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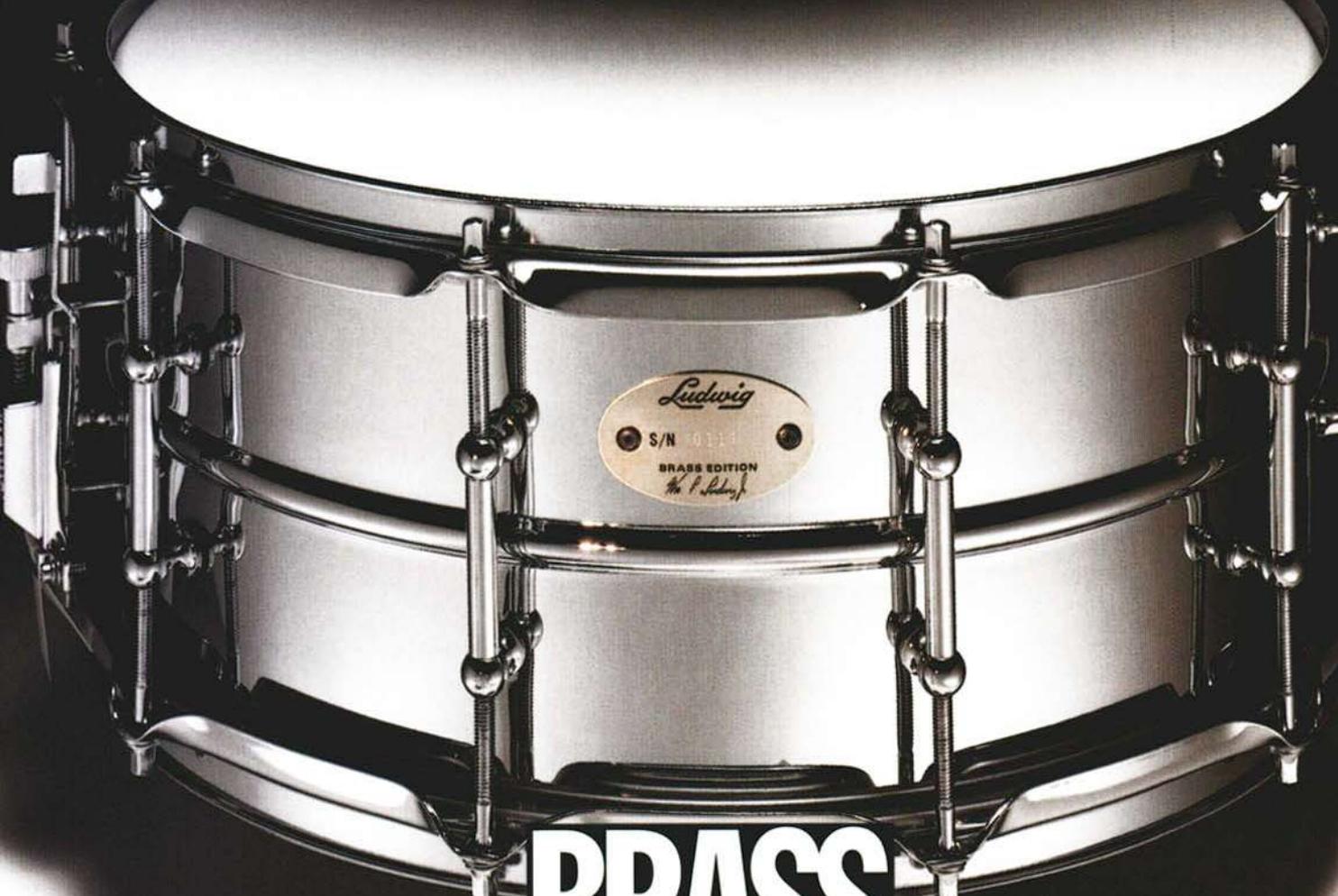
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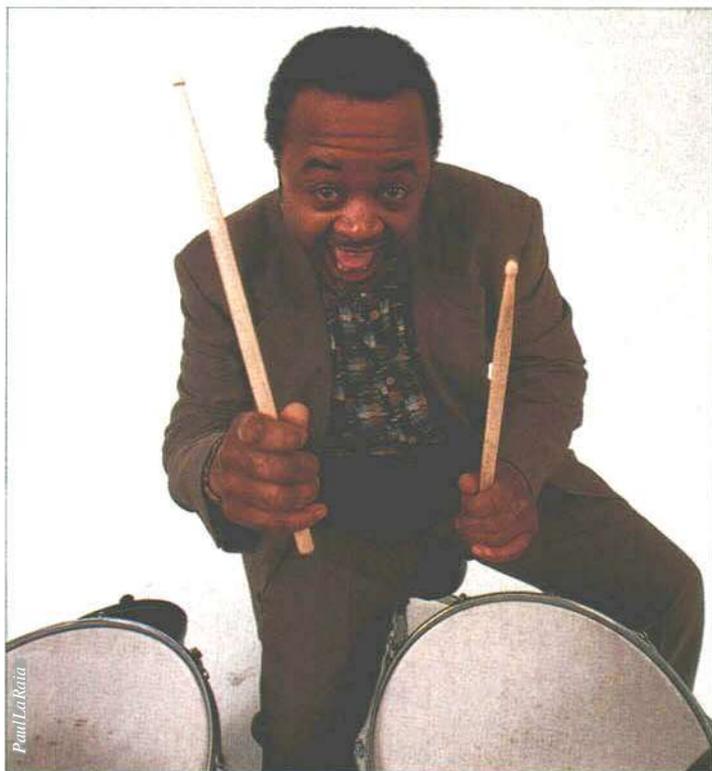
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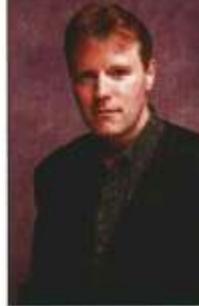
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Learning To Schmooze

Good drummers work a lot. But really, what *makes* a good drummer? Blazing chops? A great-feeling pocket? Lots of endurance? Beautiful brush technique? Owning a high-end drumkit and a van to haul your (or a prospective band's) gear? Of course, *all* of these can determine how much you work. But don't forget one of the most important factors: how well you get along with people.

Knowing the right way to "schmooze"—how to talk to other musicians to network for gigs—is a big part of our business. (It's a big part of *most* businesses.) People who know how to do it work a lot. People who don't...well, they're in their basements playing to imaginary audiences.

Over the years I've met several musicians who don't have great personal skills. Sure, it's easier for some people than for others. (Extroverted types have an easier time with this.) But I've also met guys who simply don't think about this aspect of the business. I guess they feel that once they develop their drumming skills *enough* they'll start getting calls. Frankly, developing your "people skills" is just as important as developing your playing skills.

I know a young local drummer who works *all* the time—gigs, session work, a couple of national tours. Honestly, he's not an *amazing* player, simply a good, competent drummer. But the rea-

son he works so much is because he knows how to schmooze. He's good on the phone, he knows how to "hang" with musicians (he can talk about topics *other* than drumming), and he makes sure to get out to clubs, jam sessions, and any recording dates he can get invited to. (If he hears about a date and knows somebody involved, he tags along.) He's also positive without being annoying, and he keeps things lighthearted. Most importantly, he's great at "reading" people: knowing how hard to push and when to back off. Even though he's not a gifted player, I have no doubt that this guy is going to land a major gig one of these days.

On the other hand, I've run into a lot of drummers who don't have a *clue* how to deal with people. (At *MD* we're contacted all the time by such drummers.) They're either too pushy, or they have big egos that get in the way, or—amazingly—they're just plain rude. After talking to someone like that you wonder how good of a musician they really are. If they play the way they talk, forget about it.

So the moral of this story is simple: If you're not working as much as you'd like or you're not playing with the musicians you'd like to be playing with, take a good look at yourself not only as a drummer, but as a *person*. It's worth considering.

Bill Miller

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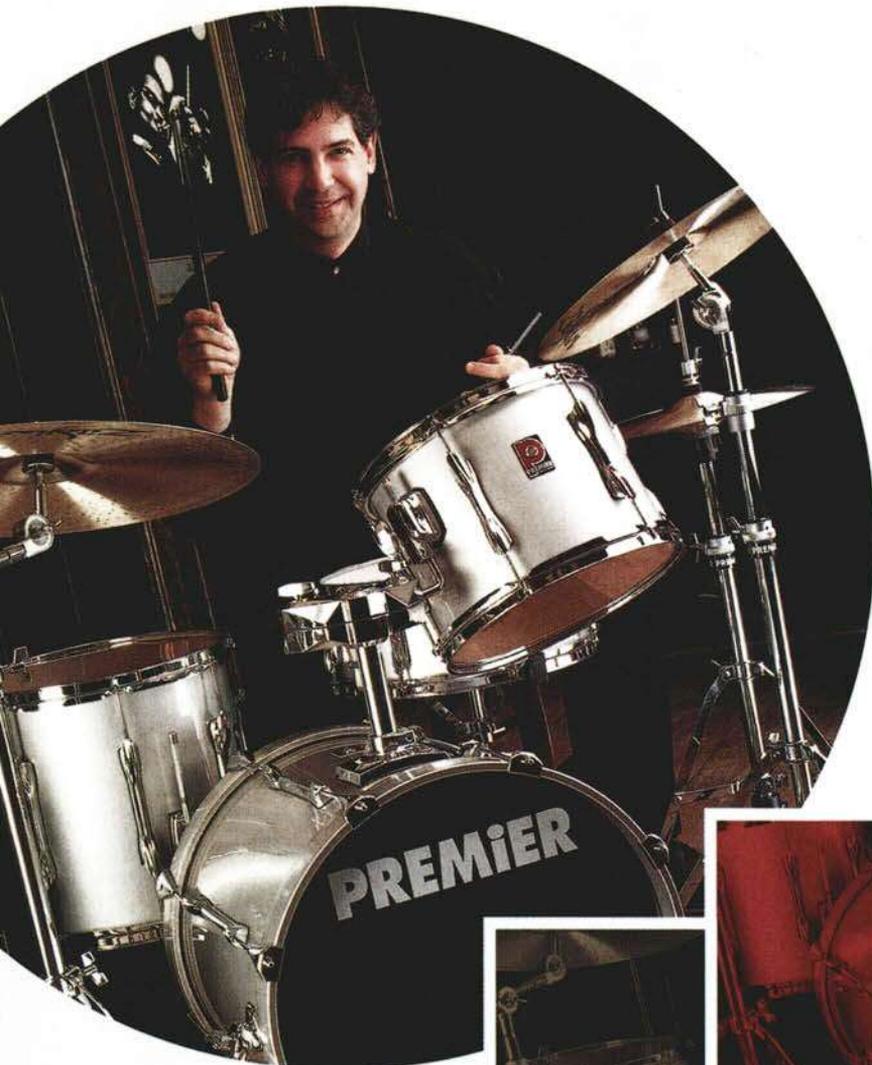
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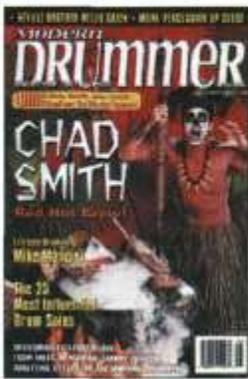
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CHAD SMITH



Thanks to Robyn Flans for her great interview with Chad Smith in the August '99 issue. Chad makes it a habit to short-change himself in print, but it's an unwarranted modesty. I had to

chuckle when he mentioned Keith Moon and others as huge influences, saying, "I'm not anywhere in their league." I can't tell you the number of drummers who've said to me, "Oh yeah...Chad Smith! He's the guy who made me want to play drums. He's baaaad." Whether or not he knows (or will admit) it, Chad is a major influence on drummers today.

Joe Day
Tucson, AZ

Kudos to your photography staff for capturing the missing voodoo madman, as featured on your August cover. Hopefully, many drumkits will now be spared from the torturing "red hot brew" also depicted.

I'm wondering if *Modern Drummer* is going to add a drumstick nose ring (like the one the madman is wearing) to the MD merchandise list. If I was ever interested in getting my nose pierced, that's the one I'd wear. Thanks again for catching the voodoo madman, and for the excellent article on him!

T.J. Young
Erial, NJ

I normally value the contents of your magazine. However, I was extremely offended by what I perceive to be a racist depiction of indigenous people on your August cover. It was irresponsible of you to approve such an image. I hope in the future you will examine the roots of your beliefs

and values prior to publishing such a picture. I look forward to reading a racially balanced and sensitive *Modern Drummer*.

Shirley Sommers
via Internet

MIKE MANGINI

Thanks for featuring Mike Mangini in your August issue. I had the pleasure of taking lessons from Mike several years ago. He opened many doors for me. In fact, I'm still using his approach today. This letter is an opportunity for me to thank Mike for the knowledge he so willingly shared with me and many other drummers.

Mike is a tremendous talent and an inspiring human being. It's fantastic to see that all the hard work has paid off for him. I know we'll be hearing much more about him in the years to come.

David Latimer
New Bedford, MA

25 Most Influential Solos

I think your staff did a great job of picking The 25 Most Influential Drum Solos. [August '99 MD] Of those with which I was familiar, only truly musical ones were picked. None that consisted completely of loud and obnoxious sounds were included. It made me smile to see the likes of Ginger Baker and Ron Bushy be recognized, and I was pleased to learn of some "new" great drummers I hadn't known about previously.

Eric Johnson
Green Bay, Wisconsin

Ringo Starr deserves credit for never overplaying, but should he really be up there with the top 25 solos of all time? Meanwhile, if the solos in "Focus" (by Hocus Pocus) and Edgar Winter's "Frankenstein" don't deserve at least honorable mentions I don't know what does.

Steve Weiss
via Internet

How can anyone possibly omit Ian Paice's solo in "The Mule" on Deep Purple's *Made In Japan*? This 1972 release proves that Ian stood up strong to fierce competitors like John Bonham. His coordination is absolutely incredible. Mr. Paice should have at least received an honorable mention.

Moe Cullity
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

There are many selections I'd take issue with, but that will always be the case with this type of list. However, a few things really stuck in my craw. To begin with, wrong dates were given for some songs. The Benny Goodman Carnegie Hall Concert was in 1938, not 1937. "Topsy, Part II" was from 1958, not 1950.

Further, the author claims that while "Let There Be Drums" by Sandy Nelson is one of the most influential solos, it's probably the least challenging on the list. Oddly enough, "Wipe Out" is listed directly below it. How is that song's repetition of accented 16ths more challenging? Sandy Nelson's drumming may not be a chopsfest, but the sound he got from his drums, and the placement of the notes, makes the song a lot more difficult than it sounds. Cozy Cole and Earl Palmer each did covers of this tune, and while they're both great drummers, the total feel for the song was lost.

The "Honorable Mentions" section lists Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich's exchanges on "King Porter Stomp" as being from the LP *The Original Drum Battle*. "King Porter Stomp" was from *Burnin' Beat*, which was made nine years after *The Original Drum Battle* was recorded, and was hardly representative of their real drum battles. (Gene's heart attack and increasing back problems had slowed him down considerably by that time.) The more likely example would be "Bernie's Tune" from the 1955 LP *Krupa & Rich*, which contained the cited "classic trade-offs" at the beginning of the song.

Shawn Martin
via Internet

John "Jabo" Starks

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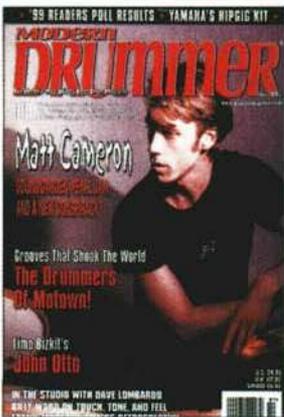
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Y2K GLITCH ALREADY

There were a couple of errors in the "Y2K Not?" piece in your August issue. The address for the first Web site listed, "The Definitive Drum Tab Archives" should be simplyplaza.vwave.com/banzai/drumtabs/. Although "www" is very common at the beginning of Web sites, it's not *always* there. Also, Paul Wertico's site has been changed to www.paulwertico.com.

Chris Supranowitz
via Internet

MATT CAMERON AND THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE



Thanks for the great interview with Matt Cameron. I loved his work with Soundgarden, and I learned a lot from his unique style. But I would

like to touch on a subject that has not been talked about much lately. I'm talking about all these drummers and other members of bands using Pro-Tools and other editing programs to "doctor" up their recordings. I think Mr. Cameron said it best when he said, "I think you can make any hack band or drummer sound really tight with the right gear. A lot of the major-label bands these days don't necessarily get it all figured out before they step into the studio, but they have this cushion that allows them to be at a level that isn't professional yet."

Maybe it's just me. But when I buy an album, I want to hear what a band can actually play, not what some computer can fix up for them.

Pajorski
via Internet

TRADE SCHOOLS FOR DRUMMERS

We appreciate your including Music Tech in your "Trade Schools For Drummers" piece in the August issue. However, there have been some changes in our status and requirements since the time our information was submitted for the article.

Music Tech has now been officially des-

igned as a two-year college by the State of Minnesota. As such, we now require a high school diploma or GED as an academic prerequisite. Additionally, since I'm on the road quite a bit, interested applicants should contact Lance Sabin, who handles admissions.

Gordy Knudtsen
Music Tech
Minneapolis, MN

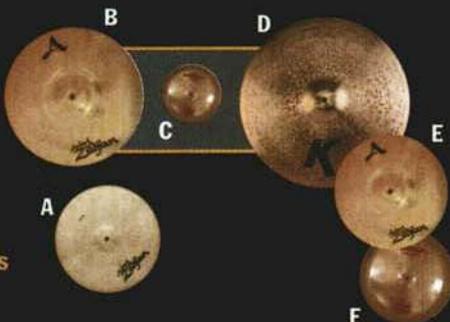
DUPLEX/ROGERS QUESTION

Regarding the *It's Questionable* column in the August '99 issue: I have the highest regard for my friend Harry Cangany, but even the best historians are sometimes tempted to make assumptions. Harry's response to the Duplex/Rogers question states, "At some point Grossman also bought the defunct Duplex name...." I also suspected this. However, when I attempted to document it while researching my book on Rogers, I found this not to be the case. Rich Berger, current head of Grossman/Trophy in Cleveland, has made inquiries and done research, and he assures me that there is no connection between the

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Grossman "Duplex" brand name and the Duplex Drum Co. of St. Louis, Missouri. Grossman came up with the name on their own, as sort of an "ACME" utility brand. Just to be sure, I tried tracing the name from the other end—the Duplex Drum Co. I was unable to follow the Duplex name any further than the corporate papers of dissolution in Missouri.

Rob Cook
author, *The Rogers Book*
Rebeats Vintage Drum Products
Alma, MI

Editor's note: Harry Cangany disagrees, commenting, "Perhaps I should have worded my original statement to read, 'At some point Grossman swiped the Duplex name....' There's no way that the Grossman company did not know of the Duplex brand name, since it had been around since 1880.

"I have never spoken to Mr. Berger, but I have spoken to Grossman's second-in-command, Dan Skutt. He told me that they don't know much about the old days. He sent me everything they had: one 1964 cat-

alog, six old Dyna-Sonic badges, a color swatch, and examples of Rogers logo badges. I remember asking Rogers' Ben Strauss about the matter too, and he couldn't recall any details.

"Whether Grossman bought or simply assumed the Duplex name is irrelevant in the long run. What is important from a historical perspective is that they used the name on drums after they sold Rogers."

NOT ALL THE DRUMMERS WERE IN MOTOWN

I appreciated the July article "The Drummers Of Motown" to the extent that all Motown drummers—certainly including the wonderful Benny Benjamin, Pistol Allen, and Uriel Jones—deserve far greater recognition. But I was disappointed to see that Allan Slutsky is still peddling his claim that all of the important mid-'60s Motown hits were recorded entirely in Detroit.

There has been a longstanding dispute as to what proportion of Motown backing tracks were recorded in Los Angeles, using the best studio musicians in that city, and then overdubbed with the singers in Detroit

(or, occasionally, LA). To present just the tip of the iceberg, any reader can try this: Compare the sound of Brenda Holloway's "Just Look What You've Done" to The Four Tops' "Reach Out I'll Be There" and "Standing In The Shadow Of Love." It's obviously the same drummer on the first two: identical opening fill, and so on from there. That drummer is LA session man Earl Palmer. And it's obviously the same percussionist on "Just Look..." and "Standing...": LA session man Gary Coleman. Brenda Holloway herself states in the booklet notes to the new Motown CD *The Very Best Of Brenda Holloway* that "Just Look..." was recorded in Los Angeles.

Motown engineer Armin Steiner has confirmed that he recorded some Motown tunes in LA during this period. Other individuals, such as Earl Palmer, are on record about the Motown LA situation. Ask Stevie Wonder who played bass on "I Was Made To Love Her" and he'll tell you Carol Kaye, the great LA session bassist. The whole dispute is discussed intelligently in *Good Vibrations: A History Of Record*

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No matter where the playing took place or who did it, I would like to thank *all* of the Motown drummers from the bottom of my heart, for their beautiful, creative work.

Joseph Scott
via Internet

THANKS FROM LOU

I've been an avid reader since the very first issue, and I haven't missed one since. So I was pleased to see myself included in the *On The Move* column in the July issue.

Readers who would like more complete discographical information can visit my Web site: www.ejn.it/mus/lougrassi.htm. Thanks again.

Lou Grassi
via Internet

DAVE LOMBARDO IN THE STUDIO

I was really glad to see your July *In The Studio* piece on Dave Lombardo. I've followed Dave's playing since his Slayer days, and I thought he was probably the best all-around metal drummer. I'm also

thoroughly impressed with his work with Grip, Inc.—especially his incorporation of Latin percussion with his supersonic tom fills and double bass drumming. Dave's latest project with the Italian musicians proves that he is a great *all-around* drummer. I still don't think he gets as much credit as he deserves. I'm really looking forward to hearing anything he puts out in the future.

Brian Ferguson
Norfolk, VA

THE BRADY BILL

In the "And What's More" section of July's *New And Notable*, you note that the name "Brady Drums" has been "returned to Chris Brady" by Bill Flynn. I was fortunate enough to get one of Bill Flynn's last drumkits, for which I'll be forever grateful, as it is an absolute monster! At any rate, Bill informs me that although he is no longer building kits (for reasons unrelated to the litigation discussed), he is still building jarrah ply snare drums under the name Ozbeat Drums.

Also, I'd be remiss if I didn't say a word

on Bill's behalf regarding the consummate integrity he demonstrated in the transaction regarding my kit. When Federal Express managed to mishandle a couple of my drums, Bill provided an extremely quick turnaround, in order to meet my musical commitments—at no extra cost to me. I just wanted to present this info in the event that it might be useful to other *MD* readers.

For info on Ozbeat Drums, contact Bill Flynn at PO Box 1046, Kelmscott, DC, Western Australia, 6997.

James Scott
Hollywood, CA

FROM ACROSS THE POND

The British drumming scene, although prominent in its own right, suffers from a lack of exposure compared to its counterpart across the Atlantic. The problem, I think, lies in the sarcasm and (un)intentional maliciousness of the British music press. The only available British drum mags seem to be more concerned with trying to be witty than with trying to be interesting.

By contrast, I'd like to thank all the people at *Modern Drummer* for putting together an altogether enjoyable and educational read. Having never had the luxury of drum lessons until recently, I've learned a lot from your mag, including often-overlooked subjects such as efficient practicing and correct posture. So thanks a lot, and keep up the good work.

Johannes Haverkamp
London, England

The photos of Phil Ehart on pages 93 and 99 of the September 1999 *MD* were taken by Robert W. Fritsch.

HOW TO REACH US

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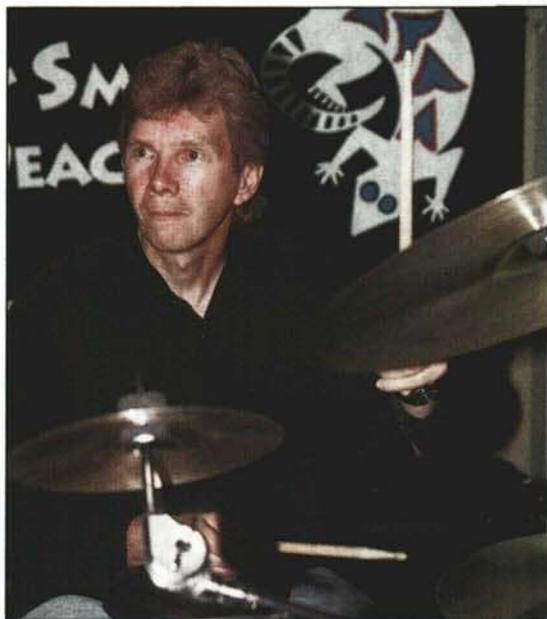
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Graham Lear

Q I enjoyed your interview in the February '99 *MD*. In it, you mentioned your CD, *Graham Lear's Latin/Rock Drumscales, Vol. 3 (with Orestes Vilato)*. I'd really love to get that CD. How may I do so?

Barry Bouchard
Manchester, NH

A Thanks for your interest in the CD (and your kind thoughts about the interview). It can be beneficial to hear the drums and percussion (separate from any overdubs), in order to get a true impression of the parts as played. The CD was developed for producers and arrangers to use in the studio, but it's useful in other ways. For one thing, it's great student practice material. Also, our bass player, Enrique Toussaint, uses it for warming up. The CD is available through Northstar Productions, tel: (503) 760-7777, www.northstarsamples.com. If you'd like to contact me personally, I can be reached at thelears@earthlink.net.



Vinnie Paul

Q I'm a big fan of yours from Sweden. I'm about to spend some serious cash on a drumset. Before I do, I'd appreciate you telling me some things about your kit. I know it's a Pearl Masters Custom series, but what kind of wood are the shells, and how thick are they? Also, what kind of hardware are you using—especially your magically fast bass drum pedals?

Andreas Berglund
Sweden

A Thanks for your interest. You're right, my touring set is a Pearl Masters Custom kit. A *very* custom kit! The shells are 4-ply 100% maple. The mounted tom sizes are 14x14 and 15x15. The floor tom is 18x18, and the bass drums are 24x24. Last but not least, my snare drums are 8 1/2x14. The whole thing is done up in a custom snakeskin lacquer finish.

All of my hardware is Pearl. Pantera did over 290 dates last year without a single stand or pedal failure. The pedals I use are the Power Shifter P201P double-chain model. They're fast and powerful, and they're able to stand up against my stomping!

Ian Paice

Q You are the reason I started to play drums—after I heard Deep Purple's *Burn* album. Would you tell me: What kind of drumheads do you use on your kit? How do you muffle your bass drum? How can I tune my snare drum to sound like yours?

Giorgos
Athens, Greece

A When Ritchie Blackmore was in the band I would use the heaviest heads I could find, such as Ludwig Silver Dots or Remo CS Black Dots. With Steve Morse in the band, the onstage volume is a little lower. As a result, I can now use my all-time preferred heads—Remo coated Ambassadors—on all the drums.

I use a 26" kick drum on stage, which needs some gentle controlling. The area of the head is so large that there are many overtones that I really don't need. But over-padding the drum makes the use of the larger shell pointless. So I've developed a method to control the outer edges of the head while leaving the center impact area free to vibrate and do its thing. I line the entire inside surface of the shell with a piece of 1" foam, making sure that it's wide enough to be in contact with both

of the drumheads at all times. This stops the head from reacting to outside influences (like the bass guitar), and controls its natural overtones.

Tuning any drum—but especially a snare drum—is a very personal thing. What may sound incredible to one player can sound awful to another. So go for the sound you like, along with the tension on the head that allows you to *play* the drum the way you like.

I tune the snare head fairly tight, and I have the snares tight enough that they don't make life too easy. By that I mean that to play a press roll I have to *play* it—not hit the drum once and let the rattle go on and on. I have the top head tight to the point that the drum doesn't sound choked. That's about as well as I can explain it. Good luck!



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Refinishing Pearl Drums

QI have a set of '70s-era Pearl drums with maple shells that have a grey wrap. The covering material is deteriorating. I would like to strip these drums and laquer them. My questions are: Is the outer ply of maple "finishable," and can a wood/fiberglass Pearl drum from the same era be finished in the same manner? Thanks for any info you can offer.

Craig Lauzon
via Internet

A Our reply comes from Pearl product specialist Gene Okamoto. Says Gene, "If you can remove the plastic covering from your shells without damaging the underlying wood, the maple outer plies are 'finishable.' However, it is customary in the drum industry to lacquer the best-looking shells, and to wrap shells that exhibit blemishes. Therefore your shells may have minor cosmetic irregularities, or may differ in shade. If you plan to finish your drums in a solid color, such blemishes (if any) will not be a problem. However, if you plan to stain the wood and then apply a clear coat, the results may vary, depending on the appearance of the shells.

"The story is the same with wood/fiberglass shells. However, since the outer plies of those drums are mahogany—which is rather porous—the lacquering process will require greater skill than if you were finishing maple. For a professional-looking job I recommend that you take your drums to a qualified drum refinisher.

"To learn more about '70s-era Pearl drums (and about Pearl drums in general), please see the History Section at our Web site, www.pearldrums.com

Painful Practice

QLast month I bought Neil Peart's video *A Work In Progress*. Peart's discussion on traditional grip really makes sense. But hey...he is the master. Traditional grip seems a little bit harder for me to accomplish. I've played matched grip for ten years, but I want to get the smoothness and accuracy of traditional grip—as well as the powerful beat on the snare drum.

Since I've been working on the new

grip, I've experienced pain in my left shoulder, in my left thumb, and in the "nest" where the butt end of the drumstick rests. Sometimes I'll play for hours after warming up, and I'll feel comfortable. But the next day the pain grows. Is this only going to continue while I get used to traditional grip?

Ignacio Torres
via Internet

A Any new technique is going to feel alien to your hands and arms to begin with. This may, in fact, result in the soreness you describe. However, *no* technique should be causing you lasting pain. It's possible that you are over-practicing, to the point where the practicing has turned into physical abuse. Try reducing your practice schedule and see if that improves the situation.

It would also be helpful if you could find a qualified teacher (or an experienced drummer who uses the traditional grip) to evaluate your development. It may be that you have not quite assimilated the nuances of the traditional grip. (You can't learn everything from a video, no matter how good it is.) Seek some guidance so that you don't do yourself permanent injury in your quest for improved skills.

Where Is Smith?

QYour June issue documented new products shown at the winter NAMM show. However, there is no contact source directory for any of the companies—notably the more obscure ones. I'm trying to find the phone number and/or address for the Smith Drum Company. Can you provide any help?

Patrik
via Internet

AYou can contact the Smith Drum Co. at 480 Barnum, Bridgeport, CT 06608, tel: (203) 846-6834, fax: (203) 847-4870.

Zildjian Crash Rides

QI recently purchased a cymbal from a pawn shop. There are no markings except for a clearly visible Zildjian stamp.

The pawnbroker told me the cymbal is a 16" Crash Ride, yet the Zildjian catalog doesn't list such a model. The lathing appears to be that of an A Zildjian, but the finish is different from any A model I've seen. It bears a traditional finish on top and a brilliant finish on the bottom. According to the Zildjian catalog, only Orchestral cymbals have this particular finish. Did Zildjian ever make an A Zildjian 16" Crash Ride? The odd size might explain the different finish. Any information would be helpful.

Michael Naperalsky
Granger, IN

A According to Zildjian's John King, "A Zildjian Crash Rides are actually Medium Thin Crashes that have been determined to have good ride qualities as well. We did have a 16" A Crash Ride available in our catalog up until 1995, so it's possible that your cymbal is such a model if it's older than that. In 1995 we decided that there was no need to continue to offer Crash Rides in the smaller sizes, considering the fact that most of our 16" and 17" Medium Thin Crashes already had that perfect ride/crash balance. Zildjian continues to offer A Crash Ride models in the more popular 18" and 20" sizes.

"We have never supplied A Zildjian cymbals with the 'hybrid' brilliant/regular finish that you describe. You are correct in stating that Zildjian does offer this type of appearance in our Classic Orchestral line of cymbals. This is done to add certain sonic subtleties that the brilliant process creates (on top), while maintaining the regular finish lathing on the bottom for 'zing' effects that certain marching and orchestral compositions require. My guess on your cymbal is that the previous owner applied a high luster to the bottom half only, for reasons unknown."

Interpreting Drum Music

QI'm a new drummer, and I'm trying to learn written drum music. My question is: Given the fact that most, if not all, rock drummers have their own custom kit setup, how can someone look at a piece of sheet



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music and play it? Drummer A may have a five-piece setup with three cymbals, drummer B may have a nine-piece setup with ten cymbals, and drummer C may have a super-custom double-bass Neil Peart monster setup. Guitar music is written for a guitar...and all guitars are six-string instruments. Drum music doesn't seem so simple.

Glenn Hammel
via Internet

Generally, there are two situations in which music is written for a drumset. The first is a transcription of something that has already been played. In that case, the transcription will reflect the size and configuration of the kit on which the part was performed. If it was a big kit, you'll see notes placed on several different staff lines (or spaces) for different drums, along with indications for cymbals, hi-hats, percussion instruments, etc. If the original part was played on a smaller kit, the transcribed part will be correspondingly simpler.

If you are attempting to play a transcription of a part that was originally played on a larger drumset than yours, you'll need to do some interpreting and adapting. For

example, if the part calls for five toms and you have only three, you might play the top two written tom notes on your highest tom, the middle written tom note on your middle tom, and the lowest two written tom notes on your lowest tom. If you don't have all of the percussion equipment listed (such as cowbells, mounted tambourines, blocks, etc.), you can substitute. Try a cymbal bell instead of a cowbell, a closed hi-hat instead of a mounted tambourine, and a rimclick instead of a block. You won't be duplicating the original part exactly, but you'll still be achieving the variety of sounds that it called for.

The other situation involving drum music is a chart written for a new piece of music. This might range from a kit/percussion chart for a theatrical pit band to a challenging piece by a rock composer like Frank Zappa. In this case the composer stipulates what equipment is called for. It's up to the drummer to create and play a kit that meets the stipulations of the chart, or—again—substitute where necessary.



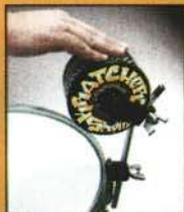
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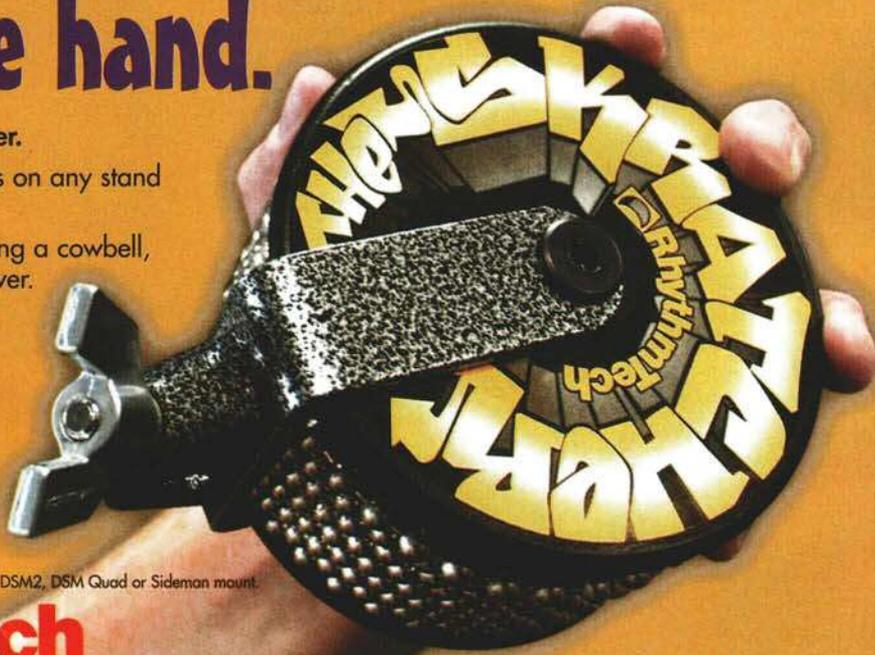
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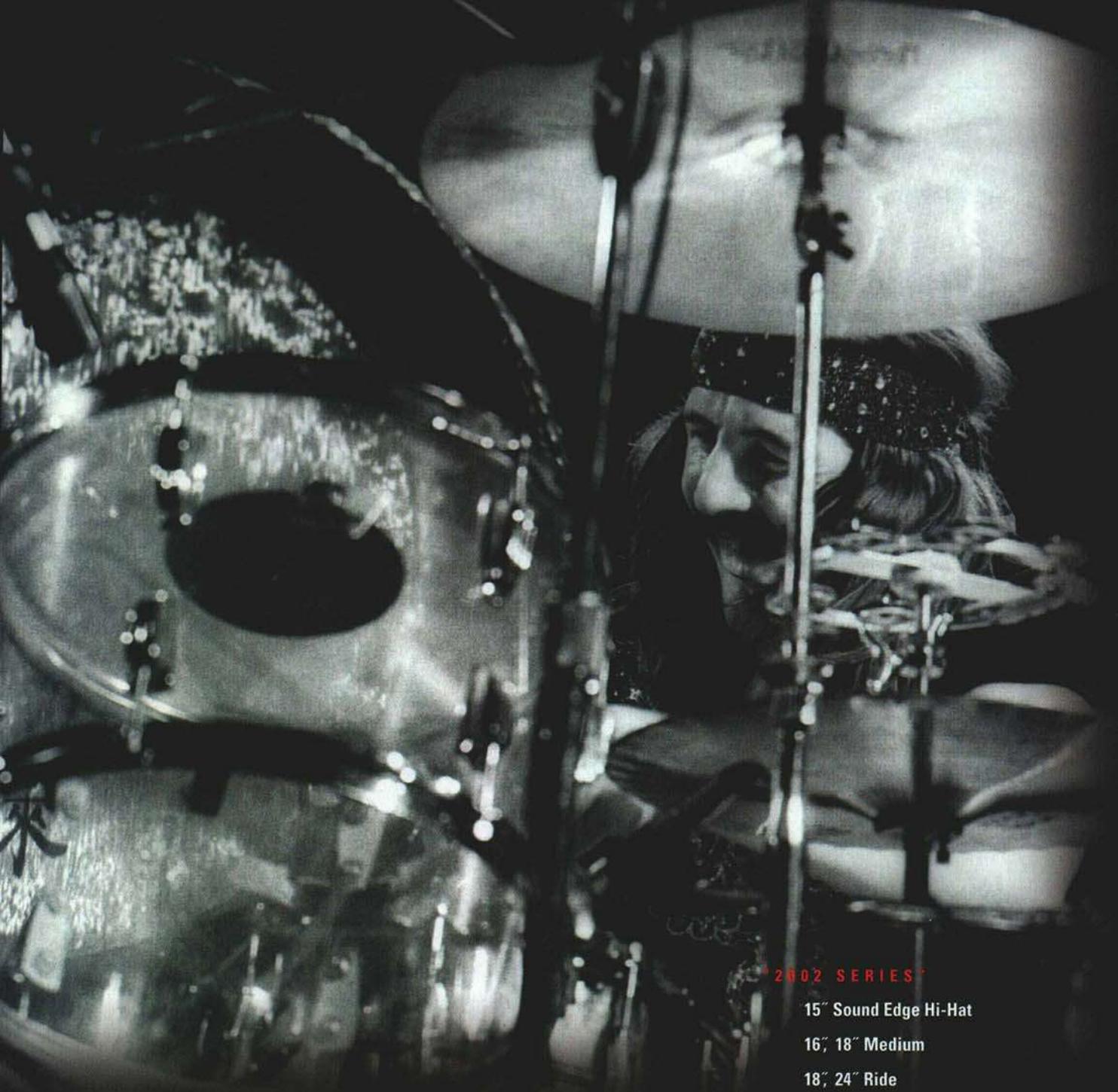


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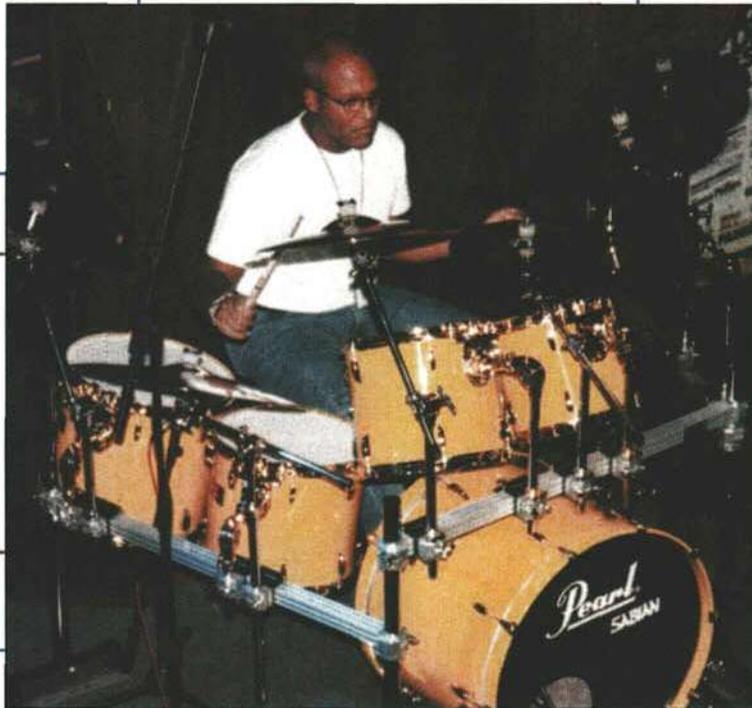
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Steve Ferrone



Echoes Of Drums

Steve Ferrone is in the midst of the first major Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers tour in four years, in support of Petty's latest release, *Echo*. "The great thing for me about the way Tom records is that it's the old-fashioned way: We go in and play the song until it's right," says the journeyman drummer. "When we did *Wildflowers*, it was a new experience for me and the band, since I was a newcomer. We tended to do a lot of recording and go over songs for a long time. At the end, Tom noticed that most of the takes used for the album were the ones we did very early on, so this album went a lot faster. A lot of the tracks are first and second takes."

The song "Room At The Top" was a little different, though. "That starts off very quietly with brushes," Ferrone explains. "It was originally recorded all the way through like that, but then they decided they wanted it to be heavier, although they liked the original feel. So I added a heavier drum part and Mike Campbell recorded a different guitar part. Then I had to figure out what the drum part was going to be when I played it live. They left the brushes underneath on the recording, which actually left me a little stumped. I called Pat Brown at Pro-Mark and asked him if there was any way they could attach a set of brushes to the end of my drumsticks. They actually inserted a brush into the butt end of

"Tom noticed that most of the takes used for the last album were the ones we did very early on, so this album went a lot faster. A lot of the tracks are first and second takes."

my model of sticks. They're great for playing straight backbeat and time and then whipping them around to play brushes."

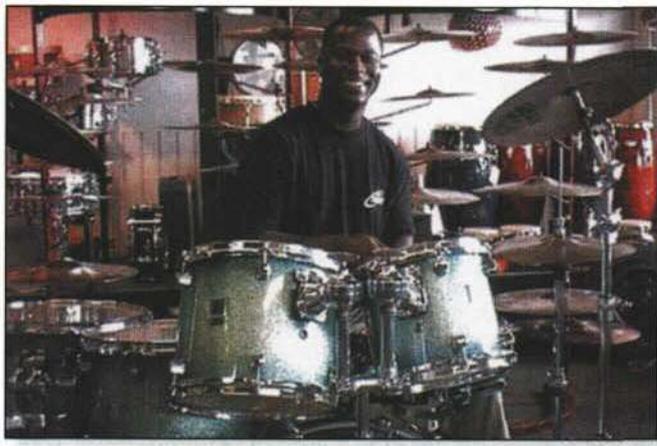
"Room At The Top" is one of Steve's favorite tracks on the album, as well as "About To Give Out," which he describes as very rocking. The B-side of "Room At The Top" in Germany is a song called

"Sweet William." "That one starts out as a slow blues," he says, "but when it gets to the chorus it goes into a wild raucous rock thing. And then it has this sort of out-of-time segue that takes it to the next thing.

"We record in Mike Campbell's studio," Steve continues, "which is interesting because the drums are at one end of one room and the guitars are in the main room with the board. Mike was engineering and Tom was sitting over to the left. I could just see the top of his head. And Ben [Benmont Tench] was in a far room with his keyboards, so there really wasn't a chance for visual cues. It was strictly feeling through the walls."

Ferrone says that even during the Petty downtime, the band got together to enjoy the process of making music. "It's called *playing*. That's what I do for a living. It's *fun* to play." At the moment Steve's having fun playing on the road with the band. The plan is for them to tour 'til the end of the year.

Robyn Flans



Ricky Martin's Jonathan Joseph *Drummin' La Vida Loca*

red-eye back to New York to play in Central Park with [jazz/fusion bassist/vocalist] Richard Bona, getting there a half hour late."

The differences between the twelve-piece Ricky Martin band's more straight-time tunes and the dense, polyrhythmic quintet of Cameroon native Bona (who's recorded and toured with Zawinul and Larry Coryell and just released his first solo CD) isn't a problem for Joseph. "I think the trick is understanding the conceptual differences," he says. "It's like driving. Whether you're in an automatic or a stick shift, you're still driving a car."

Joseph's ease with different genres stems from the fact that the thirty-two-year-old Floridian has navigated many styles in his career. Joseph played gospel services at age six in the Miami church where his mother was choir director, recorded in the early '90s with R&B vocalist Betty Wright and steel drummer Othello Molineaux, and toured with The Zawinul Syndicate between 1993 and 1994. In 1995 he subbed for Paul Wertico on a Metheny tour of Asia and started a four-year association with Sanborn, in between recording with trumpeter Randy Brecker and touring with Jarreau. When Martin's busy schedule permits, Joseph still tours and records with Latin jazz flutist Nestor Torres and conducts Yamaha clinics with guitarist Mike Stern.

Next up for Joseph is Martin's first US tour, beginning in October, with more TV time sure to follow.

Bill Meredith

Working with David Sanborn, Pat Metheny, Al Jarreau, and Joe Zawinul means drummer Jonathan Joseph has plenty of cross-country touring under his belt. But nothing could've prepared him for the intense television tour of new pop/salsa star Ricky Martin, who hired Joseph last fall. Despite no US touring to date, the former Menudo member's recent Number 1 single ("Livin' La Vida Loca") and self-titled debut CD prompted appearances on the *Grammy Awards* telecast, *Oprah*, *Rosie O'Donnell*, *Saturday Night Live*, *David Letterman*, and the *Today* and *Tonight* shows.

"Here's a recent example," Joseph says of their manic schedule. "I flew from Miami to Chicago on a Wednesday night for a soundcheck for *Oprah*, and got up Thursday at 6:00 A.M. to do the *Oprah* taping at 10:00. At 4:00 P.M. I flew to New York, then left the hotel Friday morning at 4:30 to do *The Today Show* soundcheck and taping. Then we flew to LA for a *Tonight Show* soundcheck that night. But the flight was so late that we ended up soundchecking Saturday from 7:00 to 11:00 A.M., left the hotel for a taping at 6:30 P.M., and played at 10:00. Then I had to catch a

Vertical Horizon's Ed Toth Taking Beauford's Place



Auditioning is tough enough. Imagine if you had to follow Carter Beauford! That's more or less what happened to Ed Toth. When he moved to

to do your homework and get it the first time." Ever since, it's been relentless touring. Ed spent last summer in the US and Canada, then headlined in Germany, England, Holland, and Scandinavia.



Massachusetts, carting a degree in Music Education from the University of Miami, Ed just wanted to play in a good band.

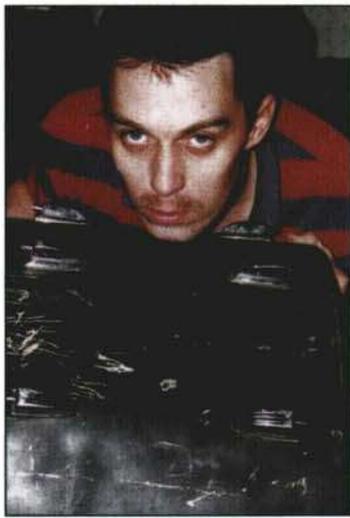
Arriving in Boston, Ed kept an eye on Vertical Horizon, who certainly qualified. Being of a practical nature, he concocted an airtight scheme to beat the audition process: "I called Matt [Scannell, vocals/guitar] and told him I wanted the gig so bad I was willing to fly myself to a showcase in Nashville. He said, 'Well, we've already got someone for the gig—Carter Beauford.' I had my tail between my legs."

Turns out Carter was just helping out on a temporary basis. Two weeks later, Ed aced the audition. With customary practicality, he practiced like mad for his first major-label recording, *Everything You Want*, which is just out on RCA. "I pulled out my metronome," he admits, "and went nuts with groove stuff. I wanted to be on my game. The nature of this business is that you have

Following in Carter's footsteps was a little strange. "When I stepped in," Ed says, "a lot of the parts I played were his. Sometimes when I listen to our album, I just *cringe*, because some of my licks are so blatantly Carter."

Ed is being a little hard on himself. Make no mistake: He's got his own thing happening. For one, there isn't a lot of clutter in his playing. With traditional grip in left hand, he cracks rimshot backbeats, "spanking the hell out of the snare drum," as he says. His marching chops come to the fore, live and on record. So do his jazz influences. An avowed Pat Metheny/Paul Wertico freak, Ed has cymbal work to match his drum finesse. Not that you can hear it on the band's first single, "We Are." It's a pumper. Elsewhere on the album, though, Ed Toth has it covered.

T. Bruce Wittet



The Flaming Lips' Steven Drozd

They say you gotta suffer for your art, but *this* is ridiculous. "I was in the hospital for four or five days. By the time I got out, it cost me like \$14,000."

The "it" Flaming Lips drummer Steven Drozd is referring to is a Brown Recluse spider bite he suffered in 1996 while cleaning out his garage. "It got infected really bad," Steven recalls with a wince. "It was crazy."

Crazy, perhaps, but also the type of incident Lips singer/songwriter Wayne Coyne knows better than to leave unexplored. "The Spiderbite Song" is one of the many magical moments on the band's latest album, *The Soft Bulletin* (Warner Bros.). With sonic imaginations that never seem to quit, The Lips have created a psychedelic pop masterwork worthy of comparison to *Pet Sounds*, *Sgt. Pepper's*, and *Piper At The Gates Of Dawn*. No lie.

And like The Beach Boys, The Beatles, and Pink Floyd in their prime, The Flaming Lips are incessantly driven to move forward. "We're always thinking of new ways to entertain ourselves," Drozd insists. "Any time we find ourselves doing something

we've done before, we get freaked out, like, 'Oh no. We're not getting anywhere!'"

Slim chance. Whether it's their "Boombbox Experiments," where the band "conducts" radio-wielding audiences, or *Zaireeka*, a four-disc album designed to be played simultaneously on four different stereos, the band is in a constant state of invention. "And everybody in the band is concerned about the drums sounding kickass," Drozd adds. "I think that's why we get a sound that's different from most people's. You'd be surprised how little it takes, though. Sometimes just one mic' in a big room does the job."

While definitely no clone, Drozd is often favorably compared to John Bonham. Like Bonzo, Drozd's beat seems to emanate from deep within the ground, and explodes like a perfectly timed geyser. Fans may have to wait awhile to experience that effect live, though, since Steven will be playing guitar and keyboards on the *Soft Bulletin* tour, and running his prerecorded drum tracks through the PA. Yeah, it's a bummer in a way—but all in the name of experimentation, a concept that's obviously worked to the band's favor thus far. And don't be too surprised if you see Drozd back at the kit before long, certainly a changed and even more interesting musician.

Adam Budofsky

Brett Chassen Chops Break Up Poison Pill

Drummer Brett Chassen has recently released an electric jazz solo record, *Mood Swings*, that features Frank Gambale, Dave Carpenter, and Steven Weingard. "I saw a lack of drummers featuring themselves and showcasing what they can really do," Chassen says. "I'd done so much in the rock genre, but I'd always loved and played jazz, so I decided to bring in the best guys at what they do to play some of my favorite charts. In a sense, it's also a tribute to some of my favorite charts, like 'Stratus' by Billy Cobham and 'Million Dollar Legs' by Tony Williams. I also did some open soloing, which I just don't hear enough of nowadays. It's not as commercially viable, but it's good for the drumming community."

Chassen's solo project balances the other work he does. He can be heard on Velvet Chain's contribution to Warner Bros.' *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* compilation, and he's been touring extensively with former Poison front man Bret Michaels. He does, however, keep up his practicing on the road. "Any experience is a good

experience, and any playing is good playing. It just matures your whole approach as a musician. But being able to push the envelope as a musician, you really have to stay on top of the practicing. I will literally stay backstage for an hour or two to sit with a pad and sticks. I work with a metronome, and I make sure I keep that up."

For the Michaels gig, Chassen says he needs to provide an abundance of energy. "It's a very high-energy gig. He really needs me to lay it down, a la Bonzo. There are certain things that call for finesse and others that call for the hammer. I actually do quite a bit of background vocals with him as well. I try to make sure I have all the bases covered."

Chassen is currently working with Michaels on a new solo album.

Robyn Flans



Since the Pumpkins tour ended last November, some of the cool things **Kenny Aronoff** has been working on include records by Tony Iommi, Dave Navarro, Melissa Etheridge (who Kenny will also be touring with in the fall), Eddie Money, Garth Brooks (as pop artist "Chris Gaines"), Cyan (an Australian artist), Ricky Martin, Michael Sweet, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Celine Dion, Amanda Marshall, and The Freddy Jones Band.

Jimmy Keegan is on the recently released Gorgeous George debut record. He's also been recording with Karissa Noel and can be heard on Santana's *Supernatural*, on the track "Primavera." Other drummers on the album are **Gregg Bissonette, Horacio Hernandez, Carter Beauford, Rodney Holmes, Billy Johnson, and Alex Gonzales.**

Roger Hawkins has been recording with Johnny Taylor, Eddie Mitchell, and Toby Keith. That's also Hawkins on "Mustang Sally," the new Ford Mustang commercial theme song.

Russ Kunkel and **Jim Keltner** are on Willis Allan Ramsey's reissues on Koch Records.

Mick Brown can be heard on *The Very Best Of Dokken*, a recent Rhino collection, and is also on the band's new *Erase The Slate*.

Andrew Berger is playing with Tom Waits.

Nicko McBrain is on a new Iron Maiden greatest hits CD/PC video game, *Ed Hunter*. The band expects to record a new CD as well.

Ginger Fish is on the road with Marilyn Manson.

Mike Levesque is on David Bowie's new album, *hours....*

Nathaniel Morton is working with Trish Murphy.

Daniel Glass is on Royal Crown Revue's *Walk On Fire*. (Complete info on the new album and tour dates is available at their Web site: www.rcr.com.)

Gerry Brown has been concentrating for the past two months on his upcoming solo CD. Gerry will also be playing with Motown superstar Stevie Wonder and acclaimed funk supergroup Cameo at selected venues throughout the US.

Doug Tann is now on a world tour with singer Lorna Luft. He has also recently completed his first instructional book, *The Forgotten Foot*.



The Los Angeles Music Academy (LAMA) is very proud to have **Emil Richards** as co-head of their percussion department, along with **Jerry Steinholtz.**

Pete Thomas is on Randy Newman's *Bad Love*.

Will Calhoun played on and co-produced Herb Alpert & Colors' self-titled CD.

Ted Zarras is on Katharine Whalen's *Jazz Squad*.

Chris Dave is on Kenny Garrett's *Simply Said*.

Kevin March is on Those Bastard Souls' *Debt & Departure*.

Matthew Cross is on Orange 9MM's *Pretend I'm Human*.

Simon Gilbert is on Suede's *Headmusic*.

Peter Erskine was recently on tour with Steps Ahead, and he finished up the tour with a three-day recording project with Joni Mitchell.

Vinnie Colaiuta is on Robben Ford's *Supernatural*.

Audie Desbrow is on Great White's *Can't Get There From Here*.

J.D. Blair and **Carter Beauford** are on the new Victor Wooten disc, *Yin-Yang*.

Joel Rosenblatt is on Spyro Gyra's newest, *Got The Magic*.

DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history.

November is a historic month for the Ludwig Drum Company. In November 1925 the classic **Black Beauty** snare drum was debuted in Chicago. And on November 10, 1937, the company introduced the first twin-spring bass drum pedal, the **Speed King**.

"Goodbye Cream." In November of 1968, Eric Clapton, Jack Bruce, and **Ginger Baker** disband the supergroup.

In November of 1986, New Jersey band Bon Jovi with drummer **Tico Torres** had their first Number-1 hit, "You Give Love A Bad Name."

Former KISS drummer **Eric Carr** passed away on November 24, 1991.

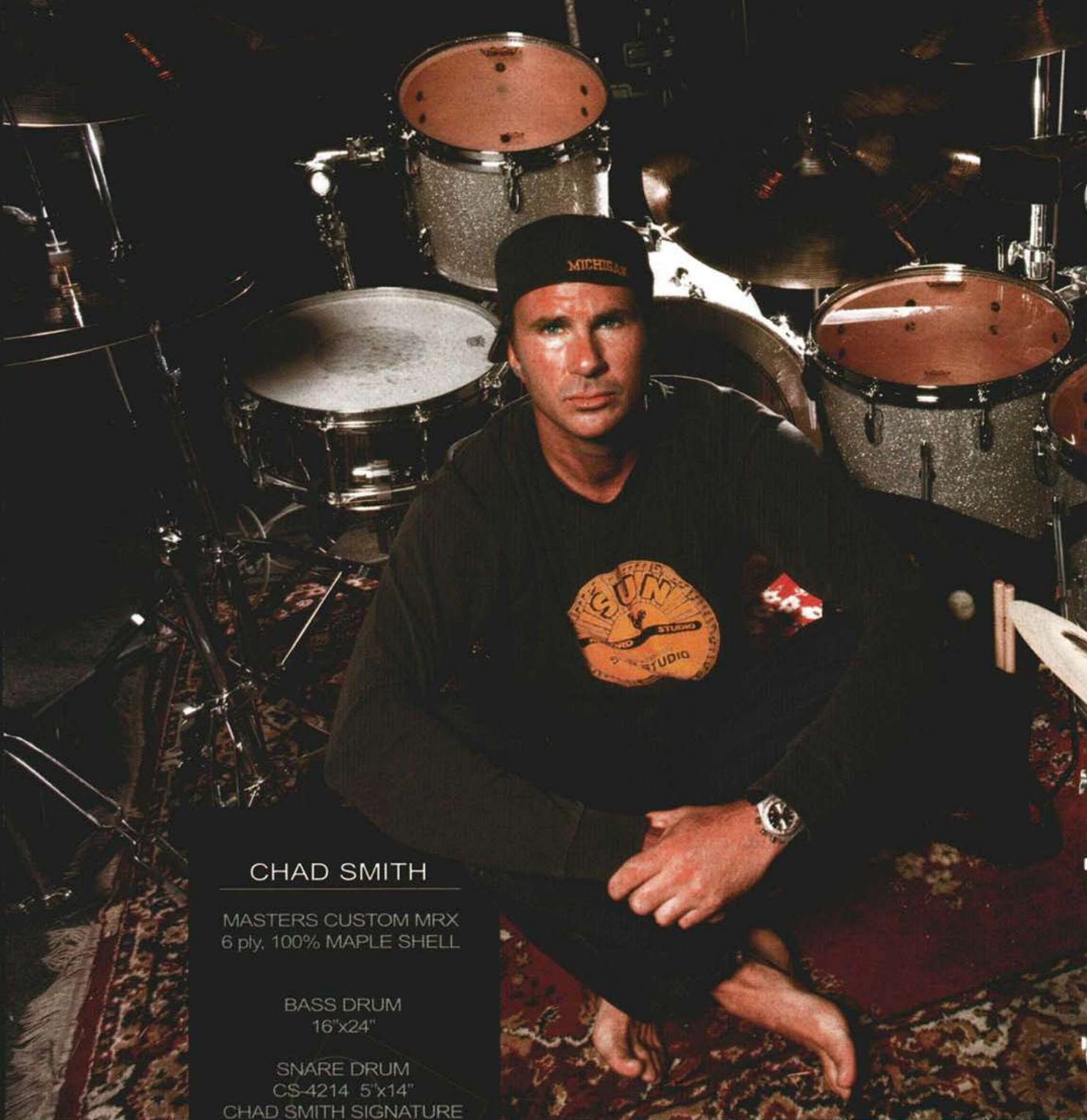
Birthdates

David Garibaldi (November 4, 1946)

Mike Bordin (November 27, 1962)

Matt Cameron (November 28, 1962)

Rick Allen (November 1, 1963)



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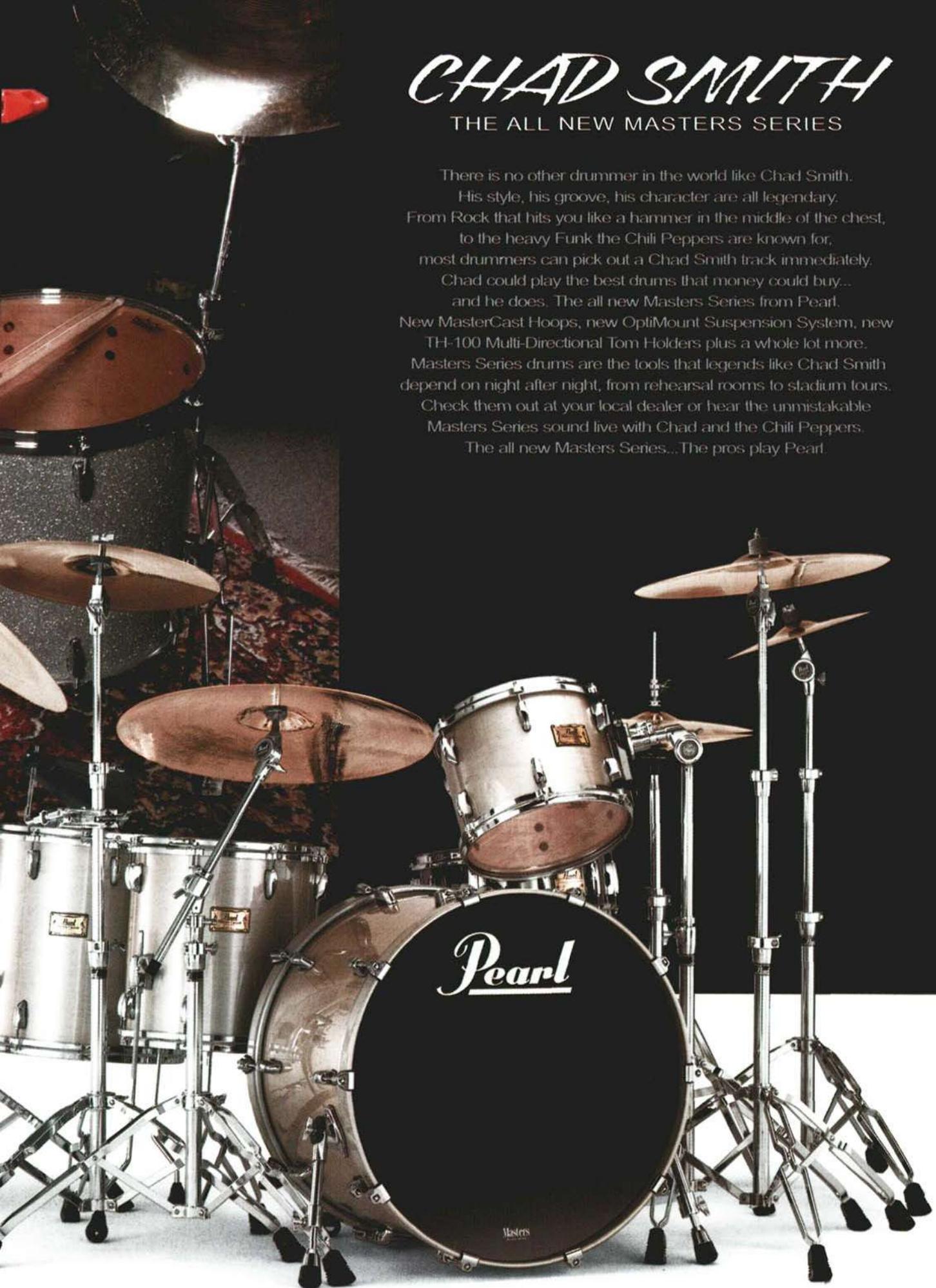
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The all new Masters Series...The pros play Pearl.



Vinnie Colaiuta

by Robyn Flans



Vinnie Colaiuta speaks much the way he plays the drums—descriptively, eloquently, and with sensitivity, reverence, and awe—which makes his reflections on other drummers quite an educational experience. Vinnie is insistent upon not dissecting anyone's technique. It is even his contention that the details of these drummers' playing are not important. What is important is that they exist and reverberate.

Vinnie marvels at his heroes, noting: "It's beautiful to behold how people can take the same instrument and the same amount of tangible rhythmic information, and yet be so different."

Peter Erskine

I first met Peter when I was a student at Berklee. He was playing in the Stan Kenton big band, and Steve Smith and I went to see him together. He sounded so great, and I loved watching him play. We actually struck up a friendship and a correspondence. He wrote me some letters with some great words of encouragement. He is a wonderful man as well as a brilliant musician. He made a great impression on me on many levels.

Peter is one of those guys who, when you see him, just oozes prodigious talent, with a maturity that is part and parcel in it—like an "old soul" kind of talent. There was one very uptempo track on an early Stan Kenton record that Steve Smith exposed me to. I don't recall the title, but it was amazing, and Peter handled it with such

grace. It's the difference between the running of a man who is trying to escape from jail and that of a gazelle. There's a lot of elegance there.

Louie Bellson

If ever there was someone worthy of the title "mentor," Louie Bellson is it. When I hear his name, I immediately think of "maestro." He is class personified, and so positive. There's so much love in his playing, in his technical ability and what he does with it, and the love he transmits with it. He's a shining example of something we all need to always be mindful of. If I wore a hat, I would immediately tip it when I see Louie. He's the grand master.

Steve Smith

My old drum buddy. He's one of those guys who keeps growing and growing. One has to wonder, How far can you grow? Where do you stop? Steve has always been the consummate student of the drums. When I look at him, I think, That guy's *there*; that guy's got it. He's always *been* there, yet he never stops striving to grow. He's an awesome drummer, one of the very best I know. He's also a dear friend. When I think of him, it warms my heart.

Elvin Jones

Elvin is one of the people who redefined modern drumming for all

of us. I can't say enough about the importance of what he has done. He's tapped into something very large in the muse and made it his own, via his own identity. He's tapped into such powerful elemental laws of music. But the most important thing is the amount of love with which he manifests what he manifests. What he is actually saying is very powerful.

Buddy Rich

That kind of a gift is like a comet in terms of how rarely it comes through human history. Enough has been said about Buddy to pass the point of redundancy, so I can't do much more than reiterate what a freak of nature he was. To say something about him "redefining drumming" almost doesn't apply, because many people didn't think what he did was attainable. One of two things can happen as a result of witnessing something like that. One can marvel at that kind of anomaly—which is a gift—and consequently become inspired by it without being intimidated. Or one can say that one is going to saw one's arms off. Fortunately for me, I marveled at it, and being a young kid, it made me want to play. It was almost like a father throwing a stone really high, and a kid, with a child's innocence, not even concerned with achieving that height, having fun throwing the stone in the same way the father did. Once you start getting hung up in your own insecurities or whatever else happens as an adult, it can get in your way of appreciating the beauty of what Buddy did.

Jack DeJohnette

The way Jack plays is like a magician. He's almost a conjurer, but I mean that in a good sense, not one that suggests negative sorcery.

It's one of those indefinable elements that *he* defines when he plays. With Tony, Elvin, and Jack, the identity is so strong. What Jack does is representative of his identity, yet in and of itself, it is something where he's made the intangible tangible.

Tony Williams

My personal drum hero, who I called "the genius of the drums." If there were ever profound truths spoken on the drums, Tony did it for me. He who has ears to hear, will hear it. During the latter portion of his life especially, Tony reached people on a primal level. The immediacy and impact of what Tony plays will reach you on that level whether you cognitively understand it or you don't.

I first heard about Tony Williams at a high-school stage-band event. There were several bands from various high schools playing, and one of the drummers I met asked me who my favorite drummer was. When you're fourteen or fifteen, you could be in a variety of different places, and there's a lot of information that can get gleaned. It's one thing to see and be influenced by someone and have the understanding of what you're being influenced by be rather immediate. It's another thing to be influenced at that age by someone else in such a way that the understanding of what they're playing isn't so immediate, perhaps entailing a certain amount of maturity. To make a long story short, when this other drummer asked me who my favorite drummer was, I said, "Buddy Rich. Who is your favorite drummer?" He answered, "Tony Williams." I said, "Hmm, who's that?" He told me about a record called *Ego*. I went to a record store where I saw it hanging on a wall. I bought it, put it on my turntable, couldn't understand any of it, and thought, "This is interesting." I wasn't used to hearing drums played that way. About

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MICHAEL YONCHAK'S FUTURE IS IN HIS HANDS

Congratulations to Michael Yonchak, recipient of the 1999 Pro-Mark/Modern Drummer Magazine Scholarship. Michael will use the \$1,500 cash award and Pro-Mark products valued at \$1,000 as he continues his music studies at Youngstown State University. Congratulations also to all the other percussionists who made submissions. While we only had one scholarship to award, you all proved yourselves to be winners.

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two weeks later, I put it on again—and it was as though I had suddenly become stricken with understanding. All of a sudden I got it.

Billy Cobham

He came out of nowhere! To be able to do what he did would obviously require an amazing combination of musical talent and physical ability that is probably akin to The Hulk. He's one of those people who also had such an impact that he spawned a slew of imitators, one of which was myself. He had an amazing, brutal technique

with finesse, with that sort of weight-lifting muscle, which is a spectacle to behold. On top of all that, he was so funky! He is one of the most important drummers of our time, and one of the major influences on my playing, to the point where I was a Billy Cobham freak. When The Mahavishnu Orchestra first appeared on the scene, my whole brain did a 180! There were some pivotal points that happened concurrently in my life: the appearance of The Mahavishnu Orchestra, Tower Of Power, some later Miles Davis records, and Tony Williams' *Ego*.

Frankly Speaking

Vinnie Colaiuta came to most drummers' attention as a member of Frank Zappa's band. His phenomenal playing on Zappa's challenging music stands as some of the most innovative drumming of all time. Being a drummer for Frank Zappa puts Vinnie in some stellar company. Here are his reflections on some other alumni of the Zappa band.

Aynsley Dunbar

I love the way Aynsley played on those records. Frank really brought out qualities in musicians that others may not have gotten out of them, which I think was the case with Aynsley.

Ralph Humphrey and Chester Thompson

I remember hearing Ralph on some of the Zappa records before I was involved. I thought, Listen to this guy, he's really, really good. The same with Chester. I'm sure Frank chose them for their roles. You could tell that Ralph was very educated. When he's out there watching you play, you know he knows everything you're doing. You ain't gonna get anything by him! He's a very astute drummer and very knowledgeable, which I respect highly.

Chester was the get down, groovin', really greasy drummer. I love the way Chester brought Frank's music to life and the feel he put to it. He treated that complex music with such playfulness, and brought it down to earth. He didn't keep it in the cerebral realm that it was in. He became the soul of the band, executing stuff of that complexity with the gut that he did. He's such a joyful

player. Chester has so much ability, and yet he is such an amazing team player. That role can be so underestimated in an age where everybody wants to be a star. Nobody understands how important it is to be that. Chester undertakes that role with such life and soul that he takes it beyond where it needs to be. Yet he never gets in the way, despite how much capacity he has. He deserves more respect and attention for the importance of what he's contributed.

Terry Bozzio

Terry really embodies uniqueness and big talent. It has nothing to do with how many drums he plays, it's *what* he does. He's really taken the step to be himself and make an important statement for the drums and for his vision. Terry, to me, is a visionary.

Chad Wackeman

Chad is an unsung hero. He came into that Zappa arena and handled it so eloquently and so well that people have taken him for granted. He's another drummer who deserves to be taken more respectfully. He's a beautiful guy and a great musician, the testimony of which is on his solo albums. When I heard his first solo album, that told me all I needed to hear, regardless of what he had done with Frank. Again, he who has ears to hear, will hear that. It's understated, in a sense. It's not put in your face to be advertised. Chad just does it, and you either get it or you don't

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A Salute To Buddy Rich

with Phil Collins, Steve Smith & Dennis Chambers

Phil Collins' performance with The Buddy Rich Band includes his hits *Sussudio* and *I Don't Care Anymore* plus 6 pieces from Buddy's repertoire. Also featured are Dennis Chambers and Steve Smith who each perform 2 songs associated with Buddy Rich. Includes bonus clips of rehearsals and interviews as well as 5 clips of Buddy, himself.

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Bill Bruford

I always loved the way Bill played with Yes and King Crimson. He struck me as a very intellectual drummer who always seemed to do something very clever. He had so many musical surprises, not only in the way he would play his part, but in what he would choose to do texturally and the choice of instruments he would use. I've gotten to know Bill over the years, and he's a lovely guy and a very interesting man. I always get the impression that there's more going on in his head than people can understand.

Harvey Mason

Another great influence on me. Harvey embodies such a well-rounded, excellent musician. When you hear Harvey, you can hear how elegantly well-schooled he is—yet at the same time he is so funky, and slippery. You know this guy really knows what he's doing! In his stellar studio career, he's been involved in so many influential records that really have shown "how it's done."

Ringo Starr

He was the first guy I remember seeing on TV where it was, Yeah! That's cool! A real character, almost a caricature of a drummer in a band. Interestingly enough, it wasn't until later on that I realized the hidden profundity of what he did. I went from being a kid seeing him and going, Gee, that's fun. I want to be a drummer, to realizing what he really had inside of him. It's been said before and I'll say it again, nobody plays like Ringo. What a character.

Dave Weckl

You can really tell that this guy wanted to play the drums. He's been so imitated because he's had so much to offer. He's such a

shining example of what can happen with the right combination of talent, dedication, and just getting down in it and doing your homework. He is one of the greatest.

Josh Freese

I met Josh when he was something like twelve years old. He was actually the ring bearer at my wedding. His father used to sneak him into The Baked Potato to see me play when he was a kid. I remember seeing him once when he was playing at Disneyland, and I thought, There you go, this kid has really got it! He's a big talent and he's really going to go places. He's just one of those guys I have to be a little proud of.

Dennis Chambers

Freak of nature number two. "Dennis the Menace" is something I remember calling him. When you see Dennis, you've got to shake your head in disbelief at the amazing superhuman speed and power that he has. But because of the way he does it, with the twinkle in his eye, you gotta laugh. He has incredible chops, but the feel he has is so funky and gut-bucket greasy. If there was ever a natural, that guy is it. And then he turns around and plays with John McLaughlin, playing music that most people would spend years intellectualizing and keeping inside a classroom. Dennis brings it to life without counting it—and chewing gum at the same time. I love that guy.

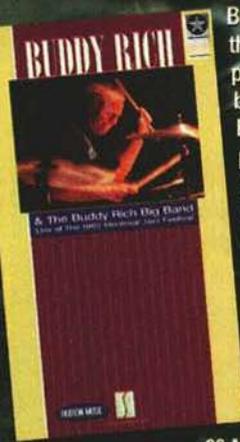
Simon Phillips

What a powerhouse! I was exposed to Simon when I was in Frank Zappa's band. He played on something that Zappa had produced called "The Dead Girls Of London." He was a well-known studio

DRUMMING FOR MODERN DRUMMERS.

Buddy Rich

Live at the Montreal Jazz Festival 1982

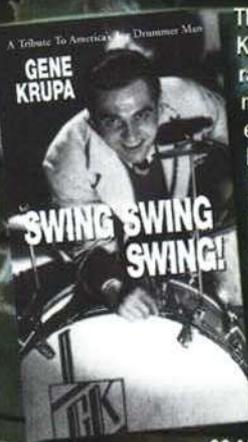


Buddy and his band at the height of their popularity, featuring a brilliant rendition of Buddy's signature piece: the medley from *West Side Story*. Part of Hudson's *Classic Performances* series, the video includes a bonus clip of a classic 1972 performance.

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A Tribute To Gene Krupa



This video presents Krupa in 14 complete, rarely seen performances with Swing era icons including Benny Goodman, Lionel Hampton, Charlie Ventura and Anita O'Day, plus a rare interview with the legend himself! Produced by Bruce Klauber for Tahoe Productions.

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Brilliant group performances interspersed with guidance and commentary from the members of this all-star ensemble make "Live In NYC" both entertaining and educational. A unique concert/clinic, this video features modern drumming legend, Peter Erskine.

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musician in England when he was young, so he's another one of those guys whose talent is obvious. I think probably he was widely influenced by Billy, but he really made it his own. He embodies power and finesse in the best possible way.

Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez

The whole thing with the clave played with the left foot has become something that so many drummers have had to "get down." But when I've seen it in a contrived manner, it turns me away from it. Horacio was probably the first guy I ever saw do it, and he does it honestly. Everything else he plays around it is so right. He was so graceful and eloquent when I saw him play last. I think he's one of the new breed in terms of recognition, and someone who is really doing something wonderful for the drums.

Jeff Watts

That's my homeboy. We're both from Pittsburgh. Out of all the people who came up in the new breed of—if you want to call them jazz players—Jeff is the one who has impressed me most profoundly. He has it going on, as far as I'm concerned. He has really tapped into some very deep stuff.

Abe Laboriel Jr.

That's someone you look at and say, "He is the anointed one, the gifted one." I feel very blessed to be able to recognize that gift, which has no reflection on whether I do or do not have it myself. I am sure that many people would agree with me when I say I recognize that that man is truly gifted.




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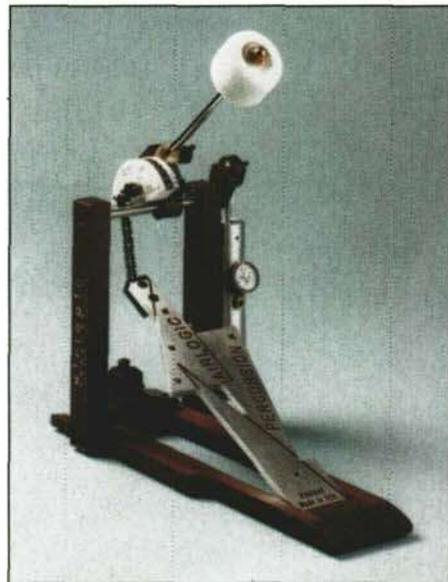
Airlogic Percussion Bass Drum Pedal

Here's a unique departure from the norm in bass drum pedal design. Airlogic Percussion's pedal develops its return force through a self-contained air cylinder instead of through the use of a spring. The design is claimed to provide a "fast, smooth, responsive action" that is "more controllable than conventional spring pedals."

The self-contained air cylinder includes an air-pressure gauge, which provides the drummer with the ability to determine the exact amount of return force to be employed. A built-in miniature pump and a pressure-relief valve combine to permit

"fine tuning" of the pedal's action.

The pedal also offers selectable true-center or off-center (cam) drive settings, with no tools required to make the adjustment. All pedals come with both chain- and strap-drive hardware, and with footboards fitted with adjustable traction set screws (to modify shoe-to-footboard grip). Construction is of solid aluminum and brass, and all components are machined. Pedals are available in red, blue, black, and green anodized colors, and are manufactured in the USA. Suggested retail price is \$329.



New Spirit

Spirit Solid-Shell Drums

Australia's Spirit Drums has made several significant design and construction changes to their one-piece, bored-out-shell snare drums. (See the *Product Close-Up* in MD's August '99 issue.)

"Traditional" tube lugs have now been replaced with improved custom lugs that are turned by hand from solid brass, then either clear-coated or chromed. Hand-threaded by Spirit, the lugs are designed for perfect alignment in order to avoid potential cross-threading. In addition, the

new lugs require only one hole in the shell each, which lowers the total number of holes drilled into each drumshell by half.

Lugs on 6 1/2"-deep drums have been lowered, in order to provide the top of the drum with 4" of unobstructed shell. Drums with natural brass lugs now feature gold-plated throw-offs and die-cast hoops. Yet all drums are priced the same as before, ranging from \$905 for a chromed 4x14 model to \$995 for a brass/gold-plated 6 1/2x14.



Back To Basics

Boom Theory Acoustic Drumsets

Boom Theory is well-known for their SpaceMuffin electronic drumkits, which feature "real" drumshells and look for all the world like acoustic kits. Well, now the company has taken the step of actually offering acoustic kits. The sets are made in the USA and feature all-maple Keller shells, solid lugs, and RIMS mounts as standard equipment. Bearing edges are hand-rounded "for exceptional live miking and recording applications." Shells are either 5- or 6-ply construction (depending on size) and are fitted with 3-, 5-, or 6-ply reinforcement hoops. (The exception is Boom Theory's Bridge Deck snare, which features a new, patent-pending design.) Lugs are available in polished brass, black, white, or chrome finishes, with optional matching black and brass hardware.

The new line consists of five-piece, covered kits only. No custom sizes are available, and the company states unequivocally: "We will not be offering any stained or oiled drums, ever. It's just not our vibe!" Suggested prices range from \$2,150 to \$2,530, but Boom Theory modestly claims that they will "match these sets against any on earth—regardless of price—for quality, sound, and performance."

This Is Not Your Father's Percussion Instrument

American Percussion Instruments Lap Drum

Measuring 12" in width by 8 1/2" in height, the Lap Drum is a non-ethnic-specific instrument made of clay. Created by drum designer Ken Lovelett, each drum features a one-of-a-kind glazed finish, and is fitted with three drumheads—one on the top of the instrument and two smaller heads on the side. These allow the performer the ability to play on two surfaces simultaneously with one hand. There is also a portal that can be used to vary the pitch or to create a glissando effect. Beneath the 5" head are slotted indentations in the clay surface that give a "guiro" or

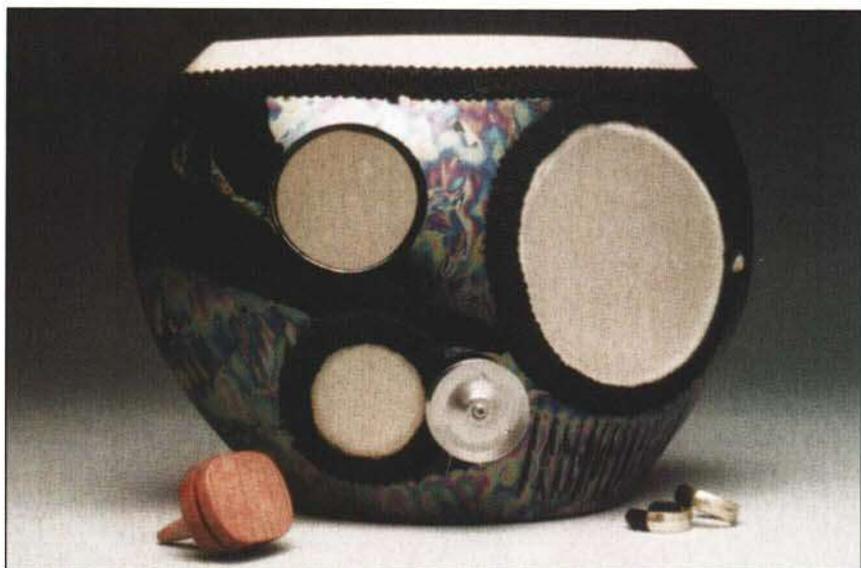
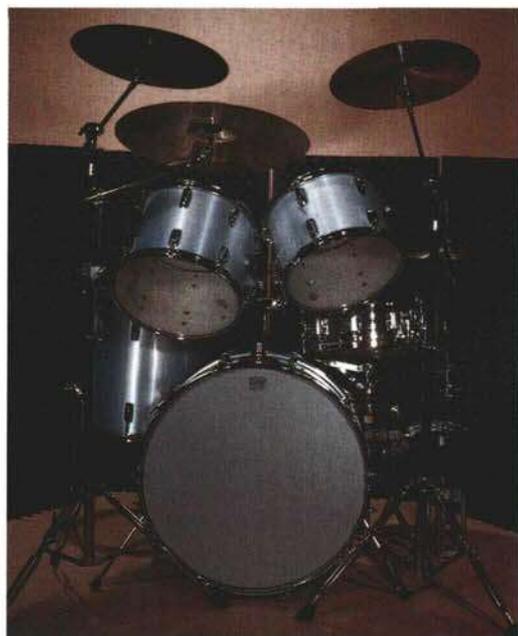
"ratchet" effect when scraped with aluminum thumb rings (provided). The rings can also be used to lightly hit the clay body of the drum to create a rhythmic tapping.

A 1/2" hole between the 2" and 5" drumheads permits the insertion of a tambourine jingle, finger cymbal, or miniature wood block. A similar hole in the bottom of the drum allows a lavalier microphone to be installed inside. The drum is painted with a non-slip surface to prevent it from sliding off the performer's lap.

Suck Up That Sound!

ClearSonic SORBER Acoustic Panels

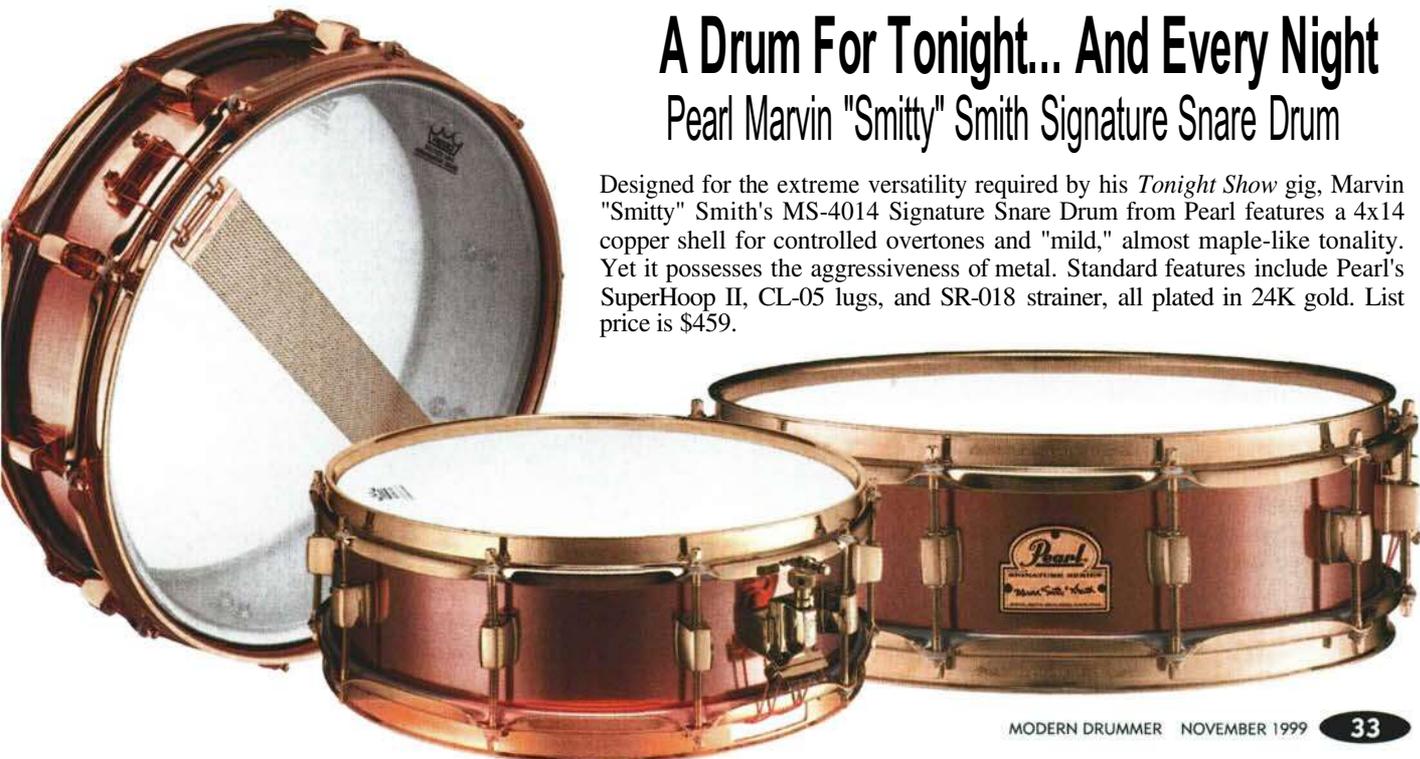
ClearSonic's W4-6 SORBER is a low-cost, portable system made from six hardboard sections connected by the same heavy-duty hinges used on the company's clear acrylic ClearSonic Panel systems. When covered with four boxes of F3-6 Acoustic Foam (sold separately), SORBER provides forty-eight square feet of "highly absorbent, 3"-thick sound-soaking foam." Designed to complement the ClearSonic Panel system, SORBER reduces the sound escaping from *behind* the drums and bouncing off rear walls, thus ultimately ending up back in the room.



A Drum For Tonight... And Every Night

Pearl Marvin "Smitty" Smith Signature Snare Drum

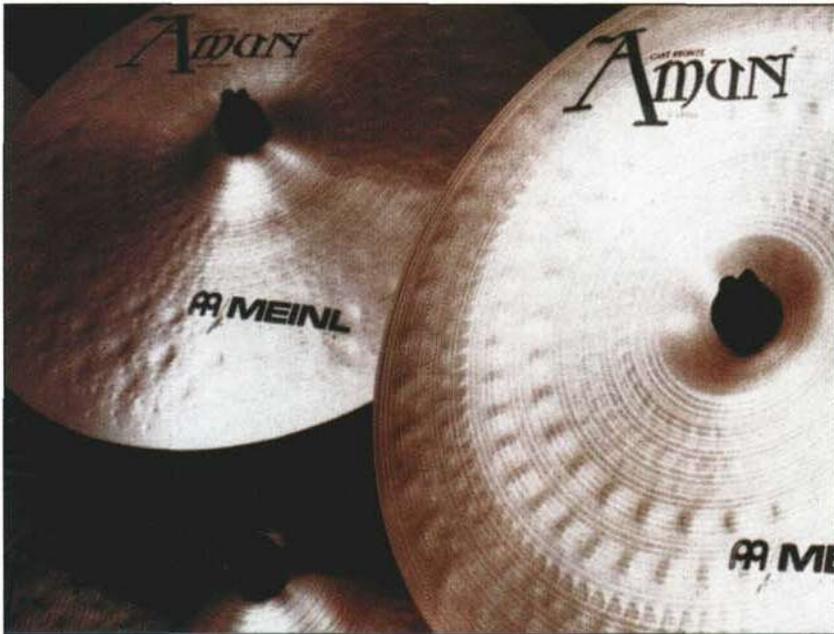
Designed for the extreme versatility required by his *Tonight Show* gig, Marvin "Smitty" Smith's MS-4014 Signature Snare Drum from Pearl features a 4x14 copper shell for controlled overtones and "mild," almost maple-like tonality. Yet it possesses the aggressiveness of metal. Standard features include Pearl's SuperHoop II, CL-05 lugs, and SR-018 strainer, all plated in 24K gold. List price is \$459.



German Instruments...Egyptian Power? Meinl Amun Cymbals

Meinl's new Amun cymbal series is cited as a "new chapter" within the company's professional range. The "foundation" of the new line is a "hardened Meinl bronze alloy," said to produce "a warm, rich sound and an even sustain." The line includes Thin, Medium, and Powerful models, and two different bell sizes are available on ride cymbals. According to Meinl,

"modern computerized hammering techniques guarantee the exact hammering sequence, depth, angle, and strength. The musical power of these cymbals—which can be felt as well as heard—is not unlike the mysterious power emitted by the Egyptian god Amun, for whom this line has been named."



Evans Goes Ethnic Evans Tri-Center Conga Heads

In their first foray into the expanding world of ethnic percussion, Evans now offers a synthetic conga head said to "combine the unmistakable sound and feel of animal skin with the benefits of all-weather materials." The new heads were developed in conjunction with some of the world's greatest congueros.

The Tri-Center head's special triple-slip "Overtone Control Center" is responsible for its "animal-skin sound," and the head is acoustically designed to eliminate unwanted overtones and add low end. A textured finish and a protective coating improve response, sensitivity, and longevity. The all-weather performance of the synthetic material means that no re-tuning will be needed between soundcheck and performance.

The heads also feature a "revolutionary hoop design" that conforms to the taper of the conga shell for a perfect fit with the bearing edge and conga rims. The hoop also locks the film in place preventing the head from pulling out under high tension tuning. Sizes are available for 11" quinto 11 3/4" conga, and 12 1/2" tumba drums.



Four More To Stick In Your Bag Pro-Mark Bill Bruford, Carl Allen, Acid Jazz, and Intruder Drumsticks

Pro-Mark's already extensive drumstick line has been expanded by four new models. The 718 Acid Jazz is 14 1/4" long, 9/16" in diameter, and features a modified ball (round) wood tip. This 5A-diameter stick is said to work well for a wide range of musical applications.

The 720 Intruder measures 16 1/2" long by 37/64" in diameter and has an elongated acorn-shaped wood tip. Although the stick is fairly large, it features a slightly thinner taper for added speed.

The 9A Carl Allen model is 16 1/4" long and 9/16" in diameter, with a pointed, cone-shaped tip. This model features a short taper to a relatively thin neck, designed to be very fast with excellent cymbal articula-

tion. Like the 718 and 720, the 9A is made of American hickory.

The SD4 Bill Bruford stick is made of American rock maple. It's 15 7/8" long and 17/32" in diameter, with a modified "barrel-

shaped" wood tip. It's said to be "very light yet versatile for a variety of quieter applications." All four models listed have a price of \$10.50 per pair.

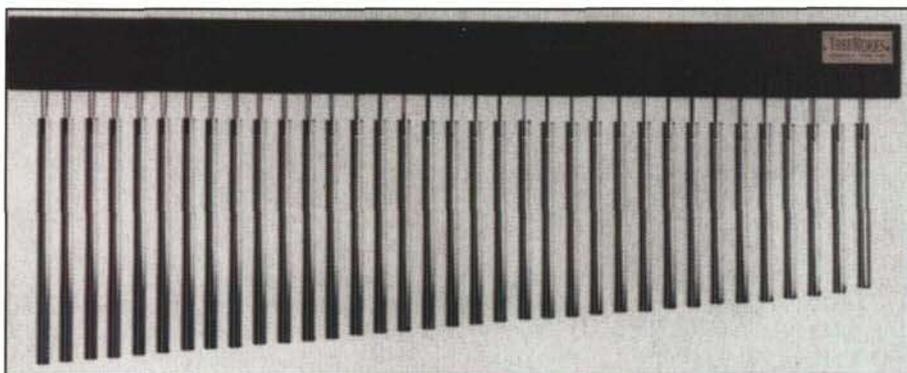


Just Chime In Anytime

TreeWorks Chimes And Bags

TreeWorks is a three-year-old company that only makes chimes (and bags for them). The chimes are made in Nashville; the bags are made on Merritt Island, Florida, and all materials come from American suppliers. Among the company's offerings are chimes mounted on wooden bars of Tennessee black walnut.

The tornadoes that ripped through Nashville in 1998 downed trees dating back to before the Civil War, and the old-



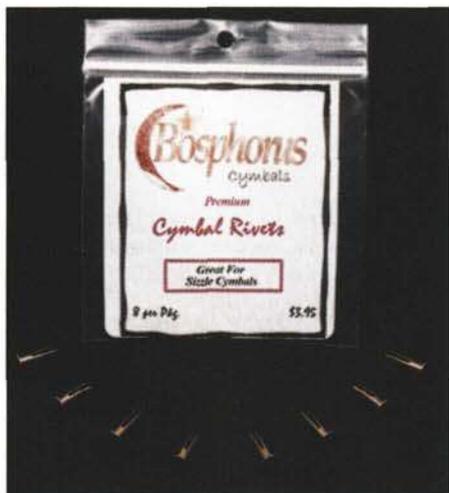
growth timber produces beautifully figured grain patterns. From bars of this wood TreeWorks hangs solid aluminum chimes, polished for bright tone and hand-tied with braided cord for strength. Prices range from \$67 to \$100.

TreeWorks also sells soft cases to protect the beauty of its chimes. The 1/2" foam on each side protects the instrument, while the lining allows the chimes to slide in and out easily. Two sizes are available, at \$26 and \$29.

And What's More

AXIS PERCUSSION has introduced an improved electronic trigger element for all Axis bass drum pedals. Dubbed the "Lectro Hammer," the new detonator mounts onto the pedals, making triggering effortless. Photo and description are detailed on the Axis Web site.

BOSPHORUS is now offering authentic brass cymbal rivets from their factory in Turkey. The company claims that their rivets are pitched lower than most manufacturers' nickel rivets, providing a "vintage sound." The split design allows drummers to add or remove the rivets quickly, and to use them over again. A package of eight is priced at \$3.95.



Known for performances with Irakere, Steve Coleman, Roy Hargrove, The Afro-



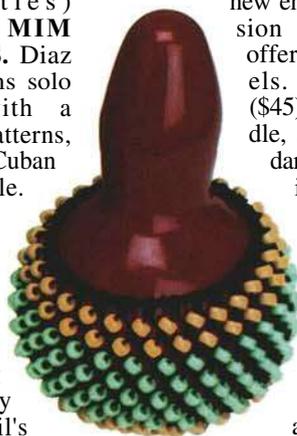
Cuban All-Stars, Ruben Gonzalez, Danilo Perez, and David Sanchez, conguero **Miguel "Anga" Diaz** is featured in a new instructional video (in Spanish with English subtitles) from **MIM FILMS**. Diaz performs solo and with a pianist and deejay to illustrate patterns, riffs, and solos in traditional Afro-Cuban music, as well as contemporary jungle. The video retails for \$39.95.

HUDSON MUSIC'S latest video releases include *A Salute To Buddy Rich* and *Buddy Rich Live At The 1982 Montreal Jazz Festival*. The *Salute* video (100 minutes, \$24.95) features **Phil Collins** performing eight compositions with the Buddy Rich Band, including some of Phil's hits plus tunes from Buddy's original repertoire. Also featured on this concert are

Dennis Chambers, Steve Smith, and Luis Conte, as well as vintage clips of **Buddy** himself. The *Montreal* video (60 minutes, \$24.95) features Buddy and his band at the height of their popularity. It includes seven arrangements, including the legendary "West Side Story" medley, and a rare clip of a drum battle between Buddy and big band great **Ed Shaughnessy**. Both videos are distributed by Hal Leonard Corp.

NOBLE & COOLEY is now shipping all its drums with Attack drumheads. N&C's drums are also now available in green, blue, and purple sparkle finishes that are UV lacquer, not wraps.

SCHALLOCH PERCUSSION is a new entry in the world percussion field. The company offers cabasas in two models. The standard model (\$45) has a solid-wood handle, and is available with a dark brown or natural finish. The "traditionally shaped" model (\$69.95, shown), which resembles a shekere, is made of fiberglass with synthetic beads. Schalloch also offers basket-woven ganzas and caxixis.



Making Contact

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Hal Leonard Corp.

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(Andrew Thress)
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www.pearldrums.com

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*Flairz™ Drumbrushes (patents pending)
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Loud, fat and aggressive yet capable of all the techniques and dynamic levels of conventional wire brushes, new Flairz™ from Gauger Percussion feature specially-designed coiled, steel wires with hollow hi-tech handles. The crimped, clustered wires form a more concentrated mass with the ability to flare out for a bigger, brush-type sound on drums, cymbals and percussion. Flairz™ also feature threaded end caps that provide a method for easy replacement and use of alternative implements as well as storage inside the advanced, soft-molded

handles. This unique system creates less weight, better balance and a more comfortable grip as it also protects the wires during transport. Recommended for many playing styles and situations, Flairz™ are the traditional jazz brush with a progressive rock 'n' roll attitude.



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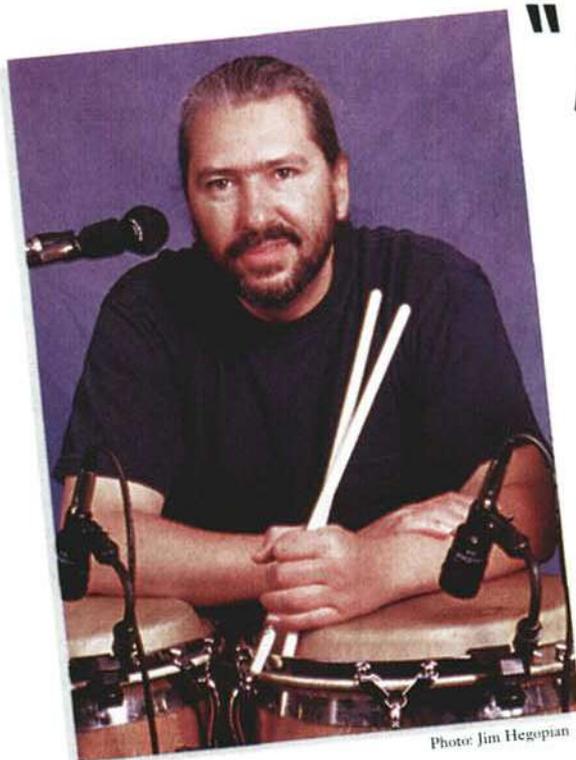
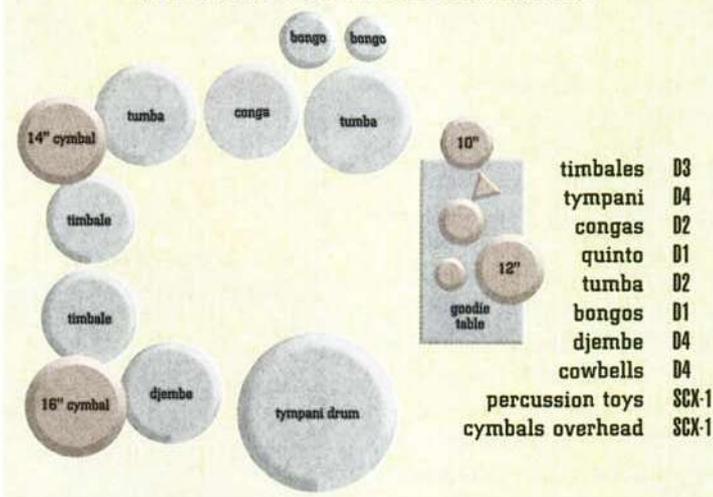


Photo: Jim Hegopian

"Audix mics
are the best
sound for
the new
millennium!"

—Luis Conte

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Hailed as one of the most sought after studio/tour percussionists in the world, Luis Conte has played or recorded with almost every name and genre in the music industry. Grammy Winner Luis Conte has added his signature sound to the music of artists such as **Madonna, Whitney Houston, The Goo Goo Dolls, Barbara Streisand, and Pat Metheny.** Currently he is on tour with **Phil Collins**, and can be heard on the soundtrack for **Disney's 1999** animated feature film *Tarzan*.

Luis describes himself as "multi-percussionist" and he has the rare ability to weave his percussive textures through the fabric of any style of music. He is currently the most "in demand" percussionist in the world.

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Paiste New Millennium Spirit Of 2002 Snare Drums

The ghosts of cymbals past lend their spirit to these unique drums.

by Rick Van Horn

Hits

- unique appearance
- unparalleled detail and craftsmanship
- great power, with warmth and character

Misses

- difficult for most drummers to afford

Jeff Ocheltree is a notable drum tech whose credits range from Billy Cobham (during the Mahavishnu days) to John Bonham (during Zep's heyday) to Steve Smith (today). This guy *knows* drums.

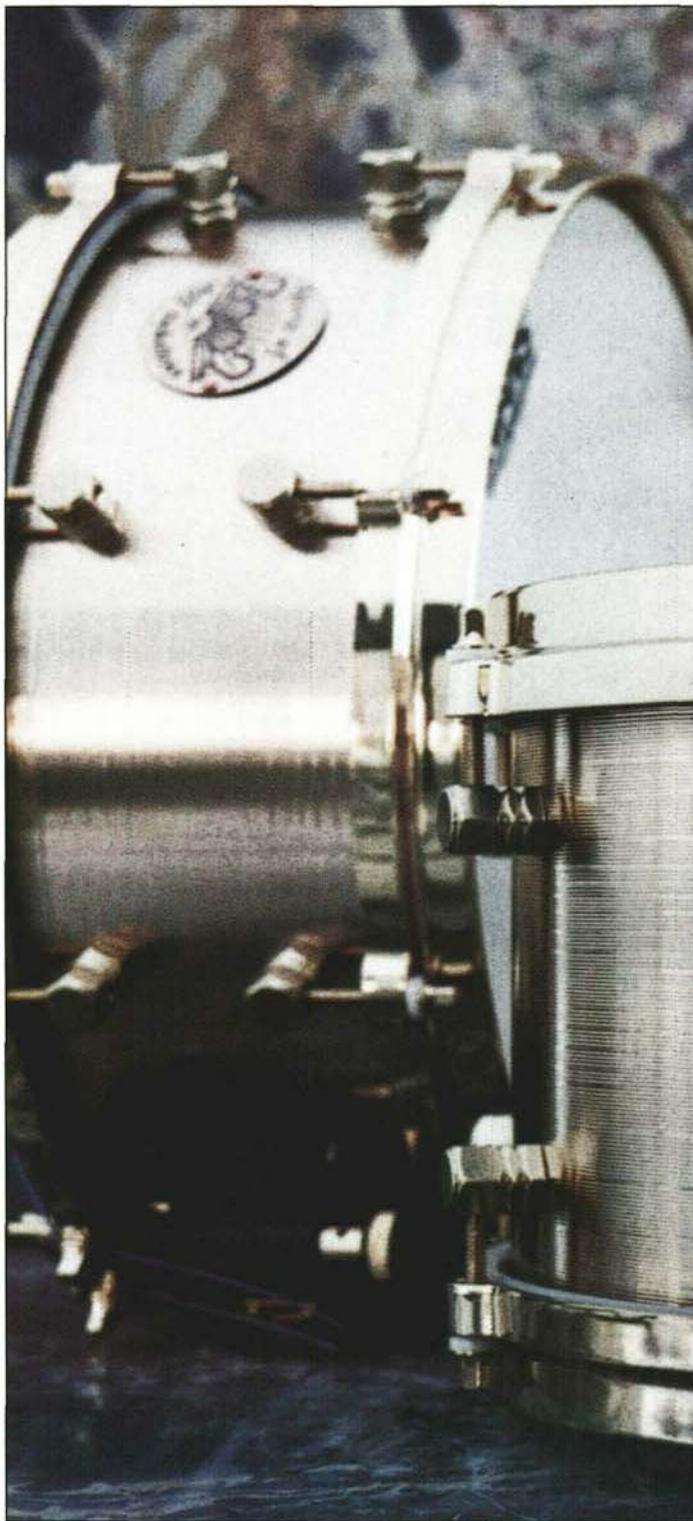
Jeff is also a craftsman whose hand-made Dangerous Ocheltree carbon-steel snare drums created quite a buzz just a few years ago. (One of Jeff's D.O. drums is a major ingredient in the highly identifiable drum sound of Carter Beauford.) This guy knows how to *make* drums. He's making them today in his New Millennium custom workshop in California's Bay Area.

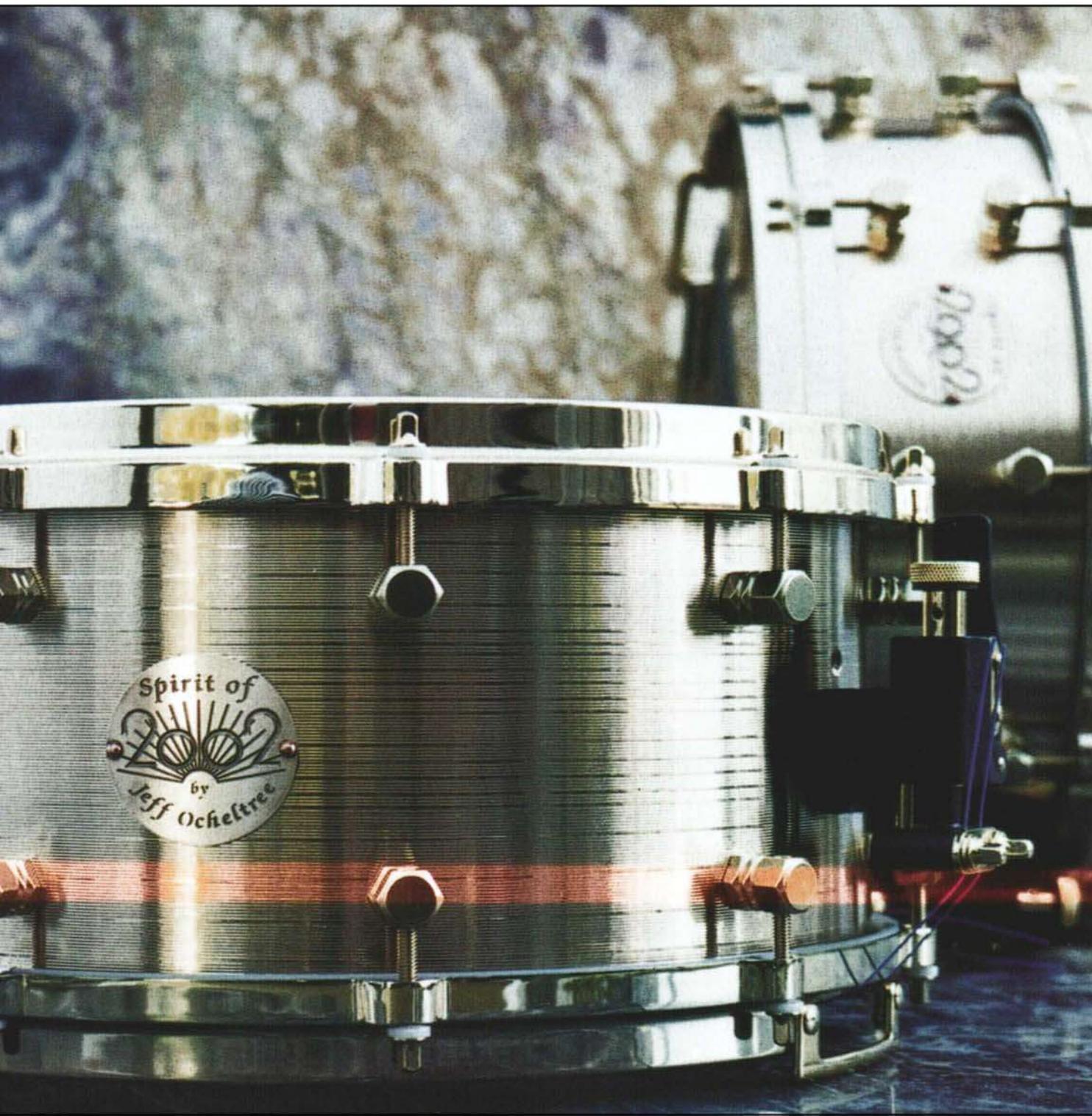
Having conquered steel, Jeff has now turned his attention to bronze, an alloy that has been used to make cymbals and bells for centuries because of its sonorous properties. Bronze snare drums aren't new, either; there are several on the market already. But Jeff isn't one to follow the crowd, so he decided to use a very special *kind* of bronze. To be precise, he's using bronze from recycled Paiste 2002 cymbals, melted down and recast as drumshells!

According to Paiste, each shell contains the spirit of the many drummers who have played the worn-out cymbals, hence the name "Spirit Of 2002." As if that weren't enough to make the drums special, Jeff has fitted them with gold-plated die-cast hoops, solid brass lugs, Pure Sound Percussion snares, and the new high-tech Piston Drive Snare Strainer by Nickel Drumworks.

In terms of aesthetics, the Spirit Of 2002 drums are unlike anything ever seen. Each shell features cymbal-style lathing lines that are unique to that drum alone. The lugs are tumbled and peened, and have a baked-on enamel finish (as do the shells). Jeff makes the copper badges (and their fasteners) himself. A certificate of uniqueness accompanies each drum, including a serial number corresponding to one inside the drum. The Spirit Of 2002 may be a drum series, but each drum within it is a legitimate one-of-a-kind.

Jeff did a lot of experimentation with shell thickness, and ultimately decided on a fairly thick shell: about 3/8". With the addition of die-cast hoops and solid brass lugs, these drums are *heavy*.







The smallest model (the 5 1/3 x 13) weighs in at just under nineteen pounds. (To put that in perspective, I own a 5x13 10-ply maple drum with steel hoops that weighs seven and a half pounds.) The 5x14 and 6 1/2x14 models weigh even more! Not exactly your "weekender" sort of equipment.

But there's a method to Jeff Ocheltree's madness. A thick metal

shell is highly reflective, creating a powerful sound with tremendous projection. Yet Paiste's 2002 bronze has such character and tonality that the sound is at once clear and warm, with lots of penetration but no abrasiveness. I've heard loud drums before. This is a loud drum that goes beyond pure volume. It's extremely rich and satisfying. (If that sounds like a coffee commercial, I'm sorry.)



The three drums in our test group were fitted with Evans G1 Coated single-ply batter heads and clear 300 GL snare-side heads. These relatively thin heads, combined with the Pure Sound Percussion snares, give the drums remarkable snare sensitivity. The slightest tap of my finger on the head produced a respectable response from the snares, even on the largest drum. Conversely, really smacking the drums with the butt of a 5B stick never came close

to choking the snares off. (The ceiling lost a little plaster, though.)

But let me stress again that sheer volume wasn't really the drums' forte (no pun intended). Their dynamic range was tremendous; each drum spoke expressively from a whisper to a roar. And they really *felt* great to play on, too.

I can't say enough good things about these drums. Every aspect of their construction and performance is absolutely at the top of the scale. Predictably, so is their cost. But it's like my grandfather used to say: A Pinto and a Rolls-Royce will each get you where you want to go. It's just a matter of how you feel along the way.

Spirits In The Material World

Paiste/New Millennium Spirit Of 2002 Snare Drums

5 1/2x13 \$2,040

5x14 \$2,160

6 1/2x14 \$2,280

All models feature 3/8"-thick shells cast of Paiste 2002 cymbal alloy, die-cast hoops, and solid brass lugs

Paiste Cymbals "Mixed Bag"

by Rich Watson

Rather than burying *MD* with every cymbal in a particular line, Paiste recently sent for review eight new models from three series. With pinpoint-specific sounds spanning a broad sonic spectrum, this impressive "sampler" (or perhaps "teaser" would be more accurate) demonstrates just how far the art of cymbal making has evolved.

Hits

- rich, exquisite Medium Swish China
- funky, distinctive Flanger Splash
- great combination of features on cymbal bag



Signature 15" Fast Crash (left) and Percussive Sounds 12" Flanger Splash

Flanger Splash

When I read "Flanger Splash" on the press release that accompanied this batch of review cymbals, I thought a couple of Paiste marketing folks might have conjured up the name late one night over a couple of brewskies (or whatever the Swiss call them). After all, how could a piece of bronze ever suggest a sound asso-

ciated with electronic signal processing? Well, "how" remains a mystery—perhaps it has something to do with their tiny bell and ultra-low profile. But after hearing the staggered decay of high and low frequencies, creating a modulation effect within the cymbal's short sustain, I could no longer doubt the name. This subtle, interesting effect would be most appreciated in lower-volume settings or in the recording studio. If you're looking for new and different sounds, put this little guy from Paiste's Percussive Sounds line on your must-hear list.

Fast Crash

No room for doubt here. The new Signature Series 15" Fast Crash responds instantly and decays almost as quickly. I've always appreciated the way 15" cymbals can serve as a bridge between a splash and larger crashes, and this one performs that function quite nicely. Typical of thin cymbals, the low-profile Fast Crash's fundamental pitch is low, and its warmth comes out beautifully when struck very lightly, or with mallets. But it doesn't take much of a whack to draw out this cymbal's full overtone blend, and its glassy highs remain in musical proportion with the lows over its entire dynamic range. A word of caution, though (which would apply to any thin, 15" cymbal): Once you reach the Fast Crash's moderate volume ceiling, no amount of muscle will push it into power/thrash territory. This cymbal "speaks" beautifully, and it will "shout" briefly and effectively, but long-term "yelling" should be delegated to larger, thicker cymbals.



Traditionals 18" Light Flat Ride (left), 20" Light Flat Ride (bottom), and 20" Medium Heavy Ride (right)

Light Flat Rides

I must confess to having a soft spot in my heart for Paiste flat rides. In my younger days, I owned a beautiful 20" 602. But during one of my leaner periods while playing in a hard-rock band, that flat ride seemed less essential to my well-being than buying gas for my car and another six-pack of Skippy, so I sold it. I've since wondered how I ever could have been that hungry.

Nostalgia aside, these Traditionals flats are nicer than my old 602—certainly warmer and a little broader. Although they differed in pitch (the 18" being higher), the two models' tonal quality was identical—another example of Paiste's characteristic consistency. Their attack produces not so much "ping" as "click" and "tss"; it's all sibilance. But beneath that crisp stick sound dwells a subtle, organic tone that keeps them musical. Very nice indeed.

Medium Heavy Ride

This cymbal completes the basic rides in Paiste's superb Traditionals line, joining the previously introduced Light, Thin, Medium Light, and Medium models. The objective was to retain the "light, warm, and smoky" wash that defines the line, but to add attack definition and power for higher-volume playing situations. In my view, the latter goal—which was clearly achieved—overshadows the former, detracting from the real distinction of the Traditionals: that dark, breathy sound associated with the jazz greats of the '50s and '60s. However, if you're looking for a versatile ride that is fairly strong, yet with a touch of that old-jazz-cymbal wash, this one is worth a listen.

Medium Light Swishes

Truer to the Traditionals ideal, the Medium Light Swishes are 100% smoky '60s jazz club. The sound produced by their subtly upturned edge and small bell is suited to the role of a simmering alternative ride in small-group jazz, or cushioning and enveloping a soloist in a big band. Actually, they'd probably provide nice variety



Traditionals 20" Medium Light Swish (left), 22" Medium Light Swish (bottom), and 20" Medium Swish China (right)

in almost any situation where they weren't expected to pierce through a ton of amplification. Warm, dark, breathy, and "polite," they build to a degree, but stop well below anything approaching a roar. The stick sound remains soft-edged but distinct, except when played at the edge, where the wash takes over. Purists forgive me: I'd be very curious to hear these cymbals with a couple of rivets in them. As with the relationship between the two flat rides described above, the 20" and 22" Light Swishes are nearly identical, except that the 22" has a lower pitch and perhaps a bit more projection. Beautiful.

Medium Swish China

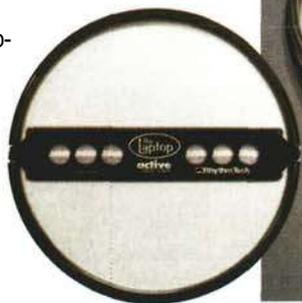
My pick of the litter, the Medium Swish China serves up some of the most full, lush, and complex cymbal sounds I've ever heard. We're talking high-butterfat, diet-be-damned, Ben & Jerry's-by-the-pint extravagance here. Like its Light Swish brothers, it excels as an alternative ride, but its heavier hammering and stronger

Quick Looks

Rhythm Tech Laptop

The latest addition to Rhythm Tech's line of unique percussion accessories (which includes Index Tension Tuners, the Memokey, and the Active Snare Strainer) is the Laptop portable "snare drum." The Laptop consists of a 13" pre-tensioned coated drumhead mounted on a simple hoop, with an Active Snare System attached to the unit's bottom. Designed for light stickwork and brush playing, it's a nifty little invention for drummers who want to be able to 'shed their figure-8s on the go—or even get in on the fun at unplugged gatherings.

Rhythm Tech thoughtfully included a flat rubber strip along the hoop's underside, which keeps the unit from sliding off your lap, as well as a cool carrying case with a simple outer pocket to store your brushes in. The Active Snare Strainer, a pre-tensioned set of 18 wires, provides a decent approximation of a real snare drum sound, and it's even slightly adjustable in terms of distance from the head.



upturn create a darker, more complex ride sound and a blooming, slightly higher-pitched China crash. It's also capable of considerably more volume and a wider variety of sounds, with greater high-end definition from the bell and a slightly more strident "baawsh" when struck hard on the edge. Even so, it never quite reaches the standard level of China trashiness that some drummers find obnoxious. This sultry beauty likely won't offend, but neither will it go unnoticed in your cymbal soundscape.

Professional Cymbal Bag

What would a mixed bag of cymbals be without a bag? Right out of the chute I was impressed by the carrying options: dual padded hand straps, a padded shoulder strap, and *padded backpack straps*. Having actually road-tested this bag by jogging (okay, trudging) through three airports and several venues at a recent jazz festival, I can state from experience that the backpack feature is a godsend. While other manufacturers offer backpack straps, Paiste's Pro also has a separate 15" pouch for hi-hats, splashes, etc. For my money, these are the two most important features in a cymbal bag—one to help protect my sizable investment



in bronze, and the other to help protect my rapidly aging joints from their tonnage. Four interior dividers further protect cymbals up to 22" in the main cymbal section.

The bag is made of heavy black Cordura, and features a heavily reinforced, water-resistant bottom. The main zippered section of the bag is lockable for "security."

(Meanwhile, the outer pouch for smaller cymbals—the ones most likely to be stolen and concealed if the whole bag isn't taken—seals only with hook & loop closure material. Never mind. The other appointments make up for this little irony.) The Pro's quality is great, and its combination of convenient features is exceptional.

Bag'Em?

While some of Paiste's cymbal-sound descriptions may seem a bit, *uh*, colorful, they're consistently borne out when I actually hear the cymbals. You might not like everything Paiste makes, but you probably won't think you've been misled by the company line. This could be important if you're considering making a "blind" purchase through mail order. But if you *do* have an opportunity to check out the current generation of Paistes, don't presume that you know how they sound. You may be surprised to find that for just about every imaginable taste and musical situation, the Swiss are making some super-fine cymbals.

Mixed Bag Price Tags

Percussive Sounds Collection

12" Flanger Splash \$130

Signature Series

15" Fast Crash \$272

Traditionals Collection

18" Light Flat Ride \$374

20" Light Flat Ride \$434

20" Medium Heavy Ride \$434

20" Medium Light Swish \$480

22" Medium Light Swish \$560

20" Medium Swish China \$480

Professional Cymbal Bag \$90

The sound is probably what you'd expect—and maybe even a little better, considering there's no shell to provide tone and projection. It's certainly good enough to get away with at, say, a spontaneous late-night jam at a party. And its medium-duty construction—pretty tough for weighing less than a pound—lets you practice your brush strokes for hours without feeling like you're on some sort of toy. The Laptop retails at \$79.95.

Adam Budofsky

Drumspan

Drumspan is a satin-like cloth covering material designed to be quickly and easily stretched over drums, instantly providing a new look for your drumset. Simply remove the heads and hoops, line up the Drumspan's cutouts over the mounts and lugs, pull the fabric over the drum, reinstall the heads and hoops, *and...voila...a* new look for your old tubs.

According to the makers, Drumspan is available in flat and glossy versions of all solid colors, as well as in hundreds of print designs. They also claim it will cover any size drum with long or short lugs and different numbers of lugs per drum, and requires no lug removal, strip-

ping, or gluing.

We were sent a set of Drumspans with a sort of trippy aquatic lava-lamp design. I slapped on a Pink Floyd album and got to work on a 10x12 Premier Cabria tom-tom.

The first thing I noticed was that the Drumspan cutout that is supposed to accommodate the tom mount was not large enough to handle *this* particular drum's. With a bit of effort I was able to stretch it over the mount, but that put so much strain on the material that it created all sorts of weird wrinkles elsewhere on the drum.

The second thing I noticed was that, yes, the Drumspan does technically "work" over long lugs. But since it is designed with cutouts to fit separate lugs, the material covers up the connecting center section of long lugs. Perhaps this doesn't affect the utility of the drum, but it does look a bit odd and inhibits the covering from laying flat on the shell's surface.

The third thing I noticed was in the Drumspan's installation instructions for floor toms and bass drums. As the literature states, you don't have to remove lugs to install Drumspan. However, if you've bought the Drumspan off the shelf, you do have to remove the floor tom legs'

continued on page 45

Yamaha DP Series Drumkit

This beginner is a winner.

by Rick Mattingly

Hits

- wood snare drum
- well-designed tom holder
- wood hoops and drumkey-operated lugs on bass drum
- excellent value for the price



The name of Yamaha's most affordable kit yet says it all: "DP" I stands for "Debut Percussion," as in "student level" or even "beginner" drums. With a list price of \$899 for a standard five-piece kit (which is a couple of hundred dollars less than Yamaha's excellent Stage Custom "entry-level" kit), the DP drumset has the quality and pricing to be a contender alongside comparable "affordable" drumkits.

The drums are manufactured in Indonesia, with shells made from 9-ply Philippine mahogany covered with a sheet of PVC (available in black, blue, or yellow). Bearing edges are cut to a 45° angle, and felt smooth and straight to the touch. More importantly, heads tuned quickly and evenly, which gives a good indication that a bearing edge is true and the shell is round.

All of the drums were fitted with Remo's budget-line U2 heads, which are made in Taiwan. They produced relatively clear pitches on the toms and a reasonably crisp sound on the snare drum.

One of the surprises on this kit was the presence of wood bass drum hoops, which are not at all common on entry-level drumsets. Stained dark brown, the hoops looked good with the black-finished shell, giving the drum a quality appearance. The batter-side hoop had a strip of rubber where the bass drum pedal attaches, which was also a nice touch. Tuning lugs were all drumkey-oper-

ated, and the spurs were solid and easy to adjust.

The bass drum's batter head was clear, while the front head was black with an off-center 6" hole. With no muffling the drum was quite boomy. Inserting a small pillow resulted in a warm "thud" that would be more appropriate for beginners who will be doing most of their early playing in the house. But the sound also had enough punch and volume for band rehearsals. A DP owner who is ready for some gigs might want to replace the factory-installed bass drum batter with something along the lines of a Remo Powerstroke 3 or an Evans EQ3.

The toms had clear heads top and bottom, and the sound was reasonably full and round, even with the penetrating tom mounts. Again, the player might eventually want to upgrade the heads, but these would certainly serve the purpose for a beginner.

There is nothing "entry level" about the tom holder that's mounted on the bass drum. Back in the '60s (which is my personal point of reference for drum innovations), the most professional drumsets you could buy didn't have tom holders made this well or this easy to adjust. Within a couple of minutes of taking everything out of the box, I had the toms positioned exactly where I wanted them. It was obvious that there were plenty of other ways to position them as well. With the additional presence of memory collars and hex-rods, once the positions are determined, setup is quick and easy.

A weak point of many budget kits is the snare drum. Not so with the DP drumset, which has a wood-shell snare drum that provides much more depth and body than the metal-shell drums found on typical entry-level sets. Granted, professionals might find the drum lacking in some respects, but it's better than it has to



Quick Looks

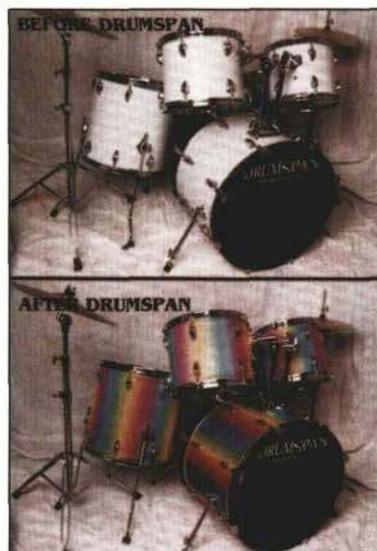
continued from page 43

receiving mounts and the bass drum's spurs, cut out holes in the material for the mounting screws, and reattach the hardware over the material. Or you can just cover up the leg mounts with the Drumspace and slice two holes in the material where each leg enters and leaves the leg mount. (Similarly you can slice a hole for each bass drum spur.) Your other option is to special-order a covering to fit your particular drums. The makers state that they can accommodate any make and model.

The *fourth* thing I noticed was that even though from up close the particular drum I covered looked a bit...er...*uncomfortable* in its new duds, from a few yards away in medium light the wrinkles and stretch marks were barely visible. In a club environment the audience would most likely never guess your drums were "clothed," and just think you look as groovy as you sound. At least that was the case with the crazy psychedelic pattern we were sent. It might be a different story with solid colors.

Of course, if Drumspace happens to fit your drums more flatteringly, it would look all the more attractive. My suggestion would be to try one out on your smallest drum (price increases with drum size) and decide from there whether to buy your whole kit a new wardrobe.

Representative prices for Drumspace are \$15.40 for a 10x10 drum, \$30.40 for a 16x22. Contact K.J. Music, PO Box 1994, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91729-1994, tel/fax: (909) 989-0246, www.drumspace.com.



Adam Budofsky

be for a kit at this price range.

The CS641 cymbal stand and SS640 snare drum stand are light-weight but solid, and could continue to serve the young drummer even after the drums have been upgraded. The HS640 hi-hat pedal is quiet and smooth, as is the chain-drive FP700 bass drum pedal. For beginners with high aspirations, a slave unit is available that converts the FP700 to a double pedal.

Overall, the Yamaha DP kit delivers good value for the money. The kit likely wouldn't stand up to the abuse of constant, professional playing. But it would certainly serve student drummers, and by simply upgrading the heads it would easily get them through their first gigs. The kit could also be useful for pros as a practice kit, or for those who only gig a couple of times a month.

Debut Performance

Kit reviewed: Yamaha DP2F5

Configuration: 16x22 bass drum, 10x12 and 11x13 rack toms, 16x16 floor tom, 5 1/2x14 snare drum

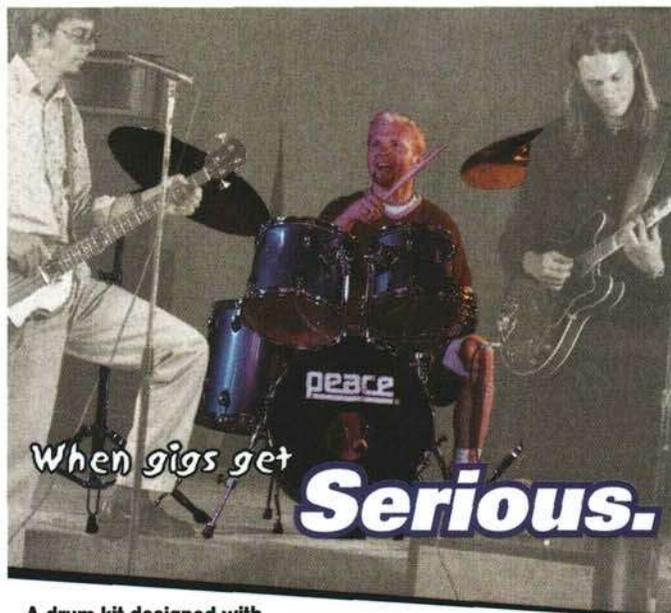
Hardware package: bass drum and hi-hat pedals, snare stand, straight cymbal stand

List price: \$899

(DPOF5 kit with smaller bass drum and toms lists for \$859.)

Correction

Our September '99 review of the GK Music Drumphones II listed the manufacturer's Web site incorrectly. The correct address is: gk-music.com. (Without the dash, you reach Grandma Katherine's Music!)



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Yamaha DTXPRESS

by Mark Parsons

For many drummers, the acquisition of an electronic drumset seems like somewhat of an either/or proposition, as in: "Either I'm going to commit my resources into going electronic, or I'm going to just hang with my acoustic set" (which is already bought and paid for, if nothing else). The main obstacle here, of course, is cost. By the time you price out the components of a complete setup—let's say seven pads, a kick trigger, a hi-hat con-

troller, a quality sound module, a rack system to mount everything on, and cables to hook it all up—you've got a significant financial investment.

Well, Yamaha's DTXPRESS may make the prospect of owning an electronic drumset a little less painful. It's a complete five-piece kit with a suggested list price of \$1,295. This means that you'll likely be able to get into a turnkey electronic setup for a street price

in the three-figure range. That's great as far as it goes, but the question remains: What sort of bang do you get for your buck?

The Hardware

The DTXPRESS arrived in two manageable boxes. Very cleverly packed into those boxes was everything you see in the photo (except the kick pedal, which the user must supply). To test the user-friendliness of the DTXPRESS (which is, to some extent, aimed at the first-time e-drum buyer) I decided to start without cracking the substantial manual. Assembling the rack was easy enough (although I cheated and looked at the photo in the promotional brochure). Made of black aluminum tubing, its main components are twin upright sections connected by a horizontal crossbar. The rack tom holders and cymbal arms attach to the crosspiece, while the floor tom, snare, and hi-hat holders attach to shorter horizontal arms that connect near the top of the uprights. (The sound module is also attached to a similar holder



on the left side of the kit, behind the hi-hat.) The whole thing forms a three-sided assembly.

All the pieces fit together smoothly and securely, and, once snugged into place, the tom and cymbal holders stayed where I put them. Nothing wildly innovative or earth-shaking, just good, solid engineering. What is remarkable, however, is that the darn thing is just about weightless. This has to be the lightest three-sided rack I've ever seen. In fact, the entire DTXPRESS set, including the module (but excluding the foot controllers) weighs only thirty-three pounds. This comes in real handy when moving it within a room: Just pick it up and walk with it, almost effortlessly.

The five pads for the snare, toms, and hi-hat are all TP60 models. These are 8" round rubber-covered units that offer a good balance between rebound and cushion. Being a basic, single-zone pad, the TP60 is not capable of generating rimshots or other dual-zone effects. (The good news, however, is that eight of the inputs on the DTXPRESS module are dual-trigger type, so according to Yamaha you could utilize their TP80S pad to achieve these effects.

The two PCY60 cymbal pads were similar in appearance to Yamaha's "quarter circle" PCY80S cymbal pads, but like the TP60 were of the single-zone variety. (So no cymbal chokes, unless you buy the dual-trigger PCY80S pads.) While I appreciated the fact that the PCY60's rubberized surface kept mechanical playing noises to a minimum, I would have preferred either a different surface or a different mounting arrangement. A rubber pad, firmly mounted (a la the tom pads) gives good rebound, and a hard surface yields lively stick action even if loosely mounted. But a softer surface that also swivels and tilts (as does the PCY60) makes precise stick control a tad more difficult. This is not by any means insurmountable, however, and Yamaha informs me that they offer optional "cymbal stoppers" that fit between cymbal pad and stand for added rigidity.

The HH60 hi-hat controller was a pleasure to use. It was smooth and mechanically quiet and had a very realistic feel to it. I was able to get closed, half-open, open, foot splash, and chick sounds with ease. No, most hi-hat sounds didn't allow for an infinite number of steps between "closed" and "open," but the transition between the three or four discrete steps was so smooth as to be unnoticeable.



The KP60 kick pad was of the "tower" variety rather than the small, "reverse-beater" type. I generally prefer the reverse-beater style, since they seem to suffer less from pedal creep. But the KP60 mitigated this by providing a pair of adjustable spikes mounted on a bracket that extends several inches beyond the pedal. With the spikes firmly anchored into a piece of carpet just large enough to also place my throne on, everything held steady. That taken care of, the KP60 performed well. The rubber trigger provided a good rebounding surface that felt natural and allowed for quick doubles.

Hits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• extensive sound and editing features• attractive price point• lightweight and compact
Misses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• would benefit by at least one dual-zone pad• cymbal pads don't provide very realistic playing response

The Software

Just because the DTXPRESS is marketed as a "value-priced" product doesn't mean Yamaha cut corners with the DTXP module. Describing all of its features in detail would take a book. But here are some highlights:

There are over 1,000 different sounds (242 snares alone), which can be arranged into 80 different kits (48 presets and 32 user). Each of these sounds can be edited in regards to volume, panning, pitch, decay, filter cutoff, reverb, and the balance between voices (if it's a two-layer sound). A group of these edited sounds can be organized into a custom (user) drumkit, which you can name. Additionally, there are some global parameters (high and low EQ, master reverb, etc.) that you can tweak for the set as a whole.

The sensitivity and dynamics of each trigger can also be edited, with the parameters including sensitivity, minimum velocity, velocity curve, self rejection, and specific rejection, pad type, etc. Nested menus are an unfortunate necessity of today's computerized technology, but Yamaha had the foresight to make the most commonly edited functions more accessible. By double-clicking the related front-panel button, you can access instrument volume, pad sensitivity, and overall equalization. What's more, the click volume and accompaniment volume knobs can function as volume controls for the kick and snare by the use of a shift button.

The DTXP can also function as a sequencer. For starters, the unit comes with 95 songs stored in memory, encompassing various styles (Latin, jazz, funk, R&B, rock, pop ballads, etc.). You can listen to a song (complete with its drum track) and then you can mute the drum track and play along with the song. This is a good training aid, allowing someone unfamiliar with the style of that particular song to hear the various idioms before attempting to play in that genre. You can also record your drum tracks, either alone or with a song (assuming you either use a song of your own or copy a preset song to a user song location, since you can't record directly on a preset song).

Another interesting feature is the "groove check" function. This is part of the metronome capabilities of the DTXP, which also include the expected tempo, time signature, and click voice settings. "Groove check" works by comparing your timing to that of the click and letting you know whether you're ahead or behind, and by how much. There is also a display of your average accuracy, letting you know where your overall feel lies.

In Use

As mentioned, assembly was straightforward. Hookup was also simple, since the inputs on the module are clearly labeled and all cables were provided, along with hook & loop fastener tabs to neatly hold the cabling in place.

The audio connections are basic: There are left and right outputs using 1/4" jacks on the back panel, an aux input (stereo mini jack) on the front for playing along with a CD, and a headphone jack, also on the front. While the lack of more than two outputs means that, for example, you can't process the kick and snare separately or record them to their own tracks, I don't really consider this a serious shortcoming in the DTXPRESS, for a couple of reasons. First, I'd venture that most purchasers will be using it more as a practice and performance kit than as a studio instrument, and those who *are* going to record with it will probably be happy to have it deliver decent drum sounds already mixed to a stereo pair. (If you want more flexibility with regards to output, you're going to have to be more flexible with your checkbook!) Also, there is a pretty comprehensive reverb unit contained within the DTXP, so external processing may not be a necessity.

Once all the connections were made, it was a snap to get the DTXPRESS up and running, again without reference to the manual. Simply turn it on and scroll through the preset kits until you find one that suits your needs, then play. And speaking of the preset kits, I found myself gravitating toward the "acoustic" ones, the drier "rock" kits (less reverb), and the general MIDI kits. Of the rest, some were very specialized, some were drowning in effects, some contained built-in loops that started whenever you hit a specific pad, and some were just plain goofy (like a horn honk for a tom or a car crash for a cymbal).

Just because I didn't find a number of the presets to be immediately useful shouldn't be cause for concern. *You* may love them. More importantly, the DTXPRESS has over 1,000 onboard sounds from which you can select, then tweak, tune, and compile into your own custom kits. Doing so requires delving into the well-written manual, but the process is pretty straightforward once you get the hang of using the "page," "select," and "value" buttons to scroll through the various options.



As for the sounds themselves, many were great from the get-go, while some required a little tweak to get just right. (For example, many of the kicks were real nice once I reduced the insidious "short gated 'verb.") Others were too "out there" for my taste, but would be perfect for those into the electronica end of things. Kicks, snares, and toms each came in two categories—acoustic and electric—with lots of high-quality 16-bit samples in each. I was also pleased with a number of the cymbal and hi-hat sounds, although a few of them decayed too quickly to achieve a realistic sound if played in an exposed setting (even after I went into the voice edit mode and selected the longest decay possible). The 100 "percussion" sounds were, for the most part, realistic renditions of various instruments (mostly Afro-Cuban, with a smattering of Middle Eastern and others).

All in all, the DTXPRESS contains a large selection of high-quality sounds, some of which are bound to suit your taste. They were not completely glitch-free, however. A few of the samples had what sounded like "digital distortion" (level above 0 dB full-scale) on some of the peaks. This audible clipping was evident through different headphones (and a speaker system) even at moderate levels, so I feel safe in saying it originated within the DTXPRESS. Regardless of the exact nature of the distortion, it was only apparent on a few of the samples, notably the windchime and a couple of the kicks.

All of the other features worked as advertised. The sounds themselves were easy to refine, the trigger sensitivity and dynamics were adjustable over a wide range, and there was a large palette of digital reverbs to choose from. The dual-zone functions worked great. I patched in a dual-zone pad (from another manufacturer, no less), and after assigning the appropriate sounds to the rim trigger, I was soon getting rimshots and cymbal chokes. It's too bad Yamaha didn't include at least one dual-zone pad with the DTXPRESS. It would be well worth the small additional cost especially on the snare.

The "song" feature was neat; it's fun to sit in with a perfect band that can play in several styles. The "record" function was also nice. It should be especially useful to those without access to any other way to record themselves, since it's always valuable to hear yourself after the fact. The "groove check" worked as described as long as things were kept simple. Depending on how you set the metronome, it can see ghost notes of 16ths as "mistakes."

The layout of the module's front panel is efficient and easy to navigate once the basic features are comprehended, and the dual-function volume pots (for kick and snare) are especially nice. I also liked the ergonomics of the kit as a whole. The placement of the pads isn't as flexible as with an acoustic kit (after all, everything is connected to a small rack by short lengths of tubing that typically slide and rotate but don't ratchet). But I'm confident that the DTXPRESS can still be configured to fit almost anyone.

Conclusion

At this price point and with this list of features and sounds, the DTXPRESS is sure to get the attention of first-time electronic percussion customers, and deservedly so. If you're looking for a kit with the high level of flexibility needed in a professional recording situation, you'd better look elsewhere (and be prepared to spend a *lot* more money). But if you're among the large majority that wants an e-kit so you can practice without driving the neighbors

crazy, generate some sounds you could *never* get with an acoustic set, or lay down some quick stereo drum tracks without the fuss and muss of recording real drums, then you should put the DTXPRESS on your short list of products deserving a closer look.

DTXPRESSions

Product:	Yamaha DTXPRESS
Description:	Self-contained electronic drumset (Five-piece plus hi-hat and two cymbals)
Components:	5 TP60 tom pads 2 PCY60 cymbal pads 1 KP60 kick pad 1 HH60 hi-hat controller RS60 rack DTXP module
Onboard voices:	1,038 total (910 drum voices, 128 G-MIDI keyboard voices)
Onboard drumsets:	112 total (80 preset drumsets, 32 user drumsets)
Onboard songs:	127 total (95 preset songs, 32 user songs)
Trigger inputs:	10, plus foot controller input
Audio connections:	Aux in, main L/R out, headphone out, MIDI in & out
Display:	16x2 backlit LCD
Weight:	33 lbs
Suggested list price:	\$1,295



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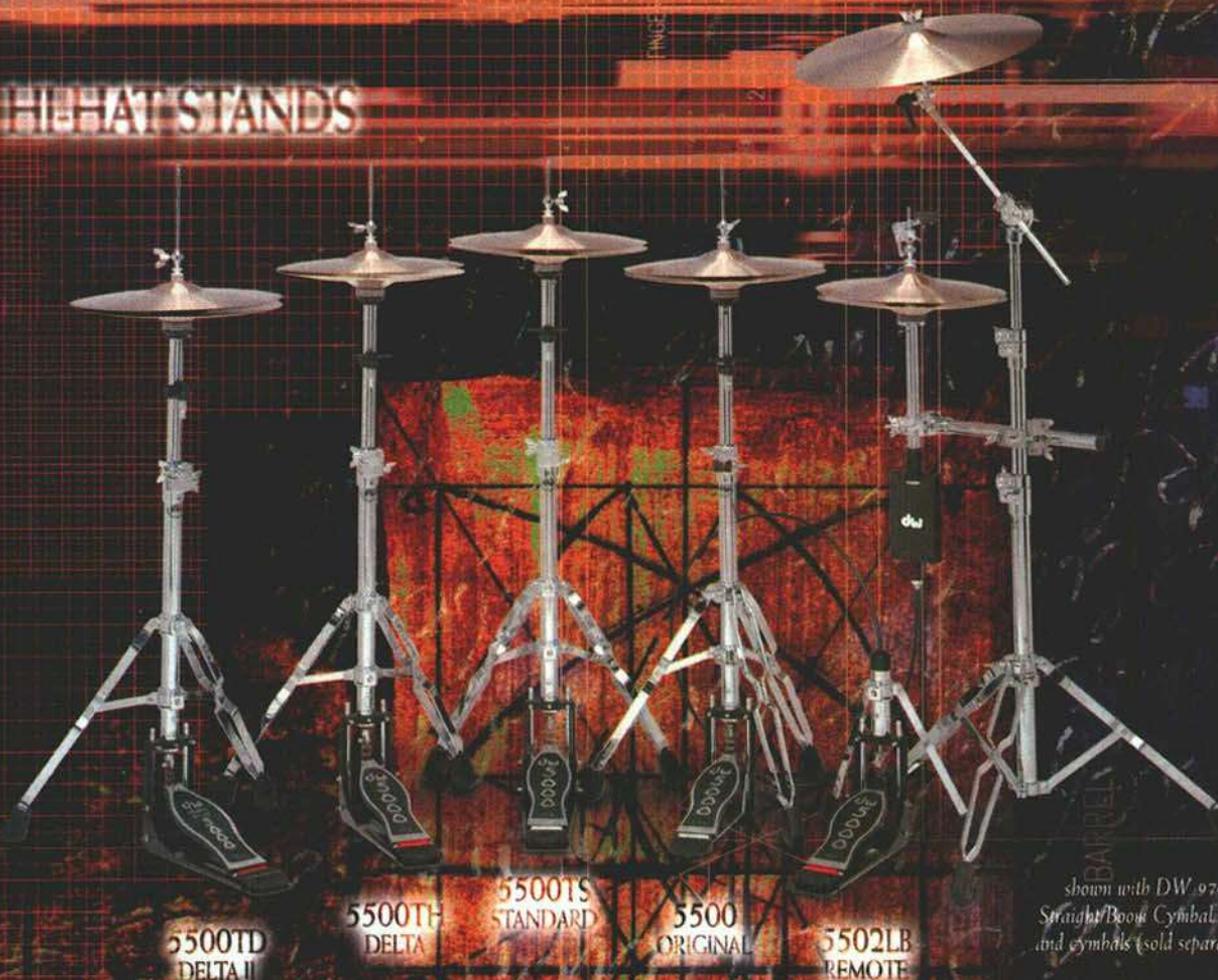


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Jeff “Tain” Watts

Story by Ken Micallef

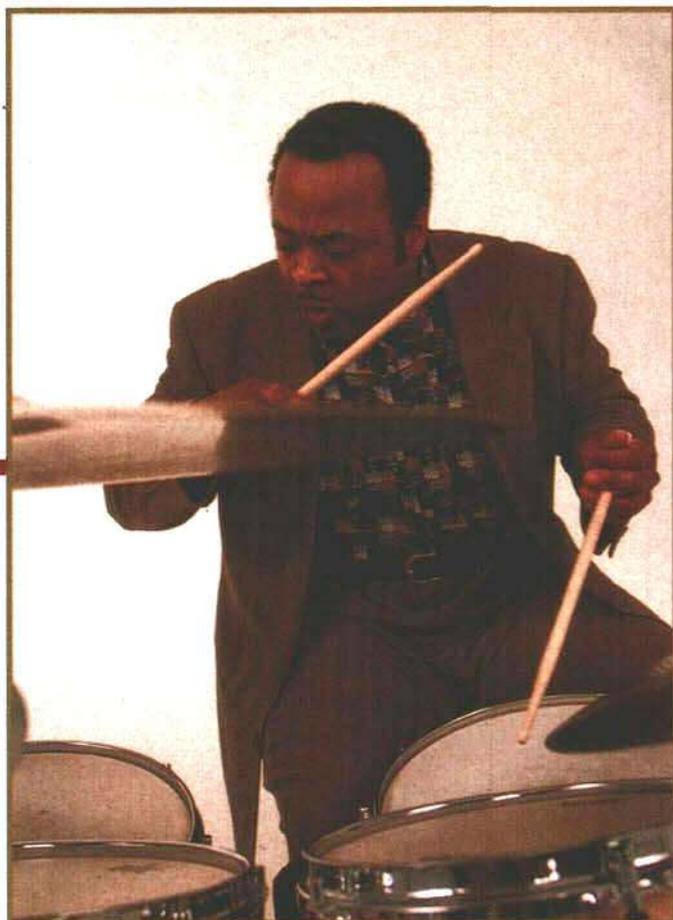
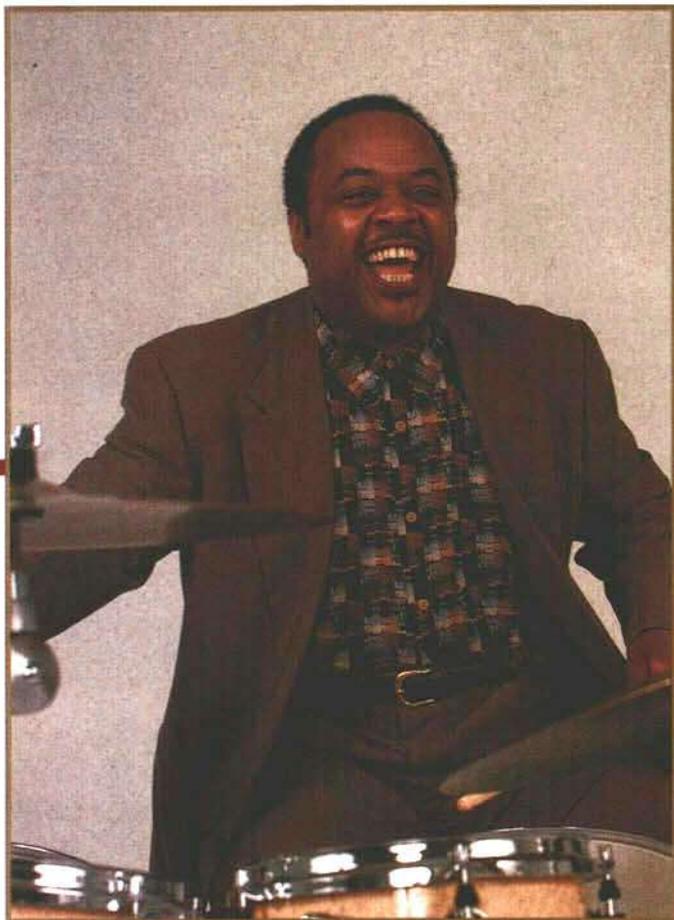
Photos by Paul La Raia

Bigtain's Drum Adventure

He came from Pittsburgh, a steel town known for fire, grit, and smoke. Those qualities also well describe Jeff Watts' acerbic drumming style and changeable temperament. Trained in the classics, with an eye toward timpani mastery, this true percussionist was sidetracked by the fabulous rhythms and fiery fusillades of fusion—of drummers Harvey Mason and Narada Michael Walden, of the smooth funk of Earth, Wind & Fire, and of the turbulent inroads of The Mahavishnu Orchestra.

But for his next awakening, Jeff Watts met Wynton and Branford Marsalis, who found him discovering the pantheon of Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, and Ed Blackwell. To this Watts brought his own superfunk and superfire, his own special touch, and that mad "Chambers of Tain" wit and wonder—the sound of rhythms being tucked, teased, scratched, and stretched into a highly personal statement, one that any knowledgeable musician can spot at fifty paces. Watts' drumming at any given moment can be prickly, explosive, demonstrative, daring, demure, intense, loud, swinging, and yes, *stunning*.





Jeff Watts has never been the sort of musician to take just any gig that came his way. In fact, most of his work can be narrowed down to a handful of leaders: Wynton and Branford Marsalis, pianist Geri Allen, saxophonists Michael Brecker, Kenny Garrett, and Courtney Pine, and the late Kenny Kirkland. But on all of their recordings Watts is quickly identifiable. From "Phryzzinian Man" on Wynton Marsalis's *Black Codes From The Underground*, to his hard-bop numbers-crunching on "Up Behind The Beat" from Courtney Pine's *Within The Realms Of Our Dreams*, Watts brings a unique blend of conversational interplay and muscular power extraction.

Okay, not everyone is up to playing with such a powerhouse. Is everyone ready to skydive or bungee jump? Are most musicians ready to be driven somewhere new, perhaps pushing themselves past their own preconceptions? Even late-night audiences had to wonder when Jeff manned the drum throne for *The Tonight Show With Jay Leno* for three "action packed" years in the early '90s. (It speaks volumes of the man that he would eventu-

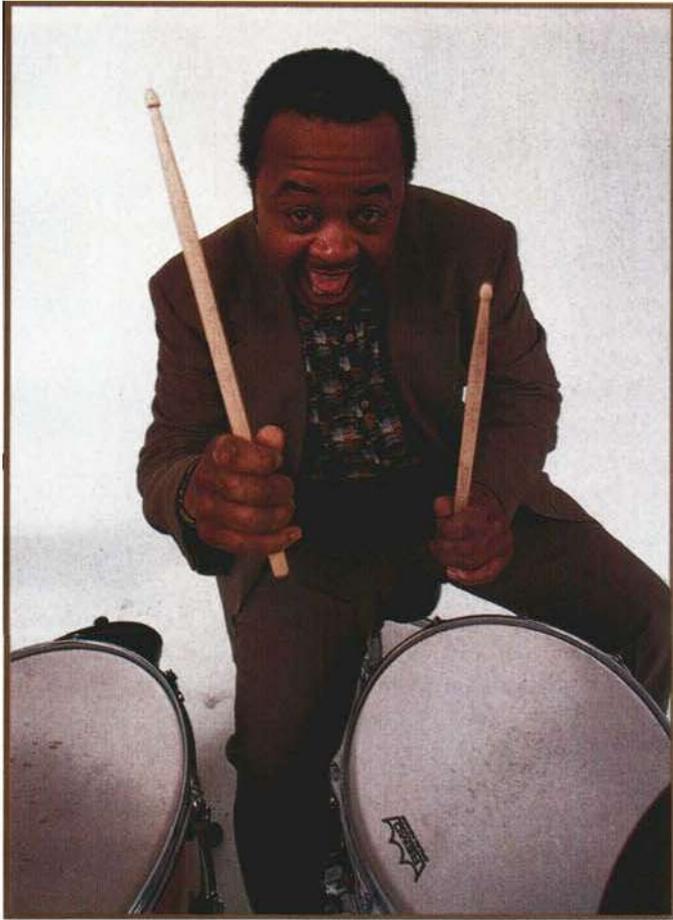
ally give up such a high-profile gig to pursue the music he truly wanted to make.)

This year, with the release of his first album as a leader, *Citizen Tain*, Watts pushes us past our preconceptions of who he is. Who would have guessed that this heavy power merchant, full of octane, spit, and spirit, could also pen a tune as lovely as the simmering "Blutain, Jr."? Watts' galvanic fervor is on call here both as drummer and composer, and though it took him ages to complete, *Citizen Tain* is a killer.

A quick study, Watts takes from his tenure with the Marsalis clan an ability to shake, rattle, and boil. The tune "The Impaler" cuts loose, marrying Afro-Cuban spice with charring straight-ahead (a la Miles' *Four And More*). The Monkish "Muphkin Man" follows, a barn burner on which Watts' chunky pulse and snare ruffs recall Philly Joe. "Attainment" reminds of Elvin: Blustery sizzle cymbals and mallets storming on toms build to a crescendo. "Wry Koln" is a fun combination of funky drumming, Third Stream jazz, and swing. *Citizen Tain* closes with "Bigtain's Blue Adventure," an expedition through full-bodied swing and crackling drum sounds.

Currently residing comfortably in Brooklyn, New York, Jeff Watts continues to work hard and take gigs as he hears fit. Look for him on new releases by guitarist Paul Bollenbeck, Kenny Garrett, Michael Brecker, organist Barbara Dennerlein, pianist Jason Robello, The Joey Calderazzo Trio (with John Patitucci), and Roy Haynes' pianist, Dave Kikoski.

In the meantime, sit back, relax, and pull up a practice pad. It's "Big Tain's *Modern Drummer* Adventure."



KM: So how did you get the nickname "Tain"?

JTW: Ha! When we had Wynton's original quintet everybody gave each other these bizarre names that ended with an "n" sound. Wynton was known as "Skain," because when he was in Art Blakey's band, bassist Charles Fambrough called him "Whimsky," which became Skain. Branford was "Steeplone." That came from when he was with Art Blakey. When his hair grew long it would grow higher in the center of his head. So Blakey told him, "Go get a haircut. You look like a church steeple." Kenny Kirkland was the "Doctone" because he was the doctor, he was so consistent and he knew everything. He was just the baddest cat. "Tain" came from when I was in Florida with Wynton. We had rental cars going from West Palm Beach to Miami. We went through a gas station once and they had this big Indian chief out front—it was called Chieftain Gas. So I became "Chief Tain," or Jeff Tain. It's pretty strange.

KM: You wanna talk about drum technique first?

JTW: I don't have any of that. I don't think we should talk about that. [laughs]

KM: Oh, right. Well, your debut album as a leader is very musical, incorporating different styles of jazz. Were people surprised that you've written tunes that are so melodic, since you are known as such a fierce player?

JTW: Most people are a little surprised. I took a band into [NYC club] The Zinc Bar just to get a sense of the music. [Saxophonist] Craig Handy was on the gig, and [bassist] James Genus too, and they joked that they thought it was gonna be a regular drummer's gig. You know, something fast with drum

breaks, typical hard bop or blues. James said he was reading the stuff during the gig and he'd finish a tune and wonder, "Who's tune is this?" It was like that all night.

KM: Is it because you've worked with so many excellent composers and players?

JTW: Definitely. That helped me with writing and pursuing a style. As far as the tradition, I have been backtracking since I didn't really have a lot of experience playing jazz when I began with Wynton. So on one hand I would have more things together traditionally if I had apprenticed with a Dexter Gordon or a Johnny Griffin or a Betty Carter, but on the other hand I got to interpret a lot of mostly original music. That helped my playing to be a little different. And as far as writing goes, I got to check out different devices, different ways of creating a tune.

Playing with these different people, you get to see the cause and effect of composition, how a song affects someone's mood. So for the recording, when I began playing these tunes with Branford Marsalis or Michael Brecker, it was really interesting. The tunes were having the intended effect.

KM: It has got to be a rush to hear them playing *your* songs.

JTW: It is bizarre. I didn't really begin writing till I was in LA doing *The Tonight Show*, from 1992 till '95. "The Impaler" was first. It came out on a Sunnyside Trio record, but that was illegal. In America it's called *Thunder And Rainbows* on Keystone Jazz. In Europe it's *Megawatts*. In Japan it's *JFK*—Jeff, Fambrough, and Kirkland. Oh God! "The Impaler" is on there in a different form, and the clave is half as long. That's my oldest tune.

Tain's Tins

Drumset: Sonor Designer Series in symphonic rosewood finish

- A. 4x14 bronze snare (or wood 1965 Gretsch)
- B. 8x12 tom
- C. 9x13 tom
- D. 14x14 floor tom
- E. 16x16 floor tom
- F. 18x18 bass drum (modified floor tom)

Hardware: Sonor

Sticks: Vic Firth 5A and 7A models with wood tip ("When I began with Wynton I played 2Bs because that's what Tony played. Now I have more sense"); Regal Tip retractable brushes with rubber handle

Cymbals: various

1. 13" hi-hats (old K Zildjian top/HH Sabian bottom)
2. 20" old K Zildjian ("Kind of Tony-ish.")
3. 16" Sabian AA Sound Control ("Similar to that shimmering Roy Haynes sound on *We Three*.")
4. 19" old K Zildjian with two rivets ("I dig in on it.")
5. 20" Sabian HH Rocktagon ("Not a Chinese cymbal and not a crash—it's kind of ugly and I like that.")

KM: What was Wynton's response to your music?

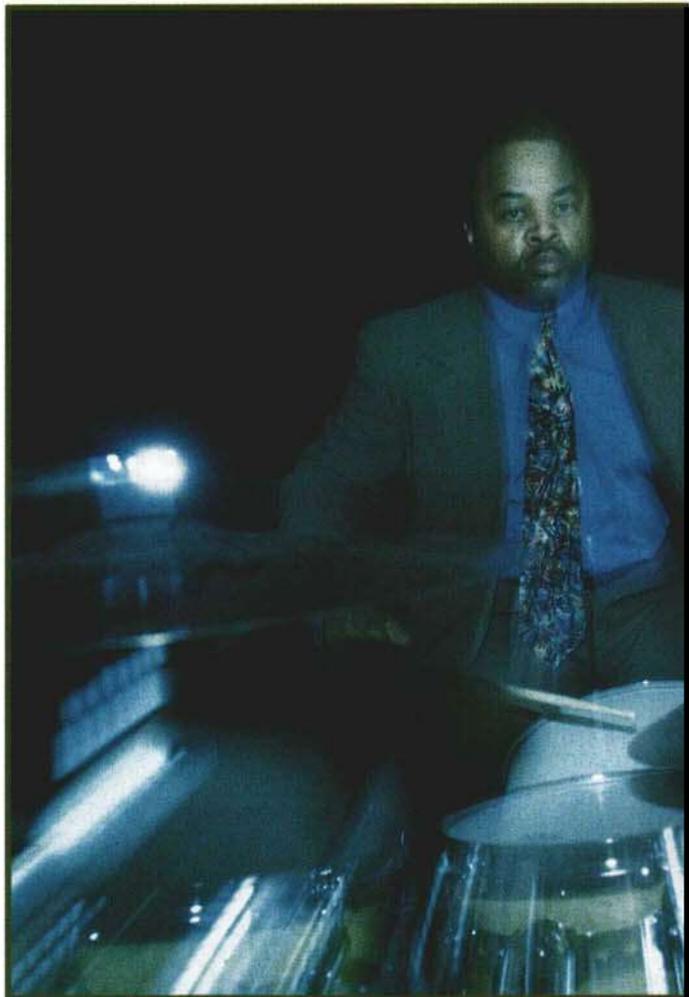
JTW: Ya know, I had intended for him to do more playing, but over the years he's gotten into what you could call a retro phase, or establishing repertoire. I wanted him to play something in the style of what we used to play. So I had him to do "The Impaler" but also balance it out and have him do stuff that he likes to do now. So he's on "Bluetain" and a ballad, "Bewitched, Bothered, And Bewildered." But that tune didn't make the record; I'll use it later. I'm sure he was surprised, but he was always very encouraging as far as my composing when I was in his group.

KM: You met the Marsalises at Berklee?

JTW: I met Branford at Berklee.

KM: Were Vinnie Colaiuta and Steve Smith there then?

JTW: Vinnie was there before me. I started there in the fall of '79, and I left in January of '82, when Wynton's group started. I was definitely more into fusion at that time. I played a lot of funk, progressive rock, and fusion. I started to listen to traditional jazz to round out my approach. Coming from a classical background, I foresaw myself going in that niche of a studio musician, playing percussion and drums in different styles.



Tain Time

Branford Marsalis On Jeff Watts

KM: Why do you continue to use Tain album after album?

BM: He's just the best in the world. He's not just a drummer, he's a melodic percussionist. Tain has a certain level of rhythmic freedom that a lot of guys just don't have. Other guys still play rhythm like it's a method. It's not really internal.

To give you an example, I was doing a rehearsal a long time ago with another band. Tain came to New York like I did and he didn't know any Latin musicians. Kenny Kirkland introduced him to Gerry Gonzales, and the next thing you know Tain is buying Cuban records and we're doing this jazz rehearsal. The piano player turns around and says, "Just give me a little Latin." Tain says, "What do you mean 'Latin'?" "You know,

Latin." "No, I don't know what you mean. What do you want? A merengue? A guaguanco? A clave? A rumba?" Tain offered up a long line of stuff.

So many people in jazz—and in American music in general—have a disrespect for music other than what they're playing. They suffer from a certain level of musical ignorance that they champion as a strength. It mirrors our society. Everybody is unified based on the strength of what they know how to do, not based on the freedom that comes from trying to deal with shit that you *can't* do well.

The music and movies that are successful are the ones that are immediately identifiable and immediately accessible. And Tain's drumming is not immediately accessible,

which is one of the reasons why he was basically dismissed as a musician for years when he came to New York. Very prominent musicians, even some who use him now, were asking me why we played with him then. They couldn't grasp what he was playing.

KM: Some used to say that his drumming didn't swing.

BM: That is laughable! There's such a massive amount of insecurity among musicians anyway. It's like that movie *Amadeus*, the one about Mozart. The idea that a slovenly, funky, really unimpressive guy like Tain, who has never had a jazz hero, is *the guy*. That's a lot for people to swallow. They said he didn't swing? That's a debate I wouldn't even waste my breath on, because the people who said that were obviously deaf. Some of them don't know better, but we haven't invented pills for them yet. And Kevorkian is in jail, so we can't help them. And it pains the other people too much to admit that Tain is playing some shit that they can't fathom. And the language, particularly in his soloing,



Two years before Berklee, I attended this classical school, Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. I was the timpanist in the youth orchestra. And I played in all these ensembles—twentieth-century music, operas, different stuff. I originally wanted to transfer to the New England Conservatory. So when I knew I was leaving Pittsburgh I sent applications to Eastman, Oberlin, The Cleveland Institute Of Music, and New England. Then I found out I couldn't get a personal audition at New England, which usually means that the teachers are bringing in some of their private students they already have. A friend told me about Berklee, so I thought I'd give it a try. I thought I could go to school there and study classical percussion privately with Vic Firth, but that didn't work out. So I concentrated on drums and got hooked on the jazz thing.

KM: But you were gonna be a legit guy?

JTW: I didn't really know. I just wanted more education. There weren't that many places that offered what I wanted. At Berklee, I became more involved with fusion. I always played the drumset from the time I was in the tenth grade, playing along with Earth, Wind & Fire, Parliament, and James Brown. My brother got me some fusion records: Herbie Hancock & The Headhunters' *Thrust*, Billy Cobham's *Crosswinds*, Return To Forever's *No Mystery* and *Where Have I Known You Before?*

KM: When you first put the band together with Wynton, was there an idea of where you all wanted to go conceptually?

JTW: It seems like with what he was writing, he felt that at the time straight-ahead jazz had faded. It had shifted into the fusion thing. His concept was valid and very cool, and something that had to happen. It was an extension of the stuff Dizzy Gillespie was doing with Cuban percussionists like Chano Pozo. It seems like we were just trying to make a logical conclusion of Coltrane, Monk, late-period Miles, and Louis Armstrong. Ornette Coleman, too—playing modally, or without a key center. After a while Wynton wanted us all to be able to create music from nothing and then play on standards like Miles did and make a form sound like there is no structure.

KM: Coming from a fusion background, did you ever feel constrained with Wynton?

JTW: At the time, I was really just jazzed to death. It was good. I was caught up in it and trying to learn it and be worthy of it. So even though we were just playing a lot of straight-ahead grooves, I was very happy with it. But I'm now trying to reincorporate some of my early stuff back into my playing.

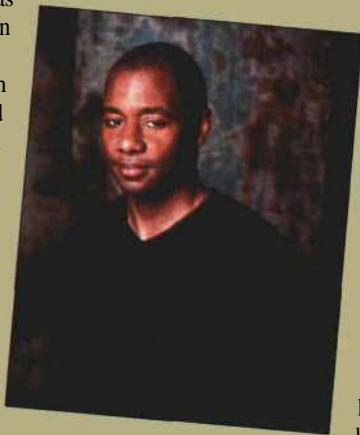
KM: Such as?

JTW: I lost a little pocket, as well as that articulation and atti-

has only gotten better. His ideas are more dense and musical than ever before.

The biggest problem with people who write about jazz and people who listen to jazz is that in the '60s all the great guys stopped playing it. Then the problem was, when the great guys stopped playing jazz, the generation right under them didn't even play it for more than a couple of weeks. They went off to play fusion.

You have fifteen years there where the history of the process—the stories of our great jazz musicians—did not center around the process but around the anecdotes that were part of the product. The music was secondary, just like everything in American society. Popular music in American society is embraced because it's an acceptance of a lifestyle choice. This is why people who like certain kinds of music all look the same, whether



it's Goth, hip-hop, or pop jazz. Kenny G's audience looks the same. Marilyn Manson's audience looks the same. But Jazz suffered greatly from that. It wasn't about the process anymore, it was about the finished product. So what made Charlie Parker great is damn near a mystery to people. People had to make up all these stories about him: Bird the intuitive musician and all that stuff. That wasn't it. Bird worked hard at his craft. He was on the road when he was fifteen.

So when Tain and the rest of us came on the scene, we're considered these young-assed kids, and we were just trying to be good. Luckily we were smart enough to know that we were too young to *really* be

good. All these people were deciding if we were good or if we sucked, but we were just playing. As age creeps in we become more mature as musicians and we become really good at what we do.

My father was a jazz musician and I understood the nature of the process. I didn't allow myself to be caught up in that "new" game. When am I going to play something new? When I'm old enough and good enough. It's that simple.

Tain is the same way. We listened to all kinds of music. You name it, we listened to it, trying to incorporate it into what we were doing naturally. That's what Tain has always done. He's always stayed true to the music. He's always tried to make himself better, and he's *been patient*. And he's enjoyed his life. That's what I've always loved about him.

KM: Can you think of a favorite Tain performance?

BM: Yeah, last night. He was a badass mother. Tain gets better every night.

Ken Micallef

tude on the drums for backbeat-oriented music. And that happened because I wasn't playing that music for a long time. But I was really proud to be with Wynton and be on the road playing that stuff and having cats like Elvin Jones at our gigs. That was a deep band.

KM: What did Wynton suggest you listen to?

JTW: He was into New Orleans music and Ornette Coleman, and he and Branford had access to the Miles Davis *Plugged Nickel* recordings before they became available in the States.

KM: In your fusion style, I can hear a lot of Tony Williams, but also a lot of *you* as well. You are such a physical player, and that really comes across. Where does that come from?

JTW: A lot of it comes from fusion. I was into Billy Cobham, Lenny White, Narada Michael Walden, and Alphonse Mouzon. Then later on I got into Gadd, Steve Jordan, Mike Clark, and Harvey Mason. I played like a stronger Harvey Mason when I was at Berklee.

In Wynton's group I dealt with it kind of logically. When I knew I was going to play with him I based my early approach on the drummers he had been playing with, like Art Blakey. Hearing Art made me want to swing like a *man*—really hard. Then Tony was very responsive and open. I don't have a specific vocabulary of cats. I try to get to their vibe and the way that they phrase, how they make the music feel.

KM: Did you ever clone a drummer?

JTW: Hmmm. No, although in some ways it makes a lot of sense. When I was at Berklee, Marvin "Smitty" Smith had the regimen of doom, technically speaking. Every month he would pick a guy and

focus on the way he played. He'd take a tape of all Max Roach solos with Clifford Brown, transcribe them, work on them all month, then move on to another guy. I need to cop more stuff from guys in the tradition, but I just haven't. It's good to learn a whole solo and get into the logic of the story the drummer is trying to tell. But I just picked the stuff I really liked.

KM: So much of your style seems to have come full-blown. You just sort of arrived. Listening to "Phryzzinian Man" [from *Black Codes*], it's all there. Now your solos are more wall-of-sound thunder than licks, but the personality is apparent instantly. You know it's Jeff Watts.

JTW: I just play. A lot of it is about *not* having come up in the tradition. Whenever there's a break, I have to think of something to play besides Philly Joe Jones. I also got stuff from people who aren't drummers. For comping, I liked the phrasing of Thelonious Monk, just trying to have a purpose for everything and not just fill a space.

There are a few different concepts in my playing. The stuff *01 Live At Blues Alley* [Wynton Marsalis] is like a code system based on consecutive notes and groupings of notes, like a grouping of four or five notes will be a theme for me. Or I'll play everything but the notes that are played by the group, so the thing is like a composite. I tend to play in the cracks of what people play, like a conversation.

When I was first playing with Wynton, I didn't have a lot of vocabulary to play in the swing groove. But Branford has very sharp ears, so after a while he would know what I was going to play. So I would start a fill and he would match it. That made me

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start doing this thing, dodging him.

KM: Has your physicality ever gotten you off a gig?

JTW: Probably not. It's only lately that I've been working with a variety of people. For eight years I was in New York, but I was only doing three or four records a year. People knew my work because at the time those records sold a lot more than the average jazz records. I actually have a couple of gold records at home.

KM: You sound much looser generally with Branford than with Wynton.

JTW: That's just Branford, the saxophone thing. And Branford takes a lot more chances with rhythm. He has a good pulse, he takes a lot of liberties, it's not as metric as the way Wynton played at that time. It gets more splotchy with Branford. Even Kenny Kirkland was like a groove doctor, but Branford's thing undulates a lot more.

KM: What's your take on the current controversy in jazz regarding the many camps and styles that still call themselves jazz?

JTW: All the camps are important. One good thing coming out of the retro thing is it places an importance on people in all types of music to make sure they know what they're doing. Musicians have to be responsi-

High Wattage

These are the albums that Jeff says best represent his playing:

Artist
Jeff 'Tain' Watts
Branford Marsalis

Wynton Marsalis
Robert Hurst
Kenny Kirkland
Gary Thomas
McCoy Tyner
Danilo Perez

Ellis Marsalis Trio
Paul Bollenbeck

Album
Citizen Tain
Bloomington
Trio Jeepy
Dark Keys
Requiem

Black Codes From The Underground
Presents Robert Hurst
Kenny Kirkland
The Seventh Quadrant
Double Trios
Panamonk
Central Avenue
Ellis Marsalis Trio
Double Gemini

...and these are the ones he listens to most for inspiration:

Artist
Thelonious Monk
Ornette Coleman
John Coltrane
Return To Forever
Mahavishnu Orchestra

Eyewitness
Harvey Mason
John Scofield

Album

any
This Is Our Music, or any with...
Transition
Where Have I Known You Before?
Visions Of The Emerald Beyond
Apocalypse
Eyewitness
Earth Mover
Pick Hits

Drummer

Ben Riley or Frankie Dunlop
Billy Higgins or Ed Blackwell
Elvin Jones
Lenny White
Narada Michael Walden
Narada Michael Walden
Steve Jordan
Harvey Mason
Dennis Chambers

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The older I get, the more stuff I truly like. I listen for sincerity as opposed to what I feel someone should be doing. The scene is changing a lot. It's more acceptable for people to play a funk or Latin tune in a jazz club. It happens a lot more in the main clubs and the clubs in the East Village.

KM: Coming up, you studied out of the legit books?

JTW: Goldenberg, Cirone, lots of marimba, concerti, Vic Firth stuff for timpani. Very difficult etudes. I spent some time

with drum corps too. Now the whole thing with my hands is really strange. It looks kind of funny. People wonder how I do stuff as quickly as I do with my left hand. I play a lot of triplet-ish, Elvin-type things, and I can do them at tempos pretty much faster than what Elvin has recorded them at. It's kind of strange. And yet, I know that at this time I can't play a perfectly smooth, convincing roll. [laughs] It's a damn shame.

KM: What was your practice regimen as a kid?

JTW: I played all day. In high school, I practiced in the morning before school, working on technique with heavy sticks on a pillow—singles, doubles, flams, double-stroke rolls. Then I'd move to the pad for wrist snaps. I did a lot of endurance exercises: sextuplet drills and that sort of thing. After school I'd practice marimba for a couple hours. I always had to audition for something, so I was always going to the store and getting new pieces of music.

KM: Was anything hard for you to grasp?

JTW: Sight-reading on mallet instruments. I always had pretty decent technique back then. I could play, but sight-reading gave me a problem. I focused on timpani because the more difficult works for the instrument have a lot of pedaling. I have perfect pitch, so tuning changes on the timpani were easy.

KM: How did all that melodic training affect the way you tune the drums now?

JTW: I'm kind of lazy with tuning. I get the drums to open up and have some kind of note. I once asked Billy Higgins about tuning, and he told me that it's not that big of a deal. He said that the most important thing is to make the whole kit sound like a family. I thought that was profound. Just make the drums sound like they belong together. As I get older and more mature as a player I'm looking for broader concepts and more universal things.

KM: But your drum sound has remained pretty consistent. It's a big and dark sound, no high-pitched, Tony-on-Four And More toms.

JTW: I've been playing Sonor since Wynton's second record. They tend to have a pretty round note, as opposed to Gretsch, which have kind of a twang.

KM: As far as drumset, did you work on specific things for independence?

JTW: Yeah. I went to Alan Dawson for a while. And he was far for me to get to—two bus rides and a mile-and-a-half walk! But I got a lot from his application of Ted Reed's *Syncopation*. I also worked a lot on linear stuff, things I got from checking out Gary Chaffee's books. Everybody was using that for soloing, plus the Garibaldi things. After a while I started writing out two-beat patterns, short rhythmic ideas that I would practice over ostinatos. That's great for independence.

KM: And how did you develop your power?

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JTW: That attitude and that power came from drum corps. Those cats are crazy! I did it for two years, mostly on triple toms, not as much snare. It was The Pittsburgh Royal Crusaders. I never went to DCI championships, though. I would take the summer off. But they have been ranked as high as ninth in the world. They put a lot of emphasis on endurance exercises and wrist exercises, like playing continuous sextuplets with accents on each hand. They'll start out with eight in a row, and by the end of the day you're doing two hundred in a

row. It's ridiculous.

Another thing I work on is an exercise that Kenwood Dennard showed me a long time ago. You make a fist, strike your knee, and then strike your chest. You go back and forth as fast as you can. [Makes a hammering motion between his leg and chest.] You can't do it in public cause it looks like.... [laughs] But do that for ten minutes. Just that physical thing of bringing your arm up and down around the kit, isolating that motion, going for speed and endurance, is very helpful. Kenwood

Dennard is one ingenious cat to come up with that.

KM: Did you practice with a metronome a lot?

JTW: Sometimes. More often I would play with records, even if I was working on technique.

KM: Did you see a lot of drummers coming through Pittsburgh?

JTW: At the time, I saw all the fusion guys. I saw Steve Smith and Casey Scheuerell with Jean-Luc Ponty, Walden and Cobham with Mahavishnu—more of those guys than the swing guys, because really, the swing guys weren't really coming through then. Buddy Rich, who I have much appreciation for now, was coming through then. Louie Bellson was around too, but that was about it. But once I got to Boston I saw Roy Haynes, Ronnie Burrage, Elvin, Art Blakey, Max Roach, Billy Hart—it was great.

KM: Your soloing has really come into its own now. It's more stream of consciousness. To put it simply, you play a lot of cool patterns.

JTW: At certain tempos I'm just trying to get stuff out, a lot of linear stuff. I don't even know what I'm doing. Form comes to me pretty easily. I'm just trying to tell a story. On faster stuff I am thinking of Tony Williams or Billy Cobham, trying to get around the drums and maintain that intensity-

For a lot of guys, when they play jazz at fast tempos, it turns out to be like Philly Joe Jones, very snare drum-ey. And because of that the solo stays at a certain level. But Tony's thing is that plus a big broad thing—very primal. I also really love what Frankie Dunlop played with Monk. That was about playing melodies on the drums and leaving some air.

KM: Are there any other jazz guys who influenced you who aren't that popular?

JTW: Ed Blackwell, who is a heavy guy but not a household name. You can hear that he was into Max Roach, but what he did with it, how he mixed it with all the African stuff, is really freaky. I also really like Ben Riley.

I read Brian Blade's *MD* interview, where he was talking about Earl Palmer and Idris Muhammad, guys who played stuff that was in the cracks. Even stuff in earlier pop music was *swinging*.

KM: What are you about now?

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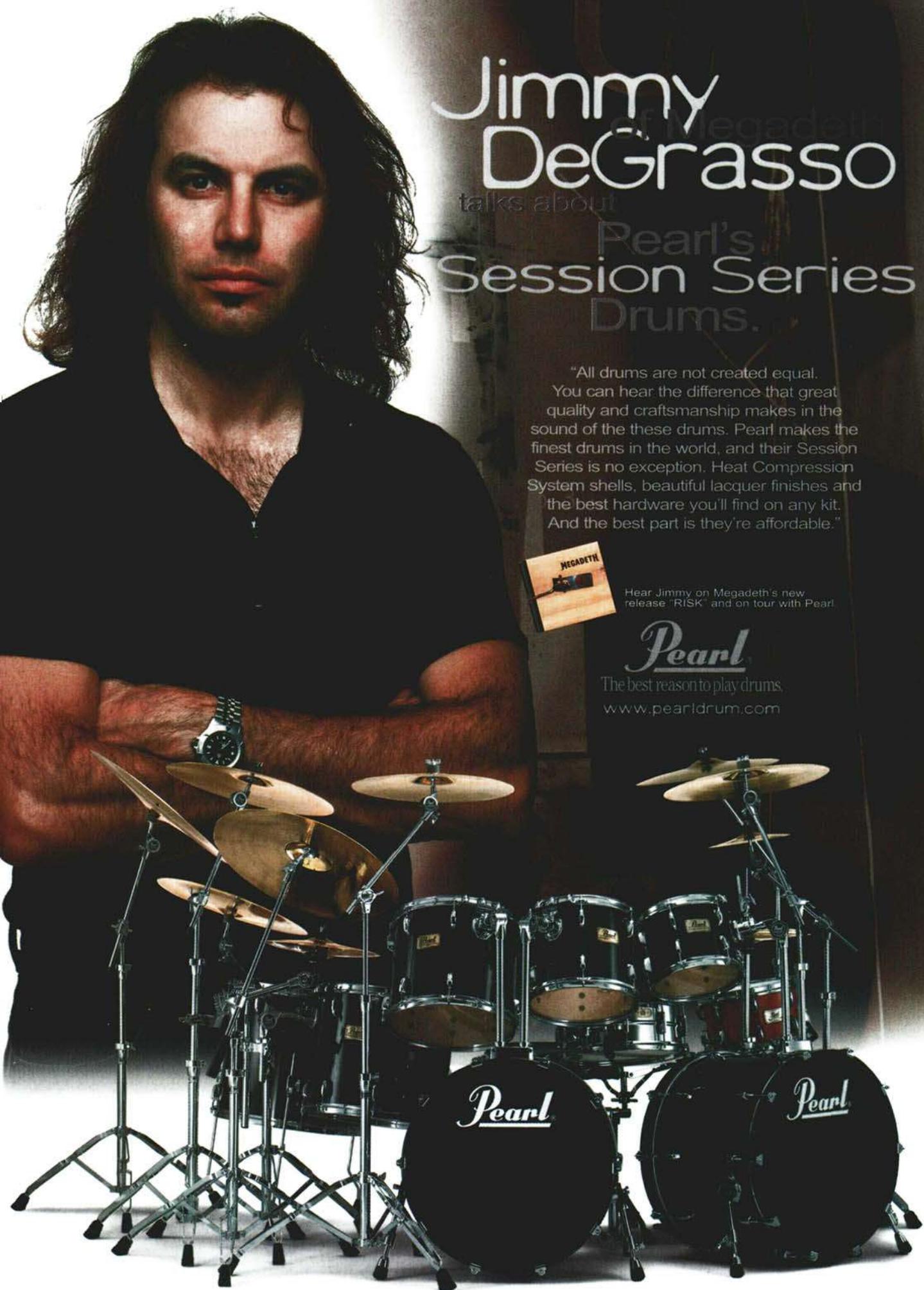


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JTW: I'm trying to play more selflessly. I still solo and get in the guys' faces, but I'm trying to not be as combative. Now I really want to help the soloist. That comes from checking out Sam Woodyard and how selfless he played with Ellington. I loved the way he played with a big band—totally fresh, and not the typical approach that most guys do. Woodyard might let a lot of figures go by and not hit one of them, but then he'd put a big cymbal crash in a hole. He'd toy with an arrangement rather than play every single hit.

KM: Any low points so far in your career?

JTW: *The Tonight Show*. In many ways it just wasn't me. I had to be an entertainer.

KM: Smitty is an entertainer.

JTW: It takes a certain head to pull that stuff off convincingly. You know, the rimshot after the punch line. When I was on the show, I didn't do that at first. It took me eight months to understand. Then Billy Crystal came on and he and Jay were doing spit-takes. Ya know, where when one guy makes a joke like, "I just saw the mailman with your wife," and the other guy spits out a mouthful of water he just drank. After one of those, Crystal looked at me and said, "Hey, Where's the rimshot, man?" So I started having to do that stuff, having to think about things that weren't really about the music. But it was a good experience. Made some good

money, had a nice car.

KM: What do you think is your best recorded solo?

JTW: That's tough. Maybe "Chambers Of Tain" on *Live At Blues Alley*, which is an extended solo. The "Citizen Tain" on

"it's one thing to execute a rhythm or an ostinato or play a beat, but it's another thing to try to put a vibe on it that makes people want to move to it."

Bloomington is good. And some people like what I played on Gary Thomas's first record.

KM: Do you still like your drumming on Wynton's *J Mood* and *Black Codes*?

JTW: Parts of it. Overall the intent was so hip with Wynton's group. It was like fate. Branford put the band together. It was like a garage band. I was still at

Berklee and Branford was off working with The Messengers, Clark Terry, and Herbie Hancock. Then Wynton got signed to Columbia. I got the phone call from Branford to join the band—and he talked a lot. I just thought he was a bullshitter. I was like, Okay, your brother has a deal, and you wanna start a band. Lemme know when it happens. Right. But then, a few months later, we're making a record. It was all very natural, like a family.

KM: Did they argue a lot?

JTW: Oh yeah! Lots of big brother, little brother stuff. Funny cats. But with Wynton's work ethic and Branford's very natural thing, it's amazing. Wynton is a workaholic. The cat has a path and he knows what he'll be playing in ten years. But right now I'm not completely getting it.

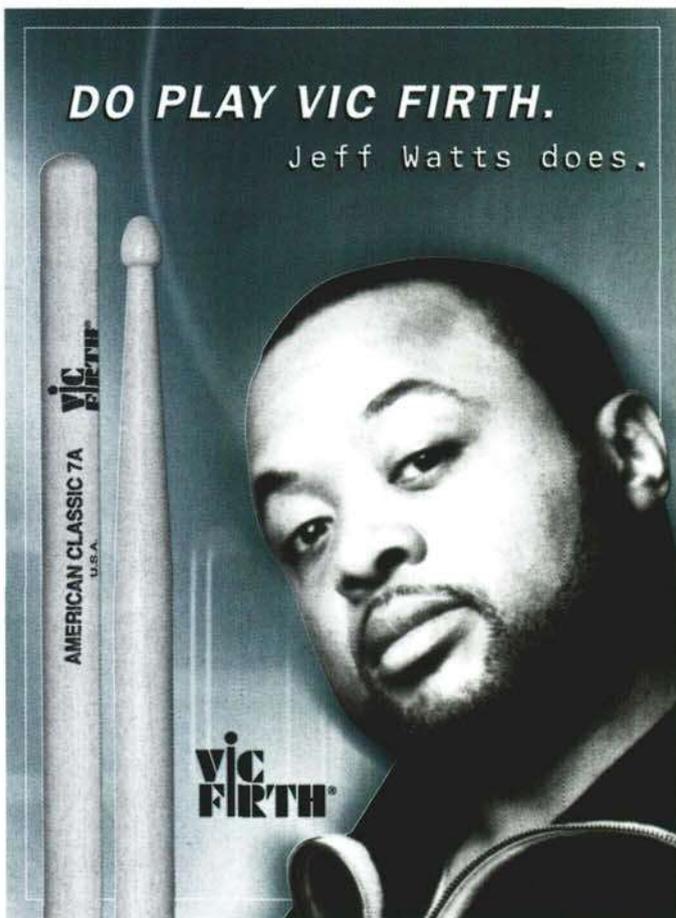
KM: What do you do differently with Michael Brecker, Kenny Garrett, and Branford?

JTW: With Branford I just do what I want. It's home base. I can mess up and it'll be fine. Garrett's thing is more uniformly intense. He stays in the cut the whole time. It's like an R&B mentality. His music is different. A lot of it is pretty and simple. But a lot of his music makes you have to bring something to it. You have to play with conviction. Brecker's thing—I'm still trying to figure out how to play with him. He has so many things he can do. He plays long lines. His music is the most structured of the three. He loves to swing and have a conversation. I try to frame him as opposed to jumping all over him.

KM: In your bio you wrote, "Everything I play is a dance." And that means....

JTW: It's one thing to execute a rhythm or an ostinato or play a beat, but it's another thing to try to put a vibe on it that makes people want to move to it. I'm really going for that, no matter what style I'm playing. On a lot of gigs I look in the audience for the oldest, crustiest person in the room. I want to get him. I want him to tap his foot and come with me. I try to connect.

I am grateful to be in this business. I've met a lot of nice people, blessings all around. I do really miss my brother, Kenny Kirkland. He showed me a lot of things about music, by example, without talking about it. He represented and he dealt with music in a very honest way. Kenny should be a blueprint for future musicians in the upcoming millennium. He was equal parts improviser, composer, and serious groove doctor. He was open to anything in pursuit of music. I loved him and I miss him.



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MD's Guide To Drumset Tuning

by Rich Watson



The gig was as good as yours!

You swung like a wrecking ball. You grooved like the Mariana trench. When they said "fusion," you lit up a sleek, hermetically sealed nineteen over seven. When they wanted straight and swampy, you laid back like Buddha.

And yet...

A few minutes into your audition, what was that expression on the bandmembers' faces? As if they were in uncomfortable proximity to a neglected cat litter box. And then didn't you begin to notice a certain sonic odeur emanating from your kit?

"We'll call you," grunts the guitar player. But the distinct, check-is-in-the-mail ring to his words suggests otherwise. Could it have been the sound of your drums?

This has never happened to you, right? Nahhh. But in an age when, at least in commercial music, success is determined nearly as much by the sound of your drums as the size of your talent, in subtler ways it could. Not only could a bad-sounding kit offend your fellow musicians (and audiences, if it's *really* bad), it could whittle away your own joy for playing and motivation to practice. Before you know it, you're spiraling down the ol' porcelain path to unrealized potential. And especially if your playing isn't quite as god-like as that of the drummer described above (say, you swing more like a rusty gate and lay back more like a drunk on a park bench), making your drums sound their best is even more crucial.

The good news is that producing a good drum sound is easier today than ever. Tightened quality control and improved manufacturing techniques produce drums and heads that are consistently well made. The enormous selection of heads available can help you personalize your sound. And current trends in drum recording (which have a big influence on drum sound in live performance) are very drummer-friendly, both in terms of prominence in the

mix and tonal concept. The sometimes adversarial relationship between drummers and engineers who made drums sound like twenty-pound bags of...er...fertilizer is but an ugly memory.

"In the past there was a tendency to try to control the drum sound," says engineer/producer Craig Randall. "Today's trend is to capture the warmth and *reality* of a kit—excepting mechanical sounds like squeaks and buzzes, of course—to let the drums breathe and promote their natural tone."

During his tenure as a sound man at some of New York's top clubs, including the famous Limelight from 1990 to 1996, Craig chalked up live sound credits with everyone from Ace Frehley, Bare Naked Ladies, Better Than Ezra, Everclear, Fear Factory, Marilyn Manson, Megadeth, Pantera, Pearl Jam, Prince, Prodigy, Prong, Rage Against The Machine, Skid Row, and Slaughter, to Laurie Anderson, Cab Calloway, Tom Jones, Tracy Lords, and Trash Can Sinatras! Along the way he also developed his recording chops at numerous studios in the city, and in 1995 he opened Brass Giraffe Studio, where he engineers and produces a wide variety of recording projects. Topping off this broad-based

live/studio perspective, Craig plays drums (although his main axe is keys), so the man has some very informed ideas about drum sound.

Although drumset tuning in traditional jazz and heavy metal follow their own conventions, tuning in pop, alternative, hardcore, contemporary R&B, and fusion continues to become more contextual—that is, customized for particular songs and situations instead of a real or imagined industry-wide consensus. "There is no universal standard of drum tuning—except good and bad," Randall quips. "The type of music and even the song's tempo can influence the tuning." Record producers are looking for new sounds and approaches that will help distinguish a given project from the crowd. This raises new opportunities for musical expression, as well as additional responsibility to be able to produce not *one* great sonic picture, but *several*.

A snapshot of this need for flexibility is evident in the Celebrity Tuning Profile, which begins on page 69. Many of the drummers consulted vary their tuning, muffling, and/or head selection depending on the type of gig they play. (To conserve space, the artists' chosen brand of heads is indicated only on the first line of each profile.)

As you read the Profiles, keep in mind that many of the terms used are somewhat subjective; one artist's concept of "medium-tight" may not be the same as that of other artists. Also note that some drummers vary their tuning even *within* the indicated categories, depending on the music and room acoustics. For example, Dave Weckl sometimes loosens his front bass drum head to avoid feedback in bass frequencies, Anton Fig sometimes tunes his tom batter heads very loose to allow him to play harder in softer musical settings, and in the studio Carter Beauford tunes his drums to suit particular songs. Unless otherwise specified, the drummers evenly tension the lugs on each drum. Recordings (some with particular song titles, in quotes) listed below each artist's name represent their general tuning preferences—not necessarily the tuning for a particular situation.

Undecided about how to tune your drums? Analyze the qualities of your favorite players' drum sounds. Do their drums sound high- or low-pitched, bright or mellow? Is their attack sharp or rounded?

Then consider how that sound might be modified to reflect your own personality, tastes, and technique, as well as the physical characteristics of your kit.

If you're still developing your opinion about an ideal drum sound, that's great. It means your mind and your ears are still open. Remember that tuning is a matter of taste—it's personal. But don't interpret the variety of approaches and sounds among today's drummers as license to be ambiguous or nonchalant about your tuning. Hone ideas about particular drum sounds that complement particular styles of music—even (or *especially*) styles you don't currently play. If you find that your ideas consistently displease the musicians and recording engineers you work with, strongly consider re-thinking them. "If your bass player, your guitar player, and the sound man all say your drum sound sucks," Craig advises, "it probably does."

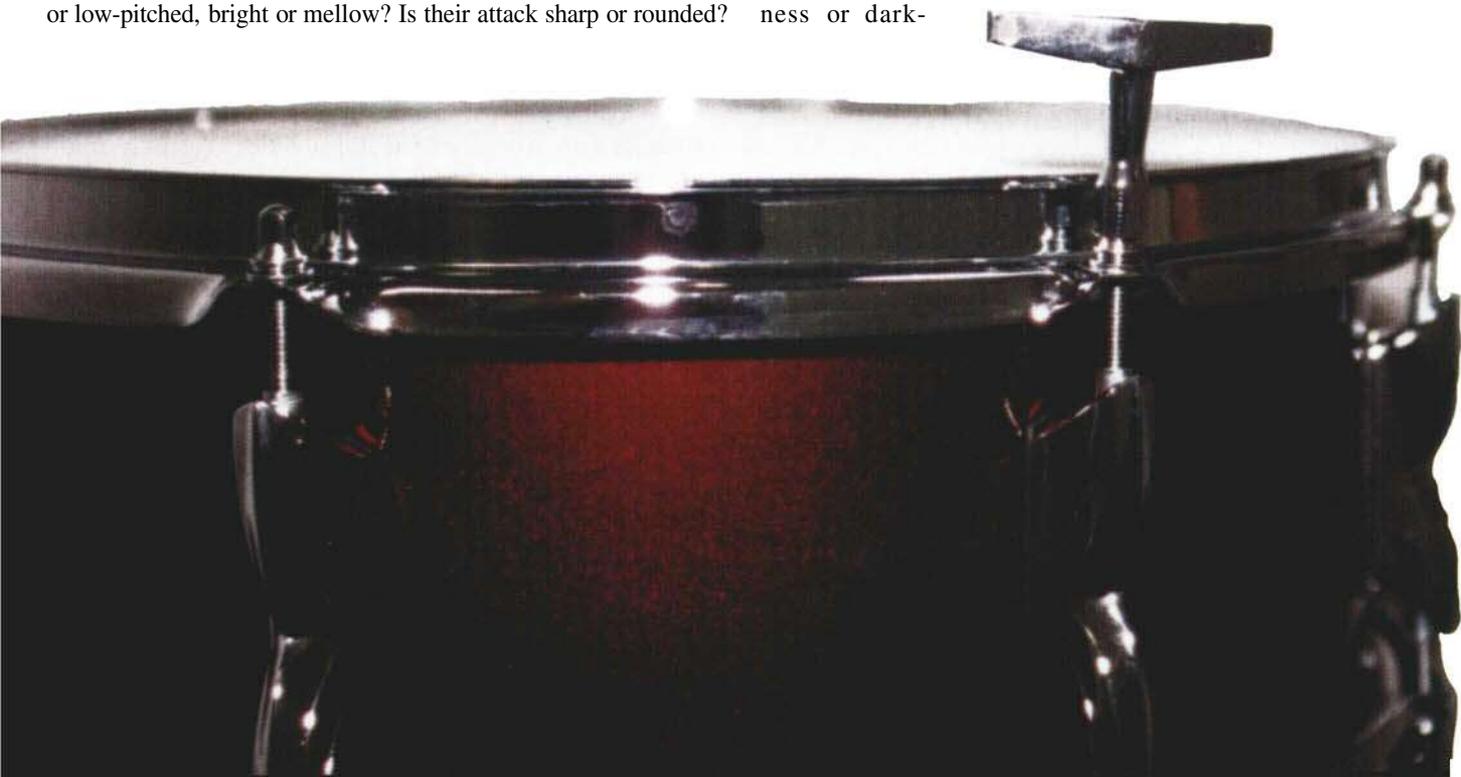
While no hard-and-fast rules dictate what constitutes a "good" drum sound, the laws of acoustics and some common-sense principles do govern how various sonic characteristics are produced or avoided. Abiding by them—or at least knowing how to bend them in your favor—will help you a) achieve the sound you're seeking, b) achieve the sound a high-paying *producer* is seeking, and c) focus upon—and feel more confident about—your playing by eliminating a "factor beyond your control" that might otherwise be looming over your musical aspirations.

So, to get started on creating your own sonic signature, let's take a gander at...

The Big Picture

Producing a good drum sound needn't be difficult, but by virtue of the number of factors involved, it *is* complex. The key is to never view any factor in isolation, but to keep in mind how the factors affect each other—their *interaction*. The way in which these factors interact fall conveniently into the following three categories, or interaction levels.

Sound components: The basic interacting components of drum sound include: pitch—the sound's highness or lowness; tone—the sound's brightness or dark-



ness (determined by harmonic content); sustain—the sound's length of resonance; articulation—the sound's attack definition; and projection—the sound's carrying power.

Parts of the drums: The tension at each lug interacts with the tension at other lugs—as do the top head with the bottom; both heads with the shell, hoops, and any muffling; the shell with the hardware; and the frequencies of each drum with those of every other. (Think: *"The foot bone's connected to the ankle bone...."*)

The playing environment: Drum sound interacts with room acoustics—the relative sonic reflectiveness or absorbency of the floor, ceiling, walls, furniture, and people in the room. It also interacts with the air—that is, the distance the sound must travel.

And yes, as if this isn't already complicated enough, factors in each of these major levels do interact with factors in the other two. But take heart. None of the principles involved in tuning are individually difficult, and most fall right in step with a common-sense view of the instrument.

Now that we have an overview, let's zoom in to the specific physical elements of your drum sound.

Heads

The parts of a drum most responsible for the sound it produces, and the ones over which we have the most control, are its heads. Although the vast variety of drumheads available is dizzying, there are some general principles that might help you focus on models that suit your needs. The major features detailed below correspond to the drumhead listing that begins on page 78.

Ply Thickness: Also called "weight," the number of plies in a head and the thickness of each ply contribute significantly to drum sound. Manufacturers commonly measure ply thickness in mils (one mil equals 1/1000"), or by gauge, where for example 500 gauge equals 5 mils. (England's Premier provided thickness figures in microns, which we converted and rounded to the nearest tenth of a mil.) In general, thick heads require greater stick impact to move and remain in motion. Thick heads vibrate more slowly than thin ones, producing a lower pitch and fatter sound than thin heads at the same tension. Conversely, thin heads are generally bright and ringy. Numbers on the drumhead listing refer to the thickness (in mils) of the head's primary (batter, outer resonant, or snare-side) ply and, if applicable, a secondary ply. The thickness of any dot(s) on the heads are not included in these figures.

Playing Surface: Uncoated heads produce the maximum volume, sustain, and harmonic range. (To varying degrees, coatings, "vents," damping rings, and extra plies—and of course all muffling devices—soften or eliminate overtones.) However, sustain and full harmonic richness can detract somewhat from the sound's perceivable pitch focus and attack definition. Some people say they can hear subtle tonal differences among clear, hazy, opaque, and smooth white drumheads. (These people must have a canine hidden somewhere in their family tree.)

The most obvious reason for choosing coated heads is their suitability for playing with brushes. The same "scratch" sound, though very subtle when played with sticks, is valued by some drummers, producers, and recording engineers for the "edge" it adds to the attack, especially when close-miked. But these days, since brush-playing is much less common than it used to be, most drummers choose coated heads because of their subtly mellower, "rounder"

tone. Coating formulas, colors (notably the Aquarian Jack DeJohnette model with its unique black coating), tonal effect, and durability vary among manufacturers.

On the drumhead listing, head surfaces separated by commas indicate different colors or surfaces available on the same drumhead model. Numbers in parentheses indicate that a noted surface is available only on a certain head size (or sizes). The term "white" refers to non-coated, smooth white heads.

"Dot"-reinforced heads: A reinforcement circle mounted to the top and/or bottom of a batter head's main target area enhances its durability. (This type of head is not recommended for the bottom/resonant side of the drum.) By adding mass to the head and therefore slowing its vibration, the dot also accentuates midrange frequencies and sharpens articulation. Dot diameter and thickness vary from one model and manufacturer to another. On the listing, unless otherwise specified, dots are made of the same plastic film as the main head surface. Aquarian's Power Dots are made of a patented, ultra-thin, plastic-impregnated fiber composite, called "fabric" on the listing. (This material covers the entire surface of their New Orleans Special.) Unless otherwise noted, dots are attached to the top side of the head. Numbers in parentheses indicate that a dotted model is available only on a certain head size (or sizes).

Damping-ring heads: In a sense reversing the dot concept, a layer of damping material around the head's perimeter attenuates overtones, thereby highlighting the drum's fundamental pitch, and enhances attack definition. Remo pioneered the modern damping ring with their Pinstripe model, whose two plies are bonded at the collar with a thin layer of adhesive. Aquarian adopted this design for their Performance II. More common today are drumheads with a ring made of the same type of plastic film as the head itself that press against the underside of the head at its perimeter. Every major manufacturer offers at least one line with this type of "internal" damping ring. Evans' Genera EQ1, EQ2, and EQ3 bass drumheads offer an additional, removable Mylar damping ring, called an E-Ring, which slips between the head and the permanent damping ring "flap." (EQ Resonant heads have flaps, but not E-Rings.)

Aquarian's exclusive Floating Felt damping rings are attached to the flat plane of the head, well within the head's perimeter. This design is intended to avoid interference with normal head collar/bearing edge interaction. Attack approaches the same tonal objective with its unique Tone Ridge, which is actually an overtone-inhibiting "crimp" in the head about an inch inside the hoop.

Calfskin-simulating heads: Although real calfskin drumheads have pretty much gone the way of the dodo, manufacturers in increasing numbers are developing heads intended to simulate their warm, slightly drier sound, as well as their look and "feel" with brushes. Aquarian's Vintage, Attack's Calflike, and Remo's FiberSkyn 3 lines feature special coatings intended to maximize predominantly low and midrange frequencies. Remo's Renaissance heads are made to sound and feel like calf heads, with a softer, more yielding stick response.

Vented heads: An Evans exclusive, Dry snare and kick drumheads have tiny holes about 3/4" from the hoop that partially defeat vibration, thus reducing upper harmonics with little effect upon physical response or attack characteristics of the drum.

Double-ply heads: Two head layers are better than one if you

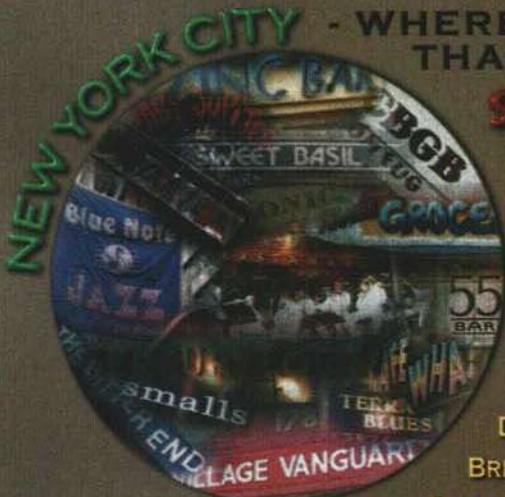
CELEBRITY TUNING PROFILES

ARTIST / REPRESENTATIVE RECORDING	HEAD	MODEL	TENSION	MUFFLING	
Carter Beauford (none provided)	Live				
	13" Snare Top	Evans (prototype)	very tight		
	13" Snare Bottom	Genera 300	tight		
	14" Snare Top	Power Center (prototype)	very tight		
	14" Snare Bottom	Genera 300	tight		
	Toms Top	Clear G2	medium-tight	sometimes gaffer's tape	
	Toms Bottom	Black Resonant	medium	sometimes gaffer's tape	
	20" Kick Batter	EQ4	medium-tight		
	20" Kick Front	EQ3 Resonant	tight		
	22" Kick Batter	EQ3	medium-tight	2 EQ pads & pillow	
	22" Kick Front	EQ3 Resonant	tight	2 EQ pads	
	Studio and TV — heads and tuning vary according to song				
	13" Snare Top	G1	medium		
	13" Snare Bottom	Genera 200	medium		
	14" Snare Top	G1	medium		
	14" Snare Bottom	Genera 200	medium		
	Toms Top	Clear G2	varies	sometimes gaffer's tape	
	Toms Bottom	Hack Resonant	varies	sometimes gaffer's tape	
	20" Kick Batter	E34	medium		
	20" Kick Front	EQ3 Resonant	medium		
22" Kick Batter	EQ3	medium	varies—usually less than live		
22" Kick Front	EQ3 Resonant	medium			
Terry Bozzio <i>Drawing The Circle</i> —Terry Bozzio <i>Chamber Works</i> —Terry Bozzio	Snare Top	Attack/Bozzio Coated White Dot	tight (tuned to B)		
	Snare Bottom	TBSS12	tight		
	Toms Top	TB Clear Medium	6 lower toms tuned in 4ths		
	Toms Bottom	TB Clear Medium	8 higher tuned to C major scale		
	(2) 22" Kick Batters	TB Clear No Overtone	medium (minor 3rd apart)	DW pillows	
	(2) 22" Kick Fronts	TB Black Thin Skin	loose		
	(2) DW Woofer Backs	TB No Overtone	loose	DW pillows	
	(2) DW Woofer Fronts	TB Black Thin Skin	loose	DW pillows	
	20" Kick Batter	TB Clear Medium	medium (tuned to C)		
	20" Kick Front	TB Black Thin Skin	loose		
	28" Kick Batter	TB Clear Medium	medium (tuned to low A)		
	28" Kick Front	TB Black Thin Skin	loose		
	Matt Cameron <i>Superunknown</i> —Soundgarden <i>Brotherhood Of Electric</i> —Wellwater Conspiracy	Live			
Snare Top		Remo Coated Emperor	medium-tight		
Snare Bottom		Clear Ambassador	tight		
Toms Top		Clear Ambassador	loose-medium		
Toms Bottom		Clear Ambassador	medium		
Kick Batter		Coated Ambassador	loose-medium	DW pillow	
Kick Front		Clear Ambassador	loose-medium		
Studio					
Snare Top		Coated Emperor	tight, half-step lower than bottom	gaffer's tape if needed	
Snare Bottom		Clear Ambassador	tight-very tight		
Toms Top		Clear Emperor	medium		
Toms Bottom		Clear Diplomat	medium		
Kick Batter		Coated Ambassador	loose	felt strip or DW pillow	
Kick Front	Clear Ambassador	loose, half-step lower than batter			
Terri Lyne Carrington <i>Real Life Story</i> —Terri Lyne Carrington <i>Till We Have Faces</i> —Gary Thomas	Straight-ahead jazz-live and studio				
	Snare Top	Remo Coated Ambassador	medium-tight	sometimes a small strip of tape	
	Snare Bottom	Clear Ambassador	medium		
	Toms Top	Coated Ambassador	medium-tight, sometimes detune 1 lug		
	Toms Bottom	Coated Ambassador	medium		
	Kick Batter	Renaissance Powerstroke 3	medium-tight		
	Kick Front	Ebony Ambassador with port	medium	sometimes a towel	
	Contemporary jazz, pop, R&B, etc.—live and studio				
	Snare Top	Coated Ambassador	tight-very tight	sometimes a small strip of tape	
	Snare Bottom	Clear Ambassador	medium-tight		
	Toms Top	Clear Ambassador or Emperor	medium		
	Toms Bottom	Clear Ambassador	medium		
	Kick Batter	Renaissance Powerstroke 3	medium		
Kick Front	Ebony Ambassador with port	medium	small blanket		

ARTIST / REPRESENTATIVE RECORDING	HEAD	MODEL	TENSION	MUFFLING
Dennis Chambers <i>Bent</i> — Gary Willis <i>No Sweat</i> — Gary Willis <i>Enter The Spirit</i> — Bob Berg	General Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front Bebop Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front	Evans Coated ST-Dry Hazy 300 Clear Genera G2 Genera Resonant EQ3 EQ3 Coated ST-Dry Clear Coated Genera G2 Clear EQ3 EQ3 Clear	tight medium medium loose loose loose tight medium medium-tight medium medium-loose medium-loose	EQ3 pad EQ3 pad
Vinnie Colaiuta <i>Ten Summoner's Tales</i> — Sting <i>Secrets</i> — Allan Holdsworth	Recording Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front live Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front	Remo Coated Ambassador Diplomat Coated Ambassador Coated Ambassador Clear Powerstroke 3 Ebony with port Coated Ambassador Diplomat Coated or Clear Ambassador Coated or Clear Ambassador Coated or Clear Powerstroke 3 Ebony with port	medium tight medium medium loose loose medium-tight tight medium-tight medium-tight loose-medium loose	sometimes a little tape blanket, small pillow, or DW muffler sometimes a little tape blanket, small pillow, or DW muffler
Jack DeJohnette <i>Keith Jarrett, Japan '96</i> — Keith Jarrett <i>Homecoming</i> — Gateway Trio	Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front	Aquarian Jack DeJohnette Signature Classic Clear Jack DeJohnette Signature Classic Clear Jack DeJohnette Signature Classic Clear	medium-tight medium-tight medium-tight medium medium-tight medium	cloth and gaffer's tape
Virgil Donati <i>Planet X</i> — Derek Sherinian <i>Just Add Water</i> — Virgil Donati <i>On The Virg</i> — Virgil Donati	Rock, pop, heavy, alternative, etc. Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front Jazz, or for darker sound (as on <i>On The Virg</i>) Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front	Remo Coated Emperor Ambassador Coated Emperor Clear Ambassador Clear Powerstroke 3 Ambassador Renaissance Ambassador Ambassador Renaissance Ambassador Clear Ambassador Renaissance Powerstroke 3 Ambassador	tight very tight loose-medium medium-tight very loose very loose tight very tight loose-medium medium-tight very loose very loose	quarter section of "donut" towel resting lightly against head
Anton Fig <i>Frehley's Comet</i> — "Breakout" Ace Frehley Bob Dylan 30th Anniversary Concert— "Don't Think Twice, It's Alright" Booker T. & The MG's with Eric Clapton (live recording)	Live, rock recordings Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front Jazz-ish gigs and recordings and low-volume rooms Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front	Remo CS Ambassador Coated Ambassador Coated Ambassador Powerstroke 3 Ebony Ambassador with port CS Ambassador Coated Ambassador Coated Ambassador Powerstroke 3 Ebony Ambassador with port	medium-tight medium-tight medium medium loose-medium medium loose-medium medium very loose-loose loose loose very loose-loose	sometimes a "donut" soft pillow "donut" sometimes soft pillow

ARTIST / REPRESENTATIVE RECORDING	HEAD	MODEL	TENSION	MUFFLING
Daniel Glass <i>Mugzey's Move</i> — "Hey Pachuco," "Topsy" Royal Crown Revue <i>Cheating At Solitaire</i> — "Long Black Veil," "You Win Again" Mike Ness	Royal Crown Revue Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front General jazz Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front	Aquarian Satin Finish Classic Clear Snare Modern Vintage Classic Clear Modern Vintage Calfskin Satin Finish Classic Clear Snare Satin Finish Classic Clear Satin Finish Satin Finish	tight tight medium tight loose medium tight tight medium tight loose medium	 small piece of moleskin where beater contacts head sandbag against front head
Richie Hayward <i>Shakin' And Stirred</i> — Robert Plant <i>Let It Roll and Ain't Had Enough Fun</i> — Little Feet	Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front DW Woofer Back DW Woofer Front	Remo Coated Ambassador Clear Ambassador Clear Ambassador Clear Ambassador Powerstroke 3 Clear Ambassador Clear Ambassador Graphic	medium-tight medium-tight medium, sometimes detune 1 lug medium loose-medium medium loose loose	very little tape in studio DW pillow with little contact DW pillow with little contact
Paul Leim <i>Come On Over</i> — Shania Twain <i>Time</i> — "Time" Lionel Richie <i>No More Lookin' Over My Shoulder</i> — "Start The Car" Travis Tritt	Shania Twain and Faith Hill Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front Lionel Richie and Travis Tritt Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front	Remo Coated Amb, Powerstroke 3 Clear Diplomat Coated Ambassador Clear Ambassador Powerstroke 3 Smooth White Amb. Coated Ambassador (sometimes PS 3) Clear Diplomat Clear Pinstripe Clear Ambassador Powerstroke 3 Smooth White Amb.	medium tight loose medium loose medium tight tight medium medium-tight loose-medium medium-tight	 rolled towel against head folded towel against outside light pillow
Marco Minnemann <i>The Green Mindbomb</i> — "Streets" Marco Minnemann <i>Time</i> — Illegal Aliens	Studio, jazz, fusion Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front Live, rock recordings Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front	Evans Uno 58 Coated Snare-Side 300 Hazy Uno 58 Coated Genera Resonant EQ1 EQ3 G1 Snare-Side 300 Hazy G1 Coated Genera Resonant EQ4 EQ4	tight tight medium medium loose loose tight-very tight tight loose-medium loose-medium loose loose-medium	
John Robinson <i>Q's Juke Joint</i> — Quincy Jones <i>Back In The High Life</i> - Steve Winwood	Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front	Remo Emperor CS Clear Ambassador Emperor Coated Clear Ambassador Clear Ambassador or CS Clear Ambassador with port	tight medium-tight loose medium loose loose	(usually none) packing blanket and sandbag with Rufus

ARTIST / REPRESENTATIVE RECORDING	HEAD	MODEL	TENSION	MUFFLING
David Silveria (none provided)	Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom Kick Batter Kick Front	Remo Coated Falams II Ambassador Pinstripe Ebony Powerstroke 3 Ebony Powerstroke 3	tight medium medium medium medium medium	foam and towels
Dave Weckl Synergy— Dave Weckl Band Dave Grusin Presents West Side Story— Dave Grusin Between The Lines— "Sunnyside" Mike Stern	Contemporary fusion and funk — tuning depends on music Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom 22" Kick Batter 22" Kick Front 18" Kick Batter 18" Kick Front Big band Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom 22" Kick Batter 22" Kick Front Bebop Snare Top Snare Bottom Toms Top Toms Bottom 18" Kick Batter 18" Kick Front	Remo Coated Ambassador Ambassador Clear Ambassador or Emperor Clear Ambassador Clear Ambassador Ebony Ambassador with port Clear Ambassador Ebony Ambassador Coated Ambassador Ambassador Coated Ambassador Clear Ambassador Coated Ambassador Ebony Ambassador FiberSkyn 3 FD Clear Ambassador Clear Ambassador Gear Ambassador Coated Ambassador Ebony Ambassador	medium-tight tight loose-medium medium-tight medium loose-medium medium-tight medium-tight medium-tight light loose-medium medium-tight medium loose-medium medium tight medium-tight medium-tight medium-tight medium-tight	small piece of rolled-up gaffer's tape sometimes small gaffer's tope rolled towel taped to head and shell same, with smaller towel small piece of rolled-up gaffer's tape sometimes small gaffer's tope rolled towel taped to head and shell same, with smaller towel



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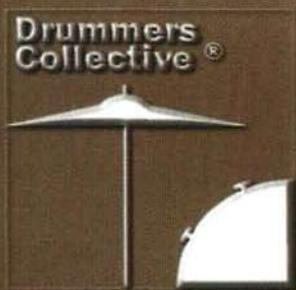
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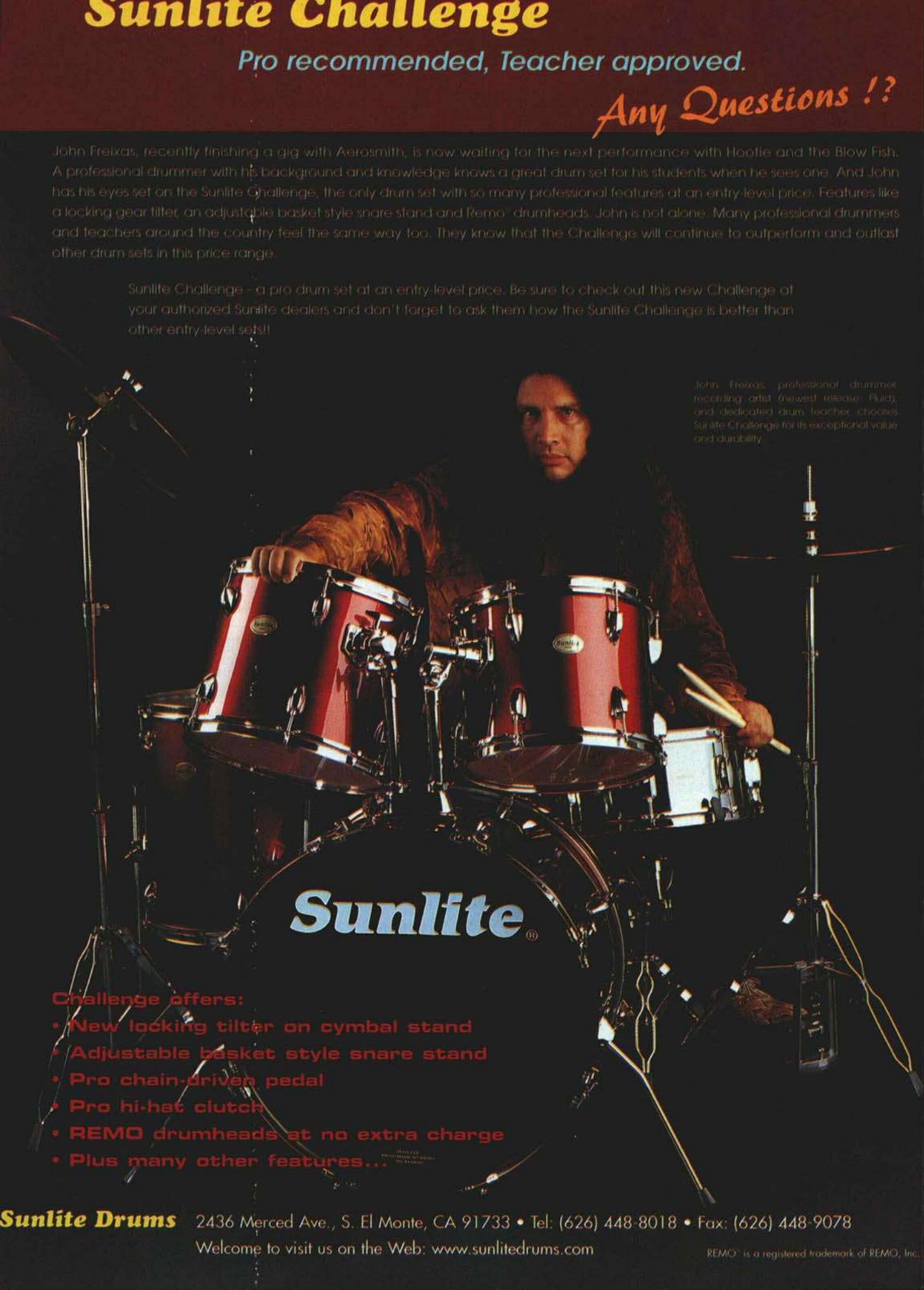
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seek durability and reduction of overtones. Their greater mass also vibrates slower, and therefore produces a lower pitch than single-ply heads at the same tension. Stick response off double-layer heads is slightly slower.

Hydraulic heads: Oil between two plies further inhibits head vibration, making Hydraulics (ironically) the driest-sounding heads of all. Say good-bye to upper harmonics and ring; these puppies are all about short, focused tone and attack definition. Stick response off Hydraulics, currently offered only by Evans, is slower than that of conventional heads.

Maximum-durability heads: Some heads are designed especially for heavy-hitters. Attack's BlastBeat heads have two ten-mil plies. And Remo's Falams II series features a layer of Kevlar, the material used to make bulletproof vests! Overtone reduction and stick response off maximum-durability heads varies, depending on the head's total thickness and the rigidity of the laminate material. This class of heads is not suitable for use as resonant heads or with brushes.

Snare-side, tom bottom, and kick drum front heads: Available in two- to five-mil thicknesses, snare-side heads are much thinner than batter heads. Aquarian's Hi-Performance snare head is reinforced where snare wires sometimes break and puncture the head. All manufacturers offer heads made specifically for kick fronts and tom bottoms. Most are medium to thin to promote resonance. Most head manufacturers now offer ported kick drum heads. The port (hole) facilitates placing a mic' inside the drum, and interrupts the head's natural vibration "path," thereby decreasing the interaction between the batter and front heads. Ports can be located in the center of the head, or off-center, approximately

equidistant from the center and the rim. Larger ports eliminate more resonance than small ones. Acoustically, Evans' Retro Screen—in a way the ultimate "ported" head—is equivalent to using no front head at all. It merely creates the appearance that the drummer is using a front head.

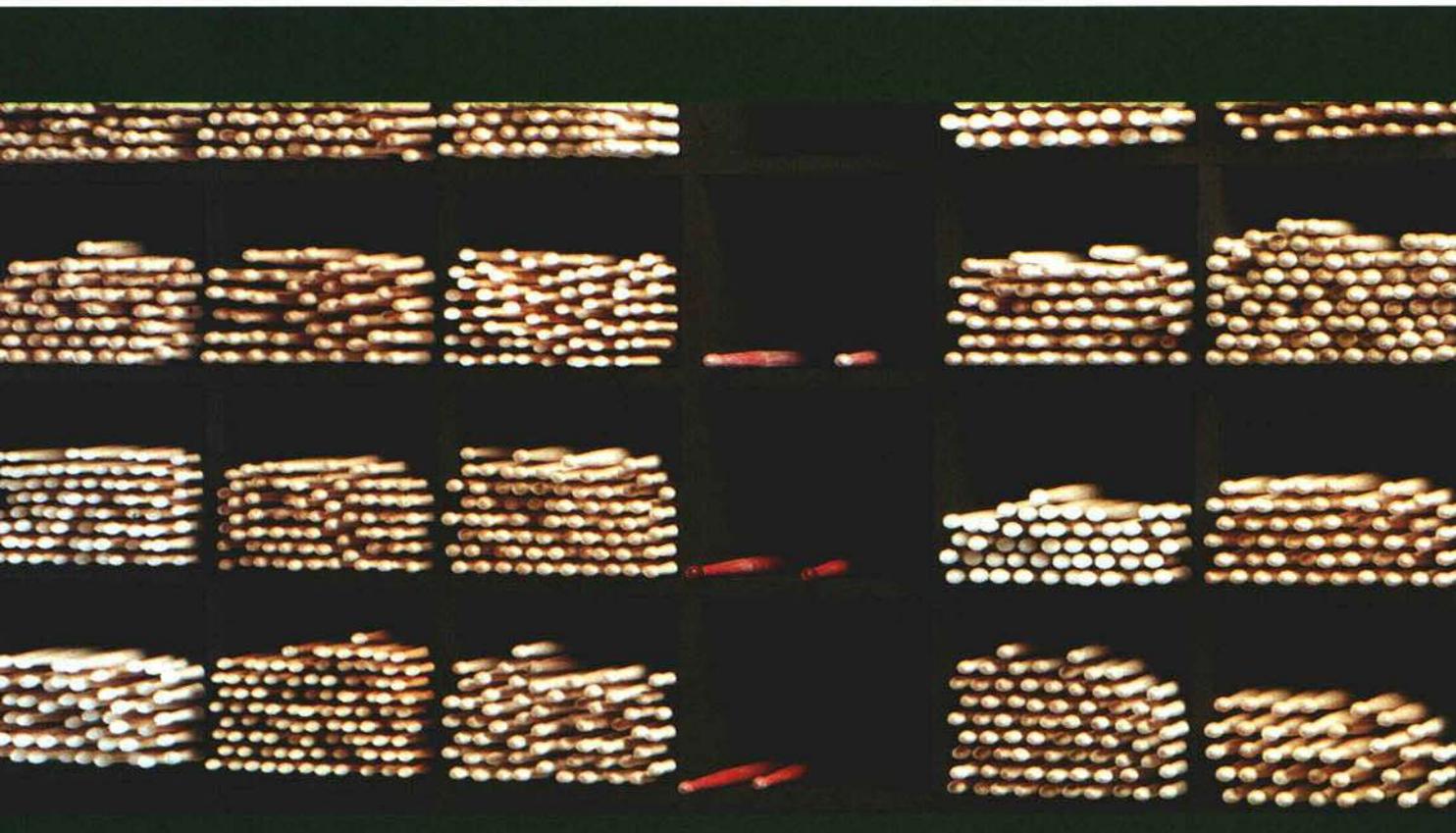
Have Your Head Examined

As important as a head's type and thickness is its condition. A head that is broken, dented, pulled out from the hoop, or badly worn is the sonic equivalent of throwing a bucket of mud on the drum. It also makes tuning much more difficult. Think of changing heads as you do about changing the oil in your car: It's not how long they've been on, but how often and how hard you've been driving them.

On The Edge

In the past, most defective bearing edges were due to quality-control lapses at the factories. Overall, the quality of drumsets made in the last ten years have improved markedly, so bearing edges aren't as problematic as they once were. But as a precaution the best time to check rims is when the drums are brand new *before* you buy them. If it seems a bit of a nuisance, remember that a true bearing edge is absolutely critical to drum sound quality. And a "false" one will drive you bananas for as long as you own the drum.

Whether the drums still belong to the store or to you, remove the head and examine the bearing edge. It should be free of dents, nicks, and gouges. It should also be perfectly flat. Check this by placing a quarter-section of the bearing edge on a marble or



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Shown above are an assortment of Remo World Percussion instruments from the African Collection, including (clockwise from upper left): Cable Djembe, Jun-Djun, Ashiko, Key Tension Djembe, Talking Drums, Djun Djun and Rope Tension Ashiko. Shown at left are Remo World Percussion Artists (from left to right): Leon Mobley, Arthur Hull, Paulo Mattioli, Babatundé Olatunji, Ayo Adeyemi and Francis Awe.



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Formica countertop. (These materials are more likely to be flat than wood or metal.) While pressing down on the shell, look for contact gaps between the bearing edge and the working surface. Examining one section of the drum at a time helps isolate each problem from any others and limits the chance and effect of any flatness variance in the working surface. Rotate the drum to the next section until the entire edge has been checked.

The bottom bearing edge on the snare drum is a little trickier to analyze because of the snare beds, which are the shallow concavities that allow the snare to be evenly tensioned across the head's surface. Like the rest of the bearing edge, snare beds can be damaged, irregular, or even the wrong depth.

Check for obvious flaws in your bearing edge or snare beds, but unless you're a *very* skilled woodworker, don't even *think* about sanding or planing your drums. Proceed directly to a reputable drum repair shop. If this service is not available in your area, you can ship your drums to specialists in many cities around the country.

To test a shell's roundness, measure its diameter from various opposite points. With a perfectly round shell, all the measurements will be the same. With an out-of-round shell, some of the measurements will be larger than others. Imperfect roundness is not as ruinous as a bad bearing edge, but a shell that is severely out-of-round will not allow heads to be tuned properly, and therefore would probably serve you better as a planter or coffee table.

Please Be Seated

A drumhead must be seated for it to tune up properly. Start by placing the head upon the shell. Head collar designs vary from one manufacturer to another, so if the head you've chosen doesn't fit

properly, try a different brand. The most common problem is when the head fits too snugly, and its collar (rather than the flat plane of the head) rides on the drum's bearing edge. The distance from the head's hoop to the drum's bearing edge should be equal around the entire circumference. Finger-tighten the key rods so they just touch the counterhoop. Then, using a drum key, tighten one rod (for example, the one at the "twelve o'clock" position) about one and a half turns. Proceed to the rod at the opposite position across the head (six o'clock), tightening it the same number of turns, and to the others (three, nine, four, ten, etc.). The purpose of the gradual tightening in a prescribed sequence is to avoid pulling the head to one side so that the other side can only seat on the collar. (If you get bored, just concentrate on all the fans you're going to impress with your napalm drum sound.)

Start over with the first rod and repeat the process in the same order until the head is very tight—significantly tighter than you ultimately want it. (The crackling sound you may hear—no cause for alarm—is excess epoxy breaking away from the collar.) Press down firmly on the head with the palm of your hand. This pressure and the "over-tightening" will cause the bearing edge to create a slight impression in the film that will "sit" faithfully on the shell for the life of the head. Because the head will seat to variations in shell roundness and, to a degree, to minor bearing-edge imperfections, it's a good idea to mark the head and a fixed point on the shell. Or if you're lazy and simple-minded like me, align the head's logo with the drum's air hole. This way, if you have to remove the head temporarily (say, to remove the drumkey you inadvertently left inside the drum), you can quickly realign it for the best fit.

continued on page 80



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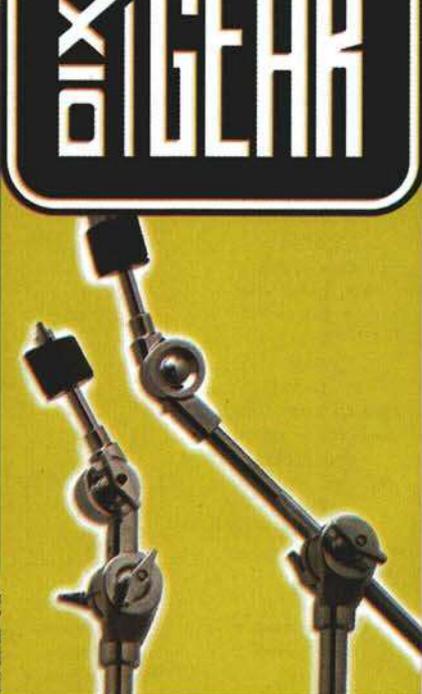
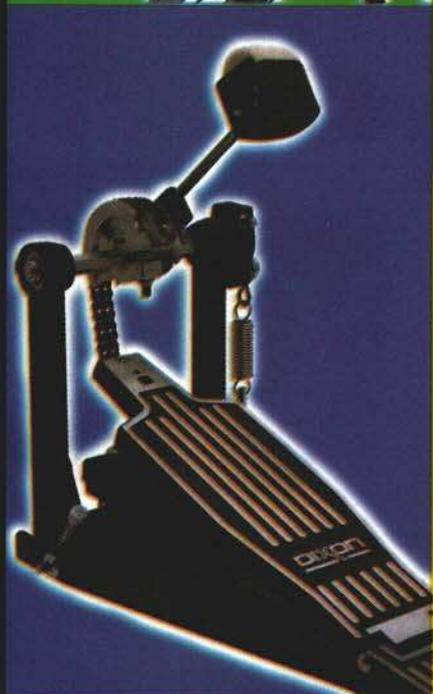
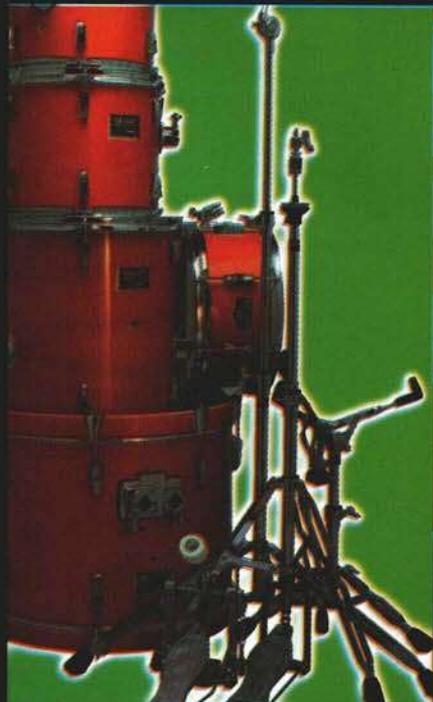
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BRAND / SERIES	PLY THICKNESS		SURFACE / COLOR	DOTS/ DAMPENERS	DESCRIPTION / FEATURES
	PLY 1	PLY 2			
AQUARIAN					
American Vintage Medium	10		coated		general, slightly larger hoop for vintage drums
American Vintage Thin	7		coated		general, slightly larger hoop for vintage drums
American Vintage Snare Side	3		clear		snare side, slightly larger hoop for vintage drums
Carmine Appice Signature Snare	10		clear	fabric dot	snare batter, 7" fabric dot
Carmine Appice Sig. Tom & Bass	10		clear	fabric dot, ring	snare batter, 7" fabric dot
Vinnie Appice Signature	10		coated	coated dot	general batter
Classic Clear	10		clear	opt. fabric dot	general batter, tom & kick resonant
Classic Clear Snare Side	3		clear		snare side
Classic Clear Video Colors	10		black, white		tom res., painted underside avoids brittle plastic
Double Thins	7	5	clear, coated	opt. fabric dot	general batter, no air or adhesive between plies
Jack DeJohnette Signature	10		black coated		general batter & resonant, slightly thicker coating
Hi-Energy	10		clear	top & bottom fabric dots	snare batter, bottom dot covers almost entire head
Hi-Frequency	7		coated, white, black		resonant or light batter
Hi-Performance Snare Side	3		clear		snare side with reinforcement patches at snares
Impact I	10		clear	Floating Felt ring	kick batter, wide felt ring
Impact II	7	7	clear	Floating Felt ring	kick batter, wide felt ring, no air/adhesive
Impact III	10		coated	Floating Felt ring, fabric dot	kick batter, wide felt ring
Tommy Lee Signature	10		clear	fabric dot	tom & kick batter, 9" fabric dot
Tommy Lee Signature Snare	10		clear	top & bottom dots	snare batter, 9" fabric dots
Modern Vintage Medium	10		coated		general, "vintage" texture, regular hoop size
Modern Vintage Thin	7		coated		general, "vintage" texture, regular hoop size
New Orleans Special	1	10	fabric	fabric "dot" over entire head	snare batter
Performance II	7	7	clear, coated	epoxy ring, opt. fabric dot	general batter, no air or adhesive between plies
Ported Bass Drumhead	10		black, white		opt, reinforced 7" center or 4 1/4" offset port
Regulator	10		black, white	10 1/2" Floating Felt ring	kick res., opt. reinf. 7" center or 4 1/4" offset port
Response 2	7	7	clear, coated	opt, fabric dot	general batter, no air or adhesives between plies
Studio-X	10		clear, coated	ring, opt. fabric dot	general batter
Super-Kick I	10		clear	Floating Felt ring	kick batter, narrow felt ring
Super-Kick II	7	7	clear	floating Felt ring	kick batter, narrow felt ring, no air/adhesive
Super-Kick III	10		clear	Floating Felt ring, fabric dot	kick batter, narrow felt ring
Texture Coated Satin Finish	10		coated	opt. bottom fabric dot (13, 14)	general batter
ATTACK					
Charlie Adams Signature	10		coated	bottom dot	snare batter, no-glue hoop
Attack 1	10		clear, coated		general batter & resonant, no-glue hoop
Attack 1 Tone Ridge	10		clear, coated	Tone Ridge	general batter, no-glue hoop
Attack 2	7	7	clear		general batter, no-glue hoop
Attack 2 Tone Ridge	7	7	clear, (coated 12-14)	Tone Ridge	general batter, no-glue hoop
Attack BlastBeat	10	10	coated		ultra-strong snare batter, no-glue hoop
Attack Calflike	10		coated		snare batter, no-glue hoop
Attack Force Kevlar			white, coated		ultra-strong snare batter, no-glue hoop
Attack Jingle Head	10		coated		effect snare batter, 4 pairs of tambourine jingles
Attack No Overtone	10		clear, coated	ring	snare & tom batter, no-glue hoop
Attack No Overtone Kick	10		clear, coated, white	ring	no-glue hoop
Attack Ported Bass	7		black	opt, ring	reinforced 4" offset port, no-glue hoop
Attack Smooth White Bass	10		white		kick batter & resonant, no-glue hoop
Attack Snare Side Medium	5		clear		snare side, no-glue hoop
Attack Snare Side Thin	4		clear		snare side, no-glue hoop
Attack Thin Skin-1	7		clear, coated, hazy black		resonant or light batter, no-glue hoop
Attack Thin Skin-2	7	5	clear, coated, hazy black		general batter, no-glue hoop
Terry Bozzio Signature	10		clear, coated		general use, Dupont Mylar, no-glue hoop
Terry Bozzio No Overtone	10		clear, coated	ring	kick resonant, Dupont Mylar, no-glue hoop
Terry Bozzio Snare Side	3		clear		snare side, Dupont Mylar, no-glue hoop
Terry Bozzio Snare w/ Dot	10		coated	dot	snare batter, Dupont Mylar, no-glue hoop
Terry Bozzio Thin Skin Black	7		black		kick resonant, Dupont Mylar
EVANS					
EQ1 Batter	10		clear, coated	ring & E-Ring, vents	kick batter
EQ1 Resonant	7		black, coated	vents, ring	kick resonant
EQ2 Batter	10	6.5	clear	ring & E-Ring, vents	kick batter
EQ2 Resonant	7		black	vents, ring	kick resonant, center port with "grill"
EQ3 Batter	6.5	6.5	clear	ring & E-Ring, vents	kick batter
EQ3 Resonant	6.5 (black 7)		clear, coated, black	vents, ring	kick resonant, 5" offset port
EQ4 Batter			clear, coated	ring	kick batter, ring proportionate to head diameter
Genera G1	10		clear, coated		snare & toms
Genera G2	7	7	coated		snare & tom batter
Genera G2 Bass Batter	7	7	clear		kick batter

BRAND / SERIES	PLY THICKNESS		SURFACE / COLOR	DOTS/ DAMPENERS	DESCRIPTION / FEATURES
	PLY 1	PLY 2			
Genera HD Batter	5	7.5	coated	ring	snare batter
Genera HD Dry Batter	5	7.5	coated	ring, vents	snare batter
Genera Resonant	10		clear		tom resonant
Genera Snare Batter	10		coated	ring	snare batter
Genera Snare Side 200	2		hazy, opaque		snare side
Genera Snare Side 300	3		clear, hazy, opaque		snare side
Genera Snare Side 500	5		clear, hazy		snare side
Hydraulic Glass	6.5	6.5	clear, (coated 14)	oil	snare, tom & kick batter
Hydraulic Blue or Black	7	6.5	blue, black, (coated 14)	oil	snare, tom & kick batter
Power Center	10		coated	perforated dot	snare batter
Resonant	6.5 (black 7)		clear, black		tom & kick resonant
Retro Screen			black opaque		acoustically transparent kick front
ST Batter	7.5	7.5	coated		snare batter
ST Dry Batter	7.5	7.5	coated	vents	snare batter
Uno 58 1000 Coated	10		coated		tom resonant
Uno 58 1000 Bass	10		coated, clear, white		kick batter or resonant
Uno 58 1000 Dry	10		coated	vents	snare batter
LUDWIG					
Weather Master Black Front	10		black		kick resonant, 5" center port, Head Lock hoop
Weather Master Black Heavy	10		black		snare, tom, & kick resonant, Head Lock hoop
Weather Master Coated Silver Dot	10		coated	coated silver dot	snare & tom batter, Head Lock hoop
Weather Master Heavy	10		coated, clear, white		snare, tom, & kick batter, Head Lock hoop
Weather Master Medium	7.5		coated, clear, white		snare & tom batter, tom resonant, Head Lock hoop
Weather Master Black Heavy	10		black		tom batter, Head Lock hoop
Weather Master Power Collar	10		clear, coated	ring	snare, tom, & kick batter, Head Lock hoop
Weather Master Snare Side	3		hazy		snare side, Head Lock hoop
Weather Master Silver Dot	10		clear, coated	silver dot	snare, tom, & kick batter, Head Lock hoop
Weather Master Vintage Front	10		white		kick resonant, Head Lock hoop
World Standard BD Front	10		clear, black		kick resonant, Head Lock hoop
World Standard Double Ply	7.5	7.5	clear, coated		snare & tom batter, Head Lock hoop
World Standard Double Ply BD	7.5	7.5	clear, white		snare & tom batter, Head Lock hoop
World Standard Single Ply	10		clear, coated		snare & tom batter, Head Lock hoop
World Standard Single Ply BD	10		clear, white		kick batter, Head Lock hoop
World Standard Snare Side	3		hazy		snare side, Head Lock hoop
PREMIER					
CL Extra	9.9		clear		tom & kick batter
CL Response	6.9		clear		tom resonant
Controlled Heavy Batter	9.9		coated	dot	snare batter
Matchedplay Bass Drum Batter	9.9		clear	ring	kick batter
Matchedplay BD Display	9.9 (black 7.4)		black, white	ring	kick resonant
Rod Morgenstein Signature	9.9		coated		snare & tom batter, light coating
Standard Snare	3		clear, (hazy 14)		snare side
REMO					
Ambassador	10		white, clear, coated		general batter, tom & kick resonant
Ambassador Snare Side	3		clear, hazy		snare side
CS Controlled Sound	10		clear, white	black, white, or clear dot	snare, tom, & kick batter
CS Controlled Sound Coated	10		coated	bottom or top dot	snare batter
Diplomat	7.5		white, clear, coated		tom resonant, light snare & tom batter
Diplomat M5	5		clear		very light snare batter
Diplomat Snare Side	2		hazy		snare side
Ebony Ambassador	10		black		general batter, tom & kick resonant
Ebony Pinstripe	10	5	black		snare, tom, & kick batter
Emperor	7	7	white, clear, coated		general snare, tom, & kick batter
Emperor Snare Side	5		hazy		heavy snare side
Falams II	6.5	12+1	white, coated, neutral, black	opt. dot	ultra-strong snare batter, woven Kevlar film
Falams Snare Side	3.5	3	white		woven Kevlar film
FiberSkyn 3 FI	14		synthetic calf		snare & tom batter
FiberSkyn 3 FA	10		synthetic calf		general batter & resonant
FiberSkyn 3 FD	7.5		synthetic calf		light snare batter, tom & kick batter & resonant
FiberSkyn 3 FT	5		synthetic calf		extra-light snare & tom batter, tom resonant
Graphics	14.5		any color/design		kick resonant with standard & custom graphics
Pinstripe	7	7	clear, coated	adhesive ring	general batter, kick resonant
Powerstroke 3	10		clear, coated, Renaissance, Ebony	ring, opt. dot	general batter & resonant
Powerstroke 3 Coated Dot	10		coated	ring, coated dot	snare batter
Powerstroke 3/Fiberskyn 3 FA	10		synthetic calf	ring	general batter, kick resonant
Powerstroke 3/Fiberskyn 3 FD	7.5		synthetic calf	ring	general batter, kick resonant
Renaissance Ambassador	10		synthetic calf		general batter, kick & tom resonant
Renaissance Diplomat	7.5		synthetic calf		general batter, kick & tom resonant
Renaissance Emperor	7	7	synthetic calf		general batter, kick & tom resonant
Renaissance Snare Side	3		synthetic calf		snare side

General Tuning

Just as you possess a comfortable vocal range, every drum has a range within which it sounds most resonant and truest to its character. A drum's character is determined by the shell's diameter, depth, and thickness, as well as the mass and density of the wood and the shape of the bearing edge. Although some drummers deliberately stray from this optimal range to emphasize some sound properties over others (see the head tension chart), most today seek to exploit it, to a degree letting each drum tune itself. Here's how to do it:

Muffle the top head by placing the upside-down drum on a carpeted floor, pillow, or drum throne. Loosen the bottom head until the rods no longer touch the counterhoop. Then re-tighten each until it just touches the rim. Tighten one lug a turn or two, then move to the lug on the opposite side of the drum and tighten it equally. Follow the same tightening sequence as previously described. Continue tightening the key rods in the same pattern, tapping your stick or drumkey about an inch in from each rod until the head begins to produce a tone, and eventually a discernable pitch.

Return to the first lug. While continuing to tap at that point, loosen the key rod until the head stops resonating, then tighten it again just until the tone returns. When you've done this at all of the lugs, you will have arrived at the lowest uniform tuning with that particular head on that particular drum. (Obviously different-sized drums will have different pitch ranges, but so too will different types of drumheads.) All this tightening and loosening may seem tedious, but it's a foolproof way to zero in on uniform tuning



HEAD TENSION

	Loose	Moderate	Tight
Pitch	low	moderate	high
Tone Color	dark	moderate	bright
Sustain	short	long	long
Articulation	round	moderate	sharp
Projection	near	moderate	far

across the head. Now is a good time to start documenting the results of all that work by comparing the drum's pitch with a pitch reference instrument such as a tuner or piano. Yes, it's extra work. But you'll probably only have to do this once (or very rarely), and it could save you a whole bag o' time and frustration down the road, so bite the bullet, note the pitch, and write it down.

Now turn the drum over so that the bottom head is muffled. Repeat the above procedure on the top head. The drum is now at its *fundamental* pitch, the lowest, loudest sustained note it will produce with that head combination.

Return the drum to its stand or mount. Using the same sequence, tighten each of the batter-head tuning rods slightly until the drum's

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overall pitch is perhaps a half-step higher. Now play the drum at different dynamics, noting its harmonic richness, sustain, projection, and attack definition. Continue tightening a half step at a time. Decide whether each combination between top and bottom head tensions are complementary or "sour." When they all begin to sound bad, loosen the top head back to its base pitch and try tuning the bottom head up a half step. Then again try different top-head tensions with that slightly higher bottom-head pitch. Of course, as the bottom head pitch is raised, you will have more possible pitch combinations, since you can begin to also try tuning the batter head *lower* than the bottom head. Continue listening and writing down pitch combinations and your evaluation of them.

What a pain in the rear! I hear you. But relax. The effective tuning range of each drum is relatively small, so you won't be tweaking your drums forever. Documenting your efforts once will save you from revisiting unsatisfactory combinations in the future. The goal is to be able to slap on a head, consult your tuning reference, and head straight for the promised land of a perfectly tuned drum. Here's an example of the kind of notes you might want to make:

12" Tom — Tuning 1

Top—Fiberskyn3single-ply—Bflat

Bottom—clear—D

Comments—bright, ringy, good for bop
(may need to muffle for small room)

12" Tom — Tuning 2

Top—coated Thin Skin-2 double-ply—G

Bottom—Thin Skin-1—G

Comments—beefy!, bit of flap, great resonance when
you really smack it

By noting non-preferred sounds as well as killer ones, you will create a reference for future gigs or the producer who tells you, "I'm not sure what I want, but that's not it," or "more blue, less purple." Instead of having to guess at a very anxious moment, you will know exactly how to achieve different kinds of sounds.

Understanding your drums' optimal tuning ranges can help you achieve your tuning goals, but adhering to them, again, is a matter of choice. Sometimes pushing a drum to extremes is precisely what makes it special. Cranking a snare drum up beyond its optimum resonance to make it "ping," or a small tom to make it "bark" or simulate a timbale, or loosening a floor tom head to the point of wrinkling to make it "growl" may be effects that suit your taste or musical needs. Go crazy. Experiment.

Uniform Vs. Varied Lug Tensioning

Uniform lug tension produces the fullest tone and greatest volume and sustain, but some drummers prefer to detune a lug or two on the batter head, usually the ones farthest from the playing area. This lowers the drum's pitch, reduces ring, adds harmonic complexity that exaggerates pitch bend, and helps eliminate harmonic interaction between drums. It also decreases volume and sustain. Non-complementary lug tensions, particularly when the overall tuning is tight, result in a "sour"-sounding drum. Detuning a bottom head lug also can help eliminate harmonic interaction, and loosening the lugs nearest the snare bed on the bottom snare head a little can help reduce snare buzz caused by interaction with adjacent toms.

Specific Drum Tuning And Tuning Relationships

One area of drum sound interaction that is commonly neglected is the relationship between the tension of a drum's batter head and resonant head. "Many drummers grab their key and go for the top head and try to do all the tuning there as if the drum has no bottom head," says Craig Randall. "There's a working relationship between the heads that creates the overall drum sound. I work with one drummer who uses very small toms. But because he really knows which heads to use, and how to tune both the top and bottom heads, the drums end up sounding huge."

Similarly, even drummers who dutifully replace worn batter heads often forget or put off replacing their resonant heads. If you find yourself fighting to produce a good drum sound, try buying—and conscientiously *tuning*—the tom or snare's bottom head or the bass drum's front head.

There are three basic variations of relative tensioning between batter and resonant heads: both heads the same, batter head tighter, and batter head looser. These combinations yield somewhat reliable results. (See the relative tension chart on the following page.) Remember to adjust for differences in head type and weight, muffling, etc. As you decide how you want each drum to sound, keep in mind its role in the larger context of the entire set. The key, as before, is *interaction*.

Kick: Many of today's drummers seek a bass drum sound that is full and resonant, yet focused and articulate. These objectives, seemingly at odds, have been realized courtesy of some great dampened bass drum head designs—Aquarian's Super-Kick I, Attack's No Overtone, Remo's Powerstroke 3, Evans' EQ series, and Premier's Matchedplay—that eliminate the need for sometimes tricky and self-defeating muffling.

As with any drum, deviation from the kick shell's fundamental pitch will diminish volume, tone, and sustain. Nevertheless, more drummers relinquish optimization of these qualities in the kick for a lower pitch and greater attack definition. A typical approach is to loosen the batter head a little, even to the point of causing it to wrinkle. Even without muffling, this will reduce ring and interaction between the heads while producing the attack character commonly referred to as "punchy."

Snare drum: "In the '80s they whipped a big gated reverb on the kit to make it sound as crazy as possible, or added some white noise to the snare," says Craig Randall. "Today there's a trend toward hearing what I call the 'boing' in the snare. That 'after-tone' used to be muffled or gated out, but now it's part of the more natural sound. If you don't like the boing, the engineer can take it out later with gating or EQ. But although it can be emphasized by boosting certain frequencies, it can't be re-created if you've tuned or muffled it out from the beginning. Starting out with things as 'live' as possible will leave more options open later on. Let the drums sing and ring."

Much of today's pop music calls for rimshot "crack" that'll drop a charging bull to its knees at twenty paces. To achieve this, both heads should be at least moderately tight. As KoRn's David Silveria says, "It's gotta pop!" Because bottom head tension determines the response of the snares, moderate to tight snare tension and a tightly tuned bottom head produce a fast, crisp sound. A looser bottom head with loose or moderate snare tension results in

a mushy, more "spread out" sound. A very loose top head is great for some funk and fatback, but it will definitely put some molasses on your stick response. And because a loosely tuned snare drum's attack and pitch are less distinct from those of other instruments in the band, it will more likely need to be miked.

Snare buzz: Sometimes we get a little nuts. We prize and pay good money for hyper-sensitive snare response, yet we have kit-tens when the sound from other drums within the kit or other instruments (commonly electric basses) makes the snares "buzz." Assuming that your snare wires and snare beds are not defective, there's little you can do to prevent this short of physically isolating the drum from amplified instruments. You have a little more control over toms, whose frequencies can "set off the snares. First identify the offending tom. Try changing its position. Then try raising or lowering its pitch to a non-sympathetic note. Then count to ten and forget about it. Chances are good that in live situations the buzz won't be heard above the sound of other drums and instruments anyway.

Toms: The intrinsic harmonic complexity of a cylinder with vibrating membranes at both ends tends to obscure exact musical pitches. Still, careful matching of top and bottom heads' fundamental pitches and strategic overtone damping will yield recognizable notes. While such notes may sound pleasantly "melodic" in one key, they may sound quite out of place in another, creating dissonance between a drum and other instruments in the band. (Consider that

good triangles are designed *not* to produce a distinct pitch to avoid conflicting with other instruments in the orchestra.) This is not to say you shouldn't try to achieve recognizable notes, but do be aware of the possible "side effects."

Toms' fundamental pitches can be tuned in various combinations of minor or major thirds and perfect fourths. Drummer/author/educator Steve Houghton recalls discovering that Mel Lewis's great-sounding drums were tuned (probably unintentionally) to a second inversion B-flat triad—floor tom, F; middle tom, B-flat; high tom, D. (His snare was tuned to an E-flat, a half step above the high tom.)

No one has pushed the concept of melodic drumming as far as Terry Bozzio. His use of *many* drums allows him to exploit distinct pitches without conflicting with the melody and harmony of the music he plays. To give you an idea of the possibilities within this largely unexplored area of drum tuning, here are a few concepts drawn from "Terry's Tuning Tips," a brochure and video produced by Attack Drumheads.

RELATIVE TENSION

Both Heads The Same

Maximizes volume, sustain, and tonal richness if within drum's optimum pitch range. Articulation and stick response moderate.

Top Head Tighter

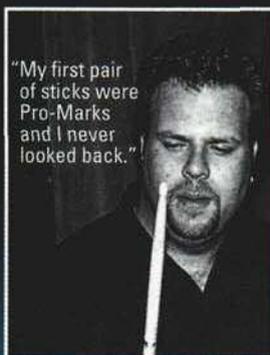
Allows deeper sound without compromising stick response, Promotes good articulation and slight pitch bend if overall tuning isn't too tight.

Top Head Looser

Emphasizes attack and projection. Promotes pitch bend if overall tuning isn't too tight.

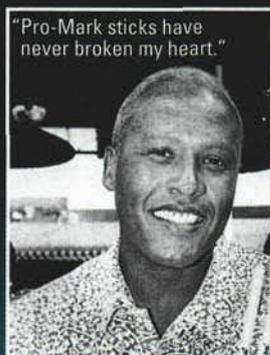
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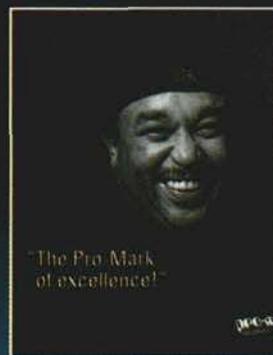
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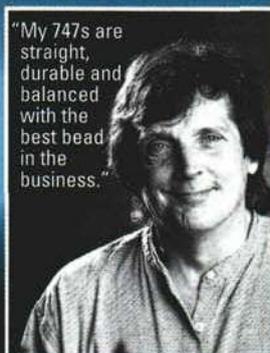
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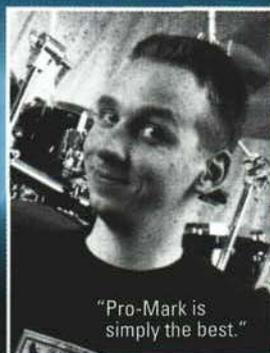
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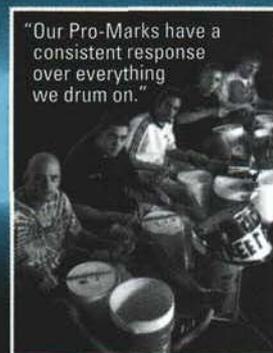
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Terry tunes his lower toms to perfect 4ths "because it is a wide interval resulting in good pitch differentiation between low thunderous drums, and it doesn't lock you into a specific triadic tonality. I don't like hearing the sound of the bugle call in one redundant key every time I go up and down my toms!" He also tunes his two 22" bass drums about a minor third apart, an interval he feels is large enough to differentiate the two drums, but "not so great as to make their character unequal."

As you can see, different drummers have very different ideas about the "melodic" role of their drums within the larger context of the music they play. But however their drums' pitches relate, most drummers seek consistency among the toms' other sound properties. One tom should sound as bright or mellow, sharp or round, dry or ringy as the others. The exception of course is when a tom is used as an effect, or to simulate another instrument, such as a timbale, timpani, or concert bass drum. In such a case its character should be distinct from the "tom group," and suggestive of the instrument it is simulating.

Drum Sounds Of Myth And Studio Magic

Over the past decade, the chasm between recorded drum sounds and the way drums *really* sound has narrowed in pop music styles where it had once been immense. To a degree, "larger-than-life" drums have slipped from vogue, giving way to tighter, more intimate resonance and ring. However, there is still a good deal of signal processing ("sweetening") being applied by recording engineers that is simply impossible to recreate acoustically. If you're miking and have the fancy processing gear, fine. Otherwise, set realistic goals for how your drums can sound, diligently go about

achieving them—and try not to make yourself crazy about the rest.

Going The Distance

Projection of unamplified drum sound is affected by a number of "external" factors, including the size and shape of the room, the acoustic properties of its surfaces, and how many people are in it. Except when played in very small, acoustically live rooms, unmiked drums will sound significantly different to the audience from how they sound to you. This raises a question: "Do I tune for myself and the band, or for the audience?"

Some drummers strive for fat- and punchy-sounding kits in practice and rehearsal situations for three perfectly valid reasons. First, this tuning may sound more like most of their favorite recordings. Second, being somewhat "quieter," it reduces ear fatigue. Third, it maximizes attack definition, which facilitates analysis and mastery of their hard-learned Uzi fills. Problems arise, however, when drummers and their bandmates grow accustomed to this sound, and carry it over wholly or in part to unmiked performance situations. Depending on stage volume, the drums may even sound okay to the drummer and the band. But what sounds dry on stage is usually dead on arrival fifteen or twenty feet away. Conversely, drums that seem "noisy" and poorly defined usually project a more musical sound out to the second row and beyond. Like snare buzz, much of the offending ring will be buried by the overall sound of the band, and in all but the most acoustically reflective rooms, the higher drum frequencies won't survive the trip to the audience.

For the benefit of all, familiarize your own ears and the ears of your band with the tuning that will sound good to the audience in

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Mickey Dee, (r) drummer for Motorhead backstage with West L.A. Music Drum Manager Glenn.	Shelly Manne, the late legendary jazz drummer, in an archive photo at West L.A. Music.	Trilok Gurtu (r) after a music clinic at West L.A. Music, talking with Drum Manager Glenn Noyes.

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venues you play. If you're playing a style that calls for low-pitched, mushy, or muffled drums (or you just *like* that sound) and you're not playing in a low-volume room, use mic's. Whenever possible, stand in the middle of the room during soundcheck and have someone—preferably a drummer—play your kit *while your band is playing*. Then factor in the room noise and additional acoustic absorbency of the cheering fans and hit-hungry producers you're expecting. It's largely for them, after all, that you even *care* how the drums sound.

Shells, Hoops, And Hardware

While the vibration of the drumhead actually produces the sound, the shell gives that sound its character. Shell dimensions and thickness, wood (or metal) type, and bearing-edge angle all have a dramatic and often defining effect on the sound the drum produces. Because the bearing edges are the points from which head vibration is transferred to the shell, their evenness, discussed earlier, is of utmost importance.

Rims: Because die-cast rims are thicker and more rigid, they will more likely expose imperfections in the bearing edge. Conversely, standard stamped and pressed flanged rims, which are about 1.5 to 2.3 millimeters thick and less rigid, are more forgiving of minor flaws. Unfortunately, quality control of flanged hoops is not what it might be. Many are not perfectly round, and the ridge that sits upon the drumhead collar is often not perfectly flat. Well-made flanged hoops produce a wide, open sound. Die-cast hoops, which seem to enjoy better quality control, will yield a drier sound with a little less sustain, but with a sharper attack.

Hardware: For years, Gary Gauger's R.I.M.S. Resonance Isolation Mounting System was the only product designed to minimize inhibition of tom shell resonance. But in the last decade, several manufacturers have introduced their own versions, and since the patent on the original R.I.M.S. expired, you can't swing a dead cat without hitting some type of resonance isolation mount. The reason for this proliferation is simple: They make toms sound better. Drummers who are dissatisfied with the sound of their non-"suspended" toms should consider adding some kind of isolation mounting system. But be aware that they can't work miracles with

truly doggy drums. So before making the investment, get an idea of how much they'll improve your tom sound by striking each tom while suspending it in the air between a thumb and forefinger. Listen for improved sustain, particularly in the low frequencies.

Lugs should be tightly screwed to the shell. Spring-type tension casings should be packed with felt or foam rubber to eliminate rattles.

Muffling

So far we've focused on maximizing the volume and resonance of your drums. But there may be situations where you will want to reduce their total volume or particular frequencies. While almost none of the drummers on the Celebrity Tuning Profiles list use any muffling on their toms, some muffle their snares and kicks, especially in the studio. But before you stock up on duct tape, consider the following suggestions.

Start with the right head. Many of today's drumheads have damping rings or other design features that diminish high overtones, thus making further muffling unnecessary. But remember, while you can always muffle a drum with "live" heads, you can't restore resonance suppressed by "deader" ones, so when in doubt about the requirements of a particular gig, err on the side of resonant. (Leave yourself some headroom, as it were.)

Always tune first. Because muffling accentuates some frequencies by attenuating others, a muffled drum may seem to be "in tune," yet not yielding its best possible tone. Make any pitch adjustments before the muffling is in place. Also, at least experiment with eliminating high overtones on toms by detuning one lug.

Experiment. If you want to muffle the sound of your drums, try different combinations of heads and muffling materials. For toms, because you'll probably want them all to have similar tone at their respective pitches, experiment on only one to avoid spending a fortune on entire sets of several head types and muffling devices. With a "location-specific" device, experiment with its position on the head, especially its distance from the rim. It's a good idea to record the drum you're experimenting with at a single pitch, verbally indexing the name and each position of the device, such as "Moongel, one o'clock, half inch from rim; one o'clock, one inch from rim," then start over with different muffling materials.

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Finally, try each device with different top/bottom head combinations.

Methods of muffling have changed over the years. Internal mufflers that press upward against the batter head and distort the natural motion and pitch of the head have joined Trixon "squashed" bass drums and Ludwig Spiral Vistalite shells in drum-dom's pantheon of charming but ill-conceived gear. If your drums still have them, you should probably remove them to avoid the shake, rattle, and buzz they're prone to produce.

Gaffer's tape or duct tape, used alone or with a piece of cloth, tissue, or toilet paper, is a perennial favorite, because it is cheap, positionable on the head, adjustable in surface area and depth/weight of padding, and sticks reliably under most climatic and playing conditions. Some drummers stretch the tape between the head and counterhoop to "anchor" the head to further restrict its vibration. Analogous commercial products include R-Tom's Moongel and Percussive Innovations' Flop Spots and Tone Control Dots.

Another way to eliminate unwanted overtones is to place a ring, or "donut," cut from an old drumhead upon the batter head. (There are also several pre-cut products available commercially.) The ring should be cut from the outermost circumference of the *flat* part of the old head; rings that include any of the collar's curve will buzz. Narrow rings (3/4" to 1") muffle less than wide ones (1 1/2" to 2"). Similarly, half- or quarter-ring sections cut from the donut's circumference allow more of the drum's full range, volume, and sustain to come through. Remo *Muff'ls* take the muffling further by pressing a foam rubber ring, or, for a really dead sound, disk against the inside surface of top or bottom heads. The foam is held in place with a plastic tray that fits between the counterhoop and shell.

For the bass drum, a felt strip used to be the norm. Lately, as drummers have become more aware of the importance of the drumhead's even contact with the bearing edge, they have given way to other approaches. Use of pillows has waned a bit in live playing situations, as many drummers have returned to a fuller, somewhat more sustained sound, but it is still commonplace in the studio. DW's Pro Cushion performs the same function, but because it attaches to the inner shell, it can be more securely posi-

tioned. Evans' EQ Pad features a patented nylon "hinge" mechanism that allows the pad to bounce off the head in proportion to the playing dynamic. Other "homemade" variations on the pillow theme include whole or partial packing blankets laid in the bottom of the kick, and rolled towels that just touch one or both heads, or that are duct-taped to the batter head.

Moleskin (ironically often purchased as Dr. Scholl's foot pads) and numerous commercially produced pads and patches are used less for their effect on sound than for their protection of the bass drum batter head at the point of beater contact.

An Ounce Of Experimentation, A Pound Of Sure

All our talk about the importance of experimentation with different heads and tuning comes with a proviso from Craig Randall: "Unless you have really deep pockets for studio time, do your experimenting at home, not when you're under the gun at a session or an important gig," he warns. "Don't come in with heads you're not used to or an untested tuning. Make sure you know what 'your' sound is—your own starting point—so you can give the engineer or the producer something to go on. Your starting point should be what you know and are comfortable with. The difference between a pro and a non-pro is preparedness."

In a way, tuning is all *about* preparing—preparing to make the best music you can, whether you're in a concert arena or local club, a recording studio or your bandmate's garage. If you get a handle on the sound of your drums on your own time, the people you work with will appreciate the time that you don't waste, as well as the way your drum sound makes "their" music sound better. Finding that handle isn't hard, but it *is* really important—to the enjoyment you feel when practicing and performing, and ultimately to your success as a musician.

For more information, check out *Drum Tuning Sound And Design*, the excellent DCI video by drummer/inventor Bob Gatzen, as well as the aforementioned "Terry's Tuning Tips" brochure and video, available from Attack Drumhead dealers and directly from Universal Percussion at (800) 282-0110.



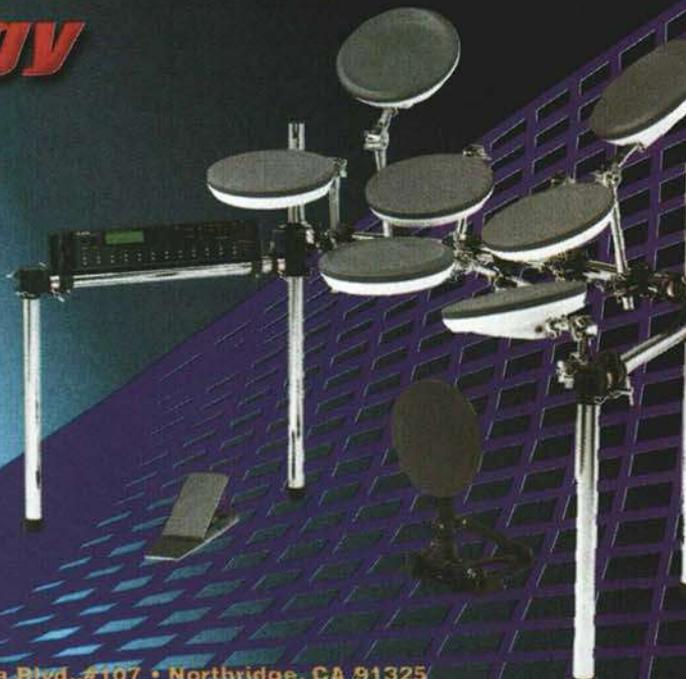
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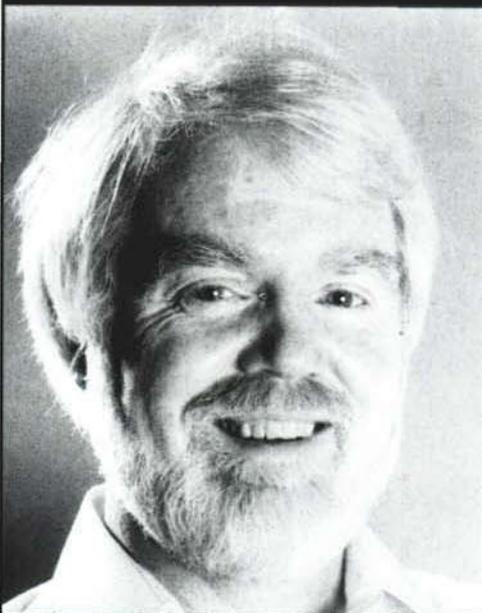
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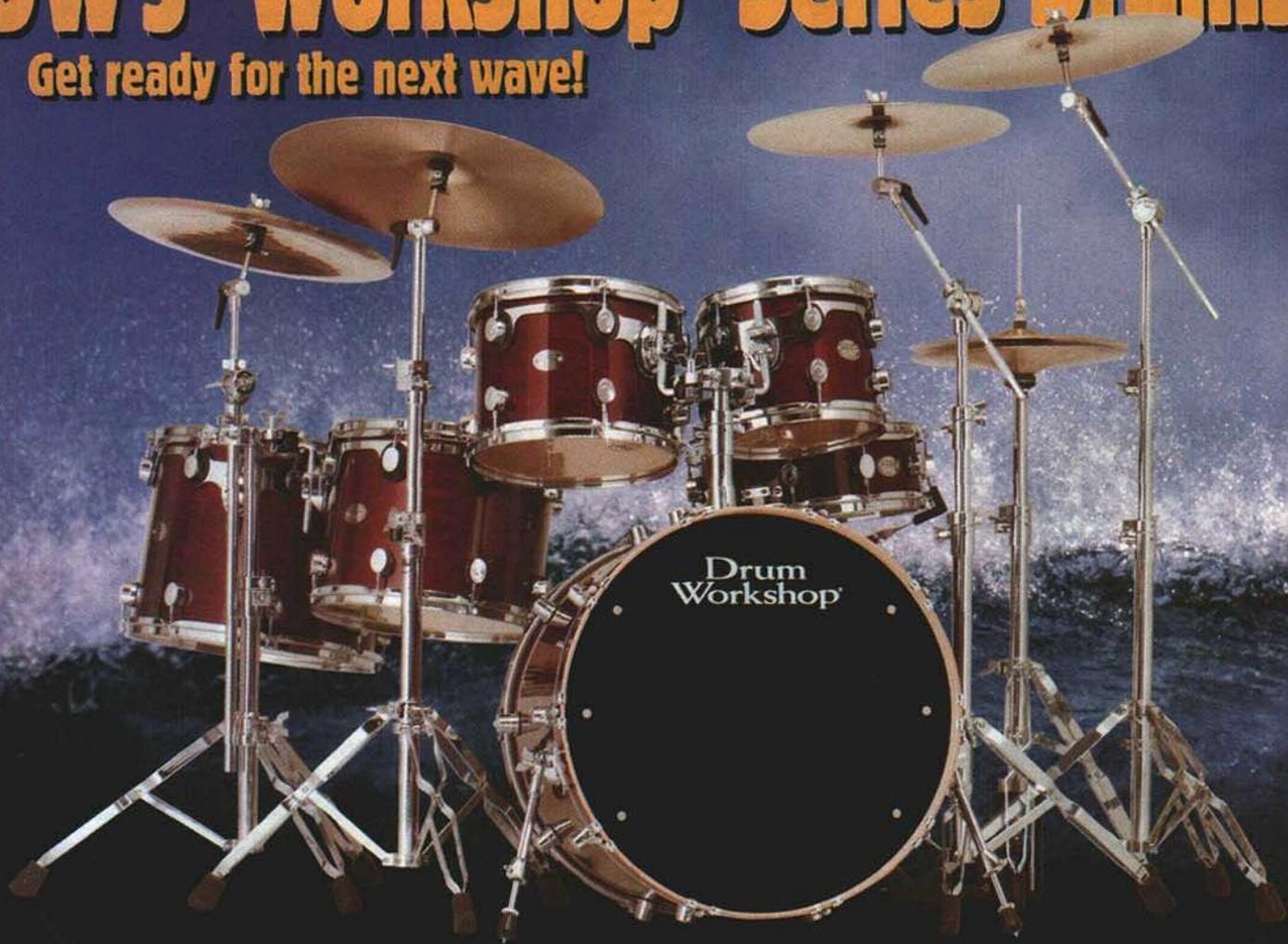
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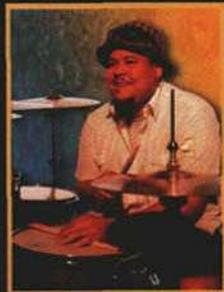
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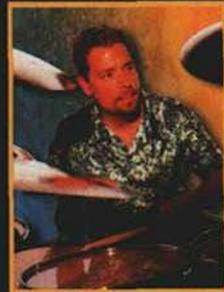
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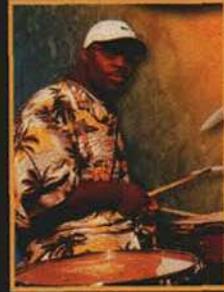
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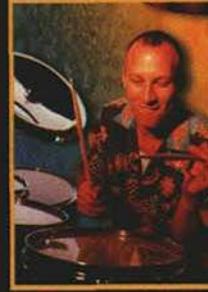
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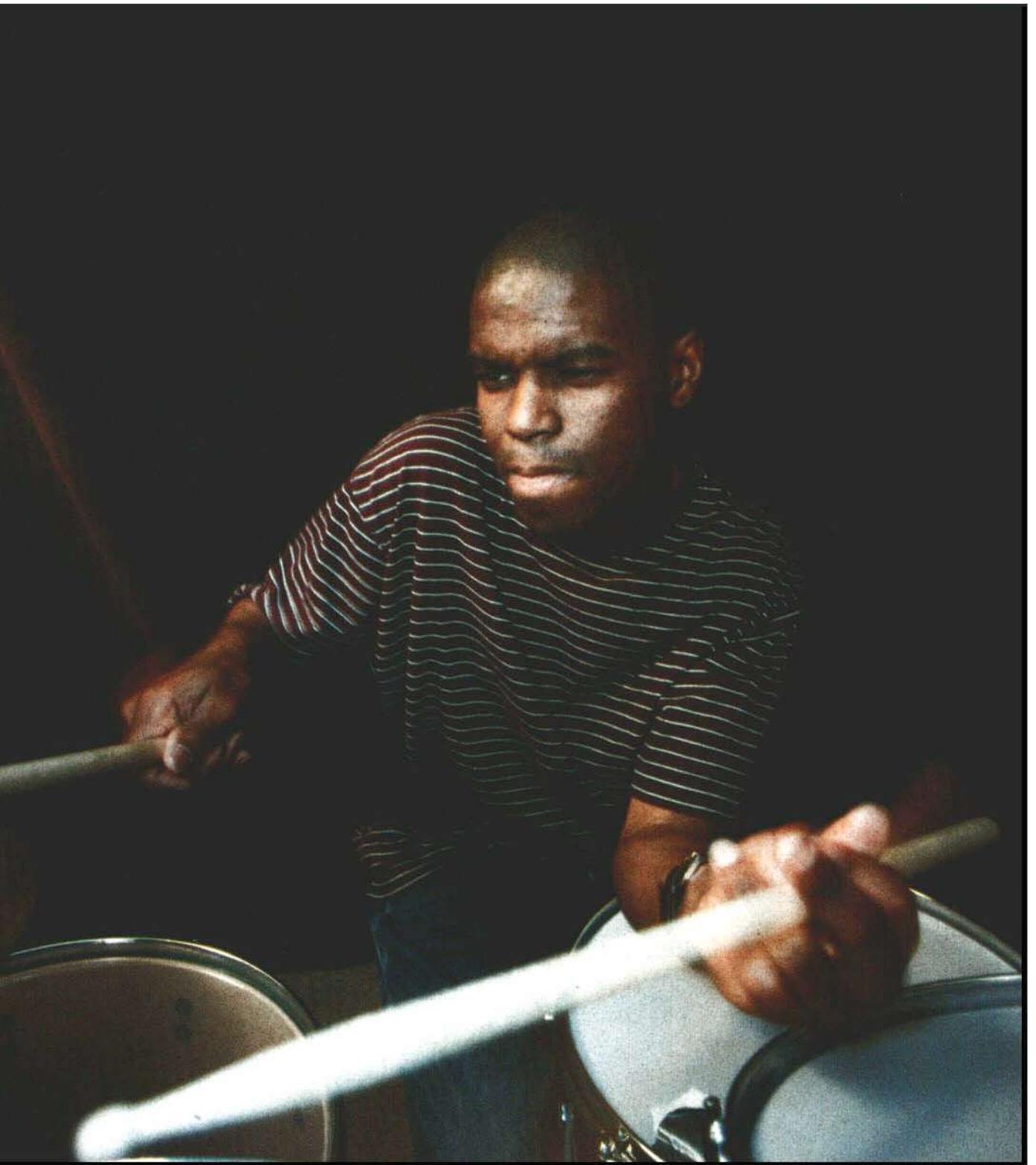
Rodney Holmes knows the way life should be on the road. With Santana, the thirty-two-year-old drummer gets royal treatment. He travels in planes or those glossy rock 'n' roll coaches equipped with videos and lounges. When he gets there, it's single rooms in swanky hotels.

Searching for Rodney's room in one such establishment, I became frustrated. Some fine hotels have these elegant alcoves with night tables interrupting the sequence of rooms—914, 916, 918. But where was 920? Then I heard the *ticking*, a sound we drummers know better than numerals or the languages of men. Relieved, I walked in the direction of the sound. Moments later, Rodney Holmes answered my knock, sticks in hand, rubber pad on king-sized bed.

I asked Rodney about the pattern I had heard clearly through the walls. It was a paradiddle-like phrase that he worked up to killer speed. It made musical sense—even from down the hall. This is important when you're playing stadiums. If you're going to get fancy, you have to make sure that every note is dead-on. Otherwise, your fills won't travel past the first row.

Let's be clear about this. With Rodney Holmes, we're talking *serious* chops—the kind of chops that could easily degenerate into blither: all speed, no substance. Yet Rodney places notes and sounds with an artist's touch.





For a guy who can wow a roomful of drummers, Rodney exercises admirable restraint with Santana. Mind you, it's not *all* restraint. He gets a long solo most nights and opportunities for fills left and right. Those fills keep getting more inventive, even six years after he did his first gigs with Carlos Santana. (At points during that association, Holmes has taken long "vacations" to work with The Brecker Brothers, Wayne Shorter, and Joe Zawinul.)

Fills are a Rodney Holmes specialty. He'll do odd groupings—for example, a six over four, drawing from Indian music—and rapid-fire bursts around the toms. Then he'll summon his trademark pattern: super-quick alternating strokes between bass drum and low tom. Once he gets it going, he can toss it anywhere he wants, vary the speed, and play anything over the top with his other limbs—*crazy*.

And although he can do all this stupid-fast without stumbling, it's how this drummer harnesses his chops that is so impressive. Raul Rekow, longtime percussionist for Santana, pays the ultimate compliment: "Rodney Holmes is one of the most underrated drummers in the world. When you list the top drummers, he's in there, man—and I mean the *top five* drummers!"

To see Rodney in his full glory, you have to check out The Hermanators, featuring Mitch Stein on guitar and Kip Reed on bass. On their CD *Twisted* (available at www.monsterislandrecords.com/hermanators), there are precious few overdubs and punches. In the sparse trio format, you hear every nuance of Rodney's drumming. There are at least three good solo spots that will give you homework for months. More important to Rodney, by the second listen, you'll be humming the melodies.

Anyway, back to the hotel room and that *ticking*. To me, Rodney's sticks seemed abnormally large, at least proportionate to his hand size and those nimble patterns, and I told him so.

RH: I endorse Zildjian sticks, and I've been experimenting with these—their Superstrokes. For the longest time, I wanted to use something a little smaller. It's actually a little thinner than a 5B, but the shoulder of the stick remains thicker further up the stick, whereas a 5B gets smaller sooner and has a bigger tip. This one gives the illusion of a bigger stick.

TBW: From the way your hands move, I'm presuming you've been drumming for a long time.

RH: I started when I was nine years old, in fourth grade. I had three passions: a love of drawing, collecting comics, and a fascination with records, music, and drums. The music around the house was Parliament Funkadelic, Earth, Wind & Fire, BT Express, and The Ohio Players. My father also had a lot of Miles Davis, Max Roach, and Art Blakey. It wasn't until later that I discovered Tony Williams. Those first few years I was hearing all these kinds of music, not realizing that they were categorized. Growing up, you think this is all one thing. On radio back then, they would play different kinds of things: I could hear Earth, Wind & Fire and Led Zeppelin on the same station. When I finally got a drumset at age ten, these were the records I would play to.

My first teacher in music class, Mitch White, could play every instrument. He was great. He taught me to read music and how to hold the sticks, and he gave me

books on rudiments, note values, and charts. I went from the junior band through to senior band.

TBW: I don't know if that fully explains your incredible technique. Did you get any outside instruction?

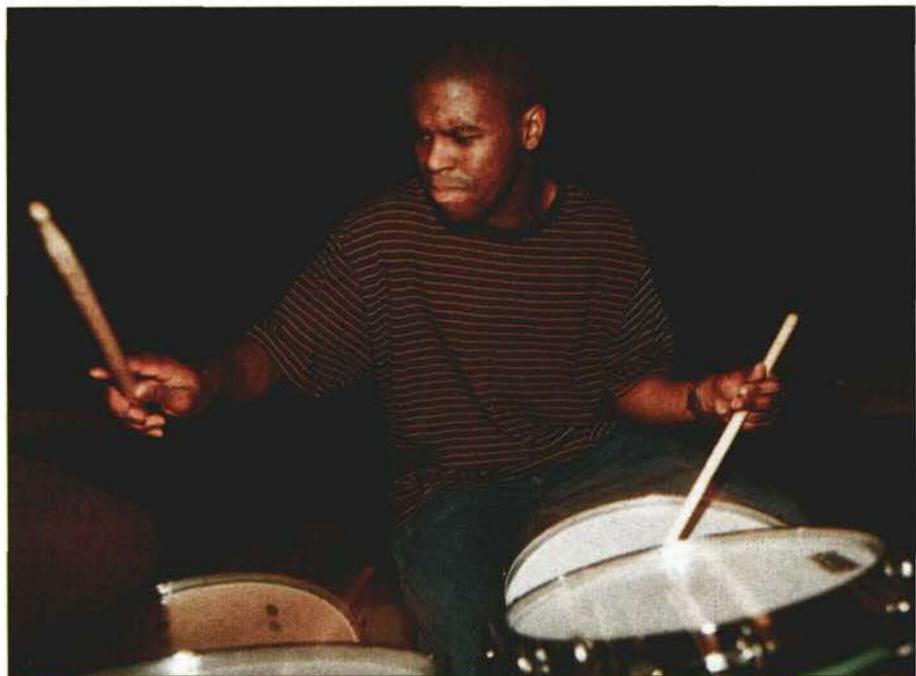
RH: A little bit. Our family moved from New York State to Georgia: *That* was a huge culture shock! The good thing about living down there is that they were really big on marching bands. So I joined the high school marching band. I had never played that style. In a marching band, you

have to *wear* the drum and learn how to march. The stickings are really "open." I would start on the wrong foot. The music teacher used to kid me: "Mr. Holmes, have you ever been in a marching band before?" Of course, I hadn't!

TBW: Because you were starting late in the scheme of things.

RH: Right. I was about fifteen. I tried out for the All-State Band that year. I had some problems reading the figures. The person who auditioned me told me that I was a great drummer but that I didn't make

"People were saying you should either be a jazz drummer or a rock drummer. I grew up believing that it all came from the same place. If I like The Police, why can't I love Miles?"



it because my sight-reading needed work. The other kid who made it didn't play as well, I felt.

I was crushed, but I decided that this wasn't going to happen again. My mother drove me to the next county to this man who helped me with my Sightreading on snare drum. It was fundamental stuff, and I only went twice. He taught me the difference between playing a buzz roll and a clean, open double-stroke roll, where you have to hear every note.

TBW: New York teacher Sam Ulano used to say: "A press roll is not a roll." In other words, you can't buzz or slur. You have to articulate each note.

RH: That's what I learned. As great as my high school teacher was, I didn't have a drummer standing next to me telling me to, you know, accent the *second* note of each pair in a double-stroke roll. It was really up to me to go through books and break a lot of bad habits. There weren't a lot of drum videos in the early '80s.

When I was sixteen, we moved back to New York and things changed. I had decided to do this professionally and to do whatever it took to get better. I had gotten partial scholarships to Berklee and Long Island University, but the *last* thing I wanted to do after high school was go back to school! I couldn't wait to get out of high school. I didn't really fit in, and it was an oppressive environment. Although I could have gone to a music school, I didn't want to find myself in a situation where I had to deal with competitive kids. I wanted to get into the real world, playing with people who weren't my age—and who thought they knew everything—and go out there and *be me*.

TBW: With minimal private instruction, how did you get to your level of technique—by emulating great drummers?

RH: You know what it is? By that time, there was a lot of information out there: books and videos. I made up for lost time and listened to everything I could get my hands on. When I was eighteen, I heard Tony Williams for the first time and it opened me up. He was the first jazz drummer I heard who wasn't afraid to *rock* really hard. There was a dichotomy: People were saying you should either be a jazz drummer or a rock drummer, whereas I grew up believing that it all came from the *same* place. If I like The Police, why can't I love Miles? I mean, what is *that*? When I heard



Tony, he confirmed all those ideas. Just hearing him play and discovering all those eras of Miles Davis's music was helpful.

TBW: I recently saw a black & white video of Tony playing with Miles around 1967. Tony was really hitting hard! He was crossing that boundary already, whereas I had assumed he didn't do that until his group Lifetime in the '70s.

RH: Actually, I was hearing that on *Four And More* [1964]. Even Art Blakey, when he was swinging hard, implied a backbeat! I finally got to see Tony in a trio reunion tour—with Ron Carter and Herbie Hancock at the Village Vanguard. I was eighteen and was already a fan. *Believe It!* is still one of my all-time favorite records.

I loved Stewart Copeland's playing too. Also Steve Gadd—mainly, I think, because I was such a huge fan of Max Roach. I know they're two completely different

drummers, but I remember Max taking these solos with triplet-type patterns between the toms and the foot. He was the first person I ever heard do that. Later on, I heard Billy Cobham.

I think my perspective on jazz was colored by the contemporary, electric stuff I was listening to in the 1980s, always assuming that the time had to be perfect....

TBW: ...which is a reflection of that era and drum machines.

RH: Exactly, and later on, having to play with a click track on recordings. Unlike most people, I didn't come to the conclusion that in order to be funky you had to be sloppy. Some of the most grooving things I ever heard were as clean as a whistle. There's a difference between clinical/cold and precise.

TBW: Were you able to discover particular areas where drummers sounded "unclean"

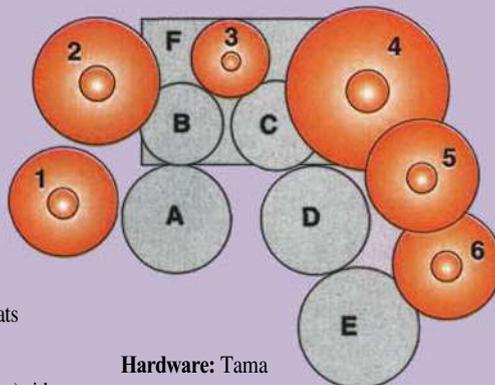
Rodney's Rig

Drums: Tama Starclassic

- A. 5 1/2x14 maple snare
- B. 8x10 tom
- C. 8x12 tom
- D. 14x14 floor tom
- E. 16x16 floor tom
- F. 18x22 kick (or 16x18)

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 14" Soundmaster (or New Beat) hi-hats
- 2. 17" A Custom Projection crash
- 3. 9" Oriental Trash splash
- 4. 22" K Custom Dark (or K Custom Dry) ride
- 5. 15" A Custom Projection crash
- 6. 14" Oriental Trash crash



Hardware: Tama

Sticks: Zildjian Superstroke or 5B model with wood tip



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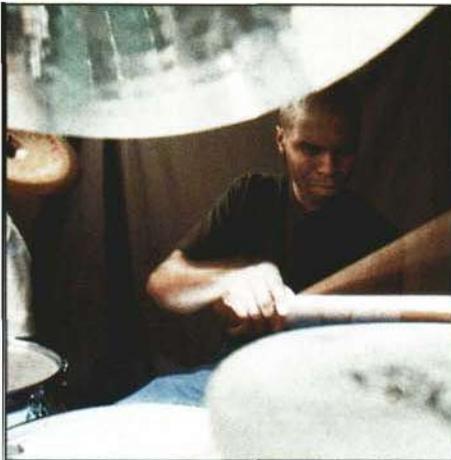
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and zero in on those areas in your practicing?

RH: Not until later, but that was okay. If I felt that a drummer was inspired, it didn't matter if the time drifted. But for *me*, I wanted the spacing between the notes to be as correct as possible. Sometimes later when I practiced with a click, I would want to execute things I was hearing—things that, as far as I knew, people normally wouldn't try with a click. They would play it safe. I never wanted to feel handcuffed like that.

TBW: Like you were stretching the time just to accommodate your licks?

RH: Right. If I did something that was on the edge, I wanted to make sure I knew exactly where I was in the bar and have control over the spacing between the notes. I didn't want to be inhibited by the mechanics.



At one point I was concentrating on "rhythm scales," like in Eastern music. With tabla, they would play a rhythmic phrase over a bar of four beats. [Demonstrates six beats on coffee table over four beats tapped with foot on rug.] Like on The Hermanators' tune "Man With Three Eyes": The song is in 7/8 and was inspired by an episode of *The Twilight Zone*. I wanted to get a contrast between the two sections. One section was very normal, but when it went to the bridge, I shifted the drum part and played dotted 8ths. Instead of shuffling the hi-hat, though, I straightened it out to make it tug and feel weird. With these kinds of things, it has to feel comfortable and natural.

One thing I figured out when I played with a click, or when I was really conscious of the time, was that the spaces between notes were always further apart than I thought! My biggest fear was that stuff would rush. Sometimes I hear people who

over-compensate for that, and then it drags. I had to really work on that and make it feel like I wasn't chasing the click all the time. That spilled over into my playing without clicks.

TBW: Drummers usually mess up during fills. Your fills are so exact and flowing, even when you do weird groups of fives, sixes, or whatever. Are there any secrets?

RH: No, I think it's *concentration*. In the Santana situation, I have to play straighter. In other situations, where I can stretch out, even if the fill is weirder, I always try to think of phrases, not licks. I practice things to the point where I don't have to think about it. Even the things that sound tricky come from a musical phrase.

TBW: I wondered if you played trumpet on account of something in your phrasing.

RH: No, but I'm a huge fan of Miles. I'm also a huge Allan Holdsworth fan; I love his phrasing and the way he gets around the guitar.

TBW: So to summarize, you're thinking in terms of little melodic phrases, and not whether you can rub your stomach and tap your head at the same time. If you play the phrase right, then it's going to fit against the click.

RH: Right. Non-drummers rush all the time because of their phrasing. First I concentrate on subdivisions in a bar and knowing exactly where those notes are. If you don't really know what's going on phrase-wise, another musician may hear what you're doing and assume you're somewhere else in the bar from where you actually are. They end up chasing what you're doing. Because some musicians are used to hearing phrases in a certain way, they may think that you're rushing a fill. When I go to play a phrase, it's clear to other musicians—although some musicians more than others!

TBW: A case in point is a salsa beat where nobody's playing the 1.

RH: And if you don't understand where those phrases start and end, it can be weird! When I was nineteen, I took some lessons with Frankie Malabe. At a time when a lot of people weren't doing it, he was applying those rhythms to drumset. He was a master conga player and understood the essence of those rhythms. That's where I learned a little bit about clave, but not to the same extent as other guys. I wanted to get to the essence of it, then sound like me. Raul [Rekow] paid me the most wonderful com-

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pliment: He said that I was a quinto player in a past life! After that I thought, Maybe I'm doing something right.

TBW: Are certain drums more suited to the way you play, in terms of sizes and tuning? On the Hermanators album, your drums sound as if they're tuned a little looser than with Santana.

RH: I'm definitely going for a sound, and I'm deliberately going for certain drums. The low end of a floor tom or the tone of a 10" tom or the snare are definitely orchestrated. It's like a sax or guitar player: He or she would be going for certain notes. If I want a roll to sound a certain way, instinctively I'll go for certain drums.

Right now I'm using coated heads on top, like the Evans G1 or the Remo Ambassador, with a clear head on the bottom. On the Hermanators CD, it was all clear heads. On three tunes I used clear Ambassadors on top, and for the rest of the tunes clear Evans G1s. I was going for more of a rock sound, but I wanted to have a jazz sensibility. I used one-ply clear heads on everything.

TBW: Funny. To me, it seemed you achieved the wet *two-ply* head sound. How were you tuning?

RH: I tuned the top relatively loose, with maybe the slightest ripple. The bottom heads were tighter to get some pitch bend, and also to get some definition and slap from the top.

TBW: I imagine those hefty Superstroke

sticks would trash the heads pretty quickly. **RH:** In the Santana situation they would trash the heads quickly, so I tune the heads a little tighter. With The Hermanators, it's a trio and there's more space. I don't have to hammer things home, whereas in Santana, there are two percussionists—Raul Rekow and Karl Perazzo. On those big stages, you have to hit harder more often just to get the sound out there.

TBW: What shapes your decision to use your double pedal or leave it at home?

RH: With The Brecker Brothers I thought it added an extra element, especially for people sitting way back. Same with Santana: It's easier to throw things out to huge audiences. Also with The Breckers, we had to play with sequences live and get that mechanical feel sometimes.

But single-pedal playing is closer to my heart. When I first heard records like Mahavishnu, I didn't know they were using two pedals or two bass drums. I would try to imitate what they were doing with one pedal.

TBW: Which includes alternating between the lower tom and bass drum.

RH: Yes, because I thought that was what they might be doing. I would try to do certain things with my single pedal [demonstrates a complex pattern between coffee table and floor].

TBW: When you just did that, it suggested Gadd's tap dance method of rocking heel-to-toe on single pedal.

RH: I can't do that! I couldn't figure out

The Sign of Four. . . And More

Here are the albums that Holmes says best represent his playing:

Artist	Album
Brecker Brothers	Out Of The Loop
Clyde Criner	Behind The Sun
	The Color Of Dark
Leni Stern	Ten Songs
The Hermanators	Twisted
Jane Getter	Jane

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

Artist	Album	Drummer
Bill Bruford	One Of A Kind	Bill Bruford
Tony Williams Lifetime	Believe It!	Tony Williams
Peter Gabriel	So	Manu Katche
Weather Report	Heavy Weather	Alex Acuna
The Police	Ghost In The Machine	Stewart Copeland
Allan Holdsworth	all	various
John Coltrane	My Favorite Things	Elvin Jones
Mahavishnu Orchestra	Birds Of Fire	Billy Cobham
Miles Davis	Four And More	Tony Williams
Chick Corea	Three Quartets	Steve Gadd
Rage Against The Machine	Evil Empire	Brad Wilk

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how to do it, but I discovered a spot on the pedal where I could get the beater to bounce like a basketball. The heel is low to the pedal; it only gets high off the pedal when I'm going for four strokes in a row—loud.

TBW: Is the Tama Iron Cobra pedal good for that, or do you use another pedal with your Tama drums?

RH: I used to use the DW. It's a good pedal and didn't have a bulky footboard. Then Tama came out with the new Iron Cobra. It's very similar, but it's smoother. It didn't require as much effort to work the pedal. I guess they really concentrated on the beater part—it doesn't feel heavy—and the bearings are so smooth.

TBW: Back to Santana, Horacio Hernandez was with them for a while after you started playing with them.

RH: He was with them when I went to work with The Brecker Brothers. I played with Carlos back in 1993, right after I quit Joe Zawinul's band. I also had been working previously with Randy Brecker. The Brecker Brothers got back together, and Randy would tell Michael to call me.

At the beginning of 1994, I was playing with The Hermanators at The Five Spot. Randy came down to see the band. Michael *reluctantly* came down. We played our first set, and after that, Michael was like, "You'd be *perfect* for the band!" The Brecker Brothers were halfway through an album and were having drummer problems. There was one specific tune, "African Skies," that they wanted me to play on. They were worried that it would take a long time to do; there was a sequence involved and some timing things.

It was something I really wanted to do, but it was a hard decision because I was still with Santana. So I talked to Carlos. I explained that it had nothing to do with one being more important than the other, and that I needed to do this at this point in my life—I was twenty-six or twenty-seven—praying that he wouldn't take it personally. He told me that if he had come up the way I did, playing the things I had played, he would have done the same thing.

I went right into the studio and did the Brecker Brothers record. I got a tape and I had four days to check it out. There was a programmed drum part that sounded like there were nine guys playing! I couldn't duplicate it, but I came up with other things. I did it in two takes, and they were totally shocked! They were impressed.

TBW: I'm quoting from my interview notes: "On 'African Skies,' Rodney displays all the qualities of a great drummer—chart reading, nailing shots, inventive fills, clean open and closed hi-hat work exactly in time, good-sounding drums, and no fluffs." I was going to ask you if you punched in [repaired] any parts?

RH: Thank you! No, we didn't punch anything or overdub, and that's where all that preparation I talked about earlier came in useful. I got to do it *all* on a recording. I got to experiment and play what I felt would work. I played with The Brecker Brothers for two years and I learned a lot. It was the first time I didn't tire of being on the road.

Eventually Mike and Randy decided to take a break and do their separate things, and I did a tour with Steps Ahead. At the time, Wayne Shorter had recorded *High Life* and had a band with Will Calhoun, Rachel Z, and David Gilmore. We ran into them in Holland at a big festival. Our band was sounding good by that point and I got a call from someone representing Wayne; they wanted to know if I could send them a tape. I put together a bunch of things, including some live recordings and some demo tapes of The Hermanators. I sent it and forgot about it. The day Wayne got that tape he called me personally! That was wild, getting a call from Wayne Shorter, because he's one of my heroes. So I joined his band. We had a great band and toured in 1996. I regret we didn't have a chance to document that band.

Anyway, things come full circle. Wayne's band played all the festivals, and we shared a bill with Santana at the North Sea Festival. They all came over to see me with Wayne and called the next day. We stayed in touch. I think at that point they were using Horacio as well as another drummer, Ricky Wellman, from Miles' band—and Karl and Raul. But after we saw each other they wanted me back in the band. And when I did get back in the band the lineup was just me and the two percussionists.

TBW: And you've been with The Hermanators all along?

RH: I've known the bass player, Kip Reid, since 1992. He played with Tania Maria and has done a lot of Brazilian gigs. In early 1993, he introduced me to Mitch Stein, the guitar player. We got together in a friend's basement and pulled out some

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standards. The tunes ended up turning into this other kind of electric vibe. Mitch had some tunes he had written. He liked my approach. He booked a gig at this little club and I was so nervous: This was something we had *created*. He made up flyers and listed the band as The Hermanators. I said, "What is this 'Hermanators'?" He told me it was a name he carried over from a band he had with Rachel Z, with Kim Plainfield on drums.

TBW: I was thinking that the music would be sort of "arbitrary"—you know, with all sorts of odd time signatures thrown in. But these are real *songs*.

RH: They're *definitely* songs! We wanted it to sound like a band. People love it. It doesn't sound like this complicated music that's just written for musicians.

TBW: Did you use the same setup for all of the tunes on the *Twisted* album?

RH: It was essentially the same, but on "Sputnik," I used a different set of hi-hats—a 13" set with a K top. The snare sound was different, too: I was using different sticks, 5Bs, and I loosened the snares. We were influenced by Rage Against The Machine records for that one.

TBW: The time feels good—not pushing but sort of on top. What do you make of all these references to "behind the beat" and "on top of the beat"?

RH: I don't know. I relate to how big the spaces between the notes are. I try to put things smack dab in the middle, and it's only when people request me to "pull it back" that I vary. But instead of literally pulling it back, I try to make the spaces bigger. It gives the *illusion* of pulling back.

On "Like A Moose," where there's a swing feel, it's easy to screw around with the spacing. When it's swinging and shuffling like that, you can change the degree to which it shuffles. It could be a matter of taking a note out at times. You know, I think time is time, and it's not as relative as people think it is.

TBW: My favorite song is "Angel." I imagine Richard Tee and Eric Gale grooving, and I think you're playing the ride cymbal I coveted at the Santana soundcheck.

RH: A lot of people like that song. They mixed the ride cymbal a lot dryer on it, and brought the overhead mic's up a little, giving it more of a jazz sound. The ride you liked at the soundcheck is similar, but it's a

K Custom Dry. The one on the record is a K Custom Dark.

TBW: Ordinarily, as we discussed, your snare drum rolls are articulated to perfection. But on "Angel" they're looser and there are little flutters—all intentionally, of course.

RH: I tried to make it sound like a Monk tune, but it was too washy, so I tried to split the difference. I wanted to give it a strong groove but still have it loose and playful.

TBW: On "Arf, She Cried" there's a funky cowbell. What was the influence here?

RH: I think that one has a lot to do with Earth, Wind & Fire and other funky bands that had percussion sections. Before seeing these groups, I didn't realize that percussionists were playing all these extra parts. I'd always try to get that sound on drumset. It got me more into orchestrating. There's a particular bell that I like: the LP Mambo Bell. It reacts quickly to multiple notes, and has a nice tone that blends.

I also like to create grooves with the bells of cymbals. The choice of cymbal is definitely important. If you have a heavy cymbal with a huge bell, the bell will sound good, but when you go to the rest of the cymbal, it's like a manhole cover. I like a cymbal with some spread that I can swing on, but that I can articulate on as well.

TBW: On "Like A Moose" you do this pattern with the floor tom and crash cymbal.

RH: I think I was playing off the quarter note, striking the floor tom at the same time as the crash cymbal. The bass drum is on the downbeat while the floor tom and crash are on the "e" of the beat—on the upbeat. Sometimes when we play that song I don't play the bass drum on 1; it just gives the feel a little hiccup.

TBW: We've talked a lot about music and drumming. Do you have any advice of a more general nature?

RH: When I was very young, my school-teacher tried to pressure my mother into sending me to art school. I've always loved drawing, painting, and music. But music became stronger by third or fourth grade. You have to be true to yourself.

Another thing: Be careful how you speak to people, because you never know who *they* know! Treat people with respect, the way you would want them to treat you.





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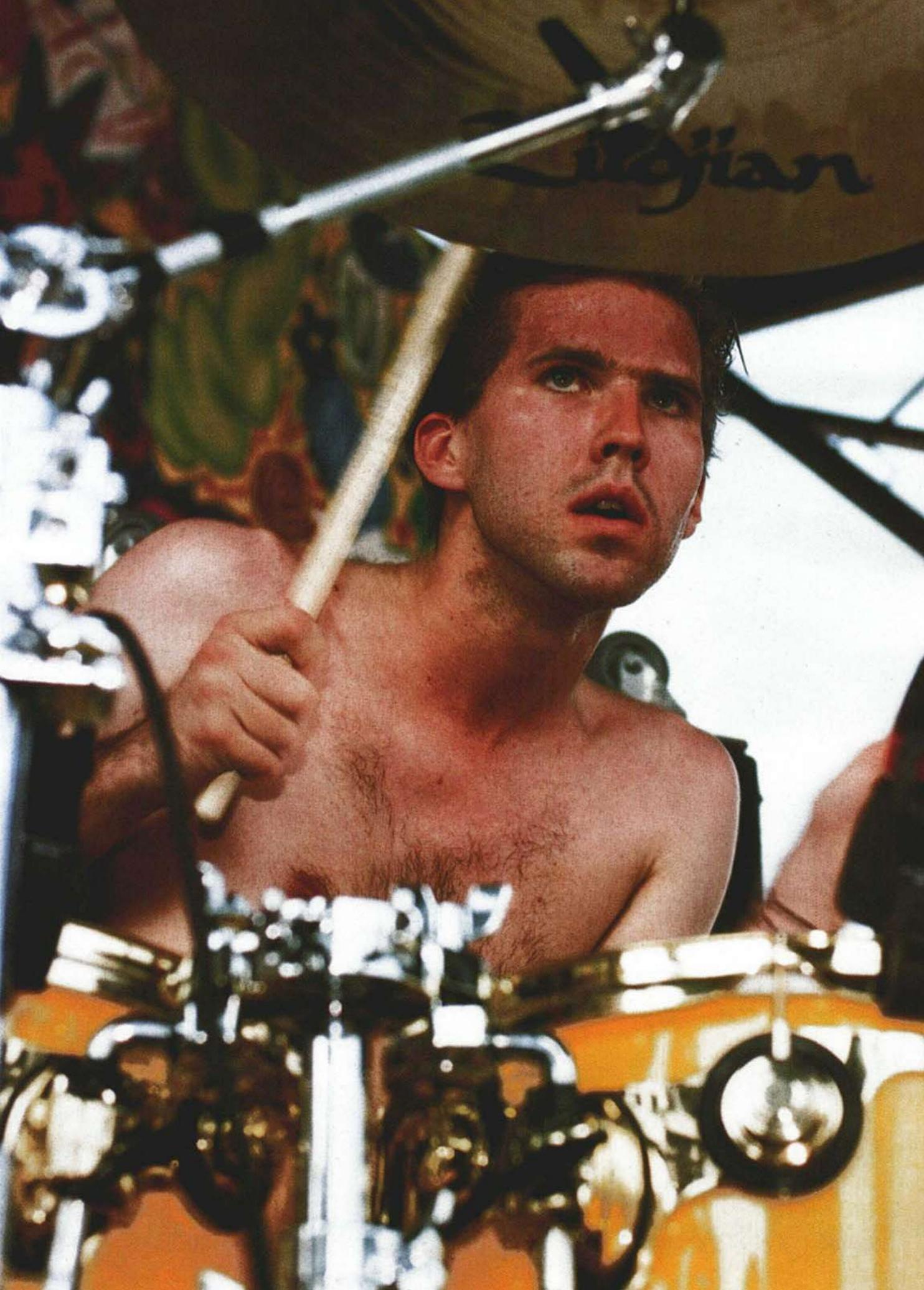
Speaking of hardware, doesn't Joel find it tough dealing with the forest of cymbal stands on this set-up? "No, because I have a tech," laughs Joel. "On my non-Spyro gigs, where I don't have a tech, I duplicate this set-up using the new Tama stacking attachments. That way I don't need to carry as many stands and the kit takes up less room."

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Brooks

WACKERMAN

If anyone was ever born clutching drumsticks, it's Brooks Wackerman.

His father is a drummer and music teacher. His oldest brother, Chad, has earned international acclaim through long associations with Frank Zappa and Allan Holdsworth, among others. Another older brother, John, has drummed with Bunny Brunel and Kazumi Watanabe. Before Brooks could walk or talk, his brothers pushed him into the drumming fold.

Perhaps through a generation gap or simply his own sense of rebellion, Brooks has taken the bloodline into a different vein. With the other Wackermans firmly entrenched in jazz and fusion, Brooks jumped into rock—first in a band of teen-dream musicians Bad 4 Good, then with punk-funkers Infectious Grooves. His current gig is with seminal punk rock mainstay Suicidal Tendencies.

The skinny kid from Seal Beach, California is an odd visual match for the tattooed attitude of Suicidal Tendencies. Musically, though, Brooks is a monster. *Freedumb*, the band's new disc, is loaded with sharp attack, clean strokes, and on-the-money beats—everything

you'd expect from a Wackerman—coupled with an aggression distinguishing Brooks' style. At just twenty-two, Brooks has already answered calls for session work—from The Vandals and Judas Priest guitarist Glenn Tipton to Danny Elfman's score for *To Die For*. Beyond that, Brooks has also stepped out front with a guitar and microphone to lead his own side project, Hot Potty.

As Suicidal Tendencies embarked on its summer tour for the new record, Brooks talked about the advantages of playing inside and outside the path blazed before him, and the inspiration to go where no Wackerman has gone before.

TENDENCY TO DRUM

MP: Drums must have been like furniture in your household.

BW: Oh yeah. I've always been surrounded by drums. Pretty much every room had at least one drum in it, and when I was a baby, my brothers used to play Buddy Rich and Led Zeppelin albums under my crib! I can't really tell you why. Maybe their intention was to indoctrinate me in the drum world. It probably worked, because having always grown up around drums and music in general—every day, there was music playing in our house—it just felt natural for me to play the drums, too.

MP: How do you think growing up under your dad and brothers helped you to develop musically?

BW: When I was really young my dad showed me a lot of things, and I learned some tricks from Chad and John. And when I was playing in high school jazz bands, Chad would get together with me sometimes and go over some of his Zappa charts or give me soloing ideas. But they didn't give me a whole lot of lessons, per se.

I'm so much younger than they are. Chad moved out of the house at seventeen to go on the road with Leslie Uggams, and I was

really young at the time. But I mainly learned from the examples they set before me. What I mainly got out of it was not just to appreciate one type of style, but be open to many different styles and not limit myself. The diversity was definitely advantageous.

MP: Tell me about your drumming education outside the family.

BW: I went to the Orange County High School of the Arts, which was connected to my regular public school. I played in a combo there for a couple of years. I also studied privately for a few years with Murray Spivak. He was a classical drum instructor, and my brothers had studied with him, too. I also studied with a jazz-independence teacher named Chuck Flores.

MP: Having studied along the same routes as your brothers, do you feel you've taken steps away from their paths to become more of your own drummer?

BW: My earliest memory of branching out from what they were feeding me is from when I was twelve or thirteen, when I discovered rock and punk rock. That's about when I started listening to Frank Zappa and getting into different things, as opposed to jazz, and realizing that I liked playing faster and more aggressive music.

Chad's a very diverse drummer, but fusion is definitely his forte and I've never heard him play punk before. Same thing with John, who's playing with Lindsey Buckingham

now. I'd say I have a more aggressive approach, but that's probably because of the style of music I'm playing.

MP: Do you think there's a "Wackerman sound" that's common between the three of you?

BW: Yeah, there probably is. I suppose I would describe it as fluent, dynamic, precise. It's hard to put into words. I guess the connecting point is our dad, along with the teachers we each studied with.

MP: How did you take what you'd learned from Spivak and Flores and apply it to a rock setting?

BW: I've always found that you can incorporate different styles, such as jazz or reggae, into rock music. I use a lot of ghost notes, and I got that from jazz. There's a song on the new album called "Hippy Killer," which is pretty much a drum-oriented song. In the first break, I do a wild Terry Bozzio double-bass thing, and then in the second there's a jazz rudimental lick, which is something you wouldn't normally incorporate into this kind of music.

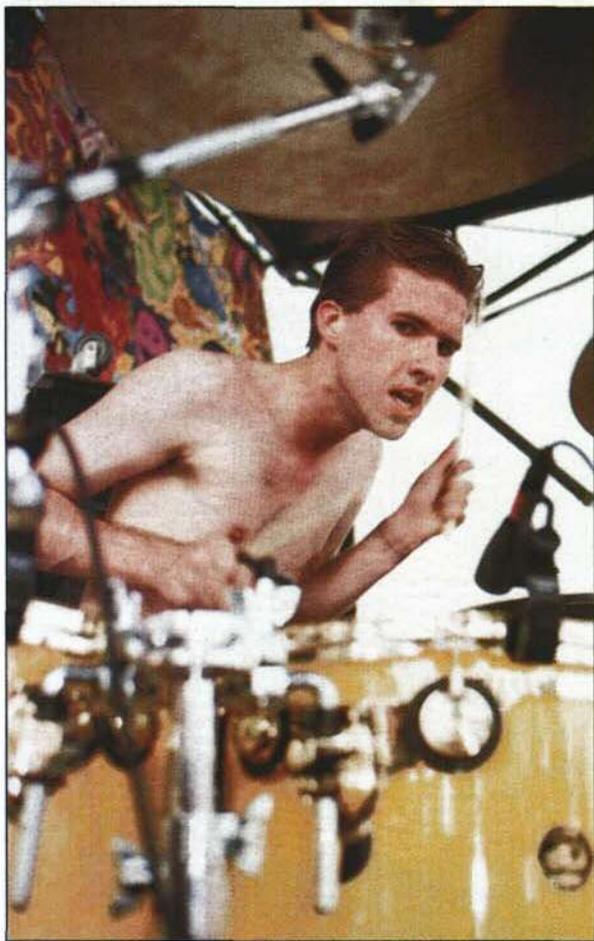
But I see myself as more of a complete musician, rather than just pigeonholing myself as simply a rock drummer. I've been playing guitar since about the fifth grade, and I've always picked up things from the guitarists I've played with. I've been writing music for quite a number of years, too. I think all of that has helped educate me to what makes a song work, and I bring that back to the kit.

MP: I'm really impressed with your delivery. It's very crisp, and I don't hear a lot of drummers in this style of music perform as solidly and cleanly, yet keep up the energy in the way you do.

BW: That goes back to my lessons. I wouldn't be able to do what I do now without having gone through that education. I went through *Stick Control* and *Accents And Rebounds*. I would spend hours on those books, devoting a lot of time to my hands. The same thing with my feet. I concentrated a lot on rudiments when I was younger.

When I stop playing that style for a little while, it definitely takes me a few days to get back into it and work up to speed. So if Suicidal takes off for a couple months before rehearsing again, I'll maybe go into my garage and brush up on my rudiments and build myself back up.

MP: That leads into the issue of speed. You always hear that you have to be completely relaxed and not tense your muscles in order



to sustain really fast single strokes. But that seems a lot easier to say than to put into practice. How do you avoid tensing up?

BW: It's definitely tougher than it sounds. It takes a lot of practice and patience to work toward that relaxation, and it's really hard to sustain that. For instance, I'll be really loose and relaxed for the first ten or twelve bars of a really fast ride pattern, but I can't help but tense up a little. So whenever I feel that tension building, I'll either not hit as hard for a passage or I'll do a quick roll that will give my muscles just a little break, so I can come back in hard and fast and not lose anything.

There are things you can do to help yourself out as far as the positioning of your drums and cymbals. I slant my snare drum away from me, like a jazzier does, because it's easier for me to hit rimshots. For me, I find I don't have to put as much into each stroke to get the power out of it. I get more attack.

MP: Tell me more about the kit you're playing.

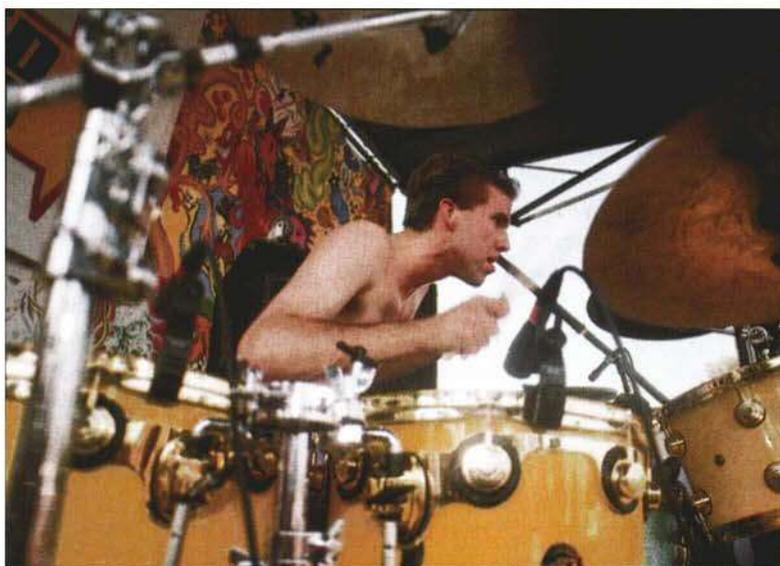
BW: I did the record on a DW kit that's basically the same one I use live. My main snare is a 5x14 DW in the new Craviotto line, and I've used a variety of other snares. I use a Kevlar head—a marching drumhead—on most of my snares, and that gives them more of a crack. It sounds like a gunshot when I hit it, and that's the effect I was going for on the record. I have a double-kick pedal, but I'm not using it as much. When I was younger, like with *Bad 4 Good*, it was double-bass mania for me. I remember buying a Tommy Aldridge video and sitting down with it and learning all his licks—basically overdoing it. But I try to use double bass stuff more for accents these days.

MP: Speaking of *Bad 4 Good*, how do you view that experience looking back on it now?

BW: At the time, I liked it because I was so young and stoked on touring. The project formed when I was thirteen, and we recorded the album a year later. We went out with Joe Satriani for a couple of weeks, and just being fourteen and playing in what seemed like a big-time rock 'n' roll band was great. I wouldn't want to repeat that

experience, though. I learned a lot from that situation. It was pretty much a put-together project. The record company didn't let us contribute to the songwriting, which we wanted to do, and it was just very contrived.

We got a lot of respect as musicians, but not as artists. People were amazed at these young kids who could play, but then they'd look at the album and see we didn't write one song on it. We attempted to do a second record ourselves, but it just didn't feel right.



The singer, bass player, and I then formed another band that played around town for about a year, but then we just decided to part ways after that.

MP: Tell me about the process of recording *Freedumb*. Did you spend a lot of time on the tracks, or did you bang them out?

BW: Most of them were one or two takes—three at the most—and we cut all the drum tracks in two days. We recorded very live, very spontaneous, no click track. I try not to get too complicated with my parts because the style of music requires that I play straight-ahead and aggressively. But there are songs like the opening track, where I'm trying to approach things more Compositionally.

MP: When you're on the road, do you try replicating the drum parts for the older Suicidal material?

BW: No, I change things up. Some of the songs were recorded in the mid-'80s, so I try to do things that are a little more contemporary. Plus, my approach is different from the other drummers who contributed to Suicidal.

The original versions might be more straight forward, whereas I like to be a little looser, and I like playing over the bar line sometimes. When I started going through the old material, Mike [Muir, singer] told me just to learn the parts and make them my own.

MP: Not that this has anything to do with your performance, but you definitely don't look like someone you'd expect to play in Suicidal Tendencies. You don't have tattoos or a gruff image—you're very clean-cut. Do you mesh well with your bandmates on a personal level?

BW: We're actually great friends. I understand the whole Suicidal image, but as a person, I'm not going to conform to something I'm not. I've tried putting a bandanna on my head, and I just look silly. But I love playing in this band, and one of the great things about Suicidal is I'll wear black-rimmed glasses and Mike won't.

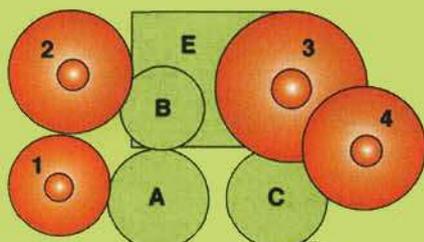
The funny thing is, I'll have the toughest time getting backstage sometimes, even with a pass, because the security guy

doesn't believe it when I tell him I'm the drummer for Suicidal. He thinks I'm just some college kid trying to get backstage. So my drum tech has to come over and vouch for me.

MP: Give me the lowdown on Hot Potty.

BW: It's basically a punk rock band with

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an R&B flavor. I play guitar and sing in the band, and my brother John plays drums. It's really interesting for me being the front man, but it's also very challenging. I would love for Hot Potty to go on to bigger and better things. We just had our record released in Japan, and you can purchase it from our Web site [www.hotpotty.net].

Suicidal's obviously my top priority right now. But whenever I go out on tour, I take my guitar with me and write and record my ideas. The idea has actually come up to have Hot Potty open for Suicidal sometime, which would be funny because people would see me behind the kit with Suicidal and say, "Hey, isn't that the singer from the opening band?"

MP: What was it like stepping into soundtrack work for *To Die For*?

BW: It was a very different situation from anything I'd been involved with. They knew I was a punk drummer, so they wanted some ferocious beats in certain sections. I did this thing called a blast-pop beat, which is a speed metal thing. They had sheet music, but they also wanted some free-form music. They had TV monitors so

we could follow along with the action of the film, and this streamer would come across the screen, and that was our cue to start improvising. When it cut, that was our cue to stop.

MP: Is Suicidal musically challenging and inspiring for you, or do you see yourself merging away from that anytime soon?

BW: Yeah, it is. I really like playing this style of music, and it's not necessarily the easiest thing to play. And even though it's punk, every time we write, we try adding something different to it. But I'd like to stay diverse and delve into areas I haven't really tried yet. I'd like to get into Latin drumming.

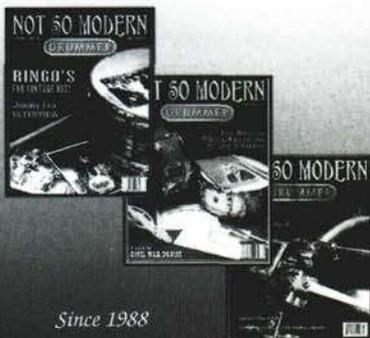
MP: Any chance of you, John, and Chad doing clinics together?

BW: John and I used to do clinics together when I was younger—like dueling drummers, trading fours—and it would just be drum mayhem. We've never done anything with the three of us together, but I really like the idea. We could call it "An evening with Wackermans." I don't know who'd show up, but I'm sure Chad, John, and I would have a blast.



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Musical Accents, Part 3

by Ted Bonar and Ed Breckenfeld

MUSIC KEY

T.T.

S.D.

F.T.

B.D.

H.H.

w/foot

Over the past few months we've explored various exercises aimed at developing different accent patterns around the drumset. In the first article we focused on single-accent patterns, and last month we focused on double-accent patterns. This month we'll combine single- and double-accent combinations.

After working through the previous exercises, you will have developed a newfound facility and independence when playing accent patterns on the drumset. The exercises presented here will start to feel more comfortable, and you'll feel more in control. You'll also begin to develop some new musical applications for the accent patterns. Let's review the five steps to developing these patterns on the drumset:

Step 1

Practice each of the accompanying forty exercises individually on snare drum only. Stay in control, keep your stick height consistent on accents and non-accents, and only increase your speed when you're comfortable with all the patterns:

Step 2

Add a quarter-note bass drum:

Step 3

Add an off-beat hi-hat:

Step 4

Place the accented notes on the high tom:

Step 5

Place the right-hand accents on the low tom and keep the left-hand accents on the high tom:

After you've mastered the following single- and double-accent combinations (which start on the next page), you should be fluent in accent placement around the drumset.

Now it's time to use your imagination to put any combination of these patterns together. Have fun with your own combinations, and then start to combine any two, three, or four (or more!) exercises together to create longer patterns for solo ideas and further independence development.

The challenge now is to find ideas that sound musical to you, and to begin to incorporate them into your overall playing repertoire. Have fun!

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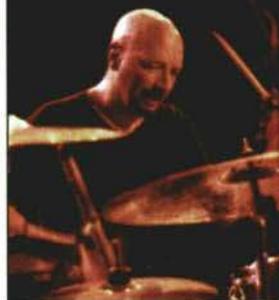
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Implied Metric Modulation

by Steve Smith

MUSIC KEY

H.H. X
 S.D. ●
 B.D. ○

Editor's note: The following question was sent to Steve Smith as an Ask A Pro query. Steve's answer was so thorough and educational that we're running it as a separate column. Thanks, Steve, for doing such a great job!

QI would first like to say that you're one of my favorite drummers. Your playing and overall musicianship are truly an inspiration. My question is: During your solo on "Maxed Out" from Vital Information's *Ray Of Hope* CD, and while you and Victor Wooten are playing on the song "Two For One" on the *Vital Tech Tones* CD, the time seems to slow down, yet it's somehow rooted in the original tempo. Can you explain this and perhaps direct me to some educational sources so I might study this technique in depth?

Sincerely,
 Clint Hopkins

AThanks for listening to my music and appreciating it, Clint. Hearing from you and other musicians inspires me to continue working on my craft.

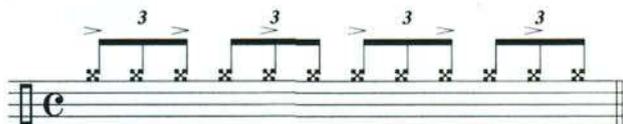
What you're referring to is a technique I call "Implied Metric Modulation." I'm implying a new tempo or rhythmic rate, but as you said I don't go there; I stay in the original tempo. This creates an interesting effect. You can make the time feel like it's slowing down or speeding up.

On "Maxed Out" I used a quarter-note-triplet rate to set up a new "implied" tempo. I'll take you through the steps.

Let's start with a simple beat.



To move to the new rhythm, first play 8th-note triplets in your right hand, accenting every other note. This will imply a quarter-note triplet.



Now add the bass drum and snare drum to every other accent. This gives the feeling that you're playing a simple rock beat in a tempo one third faster than the original tempo. You're actually

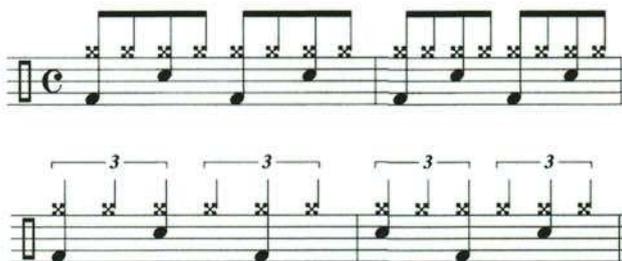
playing a polyrhythm of 6 over 4, or an implied bar of 6/4 over a bar of 4/4.



One of the tricks I use to imply the new time but not confuse the other players is to keep the right hand playing 8th notes and play constant 8th-note triplets softly with my left hand on the snare. I then catch the accents with my left hand and bass drum.



You can make the time feel like it's slowing down with this approach. Establish the tempo with a simple 4/4 rock beat, then move into the rhythm one third slower.



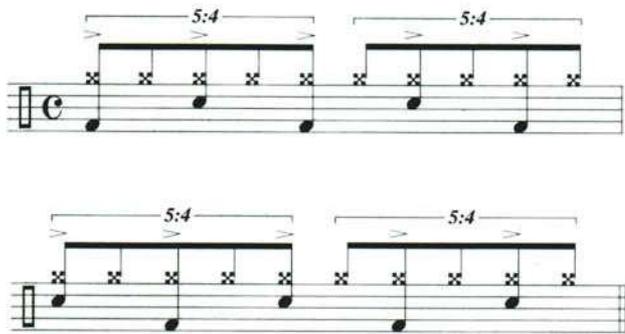
As I work on these ideas I find myself getting comfortable implying a new tempo with the syncopated quarter-note-triplet rhythm:



One example of playing a simple rock beat on this rhythm is this:



You can also continue the idea by implying the new tempo at a rate of 5 over 4, or 7 over 4. For example:



The 5:4 written above the examples means five 8th notes in the space of four. If you count the accented notes you get a rhythm of five quarter notes over four quarter notes.

To hear some of this playing, check out a tune called "Four Four And More" on the upcoming Tone Center recording *The Stranger's Hand*, with Jerry Goodman (violin), Howard Levy (harmonica and piano), and Oteil Burbridge (bass).

The idea of implying different tempos while remaining in the original tempo has been around for a while. Tony Williams, for instance, did this a lot with Miles Davis, basing new tempos on dotted-quarter-note and triplet rates. I've also heard Vinnie Colaiuta, Dennis Chambers, Jonathan Mover, Virgil Donati, Adam Nussbaum, Bill Stewart, and many others play ideas like these.

I was first introduced to this concept when I studied with Gary Chaffee in the early '70s. Lately I've taken some lessons from Pete Magadini, which have been very helpful. He has an excellent book out that addresses polyrhythmic playing called *Polyrhythms For The Drumset*. There may be other sources to study this, but I'm not aware of them. My *main* inspiration for this concept, however, comes from Trilok Gurtu. *He's* the master. Check Trilok out!

For more information on Steve, check out his Web site at www.vitalinformation.com.

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Photo: Marc Andre Linder

The Double Bass Challenge

by Ken Vogel



Attention double bass drummers! Would you like to play faster? Would you like to have more endurance when playing fast tempos? Would you like to further develop your hand and foot coordination? If you answered yes to any of these questions, regular practice of the following material—which I developed to take my *own* double bass playing to a higher level—should prove beneficial.

Practice Suggestions

Begin by practicing each foot pattern in each section until you can play them smoothly. Then practice each hand pattern in Section 1 with each foot pattern in Section 1. Begin slowly. Make sure that all limbs are "in sync" with each other before increasing the tempo. Some hand and foot combinations will be more difficult than others and will require patient practice. Follow the same procedure for Sections 2 and 3.

The third step is to play through the hand patterns nonstop, repeating each eight times while playing one of the bass drum patterns. The various hand patterns in each section will not only aid in coordination development, but will give the impression of different "rock feels," therefore creating a more practical and musical exercise that's fun to play.

To help in the area of endurance, go through the system for each foot pattern several times. Practice the exercises by using headphones hooked up to a drum machine, click, or metronome. And record yourself for critical analysis.

The Exercises

Section 1

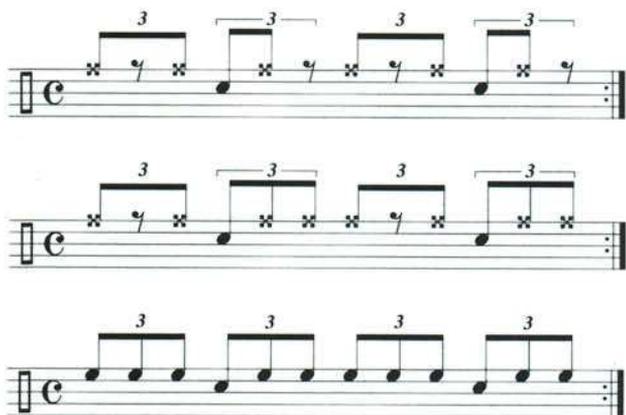
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Hand Patterns:

Section 2

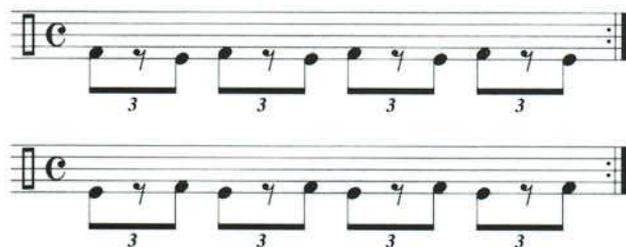
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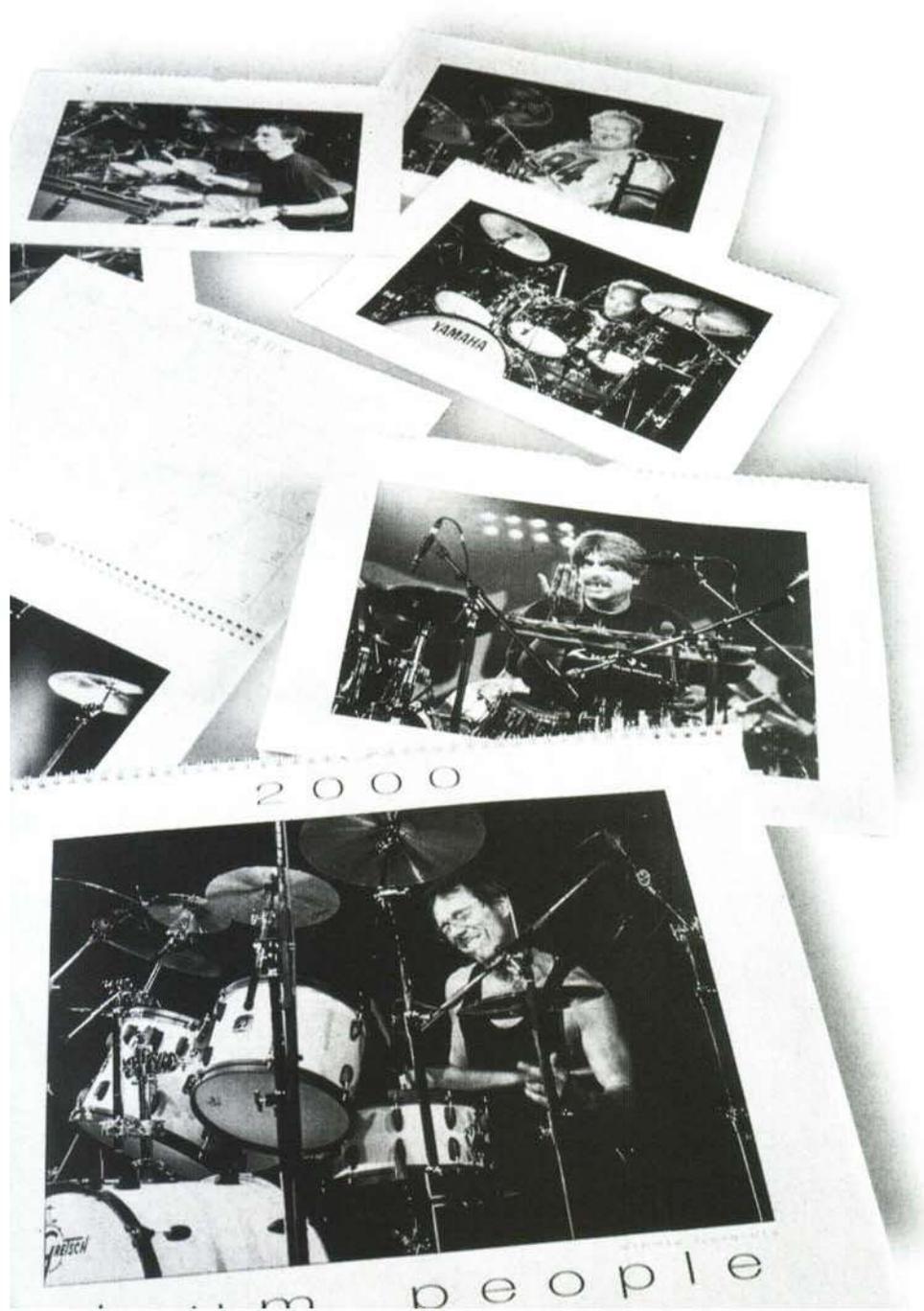
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Pennywise's Byron McMackin

Running From The Forbidden Beat

by Matt Schild

Powerful drumming that doesn't sacrifice technique doesn't come easy. Just ask Pennywise's Byron McMackin. After ten years on the stool behind one of California's most popular hardcore acts since the legendary Black Flag, McMackin's style delves deeper into more subtle styles and techniques than the all-out assault of the average hardcore skinsman.

McMackin formed Pennywise in 1988 with a trio of friends from his high school, and virtually all of his professional career since has been with the band. The combination of the drummer's driving beats and the band's energetic musical attack helped them to build a large following with surfers, skateboarders, and snowboarders. But they soon eclipsed their cult status, making a major impression with their self-titled 1991 Epitaph debut.

McMackin's career wasn't the straightforward course followed by many hardcore drummers.

After a couple of EPs and three full-length albums with Epitaph, the band was shaken by tragedy when bassist and founding member Jason Thirsk committed suicide after a long battle with alcoholism. Pennywise continued, though the ordeal would push the band's sound to more complex and emotional directions as its members struggled to deal with the tragedy.

Full *Circle* (Epitaph, 1997), the band's first album without Thirsk, saw them breaking away from staple hardcore sounds. McMackin began to avoid the stolid quarter-note patterns of traditional hardcore, pulling in more wide-ranging sounds, though keeping his tempos furiously upbeat. *Straight Ahead* continues McMackin's quest to widen his repertoire, incorporating tom work integrated into guitar and bass melodies, as well as putting more of an emphasis on groove-oriented beats.



"A lot of my stuff is similar to beats played by John Bonham, just at a higher rate of speed."

MS: How does your playing on *Straight Ahead* compare with your previous albums?

BM: It fits in really well. But there are a few songs that are slightly different. We wanted to make sure we did something fresh. We're really fed up with a lot of the stuff that was coming out. We didn't want to put out just another record.

MS: Is it hard to keep your stuff fresh within the hardcore/punk style?

BM: That's a good question. There's five hundred thousand punk bands out there, and if you ask me, they all only know one beat. It's like you can tell that's what they think is cool. Everybody's like, "Let's see how *we* can do that." You get this kid who's playing in the garage, and he just wants to play fast. But there's no foundation under there; all he knows is that one thing. Basically all it is is a bunch of other beats sped up.

Once you get into the big leagues—or some kind of league—you get a style. It's like singers: You can *tell* when David Lee Roth is singing. There are certain drummers I can identify by their sound or style. I think I have that. One thing about it, on this record, I didn't want to sound like I was doing my same old stuff.

The funny thing is, I went back and started listening to old heavy metal stuff. When I first started, I was more into heavy metal and a little funk. That helped me to come up with different beats, more snare hits here and there, and so on. I definitely didn't want to get caught doing just the same beats. The thing is, you can

do a lot of different things *with* the same beat. It might be the same thing here and there, but it's going to change with this little kick here or a little snare there. It's pretty easy to do. I definitely don't like doing the same beats in every song. It really bothers me.

Another thing is, I've actually tried to do less and less on every record. I'm kind of more solid, and more into a Dave Grohl style these days, where I think less is more. Less tom-with-guitar stuff. I'd like to put out more simple, solid beats that are somewhat different too.

MS: What are some of the tricks you did to change things up a bit and keep yourself from falling into a boring rut?

BM: Well, as I said, one of them was going back to some old heavy metal music. I had to practice a lot of it, because they're just really solid, slow beats. A lot of my stuff is similar to beats played by John Bonham, just at a higher rate of speed.

Another thing I do that's different from most punk drummers is follow Fletcher Dragge's guitar almost note for note on my kick drum. So I'm really not just playing a "drum beat." It's more like music. That's how I can avoid the same old ordinary "forbidden" beat. I just focused on keeping that in my mind. I didn't want to do the same stuff I'd done before. I kept telling the guys, I don't really want to do this here or that there. I'm trying to get more solid.

The funny thing is, at the end of the album, I always end up with more stuff on there than I wanted. But that just happens.

MS: You said you were following the guitar. I was struck by that

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on the album. You weren't necessarily playing *lead*, but you were definitely a lot closer to the guts of the song than just sitting there as the backbone.

BM: Well, I *started out* following the guitar. In our type of music the drums and the guitar are more locked-in than in a lot of other styles. For that reason, I still play stuff that sounds like it's more with the guitar. But I'm actually trying more and more to lock in with the bass, just because I feel like when that's happening it's like the foundation. It just happens that our music is characterized by the muffle of the guitar with the tom-toms and stuff.

MS: How many toms are you playing?

BM: I play just a regular five-piece kit.

MS: Are you working the toms in more then?

BM: The toms are a big part of our music. On our recent stuff, I've kind of brought in something a little like the hardcore style. There's kind of a distinction to the hardcore beat. I try to add that to the time, but bring in all this tom work. I don't know if it's a heavy metal style or what, but I dig it. On previous records, we'd just fire through and it'd be nonstop craziness. *Straight Ahead* is more musical. I think it's a lot more flowing.

MS: Who are some of your biggest influences as a drummer?

BM: I grew up with drummers of the metal era. John Bonham is like the greatest drummer in the world. But I also think Stewart Copeland is amazing. Once I got into punk, Minor Threat's Jeff Nelson is kind of where I wanted to go. He even had a couple of funk beats, and I was really into that. Black Flag was also one of my favorites—with Bill Stevenson. If you're talking about legendary punk drummers, Bill Stevenson comes in. He's like the punk John Bonham.

Scream, with Dave Grohl drumming, was another big inspira-

tion. The only thing is, when I saw them I was a bit younger. It was about the time of our first record, and I didn't have the time to put any of Dave's stuff in there, because we were going a million miles a second.

I'm not really a flashy guy. I like the feeling of the slow, groovier stuff where you could add all this kick-drum stuff. That's why I like John Bonham's style and Dave Grohl's style.

MS: More substance and style than outright power?

BM: I think it's a combination of both. Like John Bonham. The guy's beats are still famous today. Then you move into Stewart Copeland. He played harder than most people, he played traditional grip, and he did all this rad tom work. Then you have Bill Stevenson. No one hits harder, plus he plays really fast. But all these guys are totally technical, they *know* drumming. They don't just know how to play fast. They could play salsa if they wanted.

I definitely like drummers who *work* the drums. There's a ton of drummers who are up there just playing around. They're not sweating, they're not doing anything. I'd rather see someone *get* something out of it.

I'm trying to get more and more power every day. Playing fast *and* hard is really hard to do. I don't like drummers *-who just* play fast and not with power. To me, those are the kids who learned how to play fast in a month but don't know anything else. Why...because it's cool? That's not cool to me.

MS: On *Straight Ahead* the drums have a really rich sound. Are there any tricks you used when recording to get that sound?

BM: Well, there are really no tricks. It's just knowing what you want on there. Fletcher and I bought a studio, and we've been doing a lot of recording. We've pretty much done most of our own records. We had Jerry Finn come in and do one, and we've worked

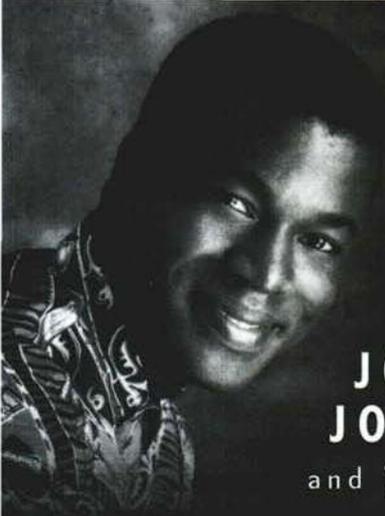
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with other people. But the last two, *Full Circle* and *Straight Ahead*, we did all by ourselves. Everyone in the band is really educated in recording. We know what feel we want and we know the sounds we want. I think on previous records we didn't put enough time in. On *Straight Ahead* we didn't just settle for a sound when with a little more time we could get what we wanted.

We worked with a drum tech named Mike Fasano, who works with Brett Reed from Rancid, Tre Cool from Green Day, and Matt Sorum. His knowledge of tuning is amazing. We set the mic's up basically how we wanted, and then changed a couple different things on the drums until we got the sound we wanted. Once we had that, we pretty much rolled.

The only thing we did differently this time was run some room mic's a bit differently. We brought the room mic's up whenever we changed tempo, to get a fuller sound. On the slower songs, we'd just bring those up. In our style of music, there's a lot of things you can't get because it's so fast. With slower bands you can hear so much more because there's time in between.

MS: What kind of drums are you playing?

BM: I play a Pork Pie kit with normal toms. I have two kits, though. One has deep concert toms, and we usually record with those. On this record we used my Pork Pie kick drum, but we used some old Gretsch toms and a big, thick, deep Gretsch snare drum. We knew we wanted a bigger, thicker sound because we were doing some different stuff. We didn't settle this time. We worked and worked until it was perfect.




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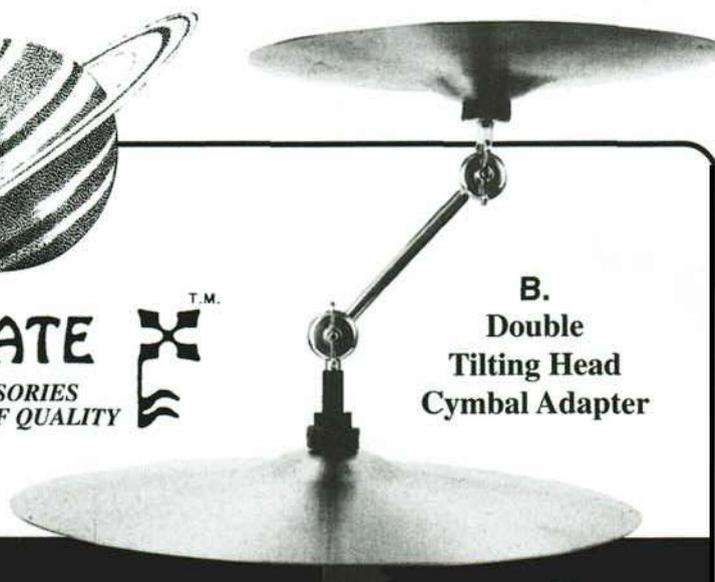
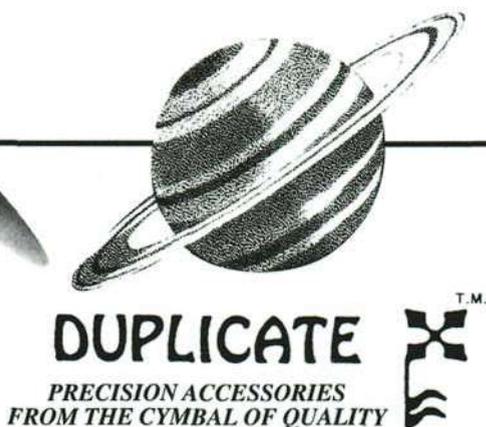
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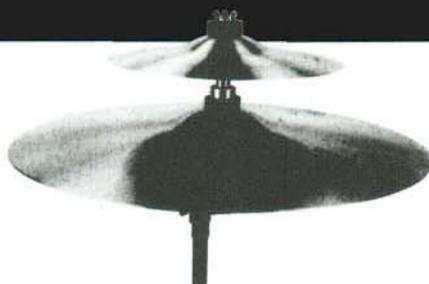


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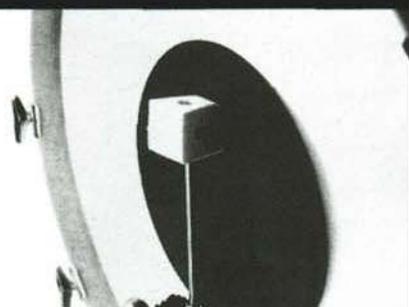
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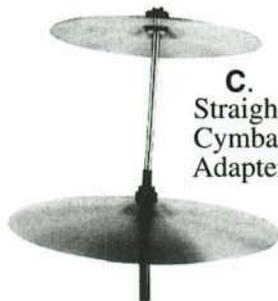
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Rex Miller

Albuquerque, New Mexico's Rex Miller has been playing drums for forty-two of his forty-eight years. His drumming began in school marching bands and rock bands in the late 1950s, and has continued through countless blues, rockabilly, zydeco, reggae, and country bands. In 1990 Rex was part of a Bloomington, Indiana group that was named best amateur blues band in the nation by the Memphis Blues Foundation. Rex has continued to focus on the blues to the present day.



And the present day is The Albuquerque Blues Connection, a hot blues band that has just recently released a self-produced CD called *West Of Texas*. An accomplished singer, arranger, and songwriter as well as a drummer, Rex composed many of the tracks on the album. His drumming provides a rock-solid foundation upon which the group builds tasty blues grooves, including shuffles, boogie, swing, and even a countrified train feel.

As influences, Rex cites Hal Blaine, Al Jackson, Bernard Purdie, Zigaboo Modeliste, all the great Chicago shuffle drummers, all the great James Brown drummers, and "anyone who knows how to play spaces in a groove." Rex plays his grooves on a 1958 Ludwig kit (on the road) or a 1961 Rogers Holiday kit (in the studio). He also enjoys collecting and restoring vintage drums.

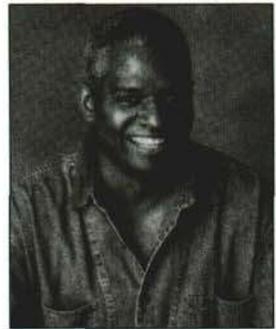
According to Rex, his basic philosophy is simple: "First, the bass drum is always the most important drum on stage. Second, drummers should always remember that less is more!"

Kenny Hudson

Percussionist Kenny Hudson has had quite a varied career. Earlier this year he completed a lengthy tour with War. Other touring credits include Stevie Wonder, Seal, Barry White, Billy Paul, Shalamar, and the Disney Lion King Parade. Kenny has recorded with War, Brand New Heavies, Bob Mamet, Anita Baker, The Dramatics, Shalamar, and The Memphis Horns, and he's done film and TV work for *Fame*, *The Young & The Restless*, *Vibe TV* (with War), and the *Lion King Parade* video.

Kenny leads his own band, too. That group, Caravana, is a high-powered act that combines African, Latin, jazz, and rock styles into a rhythmic hybrid of its own. Each of the band's seven members has extensive touring and recording credits with major artists. Originally formed in 1981, they played the clubs of Southern California for several years before breaking up to pursue individual careers. Now re-formed and busier than ever, Caravana is wowing audiences at world-music and rock clubs along the West Coast, including the House Of Blues.

Kenny says he has been heavily influenced by Babatunde Olatunji, and by all the percussionists of the Santana band over the years. He also says that Milton Nascimento left a big Brazilian impression on the music of Caravana. Kenny displays those influences on congas, timbales, bongos, and a variety of miscellaneous Latin, Brazilian, and African percussion instruments. But Kenny's also into modern technology; he includes a Roland SPD 11 percussion pad and a Roland R-5 drum machine in his arsenal. He's currently an endorser for Remo, Rimshot, Rhythm Tech, and Paiste.



Ilan Rubin

Ilan Rubin is a member of a teenage band from San Diego, California called FoN. In the two years they've been together they've received local and national media coverage, produced a CD that received favorable attention from music magazines, appeared on a nationally distributed Rhino Records compilation, opened for national acts playing several San Diego venues, and performed on the Vans *Warped* tour. Not bad for a bunch of high-school-age musicians just starting their musical careers.

But wait a minute: Ilan isn't even in high school. As a matter of fact, he hasn't made junior high yet. At the ripe old age of ten, Ilan is half the age of his bandmates. But he still has the talent and skill to drive the band's energetic performances. A demo video of the group reveals Ilan as a drummer with power, creativity, and solid time.

Although FoN's music is best described as pop/punk/ska, Ilan's personal influences lean more toward classic rock, and to John



Bonham in particular. He's also been studying the work of Virgil Donati, John Tempesta, and Tony Royster Jr. (via the 1997 MD Festival highlights video), and has recently begun studying with David Uosikkinen (The Hooters). He plays on a thirty-one-year-old Ludwig kit (formerly his father's), with Zildjian, Sabian, and UFIP cymbals.

As a normal fifth grader, Ilan is a little short on long-term goals. But he's an avid performer who loves playing before a crowd. Even though he currently divides his time between school, music, baseball, and Nintendo, he's clear on the fact that he wants to become "a great rock drummer."

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



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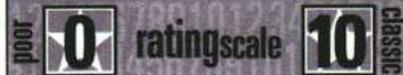
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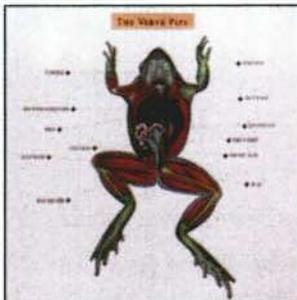
7 The Verve Pipe The Verve Pipe

Donny Brown (dr), Brian Vander Ark (vcl, gtr), AJ Dunning (gtr), Brad Vander Ark (hs), Doug Coiella (kybd)

I awoke mumbling "The Zombies." Blame it on the chorus of The Verve Pipe's "Generations," which recalls the '60s hit "She's Not There." Other British rock staples whose spirit The Verve Pipe effortlessly tap into on their self-titled album include Peter Dinklage and The Who. On the song "Supergig" in particular, drummer Donny Brown effectively captures Keith Moon's spilling tom fills and washy cymbals.

Although Brown may not be drawing from a deep well of technique, his fluid, loping feel throughout *The Verve Pipe* is infectious in the manner of Ringo Starr, and definitely contributes to the charm of the album, with its shifting textures and dramatic interludes. Donny Brown clearly has his own slant on basic 2 and 4 drumming. (RCA)

— T. Bruce Wittet



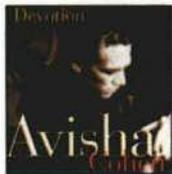
8 Avishai Cohen Devotion

Jeff Ballard (dr, perc), Avishai Cohen (ac & el bs, pno, synth, perc), Jason Linder (pno), Jimmy Greene (tn & sp sx, fl), Steve Davis (tbn), Amos Hoffman (gtr, oud)

In the glut of jazz releases, there's no shortage of fine young players. But few show as strong a leadership concept as Avishai Cohen. An extraordinary acoustic (his main ax) and electric bassist, Cohen is also a fascinating, open-minded composer. In short, there's strong vision and a fresh voice here. This engaging second solo outing by the native Israeli integrates his influences in jazz, Afro-Caribbean, funk, classical, and the folkloric music of his homeland.

Drummer and co-producer Ballard bloomed alongside Cohen in the demanding rhythm sections of pianists Danilo Perez and Chick Corea. Their strong bond is evident; now it's their turn to shine. Ballard shows remarkable touch and feel and a deep sense of composition in his playing. More importantly, he has a real understanding of many styles, but doesn't flip through them like a chops Rolodex; the elements coalesce quite naturally and musically. Hopefully this is the direction acoustic jazz will continue in in the future. Ballard and Cohen will surely be two important figures to watch on its forefront. (Stretch)

— Jeff Potter



7 Lungbrush Old School New School

Ricardo Salinas (dr), Roach (vcl), Jeff Holmes (gtr), Jon Billman (bs)

Beneath Lungbrush's razor-edged guitar chunk and its gruff, R-rated vocals lies some pretty nasty drumming. What's refreshing about Ricardo Salinas' approach is that he tends to avoid cookie-cutter metal cliché and instead uses a bit of imagination while Grafting his drum parts.

To provide the necessary thunder, Salinas incorporates nicely orchestrated tom licks into his beats rather than falling back on predictable rumbling double-bass patterns. And like a less-prog-more-flog Matt Cameron, he's fond of inserting speedy, eye-opening little figures that set up transitional passages or enhance the basic groove of a given song. When Ricardo occasionally decides to bash out a riff in exact unison with the menacing detuned guitars, as on the Rage-like "Corporate Bulls#*t," it's exciting, not just more of the same. (Pavement Music)

— Michael Parillo



7 Chris Speed Deviantics

Jim Black (dr), Chris Speed (tn sx, clr), Cuong Vu (trp), Skuli Sverrisson (bs)

Speed's Manhattan-based quartet gravitates to Knitting Factory-styled, collective improvisation, basing their tumbling time



SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

Earth, Wind & Fire was the biggest R&B group of the late '70s, and one reason was that their records felt so damn good. Drummers **Fred White**, **Maurice White**, and **Ralph Johnson** could do no wrong on *That's The Way Of The World*, *Gratitude*, and *All 'N All*. Now recently remastered and expanded editions of those albums provide invaluable guidelines to making a wide variety of grooves sound amazing. Meanwhile, a couple thousand miles to the south, Peter Tosh was releasing two seminal (and also quite eclectic) reggae albums, *Legalize It* and *Equal Rights*, featuring the ridiculously deep grooves of drummer **Sly Dunbar** and bassist **Robbie Shakespeare**. Remastering (and extra cuts) make these classics that much more invaluable. (Columbia/legacy)

Denny Weston, **Kenny Aronoff**, and **Abe Laboriel Jr.** serve up some wicked grooves on *The Boneshakers' Shake The Planet*. (Pointblank)

Drummer **Gregg Field** is a heavy hired gun with a recording/touring resume sporting names like Sinatra, Basie, and Manilow. Now he's stepping out front in *The Art Of Swing*, a collection of sparkling classic-style big band swing numbers arranged by the great Sammy Nestico. Each cut boasts the strong time and irresistible feel that make this man so in demand. (DCC/Lauren, 93012 Jordan Ave. Ste 105, Chatsworth, CA 91311 [818] 993-8822)

Mark Zonder's crisp and supportive drumming is the driving force on Chroma Key's fine new rock release, *Dead Air For Radios*. (Fight Evil Records, PO Box B576B, Valencia, CA 91386)

Taking a tip from the cartoonish quirkiness of fellow Bay Area band Primus, Nuclear Rabbit somehow manages to be twice as jokey as Les & Co. have ever been. *Intestinal Fortitude* combines swatches of metal, funk, and ska with goofy sound effects, and manic drummer **Stymie** sews it all together with neat beats and slammin', over-the-top fills. (Beach Recordings, [415] 553-8725)

changes and eclectic melodies on Eastern European premises. Always charting new ground, they never visit the same idea twice. Brash Bulgarian melodies over supercharged Tango beats? You got 'em. Haunting Czech folk tunes over tumbling Klezmer drum solos? We're not kidding.

On "Pith Remix," Jim Black's percussion/drums land like a bomb exploding, all twinkling bells, farting bass drum, and humorous sticks dribbling on the snare drum, until he locks onto a ferocious 16th-note groove that recalls John Bonham in ballet slippers. Sometimes a carnival barker with an array of oddball sounds, other times a gypsy charmer with romantic brushwork and swelling cymbals, Black is a drum magician who never ceases to surprise.

This is a challenging and fascinating record, both melodically and rhythmically. Deviant for sure—and that's only half of the fun. (Songlines, 1003-2323 West 2nd Ave., Vancouver, BC. V6K1J4. Canada, www.songlines.com)

—Ken Micallef

6 Lilys The 3 Way

Aaron Sperske (dr), Kurt Heasley (vcl, other instruments)

Armed with a packet of Kinks 45s, a sound reminiscent of cult proto-art-punkers The Monks circa '66, and a posse of esoteric pop fans backing him, Lilys leader Kurt Heasley re-animates an era when creativity outweighed crass commercialism.

Not just any drummer could make this band happen. Luckily Heasley recruited Aaron Sperske, who clearly possesses a keen knowledge of the genre and the delicate touch required by retro sounds. Sperske uses his kit sparingly on *The 3 Way*, but when it's time for those classic fills, he's spot on. On "Dimes Makes Dollars," a bongo-snare-tambourine ditty sans cymbals, Sperske bridges sections with perfect 16th-note tom fills. Choosing a stutterstep groove on "Leo Ryan," he nails a feel that's more applicable to the song than the standard 2/4 rock beat—and so much cooler. But when that 2/4 is called for, as on the chorus of "A Tab For The Holiday," he knows how to make it swing. Never particularly wild or crazy, Sperske still manages to excite.

Back to the future, living in the past—who cares! It's groovy, baby! (Site)

— Fran Azzarto and Lisa Crouch

8 Bill Evans Touch

Vinnie Colaiuta, Lionel Cordew (dr), Manola Badrena (perc), Michael Colina, Zach Danziger (dr programming), Bill Evans (sx, kybd), Victor Bailey, Chris Minh Doky, Mark Egan, Tim Lefebvre (bs), Jim Bend, Henry Hey (kybd), Adam Rogers, Chuck Loeb, Dean Brown, tee Renour (gtr)

On *Touch* saxophonist Bill Evans (Miles Davis, Mahavishnu Orchestra) has selected some of the finest drummers and programmers, along with veteran percussionist Manola Badrena, to create a fascinating world of textures.

Though drum 'n' bass master Zach Danziger creates quite an interesting track on "Dixie Hop," it's the kit work on this instrumental jazz recording that really excites—particularly Vinnie Colaiuta's. Although not every track that Vinnie plays on here is complex, his dynamic feel, flawless groove, and inconspicuous augmentations are truly educational and always inspiring. When Colaiuta is given the green light to "be Vinnie," as on "Back To The Wall," sparks fly. And when the form slowly opens up in "A Country Mile," and so does Vinnie's playing, it's times like this when we realize just how much practice is still left to be done. (Zebra)

— Mike Haid

7 Splendor Halfway Down The Sky

Marc Slutsky (dr), Waymon Boone (vcl, gtr), James Cruz (bs), Jonathan Svec (gtr, kybd)

With guitar pop band Splendor, producer Todd Rundgren has taken a turn from mellow. Spearheading the shift is drummer Marc Slutsky, who shares the aggression of the great drummers of XTC—a band whose influence is felt throughout this disc.

Marc cuts a swathe through this album with a ringy snare, clean tom fills, and a snappy, on-top feel. His solid touch is most obvious on "I Think God Can Understand," where he achieves close to a perfect balance between resonant low toms and rich cymbal wash. Although ballads are "blind tempos" for some drummers, Slutsky is right at home on them. In fact, he stamps all the grooves with an energetic approach that makes them sound like first takes. Marc sounds especially confident on the tribal tom vamp in "Space Boy."

Splendor has done a fine juggling act here, making you hum *and* think. (Columbia)

— T. Bruce Wittet

7 Dieter Ilg Fieldwork

Steve Arguelles (dr), Dieter Ilg (ac bs), Wolfgang Muthspiel (gtr, vln)

This interesting trio takes a set of seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth century ballads and traditional folk songs from the European canon, and transforms them into barely recognizable yet beautiful jazz performances. There is rhythmic complexity and advanced interplay here, but this modern jazz group accomplishes something others often fail to: Rather than playing *at* the music, they play *in* the music.

Steve Arguelles provides *Fieldwork* with a deft, warm touch while maintaining a nice sense of swing and attractive musical interplay with his two mates. Arguelles pushes and pulls the brushes on more than a few tunes, and he has a light (although never insubstantial) stroke with the sticks on the rest of the album. Steve fits in a comfortable sonic space between the deep, rich bass of the bandleader and the dense yet accessible guitar stylings of Wolfgang Muthspiel.

These musicians aren't out to prove anything. They are simply interacting with one another and creating an eminently likable, listenable contemporary jazz album. (Jazztine. www.amm-music.com)

— Ted Bonar

8 Rootsystem Live! Percussionistic Paintings

Bob Gullotti (dr, perc), Steve Ferraris (perc), Taurey Butler (kybd), Dave Grippo (sx, perc)

The brainchild of New England percussionist Steve Ferraris, Rootsystem is both a band and a concept. You see, group fixtures Ferraris and free-spirited skinsman Bob Gullotti invite different third players to join them onstage in spot-crafting tunes that are either improvised from scratch or worked up from basic blueprints. Recorded over an eight-month period at gigs in New Hampshire, *Percussionistic Paintings* teams the pair with, alternately, sax and keyboards, while saving room for several drum/percussion duets. The result is a loose, rhythm-heavy amalgam of jazz (both traditional and "out") and ethnic music.

Percussionistic Paintings slinks gracefully through a range of dynamics. Play it with your windows open and you'll find the quietest sections blend hauntingly with the sounds of nearby lawn mowers or passing cars. But when Gullotti digs in, he fills your ears with fluttering snare strokes and pulsating cymbal/drum figures. Bob is an exceptionally expressive drummer who can turn on a dime from dense, cascading

abstract beats to sensual, less-is-more-style playing, where a well-placed press roll or rimshot means everything. Likewise, Ferraris, who's as content to lay back as to tear into a brisk barrage of conga licks, coaxes tons of textures out of his vast assortment of bells, shekeres, and hand drums. Ultimately, whether accompanying the sax/keyboard players or embroiled in a heated musical conversation amongst themselves, the pared-down lineup allows Gullotti and Ferraris to happily call attention to the melodic capabilities of percussion instruments. (Rootsystem Records, www.rootssystem.com)

—Michael Parillo

One-time member of fusion legends Brand X, Frank Katz's powerful chops arsenal and deep funk grooves are a highlight of *Painted Rock*. Hot in the mix, Katz's speed-ridden grace notes and dazzling drum combinations are like a boxer in a race with the clock. Drawing on Mike Clark, Tony Williams, and Kenwood Dennard, his technique is explosive. But supported by his diamond-hard groove, Katz is truly something special in an era of progressive drummers long on flash and short on feel.

Hard-knuckled fusion without a hint of acoustic seasoning may not be to everyone's taste, but Tunnels revel in the assault. (Buckyball Records, www.buckyball.com)

—Ken Micallef

7 Tunnels Painted Rock

Frank Katz (dr), Percy Jones (bs), Mart Wagnon (MIDI vbs), Van Manakas (gtr)

Sometimes sounding like *The Lord Of The Rings* on a fusion roller-coaster, Tunnels' often delirious songs range from Zappaesque meter frivolity, to electro-jazz, to atmospheric free funk. Though they occasionally meander like gypsies on a balloon ride, these are ferocious performers.

VIDEOS

8 Paul Wertico

Sound Work Of Drumming

level: intermediate to advanced. 50 minutes, \$50

Paul Wertico is a natural teacher who with ease imparts the priceless knowledge he's accumulated with jazz giant Pat Metheny and numerous other projects. On *Sound Work* Wertico discusses the basic theories behind his drumming, then adapts to those specific pieces, played here by his quintet. He spends a good amount of time explaining what he did on each section of the arrangements, getting right to their musicality. Among his methods: approaching each song with a clean mental slate, taking chances, being spontaneous, and recognizing the importance of every musical moment. Wertico goes on to share useful ideas about feel, time, and practice, and talks about employing unusual cymbal combinations—even playing "Time Impulse" with a pair of knitting needles (for a "mischievous" sound). So many of Wertico's obsessions have to do with sound, it's charming to see him brought to a halt later in the film by a buzzing wingnut and a squeaky throne. This inspiring video gets to why Paul Wertico plays music—a worthy endeavor to be sure. (Rittor, available through authorized Paiste dealers or direct at 800-4PAISTE, www.paiste.com)

—Robin Tolleson

fact, the cameras are always ready when a soloist takes over, and when somebody's really digging in behind, they find him. On Mintzer's "Modern Day Tuba," for instance, when the band breaks it down from Abercrombie's screaming lead to a simmering Patitucci bass solo, the camera is right there to pick up Erskine starting a cowbell lick. When the drummer begins a powerful solo, it zooms in on him from overhead. You can *feel* the chemistry, the shifting moods, the cues, the inside jokes—this is simply a beautifully filmed concert.

At one point the band stops to talk about their individual roles, and Erskine discusses music-making as a "reductive" process: trying to find the best notes to put in the best places, exploring the spaces between notes. He even dissects a famous Jimmy Cobb/Miles Davis groove, adding yet more conceptual meat to an already healthy musical menu. (Hudson/Hal Leonard)

—Robin Tolleson

8 A Salute To Buddy Rich

Featuring Phil Collins, Dennis Chambers, And Steve Smith

level: all. 105 minutes, \$24.95

Last fall, yet another star-studded Buddy Rich Memorial Show was held in New York City, featuring Buddy's old band led by Letterman show bassist Will Lee. Short performances were given by Smith (with the "Buddy's Buddies" small group) and Chambers (with a trio and big band). Then Collins followed with a long big band set consisting of Rich classics and new arrangements of PC hits. (The past couple of years, Phil's been touring with his own big band.) This tape beautifully captures the event—and offers more.

First you get a nice (albeit brief) taste of Smith and Chambers. A couple of brilliant moments from Steve—one ducting up-tempo with sax and another ripping a solo—alone make this reasonably priced tape a must-have. And Dennis gets a chance to tap into his formidable chops in a snapshot appearance.

But this tape mainly focuses on Phil Collins. Frankly, it's more "face value" than "big swing face," but Collins does deliver the goods. Unlike earlier Buddy tributes that had a few lumpy performances from rock veterans trying to swing, Phil understands what the feel is all about. He doesn't overplay the material; he plays with confidence and sets up the band nicely. And just like his pop drumming, Phil



FROM THE EDITORS' VAULT

Rediscovering drumming's dusty gems

8 Seawind Remember

Seawind blew into public awareness in 1976 with their eponymous Grammy-winning debut album, followed by *Window Of A Child* in 1977. *Remember* presents tunes from these early outings, along with five previously unreleased tracks from 1981. Risking identity confusion with the public, Seawind played everything from funk and R&B à la AWB and Tower Of Power to new-age jazz à la Paul Winter Consort—all beneath both Christian-themed and secular lyrics. Their three-piece horn section (who later recorded with Harvey Mason and Rufus), led by revered trumpeter/flugelhornist/arranger Jerry Hey, is locked down mightily here by the tight, punchy drumming of Bob Wilson, who also wrote most of the material. Throughout, Hawaiian vocalist Pauline Wilson's high chest voice blows your hair back.

Ironically, the later, unreleased tunes sound more dated, with more commercially driven lyrics. But the grooves are still great, and the vocals are even stronger. In "We Got A Way," Pauline Wilson sang, "We don't despise a compromise, funk's one way to go / There's more to play than 2 & 4, funk will open up the door." It did. Go in, listen, and be inspired by the grooves' (Noteworthy)

—Rich Watson

7 The Abercrombie/Erskine/Mintzer Band Live In New York City

level: beginner to advanced. 110 minutes, \$24.95

Live In New York City clearly communicates how ferociously this jazz supergroup plays together, and treats us to many great shots of Erskine from several angles. In

lays down a fat pocket that the band falls comfortably into. (Killer percussion work from Luis Conte adds spice.) PC: the contemporary Davey Tough?

Phil, Dennis, and Steve would certainly agree that the best parts of this tape are the several rarely seen clips of Buddy performing from different eras of his career. (In fact, his is the longest solo spot on the tape!) Inspiring stuff—from yesterday and today. (Hudson/Hal Leonard)

—William F. Miller

BOOKS

7 Rhythmic Aerobics by Jim Ryan

level: intermediate to advanced, \$14.95

When I see a Mel Bay book on the shelf of my local music store, I think, "Huge publisher with no personal touch." Well, I couldn't be further off the mark with this one. *Rhythmic Aerobics* is loaded with personality!

Author Jim Ryan's stated goal is "to perfect the timing of the drum practitioner," and there is no doubt in my mind that playing these lessons to a metronome (as suggested) would make you more rhythmically grounded. You'd also get turned on to some really hip 4/4 and 6/8 grooves, all of which come out of Ryan's thirty-five years' playing and teaching experience.

Though this book's intended educational level is beginner to intermediate, beyond the first five pages, it's really more appropriate for the intermediate to advanced player. Its 101 pages are broken up into eleven sections, touching on everything from quarter notes to swing rhythms. Though the progression is a little odd at times, the lessons are incremental and make musical sense. Each is broken up into four repeated measures, and every so often a fill is placed in the last measure. Even though the exercises are in even time signatures, they get pretty darned complex. My advice is to take them nice and slow.

Add this book to your lesson plan and watch your bandmates perk up when you throw in one of these crazy beats. (Mel Bay)

—Fran Azzarto

7 Rumba Guaguango

Conversations by Arturo Rodriguez

level: beginner to intermediate, \$19.95 (book and CD)

Learning to play, sing, and dance the traditional music of Cuba has long been beyond the reach of most American drummers. In the US, authentic Cuban rumba has for

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decades had many fans but few truly qualified players, mainly because the form calls for loads of technique, teamwork, and dedication. Thanks to Arturo Rodriguez' new book, the rhythmic concepts, drumming, and singing that comprise true rumba are now within the grasp of the serious student.

You needn't be an advanced hand drummer to feel at home here, but you *do* need to commit to taking a "course" that imparts a wealth of information—cultural, conceptual, and rhythmic. To assist your journey, Rodriguez includes "pop quizzes" throughout *Conversations*. The workbook is clearly laid out, and includes rhythmic notation, song lyrics, historical background, and a very helpful accompanying CD.

Rodriguez has accomplished a big task here: making it possible for "outsiders" to feel comfortable in some very deep cultural waters. (Mel Bay)

—Bill Kiely

Alfred Marching Percussion Books

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- 6** Rudimental Duets For Intermediate Snare Drummers
- 5** Championship Corps-Style Contest Solos For The Intermediate to Advanced Snare Drummer

by Jay Wanamaker \$4.95 each

Jay Wanamaker is known as a percussion educator, arranger, and clinician, including his work instructing mass percussion sections for special events like the 1984 Summer Olympic Games and Super Bowl XXII. The first two books here were originally published in 1995, the third eleven years earlier.

Rudimental Contest Solos features seven two-page solos—"Struttin'," "Funkster," "On-Line," "Conquistador," "Chops Are

Us," "Free Flight," and "Cyclone"—and one page of seven "Chop Builders" exercises. *Rudimental Duets* also includes seven two-page solos, this time for two snare drummers—"Bombastic," "Rhythm In Motion," "Corps Master," "Ram & Jam," "Chop Breaker," "Drums On Parade," and "Colossus"—followed by one page of five "Chop Builders" duets. Both books feature clearly marked tempos, stickings (including backstickings), rimshots, taps, etc., as well as dynamics, which make each solo a true musical composition. There is nothing too complex in either book for a rudimental snare drummer in an advanced high school marching band or a drum & bugle corps. Still, each would be a challenging way for a drumset player to expand his or her snare drum chops—and especially reading skills.

Championship Corps Style Contest Solos contains seven solos—"4th Of July," "Main Street Strut," "Spirit Of Sanchez," "Drum Corps On The March," "Hurricane," "Crazy Army," and "Bridgemen"—plus a list of the new rudiments adopted by PAS in 1984. These solos seem a little dated, as more contemporary solos feature new rudiments and techniques that are constantly being added to the snare drummer's arsenal. (Alfred)

—Cody Alvin Cassidy



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Art Blakey

Part 2: 1959 To 1990

by Mark Griffith

Last month we examined Art Blakey's drumming from 1945 through 1958. We'll pick up Part 2 in 1959, which began the most prolific stretch in Blakey's career.

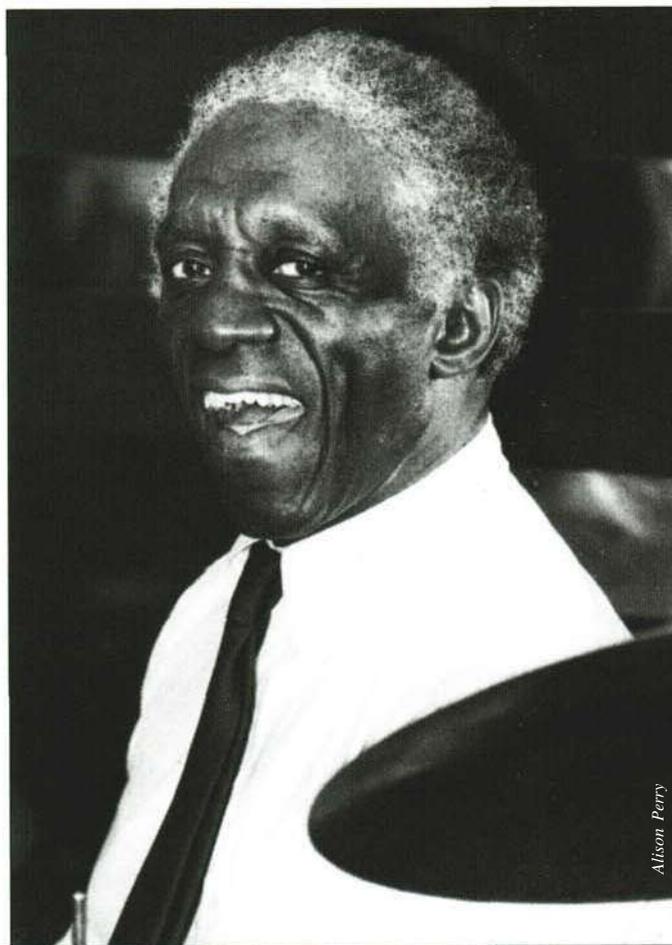
We'll start with *Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers At The Jazz Corner Of The World*, a 1959 live recording of the band back at Birdland. This recording is a good example of how The Messengers played music that engaged the audience. When Blakey performed, it was his intention to help his listeners forget their everyday worries, make them tap their feet, and walk away feeling good.

Blakey's Messengers were so good because they were working bands. They worked because their music connected with listeners and made them feel good, without pandering to them. Here lies an important Blakey lesson. Art realized that he was an entertainer, and he performed as one. He never compromised his music and was never patronizing, condescending, or rude to his audience, and the crowds always came back. Also listen to the live recording *In Stockholm 1959*, and to *Paris Jam Session* featuring The Messengers with special guest Bud Powell.

During his busy years most of Art's sideman appearances were with members of The Jazz Messengers on their own recordings. In 1960, Hank Mobley enlisted his one-time employer for two of Blakey's best outings as a sideman. *Soul Station* is a masterpiece. Its title track is an essential example of the signature Blakey groove. The laid-back "Blakey Shuffle" was recorded quite often, but here Art sticks with it throughout the cut, without variance. Its lazy-yet-propelling feeling is essential Blakey. Art played this groove with a perfect balance between his feathered bass drum, his shuffling snare drum (complete with "dead stroke" backbeats), a skipping ride cymbal, and a "chomping" hi-hat.

From the same recording, the composition and performance of "This I Dig Of You" is an absolute classic, and "If I Should Lose You" is quintessential "tipping" on Art's part. Mobley's *Roll Call*, with its romping title tune, is also a classic.

Art made several recordings with Lee Morgan. In 1960 he played on two sessions now released as *Expooindent*. They also made the *Leeway* and *Tomcat* recordings for Blue Note. *Leeway* is probably the most understated recording that Art Blakey ever made. Wayne Shorter's *Second Genesis*, which also features Blakey, was made only two days before Morgan's *Expooindent*. Notice how Art's drumming changed when he wasn't the band-

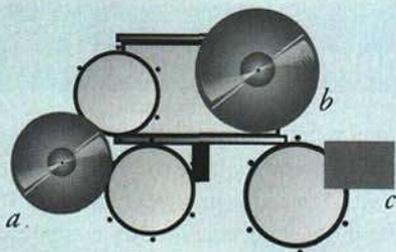


Alison Perry

leader, even if the recording personnel were nearly identical. This selfless approach is what made Art a great sideman—as well as a great leader.

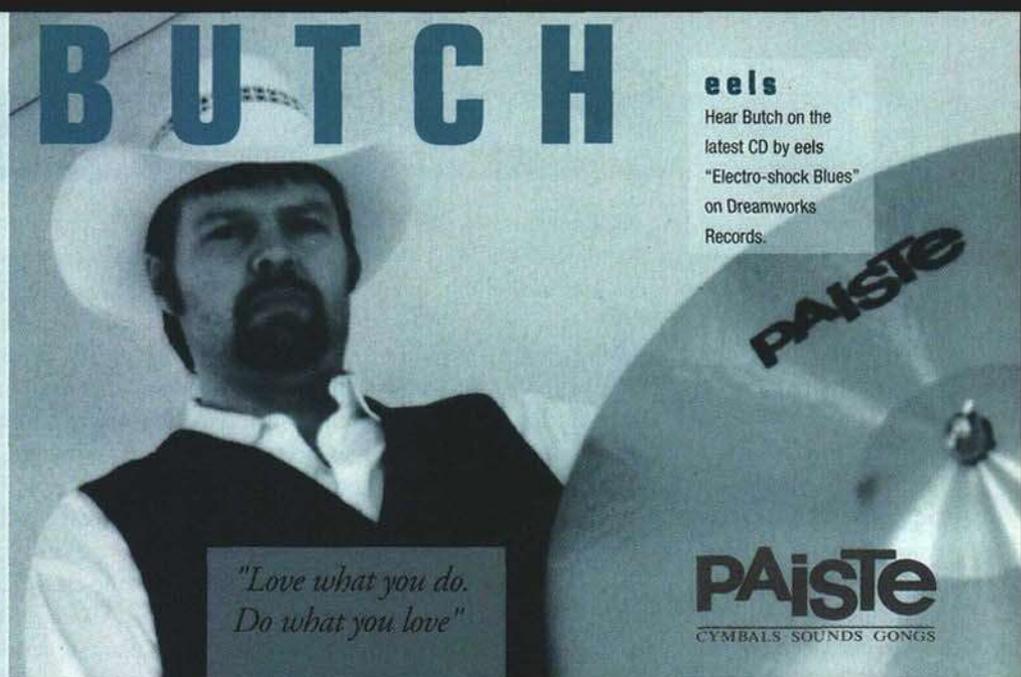
In 1960 Blakey assembled perhaps the most popular version of The Jazz Messengers, with Wayne Shorter, Lee Morgan, Bobby Timmons, and Jymie Merritt. Together they recorded nine albums for Blue Note. All of these recordings are now collected in Mosaic's *The Complete Blue Note Recordings Of Art Blakey's 1960 Jazz Messengers* box set. While this may be a healthy investment for the average listener, for the serious jazz drummer it is a small price to pay to study one of the greatest jazz drummers ever.

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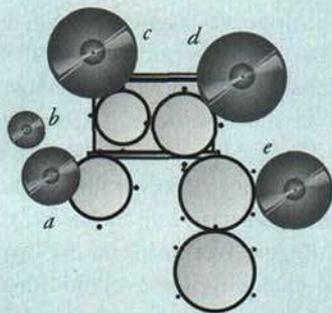


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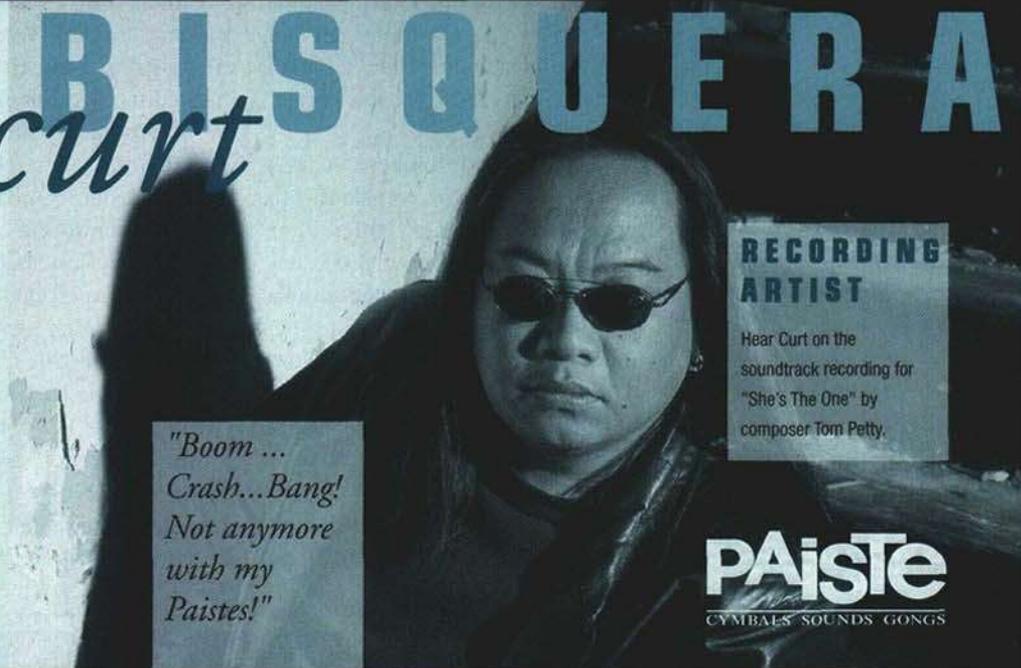
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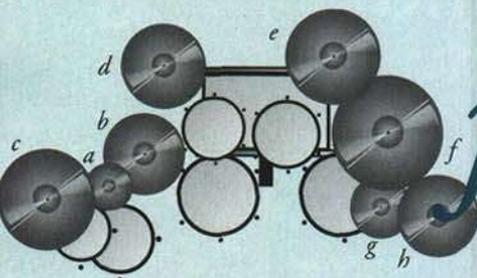
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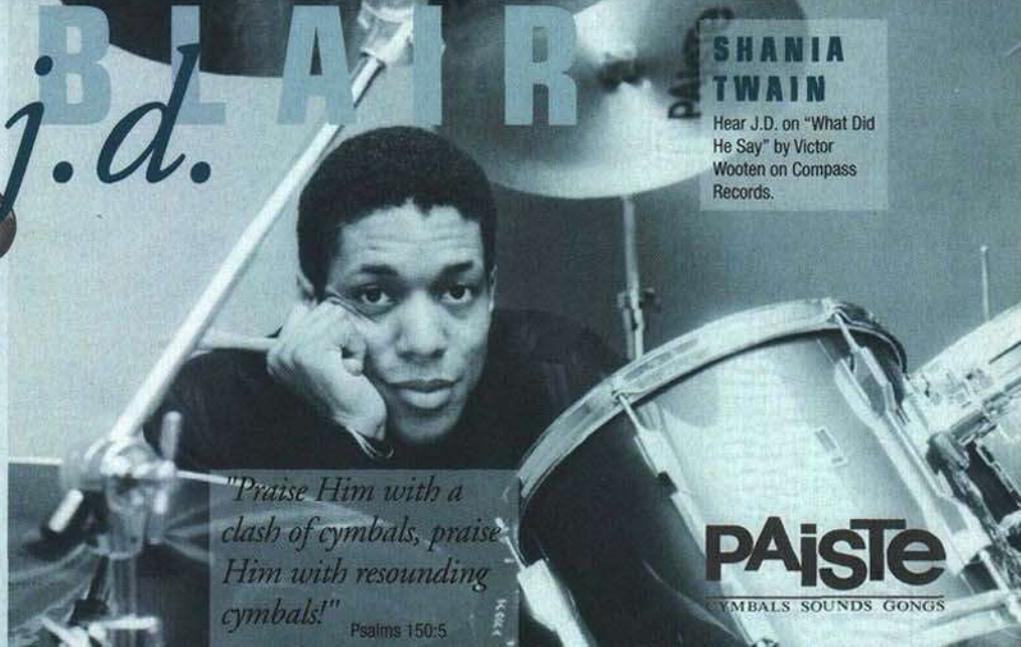
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Blakey's drumming stressed what is important: time, sound, musicality, and creativity.

If you can't afford the box set, the recording *The Big Beat* is a must-own, while *The Witch Doctor* and *The Freedom Rider* are near classics. The latter includes one of the only unaccompanied drum solos ever recorded by Blakey.

Blue Note's two volumes of *Meet You At The Jazz Corner Of The World* were the only official live recordings of this band, and are also in the Mosaic set. However, the recently released (and now official recording) *En Concert Avec Europe 1* is a freewheeling example of this band live in 1961. I've heard many live recordings of this band, and this is by far the best. The *Swiss Radio Days Live In Lausanne 1960* recordings (parts one and two) are also quite good.

Although very active as a leader, Art still occasionally appeared as a sideman. He recorded *Blue Lights* and *On View At The Five Spot* with guitarist Kenny Burrell, and *Easy Living* with Ike Quebec. Grant Green also called on Blakey for his *Nigeria* recording, which is now included in the two-disc set *The Complete Quartets With Sonny Clark*. Blakey also assembled an "all star" quartet featuring McCoy Tyner and Sonny Stitt for the unique recording *Jazz Message*.

In the meantime, The Messengers had added trombonist Curtis Fuller to the band. Blakey's power was even more prevalent with the larger group. For the first recording—simply titled *Jazz Messengers*—Art opted to focus this power into four jazz standards, instead of what would soon be mostly original compositions written by the band.

For the next nine recordings Freddie Hubbard and Cedar Walton would take over for Morgan and Timmons, while Curtis Fuller and Wayne Shorter remained on board. The Messengers now employed four prolific composers and arrangers. The bigger front line afforded more arranging possibilities, and allowed the band to play two- or three-horn background figures (coinciding with their leader's catalytic comping) behind a soloist. This larger band had

a vastly different approach and repertoire from all of the previous bands. They were a powerhouse ensemble.

The first recording, *Mosaic*, signaled a new beginning for the band. Worldwide touring was influencing everybody's composing, and Blakey (the consummate bandleader) let the band grow and blossom. Art's drumming was going through changes as well. He was beginning to play more orchestrally within the band's arrangements, shading the soloists differently and greatly coloring the music. The great bebop and hard bop drummer was evolving into an expressive and modern musician. But however modern he became, he was still the volcanic drummer we had always known. Check out the classic solo on "Arabia."

Buhaina's Delight (titled from Art's Muslim name; Abdullah Ibn Buhaina) further expanded the approach of The Messengers. This was no longer a band with only the best players around. Beginning with Benny Golson on *Moanin'*, this was also a band featuring the best arrangers around. This influence was rubbing off on Art as well. He was starting to play more like an arranger than a drummer. The fire and the drive was augmented with different textures and moods. All the characteristics were still there (polyrhythms, press rolls, cymbal chokes, driving mambos), but there was more patience, and an added sense of excitement and drama. Listen to the title track from this recording. This is more than a tune; it's an orchestrated suite, and Blakey is the conductor.

This edition of the band was documented live for the only time (Merritt was soon replaced by Reggie Workman) on the two volumes of *Three Blind Mice*. To exemplify the evolution that had occurred in the band, compare these recordings with the live *Jazz Corner Of The World* recordings from 1959, only three years earlier. The Messengers had evolved into a big band, within the instrumentation of a sextet. Blakey sounds especially like a big band drummer on these fantastic live recordings. These are possibly the most under-recognized of all Blakey's recorded works.

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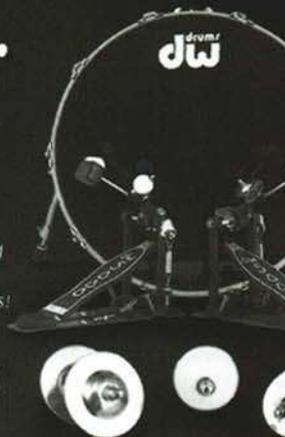
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Bassist Reggie Workman joined the band in late 1962. This was an important addition, because with Workman, Art's approach became more modern. On *Caravan*, study Art's timeflow behind the sax and trombone solos on the title track, as well as on the song "This Is For Albert." Blakey is beginning to occasionally "suspend the time" and "float"—characteristics more often associated with Elvin Jones and Roy Haynes. The rest of this recording offers an unusually subdued Blakey.

On *Ugetsu* the Workman/Blakey time-keeping relationship becomes stronger and more elastic. Blakey's polyrhythmic capabilities are now bleeding into his timekeeping, and Workman is going with the flow. Art is becoming polymetric (as opposed to polyrhythmic) while the time flow is stretching and contracting and metric modulations are occurring. We often associate this trait only with The John Coltrane Quartet and Miles' Quintet with Tony Williams. But listen to the composition "Ugetsu," and feel Blakey stretching the time flow. With these recordings we are able to study a very important musical tran-

sition taking place. The band's next recording would capture the summit of this transformation.

Free For All is what most drummers refer to when they speak of Blakey's recordings. Unfortunately, this single impression can be misleading. The approach that we hear on this recording was implied on the two previously listed offerings. But on *Free For All* Art and The Messengers simply exploded. The album's title tune is one of the most exciting performances in jazz, *period*. All of the polyrhythms, polymeters, and time permutations that had been implied since Reggie Workman joined the band came alive on the furious pulse of that tune, and on the rest of this intense and legendary session.

Only ten days after that session, the same group recorded *Kyoto*. It was a good recording that had the impossible task of following its volcanic predecessor. Later that same year the "powerhouse Messengers" would make their last recording. *Indestructible* is a thunderous, romping, and exciting recording—a fitting end to this edition of the band.

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Blakey kept the power of the band going when he brought in pianist John Hicks, saxophonist John Gilmore, and Lee Morgan (back for another stay). In 1965 this band was filmed in London. The video of that performance is outstanding. We finally get to see all of the classic Blakey trademarks. The camera work and angles are perfect. The end of the tape also features a brief drum battle between Blakey, Elvin Jones, and Sunny Murray. This is the best example of Blakey on video. (This same band also made the recording *'S Make It*, a good record of all-new material by this fantastic new lineup.)

The next edition of The Messengers featured Chuck Mangione and Keith Jarrett. While this lineup may seem a little strange, their recording *Get The Message* (originally released as *Buttercorn Lady*) is very good. Blakey's bandleading concept was so strong that it could pull even the most disparate musicians onto the same page for a great performance. Throughout the late '60s and early '70s Blakey employed such musical luminaries as Steve Turre, Woody Shaw, Stanley Clarke, and George Cables. Unfortunately there were no truly classic recordings made.

In 1971 Blakey participated in the all-star *Giants Of Jazz* tour. This band featured Blakey with (among others) Thelonious Monk and Dizzy Gillespie. Blakey himself wasn't fond of these performances. However, the recording *Giants Of Jazz In Berlin '71* is an interesting documentation of this legendary group of musicians.

The year 1981 saw one of the last "official" recordings of Blakey with one of his peers, when he supported Dexter Gordon on *Gotham City* (also featuring Woody Shaw and George Benson). In 1987, pianist and one-time Messenger James Williams tapped Art for Williams' first recording, *Magical Trio*. Because we rarely hear Art in a piano trio, this is a very special recording.

Throughout the 1980s Blakey continued to employ the greatest young talent for The Jazz Messengers. Branford and Wynton Marsalis played on several recordings, the best of which is *Keystone 3*. Also check out *Straight Ahead* and the video *Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers Live At The Smithsonian 1982*. In the mid-'80s, Terrance Blanchard and Donald Harrison joined the band, making several good recordings, including *New York Scene* and *Dr. Jeckle*.

The last edition of The Messengers featured Brian Lynch, Geoff Keezer, and Javon Jackson. Unfortunately, Blakey's health was slipping, and he had gone almost completely deaf. But his spirit was fully intact. The idea of mind over matter allowed Art to swing and push this band like he had all of the others before. The recording *Chippin' In* is clear evidence of this important lesson. The live recording *The Art Of Jazz*, done less than a year before Art's death, brought many legendary ex-Messengers together with the current band for a fitting tribute to the master. Blakey sounds better than he had in years. This recording even features a drum duet between Art and Roy Haynes.

In 1990 we lost Art Blakey. He taught scores of young musicians how to open up, and he dared us all to keep up with him. He was, in Bobby Watson's words, "the greatest talent scout in jazz." Art took the lessons he learned from Kenny Clarke and Papa Jo Jones, and became possibly the most identifiable jazz drummer

Tracking Them Down

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

Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers <i>At The Jazz Corner Of The World</i> , Blue Note CDP 724382888826 <i>Live In Stockholm 1959</i> , Dragon DRCD 182 <i>The Big Beat</i> , Blue Note CDP 7840292 <i>A Night In Tunisia</i> , Blue Note 7840492 <i>Meet You At The Jazz Corner Of The World</i> Vol 1, Blue Note CDP 7840542 <i>Meet You At The Jazz Corner Of The World</i> Vol 2, Blue Note CDP 7840552 <i>The Freedom Rider</i> , Blue Note CDP 7841562 <i>Like Someone In Love</i> Blue Note CDP 7842452 <i>The Witch Doctor</i> , Blue Note CDP 7842582 <i>Roots And Herbs</i> , Blue Note CDP 7843472 Pisces, Blue Note GXF 3060 <i>The Complete Blue Note Recordings Of</i> <i>Art Blakey's 1960 Jazz Messengers</i> , Mosaic MD6-141 <i>Swiss Radio Days Vol 1</i> , TCB 02022 <i>Swiss Radio Days Vol 2</i> , TCB 02062 <i>En Concert Avec Europe 1</i> , Europe 1 RTE 1502-2 <i>Jazz Messengers</i> , Impulse MCAD-5886 <i>Pans Jam Session</i> , Fontana 832 692-2 <i>Buhaina's Delight</i> , Blue Note 7841042 Mosaic, Blue Note CDP 7465232 <i>Three Blind Mice Vol 1</i> , Blue Note CDP 7844512 <i>Three Blind Mice Vol 2</i> , Blue Note CDP 7844522 <i>Caravan</i> , Riverside OJCCD-038-2 <i>Ugetsu</i> , Riverside OJCCD-090-2 <i>Kyoto</i> , Riverside OJCCD-145-2 <i>Free For All</i> , Blue Note CDP 7841702 <i>Indestructible</i> , Blue Note CDP 7464292 <i>'S Make It</i> , Limelight EXPR-1022 <i>Get The Message</i> , Drive Archive DE2-41084 <i>Keystone 3</i> , Concord CCD-4196 <i>Straight Ahead</i> Concord CCD-4168 <i>New York Scene</i> , Concord CCD-4256 <i>Dr. Jeckle</i> , Evidence ECD-22001-2 <i>Chippin' In</i> , Timeless CDSJP-340 <i>The Art Of Jazz, In & Out</i> IORCD 77028-2	Art Blakey Quartet <i>Jazz Message</i> , Impulse MCAD-5648 Wayne Shorter <i>Second Genesis</i> , Le Jazz CD 9 Lee Morgan <i>Expoibident</i> , Le Jazz CD 39 <i>Leeway</i> , Blue Note CDP 724383208920 <i>Tomcat</i> , Blue Note CDP 7844462 Hank Mobley <i>Soul Station</i> , Blue Note CDP 7465282 <i>Roll Call</i> , Blue Note CDP 7468232 Ike Quebec <i>Easy Living</i> , Blue Note CDP 7468462 Kenny Burrell <i>Blue Lights</i> , Blue Note CDP 7815962 <i>On View At The Five Spot</i> , Blue Note CDP 7465382 Grant Green <i>Nigeria</i> , Blue Note LT-1032 <i>The Complete Quartets With Sonny Clark</i> , Blue Note CDP 724385719424 The Giants Of Jazz <i>Giants Of Jazz 71</i> , Emarcy 834567-2 Dexter Gordon <i>Gotham City</i> , Columbia CK 36853 James Williams <i>Magical Trio 1</i> , Emarcy 832859-2 On Video with The Jazz Messengers <i>Live 1965</i> , Green Line Video VIDJAZZ 34 <i>Jazz At The Smithsonian 1982</i> , Kultur Video
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ever. Blakey's drumming stressed what is important: time, sound, musicality, and creativity. Art's playing shaped jazz history for almost sixty years, and his Jazz Messengers were one of the most popular groups in jazz for over thirty. His contagious grooves and volcanic drumming inspired us all. We can all relive this inspiration—and become better musicians in the process—simply by referring to the amazing recorded legacy of this genuine legend.



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Injustice, The Bears Are Running, Best of; **Missing Persons**- Spring Session M,
Late Nights Early Days; **U.K.**- Danger Money, Night After Night

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(w/ **George Duke**); **A Funky Thide of Sings**; **Mississippi Knights** (live); **Paradox**-
The First Second (live); **Nordic**-Off Color; **Jack Bruce**-Concert Classics

VINNIE COLAIUTA

Chick Corea Akoustic Band-Live From The Blue Note Tokyo; **Los Lobotomys**-
s/t (w/ **Jeff Porcaro** & **Carlos Vega**); **Randy Waldman Trio**-Wigged Out; **Steve**
Tavaglione-Blue Tav; **Bunny Brunel**-Dedication; **Warren Cuccurullo**-Thanks To
Frank; **Jeff Richman**-The Way In; **Vinnie Colaiuta**-s/t (Japanese edition w/bonus track)

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Stretch; Just Add Water; **On The Virg**-Serious Young Insects; **Derek Sherinian**-
Planet X; **Montreal Drumfest 1996/1997** (2 CD's featuring Dennis Chambers,
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MARCO MINNEMANN

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Illegal Aliens-Time, Red Alibis, Thickness



SIMON PHILLIPS

Out of the Blue (live); Another Lifetime (Japanese edition w/bonus tracks);
Symbiosis; Protocol (Solo Debut); **Protocol**-Force Majeure, (live); **Los**
Lobotomys-Candyman; **Toto**-Livefield, Mindfields, Absolutely Live (2 CD's)

STEVE SMITH

Vital Tech Tones (w/**Scott Henderson** & **Victor Wooten**); Show Me What You Can
Do (w/**Frank Gambale** & **Stu Hamm**); Cause and Effect (w/**Larry Coryell** & **Tom**
Coster); The Stranger's Hand (w/**Howard Levy**, **Jerry Goodman** & **Oteil Burbridge**);
Buddy's Buddies (w/**Anthony Jackson**, etc...); **Neil Zaza**-Staring At The Sun;
Montreal Drumfest '95 (w/**Kirk Covington**, **Rod Morgenstein**, **Mike Portnoy**, etc.);
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LENNY WHITE

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GREG MATHIESON PROJECT-Baked Potato Super Live!! (w/**Jeff Porcaro**);
MARCO MENDOZA/JOEY HEREDIA/RENATO NETO-Live in L.A.;
BOBBY ROCK-Snap, Crackle & Pop...Live! 2 CD's, Out of Body;
TOM SCOTT-Apple Juice, Intimate Strangers (w/ Steve Gadd); **SIXUN**-
Nouvelle Vague, Lunatic Taxi, Nomads Land, L'eau De La, Live, Explore, Pygmies,
Nuit Blanche (w/ **Paco Sery**); **STEVE TOPPING**-Time and Distance
(w/ Gary Husband); **VARIOUS ARTISTS**-Who Loves You/A Tribute to **Jaco Pastorius**
(w/ **Peter Erskine**, **Steve Gadd**, **Jeff "Tain" Watts**); **CHAD WACKERMAN**-Scream, The View,
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Street Beats

Guerrilla Percussion Is Alive And Well In Music City

by Robin Tolleson

With Nashville's hot-sticking percussionists Street Beats, it's BYOB—bring your own buckets. The young five-some puts on a great show, combining championship-quality chops, inventive writing and arranging, a flair for the stage, and a friendly street-band persona. Each member has a "drumkit" built around five-gallon utility buckets, along with a few accessories small enough to fit inside the buckets when it's time to pick up and go to the next stop.

Nashville's very vocal street preachers on Second Avenue may take offense at the drummers—"They think we're trying to drown out the word of God," says one Street Beater—but they must marvel at the crowds stopping to watch and listen. This is Street Beats' fourth summer playing together downtown, their worldly-wise rhythms bouncing off beautifully renovated stained glass and cobblestone buildings,

their fortissimos certainly reaching the steps up to stately Ryman Auditorium.

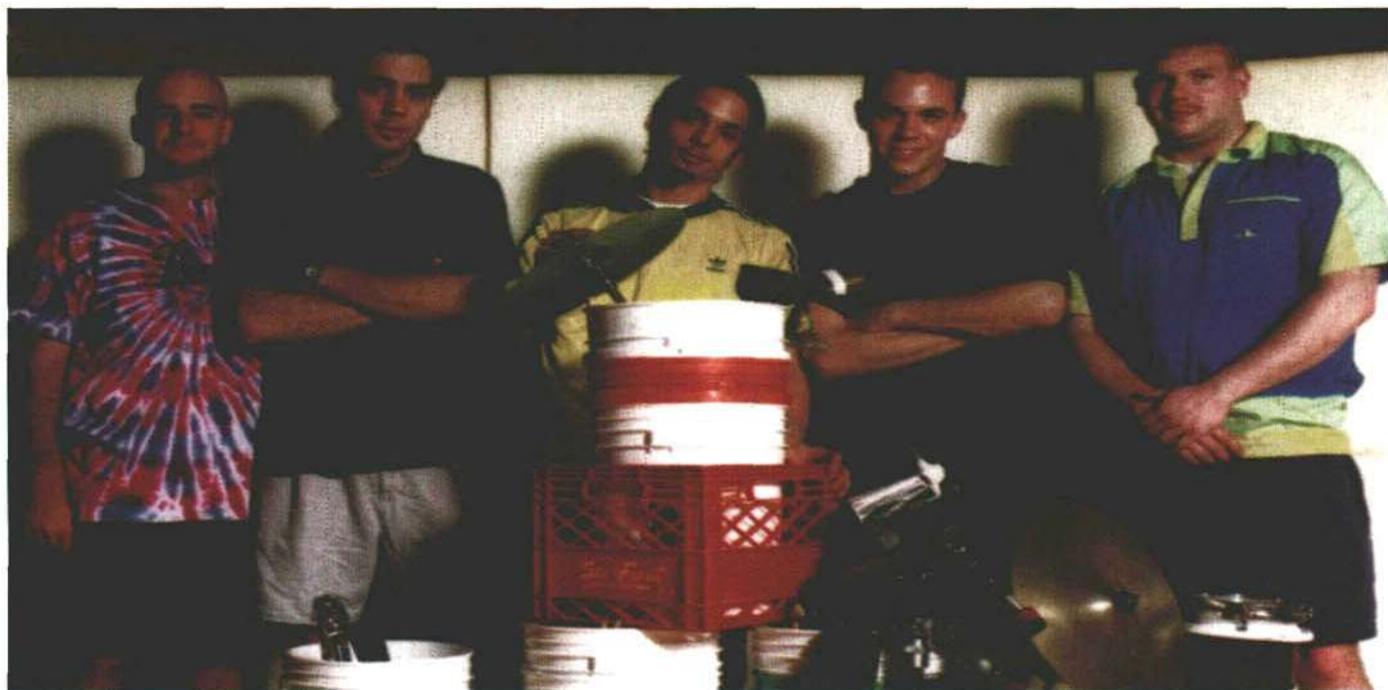
Brandon Allison, twenty-four, plays two buckets, two cymbals, and some antique cowbells in the group. "I don't even know what brand the cowbells are," he says. "They're thirty years old."

According to Allison, the members of Street Beats met in Brentwood, Tennessee, in a competitive percussion ensemble called Music City Mystique. MCM consists of about forty performers, and

"It would be cool if we got a bucket endorsement, because we break *them* more often than sticks."

they reigned as champions in the independent world class for three years. Of the experience, Brandon says, "It's a lot like drum corps indoors."

The idea of Street Beats was born during a social gathering of college and drum corps friends. "A few of us went downtown one day," recalls Neal Davis, twenty-five. "We were just practicing on



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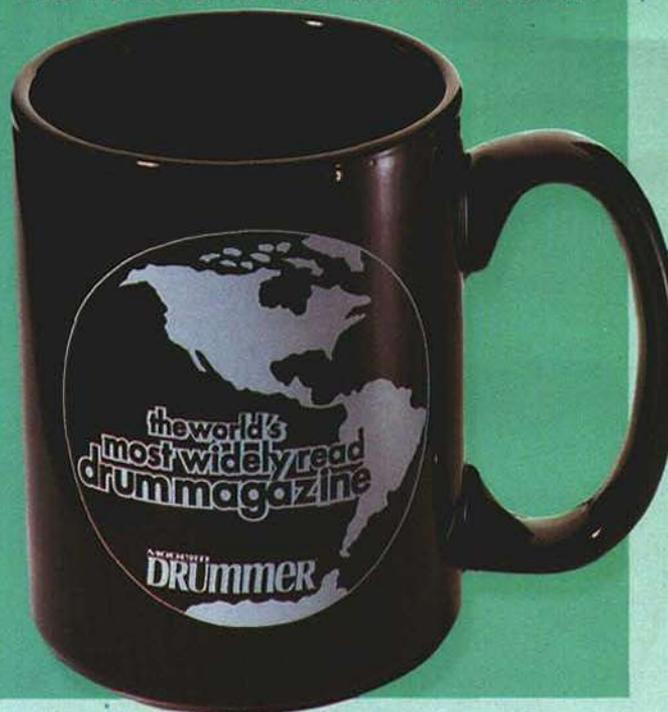
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ground, and that's how we get a resonance out of it, the bass drum sound," explains Davis. "You can also play the side of the bucket, squeezing your legs together and getting the pitch to go up and down. You can also bounce it off the ground, kick it with your foot—you can get all kinds of sounds out of it."

Street Beats' patterns are sometimes quite complex, and the same beat is rarely played longer than ten seconds. But the joyous, funky nature of their grooves keeps people completely entertained. "We love funk—the funkier the better," says Allison. "We try to play simple beats, but over the top of it we have a lot of complex breaks and

practice pads—not trying to draw any attention, just freely doing what we do at home. And this started to draw a crowd. Soon we thought, 'Hmmm, it could be a good idea to do something with this.' We'd seen related stuff on TV, and other things that percussionists had done, and we decided to put our own thing together. It's grown ever since, and it's actually evolved into a set of songs."

When writing new tunes, it generally takes Street Beats twelve to fifteen hours to completely nail the arrangements. "That's the only time that we practice," Davis says. "Otherwise we just load up the trans-van and warm up on the way."

Shane Gwaltney, twenty-three, plays on the most basic setup of the group. He has three buckets arranged in a triangle shape, one of them with a 14" head attached with duct tape. "I can hit it like a normal drum, and it sits beside me. That's all I've got—that and my sticks." According to Gwaltney, there are three main sounds that one can get from the buckets, which he likens to the three main elements of funk drumming. "Just off the center of the bucket bottom is kind of the bass drum tone," he says. "The bottom edge is kind of the hi-hat sound. Then there's the rim of a right-side-up bucket, which you can get a 'snare' or other sounds from."

"We have the bucket between our legs, holding it up off the

rudimentary stuff that keeps us happy."

You'll hear legendary funk passages borrowed freely by the group, along with their own outlandish rhythmic creations. It's a demanding gig, to say the least. Each player is pulling a lot of weight, and the spirit is like that of a team event. The group's tempos rise and fall as one voice, and they segue from one genre to another with remarkable fluidity. "That was never a problem," says twenty-two-year-old Carson Carr. "We never even had to work on that. It's all written—tempo, values of notes. I'll write something down to remember what the idea was, then we'll sit down together and say, 'Well, let's try this here.' We'll think of beats in one small section, four bars or eight bars at a time, and then we'll go in and try to put them all together. Whatever works. We just all play in time."

As one tune is flying by at an outrageous tempo, the members might throw a choreographed arm, neck, or head move into the act, which gets the crowd roaring. "A lot of times we'll just take a famous beat and add cowbells to it, funk it up," says Drew Mena, twenty-three, the man in the middle of the Street Beats setup. "I'm the one with the three cowbells that are duct-taped together—and the cymbal that's hanging on by a garbage bag tie," he laughs. Guerrilla percussion is alive and well in Nashville.

"It would be cool if we got a bucket endorsement, because we break *them* more often than sticks," says Carr. "None of us really has just one specialty. We all help write the tunes and help arrange the way they're played, and we all have solos." Carr has a mini hi-hat in his set, which he created using two splash cymbals. "I use whatever kinds of splashes I can get my hands on," he says. "I break them all the time."

"I can't use anything else because we have to be able to carry all of our stuff," adds Carr. "I definitely have the most stuff that I could possibly carry in one trip to the car. There's a parking garage right above Second Avenue in Nashville, and we walk down about a block with our stuff."

The young street musicians are attracting attention outside of Nashville, too: A trip to Florida last year saw them win over many new fans and wrestle with local authorities over the issue of a performing permit. The group finalized an endorsement deal with Pro-Mark last year, and are bound to get noticed with the launching of their Web site, www.streetbeatshome.com, and the release of their debut CD, *'Bout Time*. The title obviously refers to the nature of their music—but also to the constant stream of fans who've been asking for three years about a CD. Indeed, it *is* about time.



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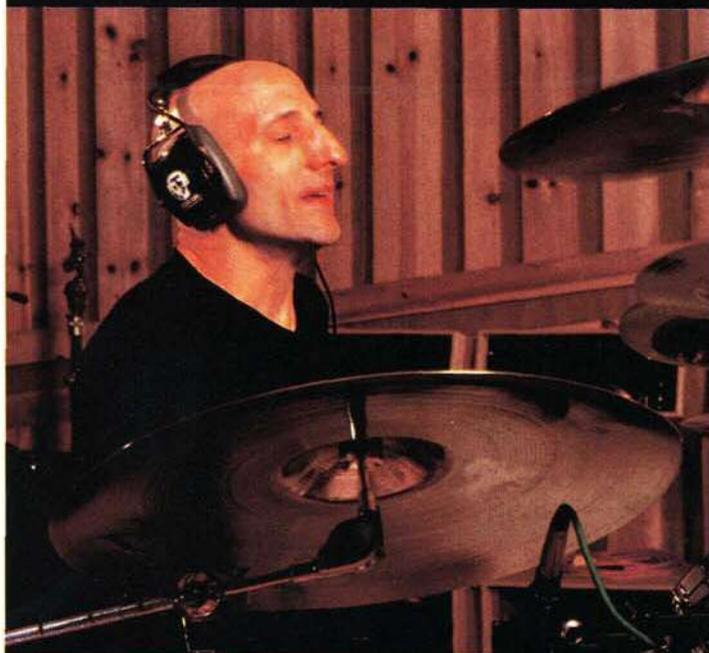
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The Benefits Of Learning A Second Instrument

by Ted Bonar

In September's *The Musical Drummer* we explored the reasons for understanding and studying melody, harmony, phrasing, and structure within music. We found that by understanding these concepts better, we can become better drummers.

What more can we do to learn about our unique role within the music? Besides improving our skills on the drums and studying the parameters of melody and harmony, one of the best ways to learn about being a complete musician is to study a non-percussive instrument. Learning a secondary instrument, even if only on an elementary level, will help you

better understand the role of each instrument in an ensemble, and therefore better understand *your* role within the music.

Of course, as percussionists, there *are* ways to dip our feet into the deep waters of melody and harmony. Drum and percussion ensembles certainly play complete musical works. Timpani have pitch control. And electronics have opened up myriad possibilities. But the plain truth is that learning a secondary instrument will teach us many important things about pitch, tone, melody, harmony, and other musical concepts that percussion simply cannot.

In music schools, universities, and con-

servatories, it is customary to require students to study secondary instruments. Usually piano is required for musicians whose primary instrument is *not* piano. This creates a scenario where a musician studies and practices his primary instrument for years and years in order to get to a university level, only to be thrown into a beginning piano class upon his or her arrival. As a drummer who went through this process, I can tell you that this was *not* an easy adjustment. After years of reading rhythms only, four parts at a time (two hands, two feet), I was thrown for a loop when I was suddenly expected to read

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music in bass and treble clef simultaneously (low and high notes—or left and right hands on the piano) while thinking about all ten of my fingers. Not easy!

I slowly discovered that, although my facility on the new instrument was slow in developing, I began to understand and hear music better than I ever had before. Music theory, key signatures, scales, chord structures, chord progressions, and different styles all made more sense to me, and I found that when I *did* get behind the drums, everything about the music became much

clearer. After years of practicing my instrument and playing only my drum part, I was now able to apply my hard-earned technique to fit the music, and to actually play *with* my fellow musicians rather than simply play *along* with them.

For many drummers, the guitar is actually a more appropriate and reasonable second instrument to learn than piano. For starters, guitars are less expensive and more portable than pianos (although there are many inexpensive and portable electronic keyboards available). More impor-

tant, however, the guitar can be more conducive to learning if a drummer has played mostly in rock settings. Most rock songs are written on and for guitar, and it is literally easier to see what your fellow players are doing. (So it's easier to steal a few guitar licks!) You will also find that the motion of the strumming hand closely resembles the motion of your "ride cymbal" hand, which should make it that much easier for you to become comfortable on guitar.

By getting to a level where you can play your secondary instrument with a band (even if you're just jamming with friends), you will have an experience unlike any you've had before. Why? Because the tables have been turned. You're now out front playing a different role in the band. Most importantly, *you now have to play your new instrument along with a drummer other than yourself!*

When you play guitar, in addition to being aware of rhythm, you must think about chord changes, which we talked about last month. But you must *also* be aware of where your new instrument sits with the band dynamically.

As drummers, we generally play fairly loudly. It's simply a loud instrument. Snare drums are tuned to cut through the din of amplification, and cymbals are huge chunks of metal that have been given the name "crash" for a reason. But in our new scenario, you now have to worry about something besides your backbeat in relation to the song. As a guitar player (or a piano player, or any other instrumentalist for that matter), you have to worry about playing loud enough to be heard (and hear yourself!) over the drums, but not so loud as to drown out the lead guitar or vocals. All of a sudden, you aren't allowed to just pound it out on the drums. Instead, you must fit right in the middle and be sensitive to everything.

Of course, this lesson should teach you that you must be sensitive at all times behind the kit as well. Playing guitar with a drummer who just "pounds it out" even one time should be all a drummer/guitarist needs to learn this valuable lesson. We drummers must play powerfully and forcefully; we are the leaders of the rhythm, and we set the groove. However, we must always be aware of every instrument in the band. Can the rhythm guitar be heard? Am



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I drowning out the vocal? How about the piano? There is no better way to learn the answers to these questions than to get out from behind the drumkit and start hearing the music from the other side of the bass drum.

you'll start to question whether or not those fills are too busy, too long, too unusual, or just right. If the fills are just right, you'll know it. If the fills are too long, you'll know that, too. If they are inappropriate and in the way of the song, you will imme-

the music dictate that I play? rather than What do I *want* to play? There are huge differences between those questions, and finding the answers is monumentally important in one's development as a musician.

"If you're playing guitar in a band you'll be amazed at what you'll hear out of the drums—both good and bad!"

The other major thing you'll learn by taking up a secondary instrument is what the other musicians want and need to hear from the drums. If you're playing guitar in a band you'll be amazed at what you'll hear out of the drums—both good *and* bad!

On a melodic instrument you'll have no choice but to be aware of chord structures, dynamics, song forms, etc. All of a sudden, you'll begin to think about what you'd play if you were once again back on drums. You'll hear the other drummer's fills, and

diately sense this. You will have discovered what being sensitive as a musician truly is, and the next time you get behind the drumkit you'll be a changed drummer. Your sense of musical "right and wrong" will increase dramatically. Your dynamics will improve, along with your awareness of your place within the structure of the song, as well as your overall ability to play musically and appropriately. While you are playing, you'll be thinking, What would the band want me to play? or What does

Learning secondary instruments is not easy by any means. However, you should find that your second instrument will be easier than your first, and your third will be easier than your second. And you will learn valuable lessons about drumming and music every step of the way!

Next month we'll take this concept one step further, when we discuss how the process of songwriting will help you as a drummer.



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New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival

From Friday, April 23 through Sunday, May 2 the people of New Orleans (and several hundred thousand out-of-towners) celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of the New Orleans Jazz And Heritage Festival. The event has been augmented more each year by scheduled musical performances that take place at different Festival venues—as well as by music that goes on virtually around the clock at an increasing number of clubs throughout the city.

A few of the drumming highlights at Jazzfest this year included Billy Higgins with Charles Lloyd, a side-by-side performance by Earl Palmer and Herman Ernest with Dr. John, Ernest Eli with Jay McShann, Johnny Vidacovich with Astral Project (New Orleans' favorite modern jazz group), Jeffery "Jellybean" Alexander with Cyril Neville & The Uptown All-Stars (and with Jon Cleary at The Louisiana Music Factory), "Mean" Willie Green with The Neville Brothers, Russell Battiste with The Funky Meters, and Bob French & The Original Tuxedo Jazz Band.



Herman Ernest, with Dr. John



Early jazz great Ernest Eli



Russell Battiste with The Funky Meters



Earl Palmer (right), being interviewed at Levon Helm's Classic American Cafe



Levon Helm on drums, with James Cotton (right) on blues harmonica

Some of the high points at the various clubs included Zigaboo Modeliste sitting in with The Funky Meters and with his own Funk Review at The House Of Blues, the extremely funky Shannon Powell with Snooks Eaglin at Mid-City Bowl (a combination nightclub/bowling alley that serves well to epitomize the phrase "only in New Orleans"), Earl Palmer (in town for the release of his biography, *Backbeat*) in clinic at Levon Helm's Classic American Cafe, and Levon himself (in beautiful form after his operation for throat cancer) playing Muddy Waters tunes with his daughter Amy on vocals and blues giant James Cotton on harp.

Paul Siegel

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Morgan Rose of Sevendust checks
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Max Honors Artistic Women- Including His Daughter



Legendary jazz drummer Max Roach was on hand as both a performer and a proud father earlier this year at a dinner honoring women in the arts. Sponsored by Champagne Veuve Clicquot, the dinner was held in New York City at Le Cirque 2000.

Honorees included stage and screen luminary Betty Buckley, Tony-award-winning

choreographer Susan Stroman, and Grammy-nominated jazz violinist Maxine Roach (founder of the Uptown String Quartet). Following the dinner, Maxine joined her renowned father in a magical duet that kept the audience spellbound—and, in fact, made history. It was the first time that the two had performed together publicly.



DiCioccio Named Manhattan School Of Music Jazz Chairman



Justin DiCioccio, recognized as one of today's foremost jazz educators, has been appointed as chairman of the Manhattan School Of Music Jazz Department. Justin has been a member of the MSM Jazz faculty since 1984. He also serves as director/coordinator for the New York All-City High School Jazz Program, and is the program director for Carnegie Hall Jazz Education. In 1997 he helped

establish the Henry Mancini Summer Music Institute in Los Angeles, where he remains a guest artist, conductor, and teacher of improvisation.

Justin also designed, developed, and directed the award-winning LaGuardia High School Of The Arts Jazz Program—the first fully accredited secondary school jazz curriculum in the US. (The program, and Justin's role in it, were profiled in the February 1987 issue of *Modern Drummer*.) LaGuardia HSOTA was the model for the theatrical film and TV series *Fame*. Justin served as musical consultant for both productions.

A talented drummer, Justin's credits include concerts, commercials, and Broadway shows, as well as recordings with jazz, rock, and new music groups. He has played and toured with Arturo Sandoval, Randy Brecker, Chuck Mangione, Sammy Nestico, Tony Bennett, and Phil Woods. He is a former member of the Rochester Philharmonic, and for five years was a member of the United States Marine Band ("The President's Own"), serving as the official White House drummer during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

Indy Quickies

Drum Workshop has expanded its customer service department with the addition of customer service specialist **Gary Patterson** (at left) and department manager **Steve Smith**. According to DW, "With their extensive backgrounds as drummers and salesmen, Steve and Gary provide us with a tremendously skilled and experienced customer service team."



The **Third Annual Heat Strokes Drum Contest** was held this past spring at the Centrifugal Force Drum School in Phoenix, Arizona. Competitors were originally divided into beginner, intermediate, and advanced classes within drumset (50 entrants) and rudimental (25 entrants) divisions. Preliminary competitions narrowed the field down to the top fifteen drummers (six advanced, six intermediate, three beginners) to compete for the top position in their classes. Ultimately, the winners in the drumset division were **Frank Rosaly** (advanced), **Rachel Berella** (intermediate), and **Armando Trijillo** (beginner). Cosponsors for this year's event included **Drum Corps World, Evans, Gibraltar, Guitar Center, Independent Video Production Studios, Mainline Drumsticks, Milano Music, Modern Drummer, Musical Matchmakers, National Drum Association, Paiste, Percussive Arts Society, Phoenix New Times, Pro-Mark, Toca, Warner Bros. Publications, and Yamaha**. Planning is under way for Heat Strokes 2000. Contact Steve Fagiano, 9602 N. 35th Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85051, (602) 978-6550 for more information.

The third annual **Hollywood Custom & Vintage Drum Show** will be held October 2 and 3 at the original Remo building in North Hollywood. Thousands of drums and accessories from manufacturers, dealers, and private collectors will be on display and on

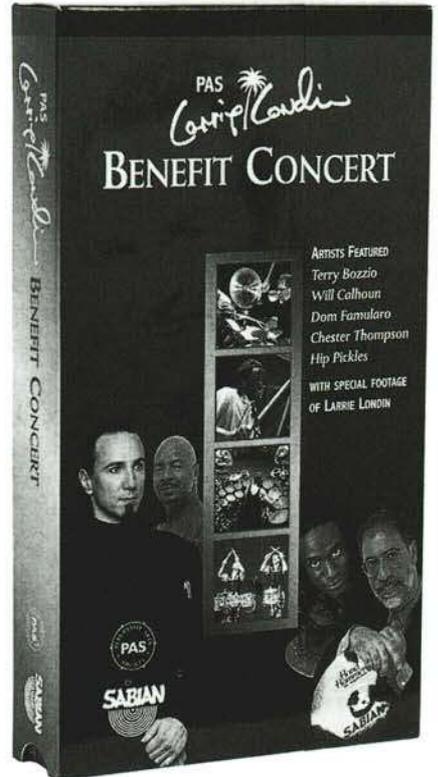
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sale. **Louie Bellson** will be on hand Saturday to give a clinic; drum historian and engraver **John Aldridge** will be there both days. Raffles will be held throughout the weekend, offering thousands of dollars' worth of prizes. For exhibitor information contact Kerry Crutchfield at (323) 461-0640 or Drumcrutch@aol.com.

After working with Florida music-retail giant Thoroughbred Music since 1979 (during which he was the driving force behind the popular Florida Drum Expo), **A.J. Altieri** has decided to open his own 3,000-square-foot pro drum shop in Tampa. In addition to offering major product lines, the shop will have a full repair, restoration, and custom-building facility under the supervision of master craftsman **Hugh Barlow**.

Sabian Cymbals recently helped drummer **Miroslav Kusner** to break his own Guinness world record for non-stop drumming. Playing in a variety of musical styles with fifteen different bands, Miroslav played 373 songs in a continuous performance that ran thirty hours, one minute, and eleven seconds. Said Kusner of his cymbals: "I play them because they sound good. But as you can understand from my performance, they are also very strong!"

Roland Corporation US has moved its corporate headquarters to a new state-of-the-art facility, located at 5100 S. Eastern Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90091-0921. The new building incorporates numerous provisions for enhanced customer service, including a modern media center. The center consists of a main meeting room, a dedicated control room, and a series of video monitors positioned throughout the facility to enable guests to have a first-hand look at the front-stage activities, no matter where they sit. The technical product-support area has also been enlarged and structured so that Roland's product specialists can have far more equipment present in their work areas to better assist users with operational questions. Interested parties may call Roland at (323) 890-3700, or surf to www.rolandus.com.

Roland's new headquarters



Endorser News

Now playing Noble & Cooley drums are **Scott Allshouse** (Max Creek), **Franky Dee** (The Happenings), **Dennis Osinski** (Trip), and **Frank Marsh** (The Ray Mason Band).

Drummers endorsing Zildjian cymbals now include **Jimmy Chamberlin** (Smashing Pumpkins), **Stan Frazier** (Sugar Ray), **Tommy Stewart** (Godsmack), **Raymond Herrera** (Fear Factory), **Morgan Rose** (Sevendust), **John Otto** (Limp Bizkit), **Ralph Irizarry** (Latin specialist), **Paul Legaspi** (Everlast), **Tony**

Fagenson (Eve 6), and **Mark McClean** (independent). **Taylor Hawkins** (Foo Fighters) is a new Zildjian drumstick endorser.

Playing Zildjian cymbals *and* sticks are **Samantha Maloney** (Hole), **Jason Marsalis** (jazz independent), **Alfredo Hernandez** (Queens Of The Stone Age), **Jared Crawford** (Lauryn Hill), and **Roy Mayorga** (Soulfly).

John Miceli is touring with Meat Loaf on a Sonor kit. Also playing Sonor is Austrian drummer **Cristian Eigner**, the first acoustic drummer to play with electro-pop band Depeche Mode.

Charlie Morgan, best known for his long tenure with Elton John, is now a Sabian cymbal artist and clinician.

Spaun drum company endorsers now include **Bill Ray** (independent), **Brian Flenniken** (Buck Wild), **Mitch Ross** (The Darrell Mansfield Band), **Ray Santovasi** (FourPeace), **Jeremy Price** (Frog Candy), **Matt Tuttle** (Codeseven) and **Mike Day** (Everybody Duck).

Marva King (The Artist), **Melena Francis** (Barry White/John Tesh), **Taku Hirano** (Isaac Hayes/Brandy), **John Lewis** (The Fifth Dimension), **Rodger Carter** (Meredith Brooks), **Greg Hutchinson** (Joshua Redmon), **Nery Arevalo** (Mountain Stage), and **Adam Nicol Roach** (Vesica Pisces) are drummers and percussionists using Rhythm Tech instruments.

Playing Meinl cymbals are **Chad Rager** (The Chad Rager Modern Big Band), **Gayelynn McKinney** (Straight Ahead), and **Bob Harsen** (Bette Midler, Melissa Manchester, Broadway). Playing Meinl percussion *and* cymbals are **Sheryl Hackett** (BAP) and **Shan Chana** (London pit drummer/percussionist).

Jazz drummer **Mat Marucci** is now a Mapex artist.

Pro-Mark has a slew of new endorsers. They include **Matt Rogers** (The Few), **Marc Slutsky** (Splendor), Sean Sellers (Good Riddance), **Dennis Murphy** (Kingdom Heirs), **Chris Clawson** (My Superhero), **Rod Quinn** (Mary Black), **Derek Murphy** (Angie Aparo), **Keith Brodgon** (Bare, Jr.), **Nathan Sjogren** (Insyderz), **Billy Joe Johnson** (Frog Pond), **Babatunde Olatunji** (world percussion artist), **Keni Shino** (PaPa/Hotei Band), **Bob Moffatt** (The Moffatts), **Ryan Vandeberghe** (Suicide Machines), **Ed Brown** (Shades Apart), **John Kamoosi** (DayInTheLife), **Tim Berkebile** (Backstreet Boys), **Neil Sebba** (Jamestowne), **Troy Tague** (Danielle Howle & The Tandrums), **Reggie Jackson** (Kim Pensyl), and **Kevin Neal** (Brian Howe).

Among the new performers using KAT percussion controllers are **Jim Bogios** (Sheryl Crow), **John McMahon** (Elton John), **Dave Harrison** (Edwin McCain), **Derek Zimmermann** (Kitaro), **Gary Poulson** (Joe Zawinul), **Billy Mason** (Tim McGraw), **Dean Sharenow** (David Sanborn), **Taku Hirano** (Whitney Houston), **Chad Wackerman** (independent), **Tre Balfour** (Michael Bolton), and **Edwin Bonilla & Olbin Burgos** (Gloria Estefan).

Internationally recognized jazz vibist **Dave Pike** is now using Mike Balter mallets.

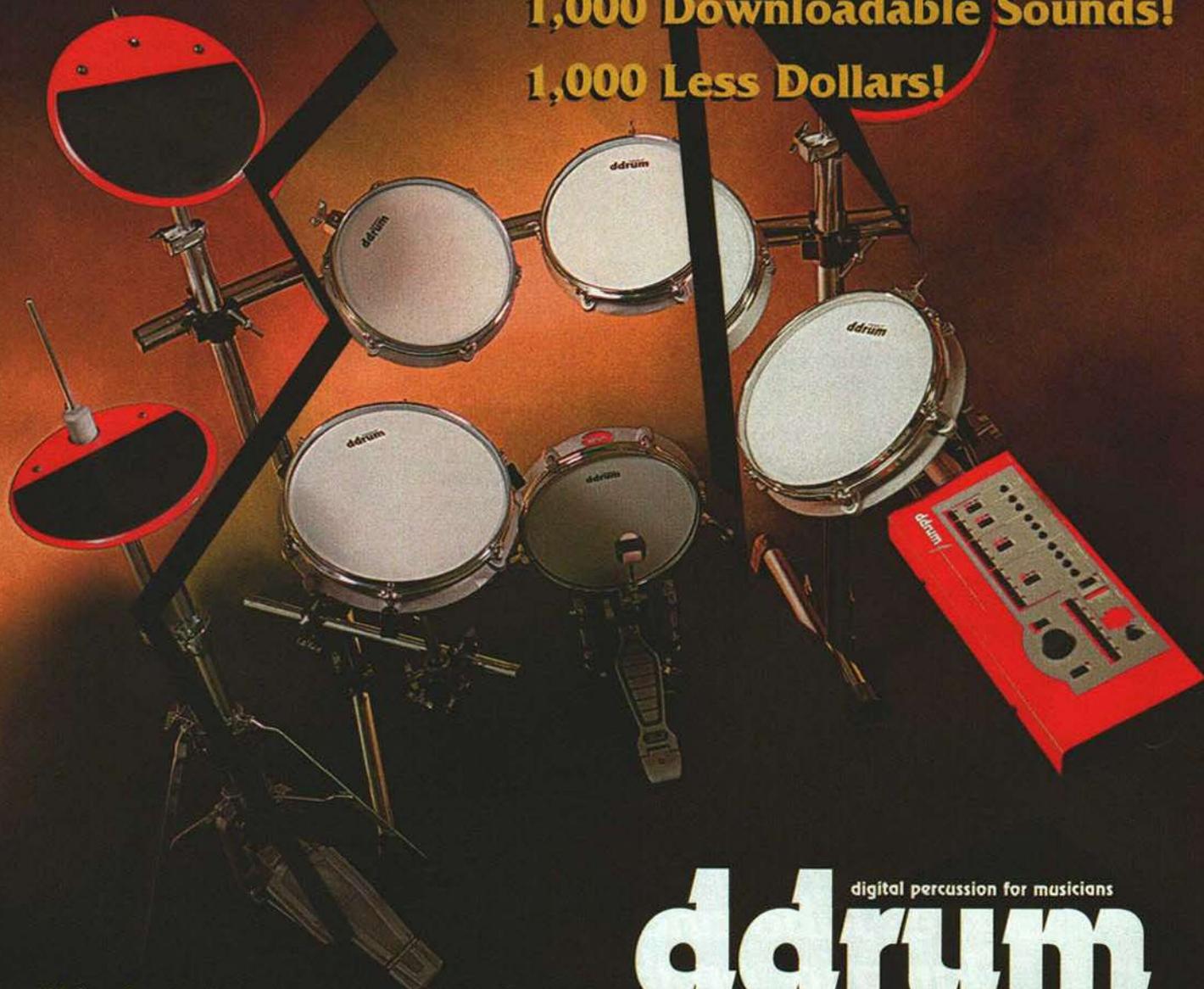
Artists now on the Aquarian Accessories roster include **Joey Waronker** (Beck, R.E.M.), **Peter Yanowitz** (Natalie Merchant), **Kevin Miller** (Fuel), **Jon Kleiman** (Monster Magnet), **Jason Harrison Smith** (Mike Keneally, The Temptations), **Nathaniel Scott** (Les McCann), **Byron Landham** (Joey DeFrancesco), **John Dolmayan** (System Of A Down), **Matt Hammon** (Bob Mould), **Jason Camiolo** (Fuzzbubble), **Larry Darrell** (Monica), **Doug Moore** (Split Decision), and **Jason Schmidt** (Dry White Toast).

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Festivals, Upcoming Drum Clinics, Concerts, and Events

Atlanta Vintage & Custom Drum Show

9/18 — First Annual **dum** show, door prizes, special presentation by William Ludwig II, clinic by Cliff Davis, vintage **dum** display by collector Bill Pace, and more. Ramada Inn Conference Center, Atlanta, GA. Contact Billy Jeansonne, (770) 438-0844.

Avila Drum Day

10/9 — Benefit, artists to appear: Airtto Moreira & Flora Purim, Michael Shapiro, Keyvn Lettau & friends, Walfredo Reyes Sr., Walfredo Reyes Jr., and Danny Reyes, Karl Perrazo & Advance, Tommy Aldridge, many surprises. Avila Beach Resort Golf Course, Avila Beach, CA. Contact ETuduri@aol.com.

CMJ Music Marathon

9/15_18 — New York Hilton, New York, NY. Contact (516)498-3130.

Terry Bozzio

9/15 — Jersey Drums, Edison,

NJ, (732) 985-9099

9/16 — Dales Drum Shop, Harrisburg, PA, (717) 652-2466
10/3 — Stockholm Drumfestival, Stockholm, Sweden, 011-46 21300059

Dom Famularo

10/3 — Stockholm Drumfestival, Stockholm, Sweden, 0114621300059

Richie Garcia

10/3 — Stockholm Drumfestival, Stockholm, Sweden, 01146 21300059

Hollywood Custom & Vintage Drum Show

10/2-3 — Special guest Louie Bellson, giveaways, surprise guests. Remo building, North Hollywood. Contact Kerry Crutchfield, (323) 461-0640.

Arthur Hull

11/6-7 — Boston Playshop, Boston, MA, (978) 371-2502

Keeney Bros. Music Center

10/8-10 — Second annual

Dum Set Show, displays, vintage drums, drum memorabilia, clinics, giveaways. Palouse Mall, Moscow, Idaho.

PASIC '99

10/27-31 — Exhibits, clinics, concerts, master classes, (580) 353-1455

Pennsylvania Vintage Drum Show

10/30 — Sunbury, PA. Contact Lawton Drum Co, (717) 988-0655.

Mike Portnoy

9/19 — Birmingham Drumfestival, UK, 01384 565 422
9/20 — Leeds, UK, 01384 565 422
9/21 — Reading, UK, 01384 565 422
9/22 — Rome, Italy, 39 02 935 961
9/23 — Pisa, Italy, 39 02 935 961
9/24 — Madrid, Spain, 34 91 680 1516
9/25 — Sevilla, Spain, 34 91 680 1516
9/27 — Lisbon, Portugal,

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9/28 — Oporto, Portugal, 351 145 8190
9/29 — Hellendoorn, Netherlands, 31 02975 67788
9/30 — Rotterdam, Netherlands, 31 02975 67788
10/2 — Copenhagen, Denmark, 46 0303 92260
10/3 — Gothenburg Drum Festival, Sweden, 46 0303 92260
10/4 — Borlange, Sweden, 46 0303 92260
10/5 — Helsinki, Finland, 358 9757 1344
10/6 — Tampere, Finland, 358 9757 1344
10/7 — Lille, France, 33 01 3995 2688
10/8 — Nancy, France, 33 01 3995 2688

Art Blakey Tribute

10/1 — Performers include former Jazz Messengers, Ralph Peterson, Abbey Lincoln Quartet, and Valerie Capers Quintet. Arron Davis Hall, New York City. Contact Mike Patterson, (212) 369-9532.



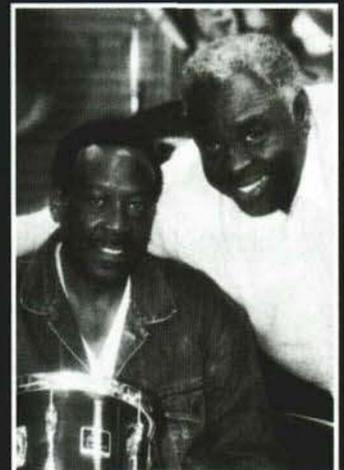
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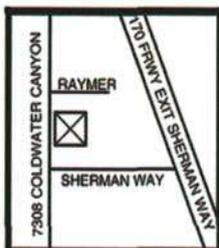
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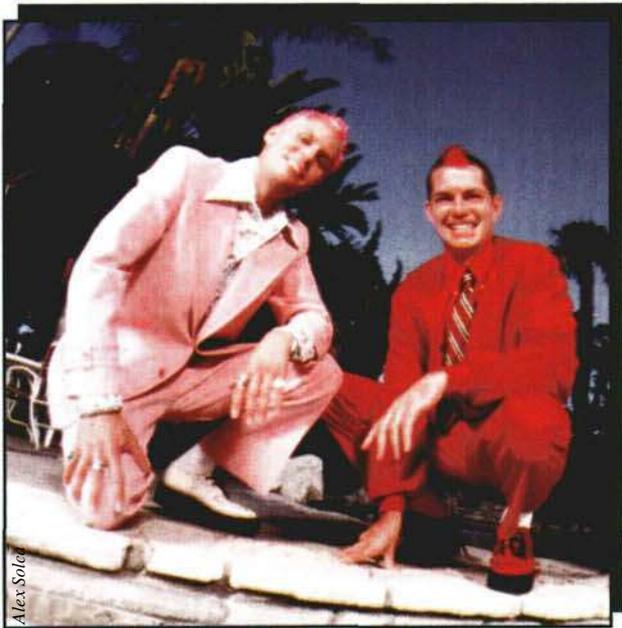
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Drummer: Dave Mattacks

Studio: Capital Studio B, Los Angeles, California

Artist: Richard Thompson *Mock Tudor*

This month we look at a December date that saw British session ace Dave Mattacks (XTC, Paul McCartney, Mary Chapin Carpenter, *many* others) recording with cult guitarist Richard Thompson. We're talking straight-up rock pumpers and dark ballads, recorded mostly live off the floor. Dave remarks that the producers "didn't mind the occasional glitch, bum note on guitar, or odd rimshot backbeat that was a little off."

The snare is hot in the mix and betrays Mattacks' signature "Blakey style" press-roll crescendos and behind-the-beat 2 and 4. Mattacks shows an uncanny ability to "shadow" Thompson's licks with complementary phrases.

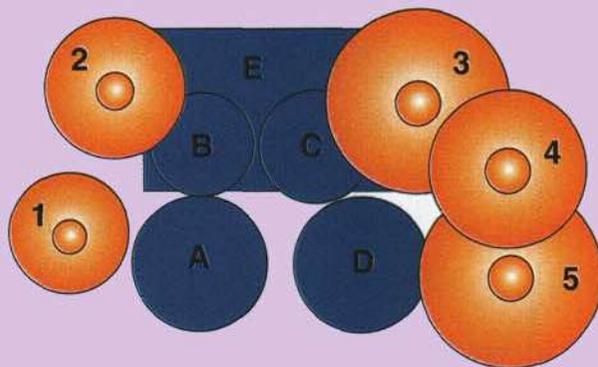
Inside Scoop: On the song "Bathsheba Smiles," Dave dispensed with the floor tom and replaced it with a Ludwig snare drum, tuned medium with an O Ring. The main snare was tuned higher. According to Mattacks, "The producers heard dissonance right on the last bar of the bridge. It was the rack tom clashing with the D chord in the final bar. I retuned the tom to a D and we 'dropped in' the whole kit for that *one* bar—and also right at the end of the song."

"When you do this sort of thing, because the kit is multi-tracked/miked, you have to make sure all your levels/intensity/touch match with the rest of the track. Cymbals are particularly tricky. If there's no click track—which there wouldn't be on a Richard Thompson recording—you have to lock in with the other musicians as if you were playing it then and there 'live.'"

"Sometimes a piece can seem as if it has a good groove, but exposing one or two instruments in 'solo' mode can sometimes make you question exactly what is a good feel!"



Session Gear



Drums: Yamaha Maple Custom, except as noted

- A. snare drums: several, including Noble & Cooley 4x14, Ludwig 5x14 400
- B. 8x10 tom
- C. 10x12 tom
- D. 14x14 floor tom
- E. 16x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian (plus various effects cymbals, tambourine taped to hi-hat for one song)

1. older, "extremely thin" 13" A Zildjian hi-hats that previously belonged to legendary British jazzier Kenny Clare
2. 15" A Custom crash (or thin K)
3. 20" A medium ride, from the '60s
4. 17" A Custom crash (or thin K)
5. 20" Pang (older)

Heads & Sticks

- Evans EQ1 coated batter head with muffling pad; EQ1 coated head on front with a hole cut out
- Evans G1 clear on toms
- Evans G1 coated on snare drums
- Pro-Mark Dave Mattacks model stick with nylon tip
- Ordinarily an aficionado of the old Rogers Swiv-O-Matic bass drum pedal, Dave used a standard DW chain pedal for this session. (When in Rome....)

Tuning & Approach

- Snare: minimal muffling; sometimes short strips of masking tape on *underside* of head, near rim. All backbeats are rimshots.
- Toms tuned medium to high; tight enough to get a clean rimshot on first tom.
- Bass drum has EQ pad against batter. Played two ways: For certain songs, Dave "buried the beater" to get more punch. Otherwise, he released it, letting the head vibrate freely for a longer sound.

T. Bruce Wittet





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