy version of the song.

## Rock Tours America On Clinic Trail

Veteran drum clinician Bobby Rock, guitarist Neil Zaza, and bassist Bill Dickens are currently on the road on Peavey's 1997 Rock Across America Band Clinic tour. The tour is unique



Left to right: Bill Dickens, Bobby Rock, and Neil Zaza

in that it focuses on the entire band, rather than on a single instrument or player. The trio performs tracks from Bobby's solo release, *Out OfBody*, and demonstrates riffs, grooves, and other elements of working as a band unit. Bobby is performing on a massive kit that includes four kick drums, five toms, four hi-hats, timbales, timbalitos, and numerous cymbals. For scheduling information contact Peavey Electronics Corporation at (601) 483-5365, or visit their Web page at [www.peavey.com](http://www.peavey.com).

## Drum Workshop To Distribute RIMS

Drum Workshop Inc. has been selected by inventor Gary Gauger as the worldwide distributor of RIMS (Resonance Isolation Mounting System). Formerly manufactured and distributed by PureCussion, which ceased operations recently, RIMS are currently available from DW for 8" to 18" rack toms in chrome finish (at significantly reduced prices, according to the company).

First introduced in 1980, RIMS applied Gauger's concepts of drum suspension to establish new levels of drum resonance and sound quality. Since then, while suspension-style drum mounts have become a standard part of most manufacturers' hardware design, RIMS have remained the only available suspension mounting system that accommodates drums from *all* leading manufacturers.

For more information, contact Drum Workshop, 101 Bernoulli Circle, Oxnard, CA 93030, tel: (805) 485-6999, fax: (805) 485-1334, e-mail: [www.dwdrums.com](http://www.dwdrums.com).

# Indy Quickies

**Brady Drums** now has their own Web site and e-mail address. The Web address is: [www.bradydrums.com.au](http://www.bradydrums.com.au). The e-mail address is [bill@bradydrums.com.au](mailto:bill@bradydrums.com.au).

New contact information for **K&K Sound Systems**: PO Box 626, 935 South Empire Blvd., Coos Bay, OR 97420, tel: (800) 867-6863 or (541) 888-3517, fax: (541) 888-4846.

**Bob Yerby** is Remo's new artist relations manager, while **Rusty Martin** now holds the same position for Sonor drums.

# Endorser News

**Mike Portnoy** is a new Pro-Mark artist, with his own autograph model drumstick.

New endorsers of Fredrico Percussion products include **George Clinton & The P-Funk All-Stars** and **Toots Hibbert** (Toots & the Maytals).

Hardcase drum and cymbal cases are now being used by the **Black Bottle Pipe & Drum Band**.



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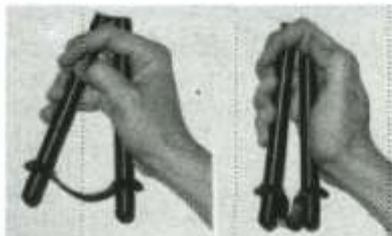
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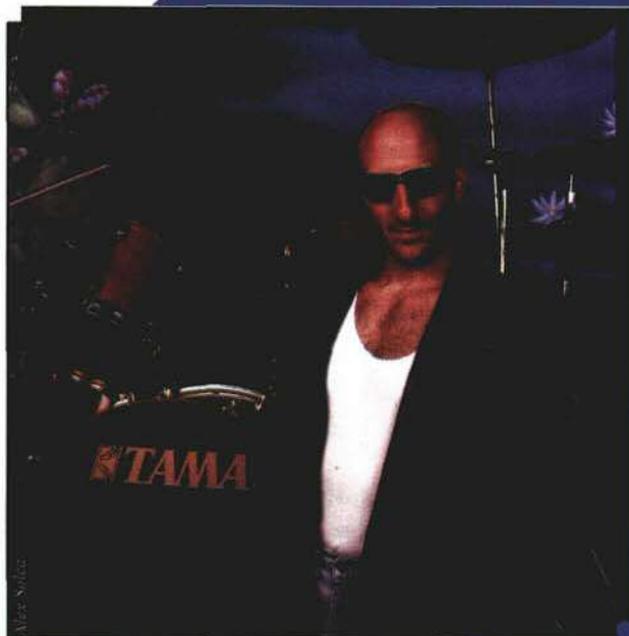
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"Purple percussion" might best describe this unusual assemblage belonging to M'liss, a drummer from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The basic kit comprises '70s-era Slingerland drums, augmented by a Pearl *Free-Floating* snare drum, one Yamaha floor tom (on the player's right), and a second floor tom of unknown origin that M'liss "bought in an antique store for \$40." Zildjian cymbals complete the setup.

Aside from the kit's striking color scheme, its most unusual feature is the battery of frying pans mounted to the left of the hi-hat. "Yes, they're real frying pans," says M'liss in response to the obvious question. "They say women belong in the kitchen. I just brought my kitchen with me."

The bass drum head features a photo of David Letterman. "Dave's head moves when I kick the drum," says M'liss. "It always gets a great reaction. I showed the drumhead to Anton Fig at a clinic, and he liked it so much that he autographed it. Now, if I can only get Dave to do the same...."



#### PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted.
2. You may send more than one view of the kit.
3. Only show drums, no people.
4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds.
5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit. Send photo(s) to: Drumkit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288.

Photos cannot be returned.



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