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JUNE 2007

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BREAK IT DOWN!

**BRIAN YOUNG**  
FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE

**8** FANTASTIC  
FILLS FROM  
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**RAY LUZIER**

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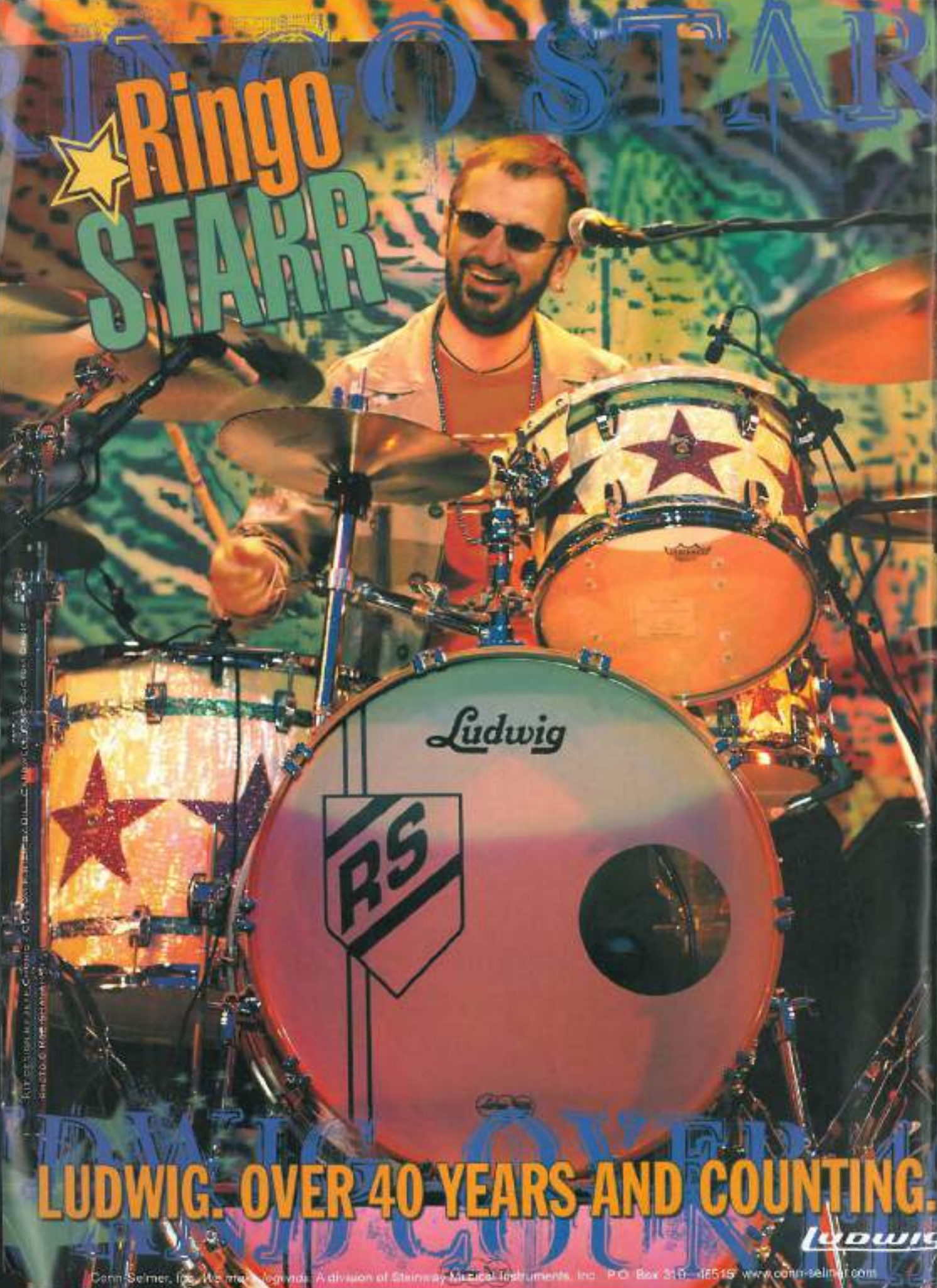
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## FEATURES

### 59 The Keys To Coordination

Declare your independence! In this very special report, MD talks to the most monstrous coordination masters on the planet for tips on making your limbs do exactly what you want them to do. Weighing in: Adler, Bruford, Cobham, Donati, El Negro, Kinsler and more! Plus—a dozen must-own coordination books and DVDs.

### << 76 Marco Minnemann

Is there a drummer alive who has raised the bar of ambidextrous technique higher? Coordination king Marco Minnemann lets us peak behind the magic curtain.

### 118 Fountains Of Wayne' s Brian Young

Reviving power pop drumming.

### 130 Diddy' s George "Spanky" McCurdy

Laying down righteous grooves with hip-hop royalty.



#### 22 Update

Dashboard Confessional' s **Mike MARSH**

Calexico' s **John CONVERTINO**

Ollabelle' s **Tony LEONE**

Sugarland' s **Sean O' ROURKE**

The Stooges' **Scott ASHETON**

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page 129



#### 138 Playback

##### Marky Ramone

Punk legend with a past..present... and future.



#### 143 In Memoriam

##### Ian Wallace

Ian Wallace glided through King Crimson' s ever-shifting rhythms—and supported star singer-songwriters with a mile-deep feel.



#### 146 A Different View

##### Jim Marshall

Photographer of drumming gods.

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In Johnson, Vermont  
see page 136

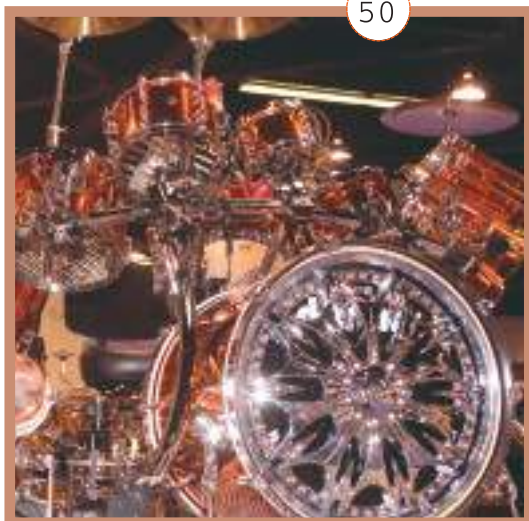




# EDUCATION



50



## 96 CONCEPTS

**Fear Of Flying!** A Coordination Mindset by Billy Ward

## 98 BASICS

**Coordination Building:** Windmills Of The Mind & Body by Jeremy Hummel

## 100 THE FUNKY BEAT

**Groove Making:** Basic Coordination Challenges by David Garibaldi

## 104 JAZZ DRUMMERS' WORKSHOP

**Declaration Of Independence:** Seven Truths With Musical Proof by John Riley

## 106 UNDERSTANDING RHYTHM

**The Essence Of Independence:** Is The Answer Right Under Your Nose? by Joe Crabtree

## 110 ROCK ' N' JAZZ CLINIC

**Coordination Escape Plan:** Developing Independence With Ostinatos And Polyrhythms by Chris Pennie

## 112 STRICTLY TECHNIQUE

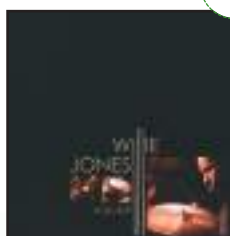
**Mixing Match-Ups:** With 16th Notes And Triplets by Ed Breckenfeld

## 114 ROCK PERSPECTIVES

**Down The Middle:** Split-Body Exercises For Grooves And Fills by Monty Sneddon



150



# DEPARTMENTS

## 10 AN EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

A Coordinated Effort by Rick Van Horn

## 12 READERS' PLATFORM

## 14 IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Landing A Gig In A New City

## 18 ASK A PRO

Jason Bittner's Drum Riser • Steve Hass On Comping And Grooving • Quick Beats: Kenny Aronoff

## 144 OFF THE RECORD

Army Of Anyone's Ray Luzier by Ed Breckenfeld

## 149 ON THE MOVE

Daniel Rodriguez Jr. Guitar Center Drum Off! '06 Grand Champion

## 150 CRITIQUE

## 154 SHOWCASE

## 160 DRUM MARKET

Including Vintage Corner

## 164 BACKBEATS

Guitar Center Drum Off! '06 Finals • Beat It Wally! Benefit • and more

## 176 KIT OF THE MONTH

# EQUIPMENT

## 30 PRODUCT CLOSE-UP

Drum Dios African Bubinga And North American Walnut Drumkits • Sabian AAX Ozone Cymbals And AAX/HHX X-Celerator Hats • Attack Jeff Ocheitree Old School Drumheads • Road Ready IntelliStage Portable Stage Systems • Snare Drum Of The Month: Spaun 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>x14 Vented Steel • Quick Looks: Bopworks Drumsticks

## 42 ELECTRONIC REVIEW

Audio-Technica Artist Series Microphones

## 50 NEW AND NOTABLE

New At NAMM '07

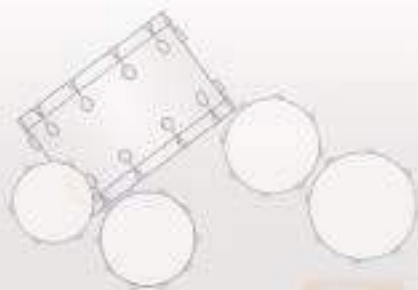
30






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# A Coordinated Effort



This month's cover artist, the amazing Marco Minnemann, is at the forefront of a movement that sees drummers doing things with their arms, legs, hands, and feet that seem mentally inconceivable, to say nothing of physically impossible. These talented players take independence and four-limb coordination to new realms of technical brilliance and musical excitement. And a lot of other drummers want to know how they do it.

That's the reason for this month's theme issue on coordination. In addition to our interview with Marco, we're offering tips from a stellar lineup of drummers known for their abilities in this area. Our column roster also focuses on the topic of coordination, with plenty of "how-to" advice on applying the techniques to a variety of musical styles. And we're presenting a list of resource materials for you to check out, including the very latest books and DVDs from today's coordination specialists.

The goal of this theme issue is to give you the tools with which to develop your own coordination skills—in ways that will contribute to your musical efforts. That's what makes the great coordinators truly great.

## MD Festival Update

The 2005 and 2006 MD Festival Weekends at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center were smashing successes. Unfortunately, NJPAC could not offer us dates in 2007 or 2008. So a search has been on for a new venue.

That search led us to the Performing Arts Center at the State University of New York, in Purchase (about thirty miles northwest of New York City). It's a great facility in a lovely setting, with all the technical capabilities that we need. Unfortunately, it, too, was booked throughout 2007.

So there will be no MD Festival Weekend this year. Instead, we'll take the year to work with the staff at the new venue, preparing for a great Festival Weekend 2008. That event will take place September 20 and 21. Mark your calendars, call your travel agents, and make your plans now!

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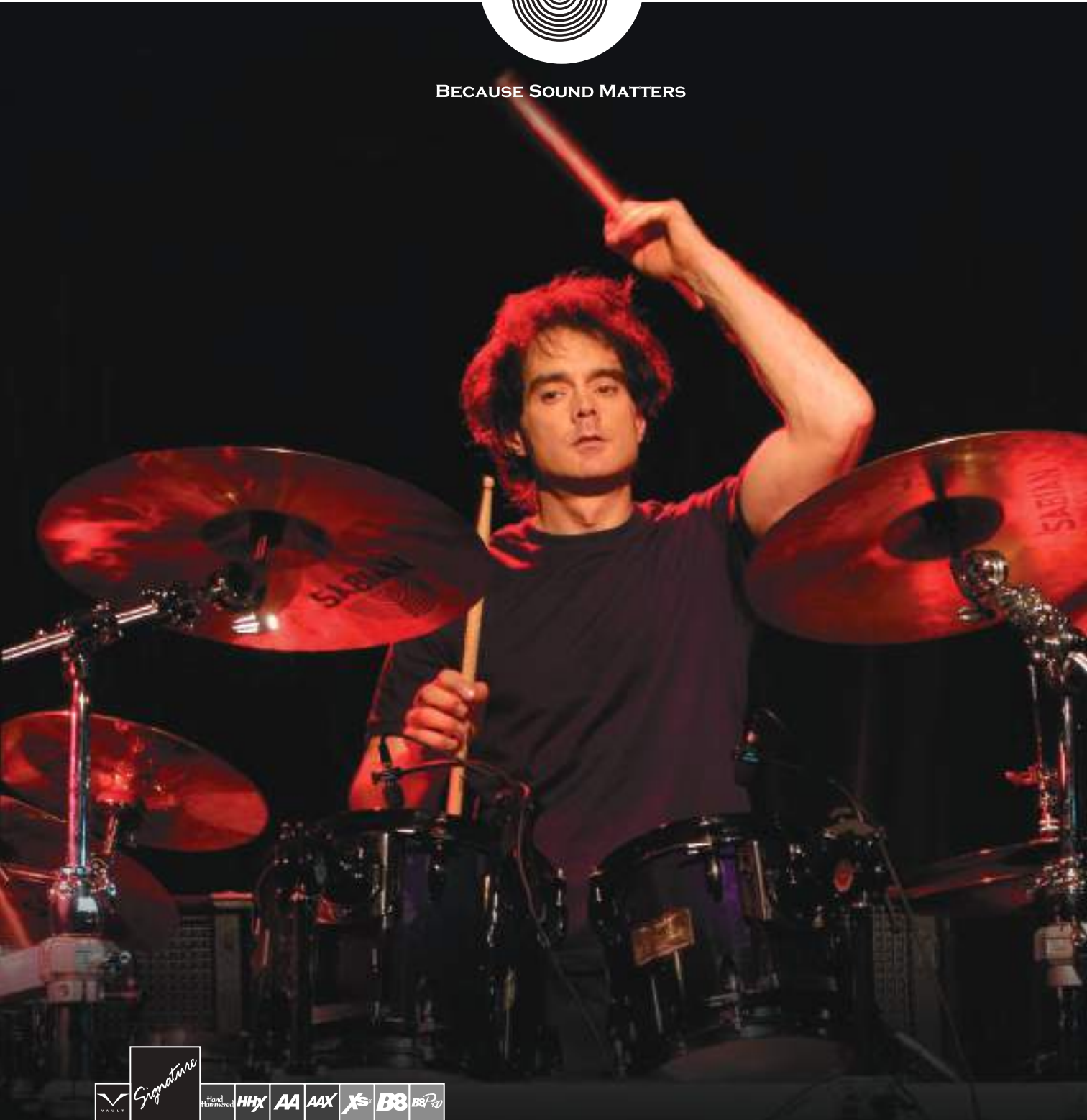
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## Vinnie Colaiuta

When I got my March MD in the mail I tore right into Ken Micallef's deep-digging interview with the great Vinnie Colaiuta. Thanks to Ken for another high-quality, revealing feature. And a special thanks to Anthony Giles for the unenviable task of transcribing Vinnie's complex rhythmic concepts. Bravo!

**Timothy Lee Cromer**

Many thanks to Vinnie for addressing a very important topic. It's not about your speed or chops; it's about the feel of the music that you're playing, and about complementing the spaces between the lines. I understand that people expect drummers to run the show, but remember that we're not the only ones on stage. There is a time and place for everything.

**Elvis Bruno**

For years I've walked away from clinics after sitting through boring product demonstrations, insulting Q&A sessions, and a wall of indiscernible noise once the featured drummer hit the stage. Vinnie is right: Context is key. Without it, a "clinic" ends up being an uneducational show-off session.

That being said, in recent years I've attended clinics by Steve Smith, Billy Ward, Ian Wallace & Freddy Gruber, Stanton Moore, and Liberty DeVitto, each of which was educational and informative on multiple levels while incorporating musical context into the demonstrations. I'd be first in line to witness Vinnie in a clinic, where I'm certain he could teach us all a thing or two about musicianship from his unique and respected vantage point.

**Ryan Westbrook**

Vinnie should lighten up. Many people attend drum clinics just for fun. If they can have that fun while being exposed to an educational experience, so much the better. Does the context really matter? Perhaps a trip down off the high horse to share with people who may not "get it" would be fun for Vinnie, too.

**Tony Stephan**



## Nigel Olsson



Nigel Olsson's drumming on Goodbye Yellow Brick Road had me hooked at the tender age of eleven, and I've been a huge fan (and a drummer) ever since. While I appreciate the talents of the various drummers that played with Elton John over the years, there is only one man who was born to play drums for Elton, and that's Nigel. Thanks to MD for covering yet another legend.

**Chuck Orr**

## Top Drum Tracks Of The '80s

Your "Top 30 Drum Tracks Of The 1980s" didn't include any tracks from King Crimson's Discipline. "Frame By Frame," "Indiscipline," and "Thela Hun Ginjeet" are all incredible performances from Bill Bruford. It was Bill who was at the forefront of using Simmons electronic drums before everyone else. And he recorded that album without any hi-hat—something unheard of in modern drumming. I'm not

saying that any of the above tracks should have been the number-one song of the 1980s—"YYZ" is the correct choice—but any one of them deserves to be in the Top 10.

**Steven Scheifley**

## Running And Drumming

I perked up when I read Jeremy Hummel's March Health & Science article about the benefits that drummers can derive from running. For me, running led to drumming. I started running in my thirties, and as I put in my miles while listening to my favorite tunes, I began to separate out the drums from the rest of the music. Within a year, I was taking drum lessons. I'm still drumming and running today. Thanks to Mr. Hummel for his article.

**Susan Behrens**

## Travis Smith

I had the pleasure of being Travis Smith of Trivium's private instructor during his high school years, and it's important for young drummers to know that he never came to a lesson unprepared. No matter what I'd given him for an assignment for the week, he came to his next lesson having done far more than I'd asked for. Travis always had that fire in him that



makes for the exceptional musician. I have no doubt that as he continues to grow in the musical community, he will contribute much to the world of drumming. Thank you for featuring such a great young drummer on the rise, who was not afraid to work hard in order to achieve his dreams.

**Joey Eberline**

## Traps For Sale

In his March '07 review of Traps shell-less drums, Russ Barbone suggested that it would be a good idea to sell the A400 set without cymbals. In fact, we do, but we neglected to tell Russ that. We also sell them without the hardware that accompanied the review kit. So drummers have lots of options and price ranges to choose from.

**Bob Henrif, Traps Drums, UK**

## Dropped Beat

The March '07 update profile on Steve Asheim of Deicide incorrectly noted him as playing Sabian cymbals. Steve is a Paiste cymbal artist.



The Inner Circle



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## Landing A Gig In A New City

I'm a pro drummer who's recently moved to Nashville. I'd like to know who to talk to about auditions for pro-level acts. Do I contact record labels, production companies, management, producers...? Or might there be another way of getting on the inside track?

Richard Lewis

This is one of the questions that MD receives most frequently. Although the city might change, every aspiring pro drummer wants to know how to get a foot in the door of what often seems a "secret society" of drummers playing for major artists. To gain some insight, we posed the question to four successful Nashville-based drummers. Here are their replies.

**"There is no shortcut, unless you already know someone who knows someone." —Paul Leim**

**Paul Leim** (studio great, tour drummer with Elvis, The Concert, house drummer for The Grand Ole Opry): "Most of the guys I know that got to the major-artist level in Nashville worked in the Lower Broadway honkytonk scene for years in order to get acquainted with the local live/road players. You have to establish relationships within the business to get referrals and recommendations. There is no shortcut, unless you already know someone who knows someone. I paid dues in Texas before moving to California, and Eddie Bayers did it here until Larrie Londin recommended him. You have to prove yourself. Work hard, and take every gig you can."

**Jim Riley** (Rascal Flatts): "There are three circles of players in Nashville: session musicians, touring musicians, and local musicians. The great thing about it is that all of these circles slightly overlap. I make the bulk of my living from touring, but when I'm not on the road I'm playing sessions and doing local gigs. I can tell you from experience that if you play local gigs in Nashville, you will eventually end up on a gig with musicians that are doing

**"Personally, I feel that presenting a promo pack to every producer and manager in town is a waste of time and money." —Jim Riley**



Paul Leim

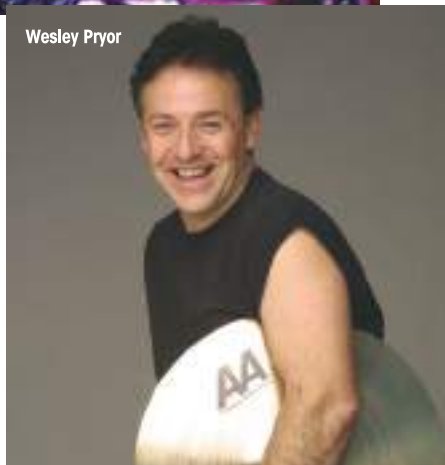


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## “It’ ll be necessary to earn a living while you’ re building your network of connections, so be ready to get a day job.” —Johnny Rabb

big tours and playing big sessions. If you kick butt on a local gig with a bass player that plays on a big tour, he’ s going to remember you when they need a drummer. Personally, I feel that presenting a promo pack to every producer and manager in town is a waste of time and money. If you play great and have a great attitude, you’ ll become known for those things, and opportunities will come your way.

“ As far as auditions go, you need to be overly prepared. Have all of the material memorized, and play it to a click. Be ready to play the parts exactly as they appear on the record, unless you know the artist wants something different. It sounds boring, but it gives you the best chance of landing the gig. Once you’ ve done that, then you can see how much room you have to get creative.”

**Johnny Rabb** (SheDaisy, Hank Williams III, Deana Carter): “ I can trace every gig I’ ve

gotten back to people that I’ ve known on a personal and playing level. I didn’ t spend a lot of time trying to seek out these people. We just met through being on the same gig, or from them hearing me play out. It’ s important to gain visibility in any new place. And come prepared. This includes reading, knowing music theory as well as the Nashville Number System, playing every style, and, if possible, being able to sing.

## “ You have to travel well, get along with others, and really love this kind of life.” —Wesley Pryor

“ Networking is still the hardest part of the business, in my opinion. I live in Nashville, and I still often hear about auditions after they’ ve happened. It’ ll be necessary to earn a living while you’ re building your network

of connections, so be ready to get a day job. And plan on staying awhile. In Nashville or any other town, it’ ll take time for you to hook up with anything. I lived here for two years before anyone got interested in me for a road gig. And when you do land a gig, remember that it’ s about more than just your playing skills. Bandleaders and other musicians want to tour with people who are easy to get along with. You’ re in the bus more than on stage.”

**Wesley Pryor** (Jeff Bates, Mark Chesnutt, Tracy Lawrence): “ You need to live here and meet people who are working in the bands of the major artists. Play locally, so your

friends know how good your chops are. Play the record, and play with authority. You also have to travel well, get along with others, and really love this kind of life.”

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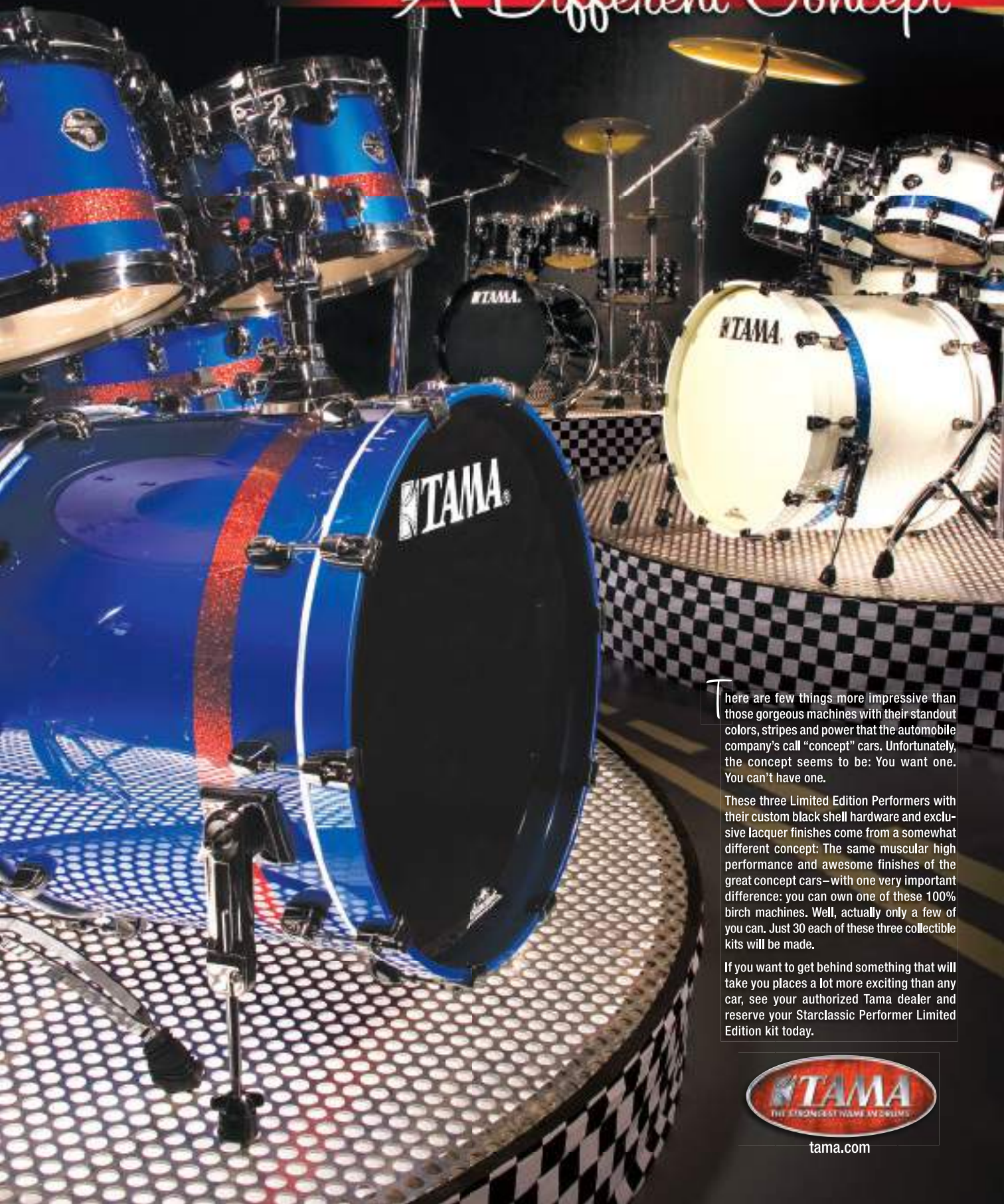
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# Jason Bittner's Drum Riser

You perform on a grated metal drum riser. I'd like to get something similar. How exactly is yours designed, and who made it?  
**Frank Amamoto**

My 10x10 grated riser was made for us by a company called Accurate Staging. You can contact them at (310) 324-1040.

The riser sets up in two sections (split down the middle horizontally) that get bolted together via four Allen bolts. Then all the drum-rack legs, stand legs, and kick spurs go conveniently into little cups that are screwed into the grating. Mind you, placing these cups initially is not a one-man job—a fact I found out the hard way. There was a lot of screaming and cussing coming out of my garage as I tried to set things up myself. So get a helper.

Once the cups are in, your setup stays almost perfect. Sometimes my kit will even stay together on the two riser sections, and will get transported while completely set up. That makes life very easy, especially when we're on big festival-type tours.



Chad Lee

## Quick Beats

## KENNY ARONOFF

Text and photo by Joe Perry



**Place of birth:** Albany, New York  
**Influences:** Bonham, Ringo, Gadd, Cobham, Ginger Baker, Charlie Watts, and any drummer who played with John Coltrane or Miles Davis  
**Hobbies/interests:** Anything sports-related  
**How I relax:** Watching movies and sports  
**Favorite food:** Raw nuts  
**Favorite junk food:** Ice cream  
**Favorite drink:** Water  
**Favorite TV show:** NFL football  
**Favorite movie:** *Apocalypse Now*  
**Favorite album:** All Beatles and John Coltrane albums, and the first three Hendrix albums  
**Vehicle I drive:** Mitsubishi SUV  
**Other instruments I play:** Piano, timpani, mallets, all percussion  
**If I wasn't a drummer, I'd be:** Something to do with sports  
**Place I'd like to visit:** The moon  
**I wish I'd played drums on:** Any Led Zeppelin song

**Most prized possession:** My health  
**Person I would like to talk to:** Marilyn Monroe...to know what really happened  
**Musician I'd like to have worked with:** Jimi Hendrix  
**Person I admire:** Anyone who works hard to be the best that he or she can be and still remains humble  
**Most embarrassing moment on stage:** I started a movement on chimes in the wrong key during an opera  
**Most memorable performance:** A violin concerto in 1976, with a 60-piece orchestra. I spent a year preparing.  
**Most unusual venue played:** On the roof of a building in France, with Smashing Pumpkins  
**Biggest venue played:** In front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC in 2000, with John Fogerty, for a million people  
**Most unusual item autographed:** Women's body parts

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# Steve Hass

## On Comping And Grooving

I've seen you perform with John Scofield and Mavis Staples, and with The Manhattan Transfer. I was amazed at how authentically you grooved in each style. You had a large amount of Southern sway in your groove, especially with Scofield and Staples. Considering that you're from New York City, how did you develop such swampy feels as those you played on "I Got A Man," "Georgia," and some other songs?

I also have a question about your February '07 Jazz Drummers' Workshop column, "The Groove Comp." When I saw you live, I remember you having a fairly busy left hand over your swing time. Yet it was light, musical, uncluttered, and very much a part of the whole groove. When I play these groove patterns, I sound heavy, cluttered, and even a bit disconnected. Can you give me some insight on what I may be doing wrong? Also, you played many fast triplet hand and foot patterns over the jazz ride. What was that?

Phil Jacobs

Thanks for your kind words and great questions. Having a proper vocabulary in each style of music is very important to me. Thanks for noticing!

My approach to the feel that you're referring to is a mixed bag of Dixieland, second line, swing, blues, and soul drumming. I've concentrated on two time concepts with my backbeat drumming. One is a very accurate approach, where I focus on placing the kick and snare in the same spots in every measure. The other is that more organic, "swampy" approach you refer to, where my beat has a certain swing to it. The backbeat is more behind, and it doesn't always fall in the same place.

I also enjoy adding a swing element over a song that's in straight time, and a straight-8th element over a song that swings. This gives the illusion of beat stretching. The musicians who inspired me to play in this mixed-groove bag are Allen Toussaint, Dr. John, Ricky Fataar (drummer with Bonnie Raitt and one of my faves), Johnny Vidacovich, Zigaboo Modeliste, Levon Helm, and Al Jackson Jr.

My advice in regard to left-hand comping over swing time is to keep it light. Work on each phrase slowly to develop a certain amount of accuracy, and keep the volume down. I think your volume and accuracy might be the culprits when it comes to clutter, disconnection, and heaviness. I suggest working out of Jim Chapin's *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer* in order to develop the jazz independence needed to play some of the groove comps I have written. I switch between the groove comp and relating to the soloist's ideas.

I'm not sure which triplet pattern I played under the swing ride that you mention, but the one I get asked about most is fairly simple: 8th-note triplet doubles between the left hand and the right foot, at mezzo piano volume. I use this very often to create a low rumble under the time. The first drummer I ever saw who did this effectively and musically was Jeff "Tain" Watts, who's another favorite of mine.

I hope this helps. Good luck to you!

Paul La Raja

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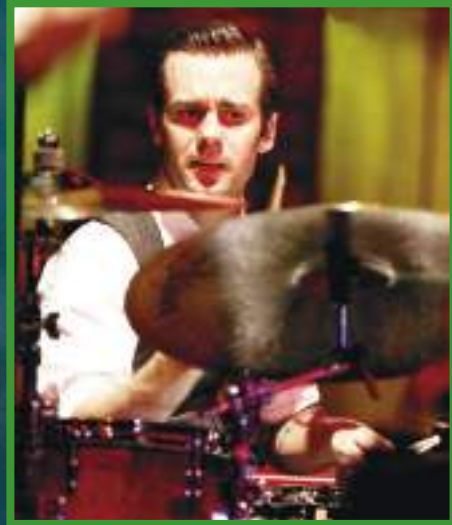
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Ralph Nataro

## Dashboard Confessional's Mike MARSH Warm, Beautiful Tones

“As a drummer, I truly feel that what you *want* to play and what you *should* play can be the same thing if the goal is right,” says Mike Marsh, drummer for emo rock band Dashboard Confessional. Speaking about *Dusk And Summer*, the first Dashboard CD since 2003’s *A Mark, A Mission, A Brand, A Scar*, he explains, “My goal on this record was to show that I’m not a kid anymore who wants a drum fill in every bar. Because of the nature of the melodies and the structure of the songs, the recording process gave me a great opportunity to create space.”

*Dusk And Summer* also showcases Marsh’s warm drum tones and his musical approach to the kit. Mike offered some insight on how he gets such natural-sounding recorded performances. “A lot of rock drummers revert back to John Bonham and the way he made his drums sound larger than life with the use of room mics,” Marsh says. “Some drummers think that you have to beat the hell out of your drums to get that to hap-

pen. But there’s only so hard you can hit a drum before it compresses. It’s important to understand that it doesn’t take muscle to make your drums sound huge. Honestly, it takes a good drumkit, a drummer who knows how to play, and a really good engineer. I’ve been fortunate to work with people who are not only skilled drum tuners but who are also great engineers and know where to place mics.”

For Marsh, getting the best sound from his drums is also about knowing how to read a room—a talent he feels has come with experience. “I’ve played in enough rooms to know how hard or soft I should be playing,” Mike offers. “Often, I’ve found that the softer I play, the more accentuated the nuances become. If you can really lay back and create a mellow atmosphere for yourself in the studio, ghost notes and phrasings become so much larger. I’ve really tried to keep that warmth on the records and to keep the tones of my drums consistent and as beautiful as I can make them.”

**Gail Worley**



# Calexico's John CONVERTINO Embracing The Art



"I was actually trying to channel Charlie Watts on this record," laughs Calexico drummer John Convertino, explaining his M.O. while recording the critically acclaimed Tucson, Arizona band's latest album, *Garden Ruin*. While summoning the percussive energy of the Rolling Stones drum legend may not seem all that unusual, it is somewhat out of character for Convertino, a man better known for expansive, moody, brush-driven drumming than straightforward timekeeping.

"We wanted to streamline things this time out and make this record more song-oriented and less cinematic," says Convertino. And that's the first thing long-time fans notice about *Garden Ruin*: Missing are the dramatic Spaghetti Western and mariachi-style instrumentals that have become a staple of Calexico's albums and live shows. In their place are hooky, country-tinged pop songs.

An integral part of Calexico's sound is Convertino's deft blending of percussion with drumkit. "I like to play percussion while we're recording the drum track," says Convertino. "On [*Garden Ruin's*] 'Roka,' I think I was playing a shaker, hitting a cowbell, and playing cross-stick on the snare. Then I overdubbed more percussion over it."

Though Calexico is Convertino's number-one priority, his list of extracurricular credits has been growing steadily. Artists like Neko Case, Richard Buckner, and Iron And Wine's Sam Beam have been taken by the vintage drum enthusiast's playing and have recruited him for recent records. Convertino recently logged a career highlight when Calexico recorded a tune with country legend Willie Nelson, an experience Convertino describes simply as, "Amazing."

Last year saw the release of *Ragland*, a solo instrumental album featuring Convertino playing piano, vibes, and drums. "It was meant to be ambient wall-paper music," laughs the musician. "It's a little jarring, though, not quite as meditative as I'd hoped...guess I was getting some demons out."

*Ragland's* musical exorcism might explain why *Garden Ruin* is the first Calexico album on which multi-instrumentalist Convertino is credited solely with "drums." "I read an interview with Tony Williams once where he said, 'Don't ever be ashamed of being a drummer. Be a drummer. Love being a drummer.' I adhere to that. It's a great art, whether it's Terry Bozzio-type chops or Charlie Watts laying down a great groove." **Jon Wurster**

# Ollabelle's Tony LEONE The Gospel Of Groove

When Tony Leone moved to New York City in 1998, his intent was to focus on straight-ahead jazz, and he started gigging with such jazz icons as Lou Donaldson and Illinois Jacquet, along with saxophonist Eric Alexander, trumpeter Jim Rotunde, and trombonist Steve Davis. But he also got involved with a Gospel music scene on New York's Lower East Side. That led to the formation of Ollabelle, a group whose music also contains a mix of blues, folk, country, and bluegrass.

"I had been wanting to get back to the type of music that first inspired me to play," Tony explains. "Artists like Bob Dylan, The Band, The Eagles, and Crosby, Stills And Nash were important to me growing up, and I think that's what led me to Ollabelle."

"When I first started playing with Ollabelle," Tony continues, "I thought all I needed was a four-piece kit, sticks, and a pair of brushes. But I've expanded my scope of sounds, and I'm also using Hot Rods, shakers, cowbells, and blocks, and doing things like Jim Keltner does with a maraca or tambourine in one hand and a stick in the other. The groove stays the same, but these accents pop out of nowhere."

One of Ollabelle's singers is Amy Helm, whose father, Levon, is the legendary drummer of The Band.



"Tony has the privilege of anchoring one of the best new groups in America," Levon says. "He always plays the perfect drum part, and he's one of the strongest singers in the group."

Tony was thrilled to meet Levon. "I had been studying his playing with The Band for about ten years," Tony says. "I was mesmerized by where he could place the backbeat, as well as by his voice."

Ollabelle has participated in several of Levon's Midnight Ramble concerts, and they appear on *Vol. 2* of the DVD/CD set drawn from those shows. In addition to Ollabelle's self-titled debut CD and their latest album, *Riverside Battle Songs*, Tony also appears on trombonist David Gibson's CD *Maya* and on guitarist Randy Johnston's DVD *Live At The Smithsonian Jazz Café*. **Rick Mattingly**

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- **Remo Belli** (Remo drumheads): 6/22/27
- **Vic Firth** (percussionist, Vic Firth drumsticks): 6/2/30
- **James Gadson** (R&B great): 6/17/39
- **Charlie Watts** (The Rolling Stones): 6/2/41
- **Bernard Purdie** (R&B legend): 6/11/41
- **Mick Fleetwood** (Fleetwood Mac): 6/24/42
- **Ian Paice** (Deep Purple): 6/29/48
- **Frank Beard** (ZZ Top): 6/11/49
- **Joey Kramer** (Aerosmith): 6/21/50
- **Bun E. Carlos** (Cheap Trick): 6/12/51
- **Peter Erskine** (jazz great): 6/5/54
- **Doane Perry** (Jethro Tull): 6/16/54
- **Charles Collins** (R&B veteran): 6/21/54
- **Mickey Curry** (Bryan Adams): 6/10/56
- **Chad Cromwell** (sessions): 6/14/57
- **Zoro** (independent): 6/13/62
- **Steve Shelley** (Sonic Youth): 6/23/62
- **Jimmy Chamberlin** (Smashing Pumpkins): 6/10/64
- **Eric Kretz** (Stone Temple Pilots): 6/7/66
- **Ray Luzier** (Army Of Anyone): 6/14/70

# Sean O' ROURKE

## Sweet Gig In Sugarland

Atlanta studio ace Sean O'Rourke has been plugging away in the trenches of the local scene for over twenty years. Having also toured with Mother's Finest, The Derek Trucks Band, and Aquarium Rescue Unit, O'Rourke is a seasoned road warrior. His persistence paid off when he landed the sweetest gig in town with the Atlanta-based, award-winning country/pop group Sugarland. Fronted by singer Jennifer Nettles and singer/songwriter Kristian Bush, Sugarland has captured practically every music industry award imaginable over the past year, including the American Music Awards trophy for Favorite New Artist, a category that covers all genres.

Sugarland's debut LP, *Twice The Speed Of Life*, went double platinum, and their latest, *Enjoy The Ride*, has crossed over into the Billboard Hot 100. O'Rourke has recently signed endorsement deals with Ludwig,

Sabian, and Pro-Mark. The band recently completed their first major headlining tour as well.

Late last year Sugarland played the CMAs and shot a video for the single "Settlin'," a song O'Rourke describes as, "basically a heavy 2 and 4 backbeat gig with 1 and 3 on the kick drum, which I love. Playing with Mother's Finest really helped me develop my deep pocket groove. I've learned to love the space between the notes."

It seems that Sugarland is more than a straight country gig. "Sugarland is almost like being in a pop-rock band, in terms of the feel," O'Rourke agrees. "I'm looking forward to our 2007 tour, and just enjoying the ride." Continuing his session work, O'Rourke recently recorded three CDs' worth of scorching progressive rock fusion tracks with Atlanta keyboard whiz Tom Grose.

Mike Haid



## DRUM DATES This month's important events in drumming history

- **Shelly Manne** was born on 6/1/20.
- **Chick Webb** passed away on 6/16/39, **Yogi Horton** on 6/8/87, **Tito Puente** on 6/1/00, and **Pistol Allen** on 6/31/02.
- 6/1/76: Tom Shelley starts his company, **Universal Percussion**.
- June 1985: Hall & Oates (with **Mickey Curry** on drums) and special guests, former Temptations singers Eddie Kendricks and David Ruffin, re-open the newly renovated *Apollo Theater* in New York City.
- June 1992: **Elvin Jones** performs with Charles Lloyd and McCoy Tyner in a tribute to John Coltrane at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

## The Stooges' Scott ASHETON

### Back To The Fun House

When punk rock progenitors The Stooges reformed for some shows in 2003, big names like Rick Rubin and Jack White expressed interest in helping the band produce a new record in the tradition of their classic albums *Fun House* and *Raw Power*.

Neither was able to commit to the project due to scheduling issues, so famed engineer Steve Albini stepped in, bringing his signature in-the-red sonic approach to The Stooges' first album in thirty-four years, *The Weirdness*. And with the mangy fury of Iggy Pop, guitarist Ron Asheton, and Ron's drumming brother Scott's early efforts underscored by the dark and roomy drum sound you get with Albini placing mics and setting levels, it's a match made in scuzz-rock heaven.

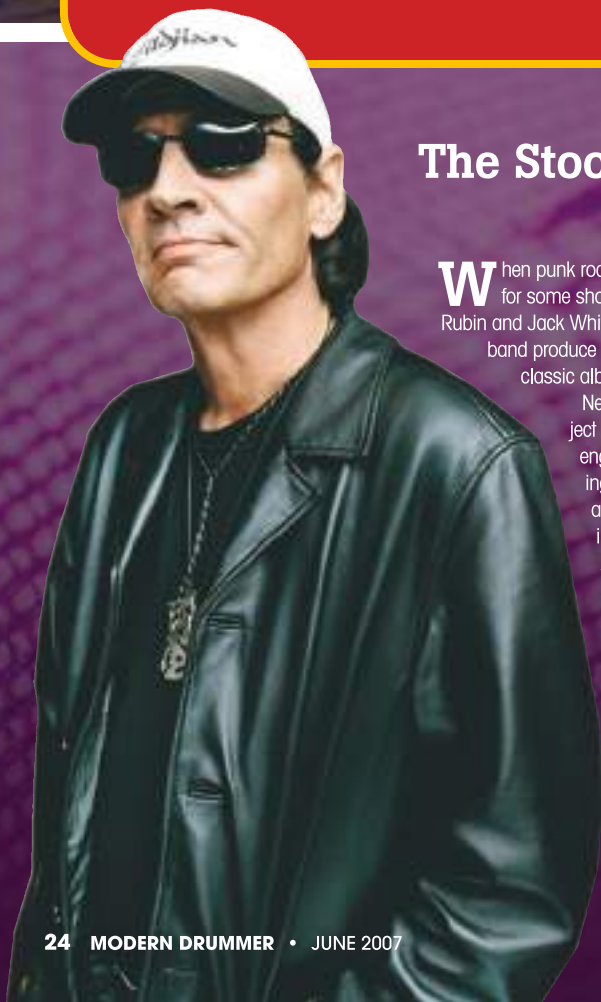
"Steve's good to work with," says Scott Asheton of Albini. "He stays pretty much in the background. One of his favorite lines is, 'I have no opinion, but if you want a suggestion, this is what I would do.'"

One of Albini's suggestions to Asheton: Embrace the high end that the studio whiz rolled into his throttling kick drum sound to help it cut through the mix. "I'd complain about the bass drum having a click-y sound and ask if we could get rid of it," Scott reveals. "And Steve would say, 'Do you know how many drummers would kill for that click-y sound?'"

At Albini's suggestion, Asheton played a Yamaha Recording Custom kit with a 20" kick for the sessions, along with a Steve Gadd Signature series snare. The five-piece set was a far cry from the utilitarian rig of two fifty-gallon oil drums played with wooden mallets Asheton employed during The Stooges' early days. "We didn't want to conform back then," the drummer says. "The idea of the thing was not to sound like anyone else. The oil drums, with the contact mics on them run through a P.A. system, made an incredible noise. It made people look, listen, and talk."

The oil drums were out when The Stooges began having success. According to Scott, "When Elektra came along and offered us our first record deal, they said, 'We love Iggy and we love you guys, but you've got to have songs.' So once we had to have songs for a record, the fifty-gallon drums just didn't seem right to actually play on albums for Elektra Records."

Patrick Berkery





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# UPDATE NEWS

**Robin DiMaggio** is on Diana Ross's latest CD, *I Love You*. **Keith Carlock** guests on one track, "What About Love." And **Mitchell "Michito" Sanchez**, **Mike Fisher**, and producer Peter Asher add percussion.

**Jeff Glidden** is on the Summer McKane Group's *Night Blooming Cereus*. For more on Jeff, visit [jeffglidden.com](http://jeffglidden.com).

**Jim Duguid** plays drums and more on Paolo Nutini's debut, *These Streets*.

**Mitch Hull** is currently touring with Gongzilla.

**Jordan Johnson** is on Tyler Read's debut, *Only Rock And Roll Can Save Us*.



The Gang Font Featuring Interloper finds **Dave King** of The Bad Plus behind the kit. (Speaking of King and The Bad Plus, you may want to check out *Prog*, their latest studio release. It features a cover of Rush's "Tom Sawyer.")

**Kyle Woodring** recently finished up a tour with Deana Carter and is currently recording a new album with Dennis DeYoung. Woodring has also just released a solo project of instrumental ambient music. Visit [www.kylewoodring.com](http://www.kylewoodring.com) for more info.



**Will Denton** is now playing with LeAnn Rimes.

NYC-based Latin-jazz band AfroMantra, founded and led by drummer/composer **Alejandro "Alex" Garcia**, has released their third CD, *Uplifting Spirit/Espíritu Optimista*.

The Almost—the brainchild of Underoath drummer/vocalist **Aaron Gillespie**—recently released their debut album, *Southern Weather*.

Fosterchild, a four-piece rock band featuring former Fuel drummer **Kevin Miller**, is in the studio recording the band's debut.

Nineteen-year-old **Eric Slick** is on tour with The Adrian Belew Power Trio. The trio will be recording a live CD to be called *Side Four Live*.

*We Belong To The Staggering Evening* is the name of the new release by The Ike Reilly Assassination, featuring drummer **Dave Cottini**.



To hear some of the artists mentioned in this month's Update, go to MD Radio at [www.modrndrummer.com](http://www.modrndrummer.com).



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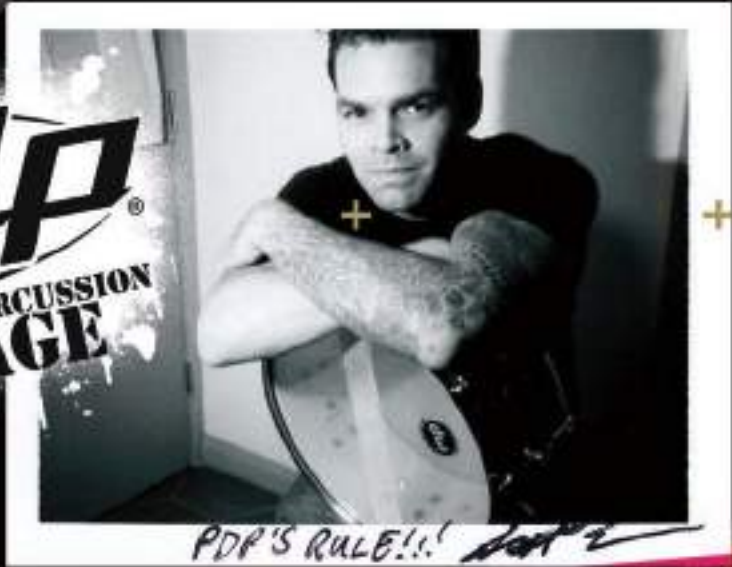
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# Drum Dios African Bubinga And North American Walnut Drumkits

>> Quality And Character In An Affordable Package

by Chap Ostrander

Drum is taking the same approach to acoustic drums as they did to electronics: It's all about the sound.

## KEY NOTES

- Beautiful wood-grain shells
- All drums sound huge
- Bubinga drums emphasize attack and clarity
- Walnut drums focus on depth and roundness

You may associate the drum name with the high-end electronic drums and triggers that many top touring and recording drummers have sworn by for years. Well, that legacy is well represented by drum's Dios line of acoustic drums. This high-quality professional series includes kits crafted out of African bubinga and North American walnut. Each wood type offers a distinctive acoustic character and a stunning appearance.

## Construction Features

Dios snare and bass drum shells are 8-ply (8 mm), and tom shells are 6-ply (6 mm). The standard setup, which is what we reviewed, is called the Player configuration. It includes a deep-shelled (20x22) bass drum, a deep but small-diameter (7x13) snare drum, and relatively shallow rack (8x10, 8x12) and floor (13x16) toms. Optional 7x8 rack and 12x14 floor toms are available.

The drums all have brass tube-style lugs that make two-point contact with the shell. I've always liked this design because it doesn't transmit torque to the drum shell. The drums come fitted with

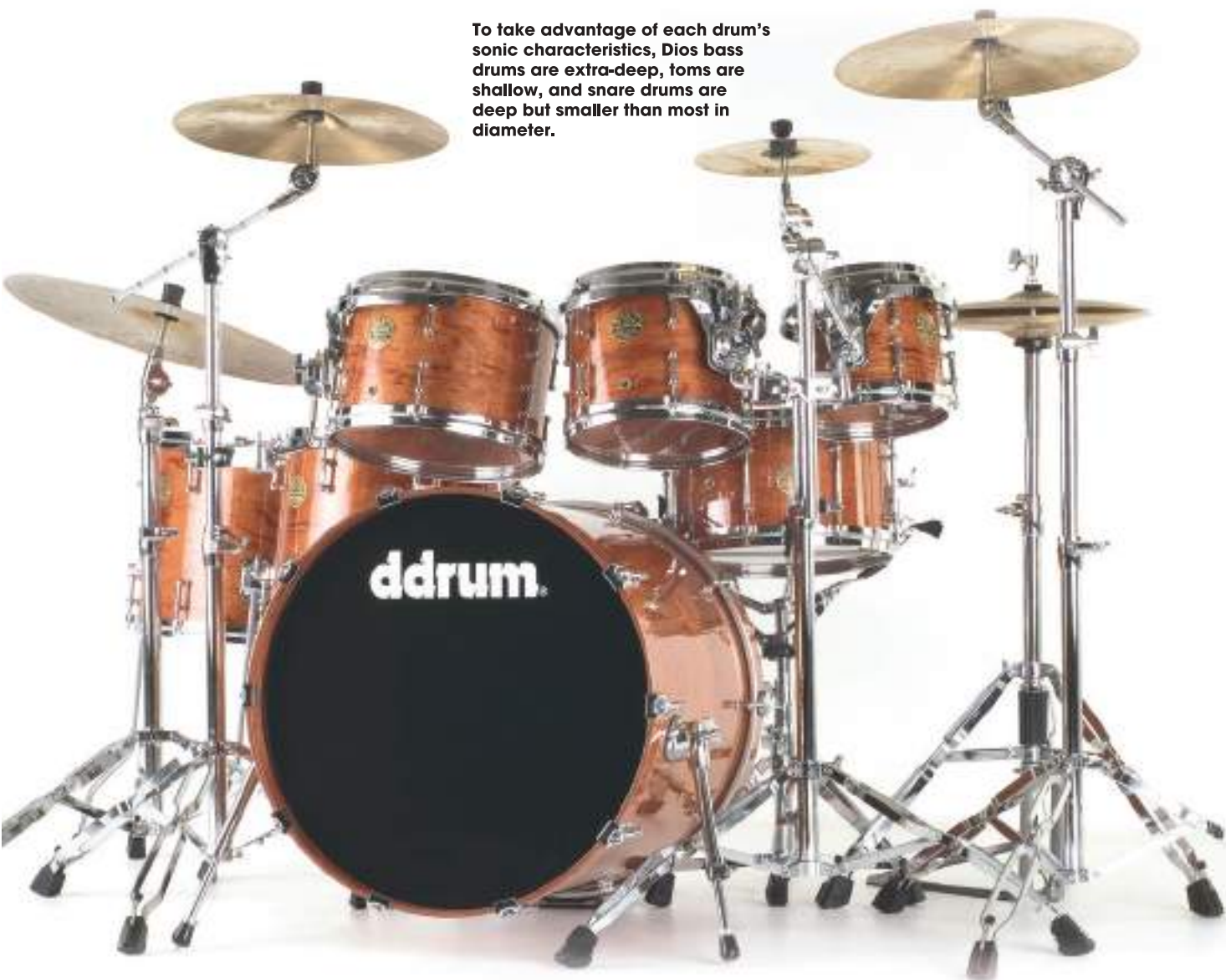


Dios shells feature alternating horizontal/vertical ply construction—and stunning looks. This kit features African bubinga shells.

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To take advantage of each drum's sonic characteristics, Dios bass drums are extra-deep, toms are shallow, and snare drums are deep but smaller than most in diameter.



die-cast hoops, and the rack toms feature an isolation mounting system. The snare strainer is the type that pulls straight out and away from the shell.

An unusual feature of Dios shells is their horizontal/vertical ply construction. This means that the direction of each successive layer is alternated, which ddrum says makes the shell react like a single ply. The drums are finished with a high gloss that really shows off the grain pattern of each wood. A sealant coats the insides of the shells.

An interesting point is that the air vents on the tom and snare are not centered in the shells, but instead are closer to the resonant (bottom) heads. Conversely, the vent on the bass drum is near the batter head. The theory is that the air held within each drum supports the head that has the largest role in

providing the frequencies that make up that drum's voice.

### Out Of Africa

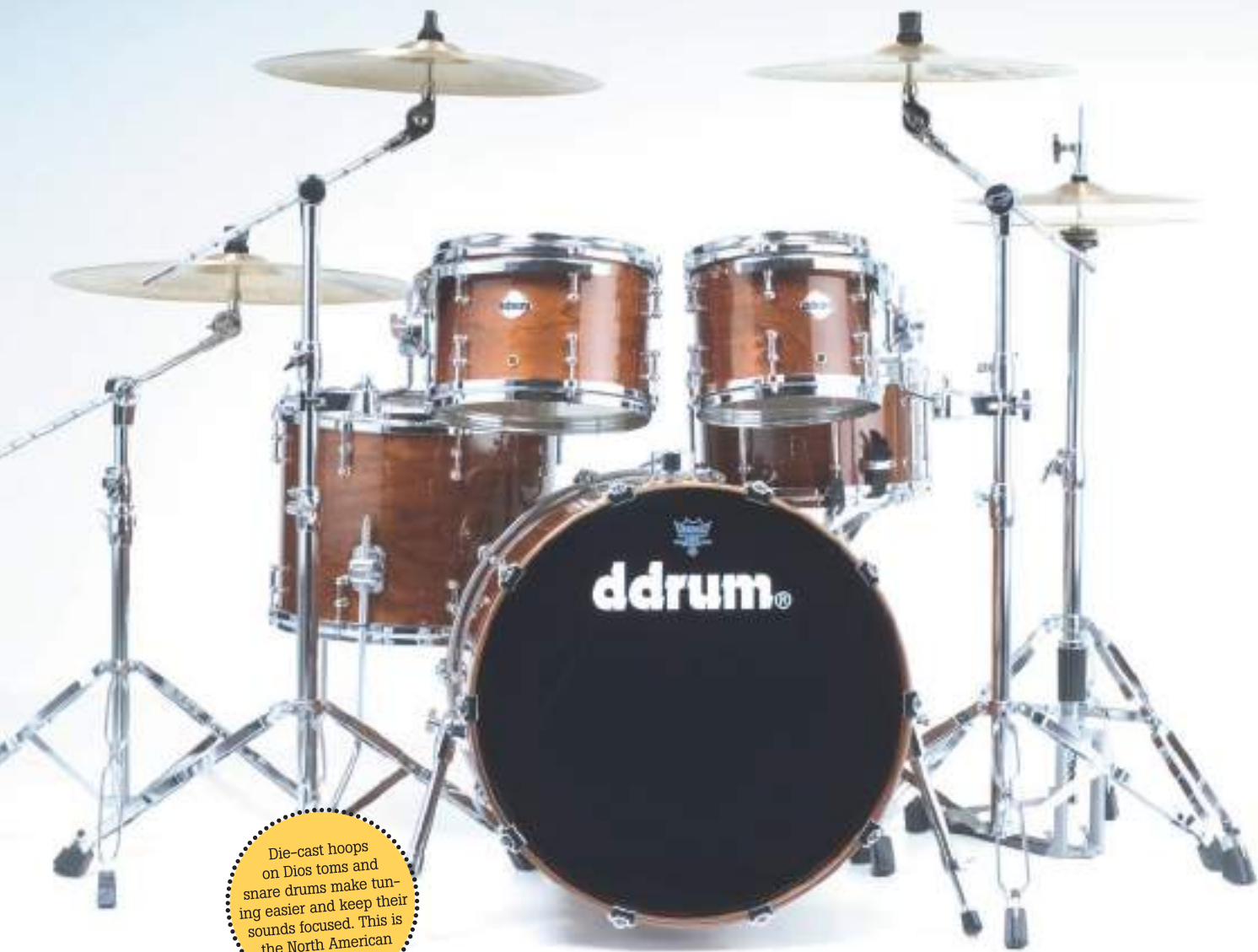
The African bubinga kit is beautiful in appearance and sound. The shells have a deep-grained reddish cast, and the overall quality of the finish is first-class. Sonically, the drums are bright and piercing. The rack toms are clear and centered. The floor toms sound huge (belying their actual sizes), and they ring forever. Accents are clear at any volume level. Ddrum included the optional 8" and 14" toms with this set, and they fit in beautifully. Their voices fit right between the ranges of the other toms, allowing for greater musical expression.

The snare is crisp and clean, with gunshot-like rimshots. Its 7" shell depth provides

excellent body, while its 13" diameter keeps things clear and sharp. The bass drum sounds low and solid—as befits a 20"-deep drum. It also possesses lots of tone, giving it great presence. I found that I could tune the bubinga kit into a low range, but the drums seemed happier when tuned a bit higher.

### Closer To Home

The North American walnut kit is equal to the bubinga in terms of having a stunning finish, with a dark, rich appearance. But I found a significant difference in its sound. While the bubinga is distinct, focused, and bright, the walnut is monstrous in its roundness. When I struck the toms and bass drum, the sound was very full, and it continued to build in depth as it rang. It just grew bigger and deeper.



Die-cast hoops on Dios toms and snare drums make tuning easier and keep their sounds focused. This is the North American walnut kit.

I played the walnut snare at various volumes, and though I tried hard to challenge it, it would not choke. It gave back whatever I put into it, with maximum power and great finesse.

### About The Steel

The Agenda 400 series hardware supplied with the kits is of good quality, with some striking features. I liked the way the solid base for the hi-hat connects to the stand with a drumkey screw: secure for playing, but easy to set up and pack. The hi-hat's action is smooth, quiet, and very adjustable.

The bass drum pedal also offers independent adjustments, and it attaches to the hoop using a quick-release lever under the side of the pedal. Once I adjusted the tension of the hoop clamp underneath the footboard, I didn't have to touch it again.

All the stands (snare, hi-hat, cymbal, and double tom) have large-diameter tubing, double-braced legs, and memory locks at each joint. The legs can be widely spaced for stability. The design of these stands is clean and solid, without being massive and unduly heavy. There were also memory locks for the floor tom legs.

### Conclusion

The Dios bubinga and walnut sets possess highly individualistic acoustic characters when compared with each other (or to kits of any other type, for that matter). The rack toms have clear and distinct voices, the floor toms have tremendous tone and ring, the snare drums have depth and crispness at the same time, and the bass drums...well, let's just say "big" is an understatement. While the bubinga kit might be the choice for someone favoring attack and volume, I personally favored the walnut for its depth and body.

Ddrum has put together two great packages, in terms of unusual but effective drum sizes and solid hardware. This is professional-quality equipment at modest prices. Ya gotta love that.

### THE NUMBERS

Five-piece Player configuration shell pack, bubinga or walnut	\$3249.99
7x8 add-on rack tom, bubinga or walnut	\$390.99
12x14 add-on floor tom, bubinga or walnut	\$675.99
Agenda 400 series hardware pack	\$499.00
(813) 600-3920, <a href="http://www.ddrum.com">www.ddrum.com</a>	

# SNARE DRUM OF THE MONTH

by Michael Dawson



Two 2 1/2" holes allow a lot of air to escape with each stroke, which elevates the drum's dynamic level into the stratosphere.

Black hardware and mirrored-chrome finish make it a definite attention-grabber.

Spaun's original throw-off is a simple design that snaps firmly into place.



## SPAUN 6 1/2 x 14 VENTED STEEL

### HOW'S IT SOUND?

Hard-hitters take note: Spaun's new Vented Steel snare is packing some *serious* punching power. As soon as I took it out of the box, I knew this wasn't going to be a light, delicate instrument. But even still, I was ill prepared for how explosive it turned out to be. Rimshots were *ridiculously* loud (without a lot of excessive overtones), while center strokes cracked like lightning. And forget about overplaying this drum. The two giant holes on the front of the shell allow all of the air to escape immediately on impact. So no matter how hard you hit it, it simply *will not* choke.

As for softer strokes... let's just say you won't be pulling this bad boy off the shelf for gigs with your local symphony orchestra. For the same reason that the two vents increased the upper dynamics, they also limited the lower range. When I played anything below *mezzo piano* (roughly 3" from the head), there was a prominent low-pitched hum emanating from the sound holes. But anything above that point cut through loud and clear.

Like its somewhat compressed dynamic range, the Vented Steel also has an optimal tuning range that works best with both heads pretty tight. You can find useable tones at lower tunings (with the help of some muffling and a 2-ply head). But the higher tensions are where this drum *really* stands out among the crowd.

WHAT'S IT COST? \$780

[www.spaundrums.com](http://www.spaundrums.com)

MP3

To hear this drum, log on to [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com).

## Quick Looks

### BOPWORKS DRUMSTICKS

by Michael Dawson

**B**opworks hickory drumsticks are designed to replicate the response and feel of various jazz models that were popular in the '50s and '60s from classic American manufacturers like Ludwig, Slingerland, Gretsch, and Rogers. They're shorter, thinner, and less front-heavy than many current brands' models, which make them ideal for use on super-thin ride cymbals or on quiet acoustic gigs.

There are currently four models in Bopworks' line: Birdland Model, Savoy Jazz, West Coast, and Storyville Jazz. The tip and shoulder length of each version is proportionate to the sticks' overall length and width. And each stick features the same elongated oval tip shape.

The Birdland Model is the smallest of the crew (15<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" long and .500" in diameter). It's said to be designed for "the jazz drummer who requires a light stick that won't produce excessive overtones on the ride cymbal." And that's *exactly* what it does. I had no trouble playing fast ride patterns at very soft dynamics without feeling like I had to tiptoe on the cymbal. These sticks would be great on gigs where volume control is of utmost concern.

The medium-weight Savoy Jazz model is the same length as the Birdland, but has a slightly larger diameter (.535"). That little extra weight helps these sticks bring out more overtones on the ride, while remaining very light and articulate. Of all four models, these were the least comfortable size for my hands, and they felt a little too short. They were especially difficult to control when I tried to execute quick rudimental-inspired bebop ideas around the kit.

The West Coast stick has a little more length (15"), but it's thinner (.520") than the Savoy Jazz. As soon as this stick touched the ride, I felt at ease. It was perfectly weighted, which allowed me to play effortless legato ride patterns (à la Mel Lewis) at any tempo. I couldn't play as softly as I



could with the Birdland, but the sound was full and musical, with just the right amount of attack.

Bopworks' largest stick, the Storyville Jazz, is 15<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" long and .540" in diameter. It's designed for drummers who require extra thickness for big band, intense bop, or funky New Orleans-style grooves. This model falls somewhere between a traditional 7A and a 5A, which would make it a nice all-purpose jazz stick. I was able to play quietly enough to feel comfortable using them with a piano trio, but they also have an adequate amount of weight to be able to punch out crashes with a full horn section. All models list for \$7.95 per pair.

[www.bopworks.net](http://www.bopworks.net)

# Sabian AAX Ozone Cymbals And AAX/HHX X-Celerator Hats

>> Less Is More Meets More Is More

by Rick Van Horn

Sometimes it's not what you add, but what you take away that creates a new sound.



## KEY NOTES

- AAX Ozone cymbals combine brightness with China-esque trashiness
- 20" AAX Ozone crash delivers a sustained "FX" sound
- 13" AAX-Celerator Hats are particularly quick, bright, and penetrating

Sabian's new AAX Ozone splashes and crashes offer a special sound due to the removal of material. In this case, less is more. Also in the AAX series, the existing 14" X-Celerator Hats have been augmented by 13" and 15" models. Meanwhile, totally new X-Celerator Hats have been added to the HHX series, in 13", 14", and 15" sizes (three more models than there had been before). Ah, the possibilities.

## AAX Ozone Cymbals

Imagine a fairly thin, bright-sounding splash or crash cymbal. Then give it a certain amount of China-like trashiness and quite a bit of "wobble." Or, conversely, imagine a China cymbal that has more than usual musicality, a very quick decay, and a higher tonality than you might expect.

That pretty much sums up the overall character of Sabian's new AAX Ozone splashes and crashes. Essentially, they're a group of AAX thin cymbals that include 10" and 12" splashes, as well as 16", 18", and 20" crashes, each of which has a pattern of holes cut out to remove mass. It's these holes—or rather the removal of the material from the holes—that give the cymbals their interesting sonic identities.

## It Started With Dave

The Ozone design originated in Dave Weckl's HHX Evolution series, which are fairly dark-sounding cymbals. The AAX line has a much brighter, more penetrating overall tonality than does the HHX, so the AAX Ozone models perform up in that register. But they still offer a somewhat dark response, simply based on how thin they are coupled with all those holes.



Putting holes in the AAX crashes reduces their mass, creating a very fast response and a trashy sonic character.

### Just A Splash, Thanks

As you might expect, cymbals that start out as splashes and then have material removed from them are going to be very light, and thus their response is going to be extremely quick. Thus it is with the Ozone splashes. There's not a lot of body to the sound of either size. (But then, there's not a lot of body to their structure, either.)

The 10" model rings out, hisses, and then disappears, almost within the same instant. The 12" model has a little more sustain, but it's much quicker than a "whole" 12" splash would be.

### Hole-ier Than Thou

The various crash models decrease in pitch and increase in "wobble" as they get larger. The 20" has a fairly large bell and the greatest amount of remaining surface area, which helps it to produce a fairly long sustain. Its smaller siblings have proportionately smaller bells and smaller surface areas, resulting in shorter sustain and a bit more "trashiness" to their sound. The 16" crash is especially quick for its size, and would make a really nifty punctuation cymbal for those special accents.

The AAX Ozone models are nobody's all-purpose cymbals. They're effects instruments, designed to offer a unique voice that will stand out within an overall cymbal choir. Check 'em out.

### AAX X-Celerator Hats

The concept of Sabian's X-Celerator design is to create cymbals that deliver "increased speed and clarity." A medium-weight top cymbal is matched with a heavy bottom cymbal that features a contoured Air Wave design to eliminate airlock. Add this to the overall bright, penetrating character of the AAX series, and you get some pretty cheeky (or should that be "chick-y"?) hi-hats.

The 13" hats are very quick in terms of stick response, and they have a nice, tight-and-bright sound. (I'm particularly fond of 13" hats for this reason, and the 13" AAX X-Celerators proved to be my favorites among our test group.) Predictably, the 15" hats sound bigger and louder, as well as lower in pitch, and they have much more spread. But they retain terrific clarity, and they never sound out of control. Still, they'd be more appropriate in a loud rock situation than in funk or R&B music, where quick hi-hat barks are called for. They proved especially nice when used in a partly open, washy-ride application.

### HHX X-Celerator Hats

Sabian says that the HHX series delivers "hot, dark, simmering tones," and that pretty much sums up the HHX X-Celerator Hats. In essence, take everything I said about the AAX X-Celerators, and drop the pitch a few notes.

Again, I liked the 13" size the best (though not quite as much as its brighter-sounding AAX cousin). The 14" seemed the most general-purpose of the group, with enough quickness to cover any funky style, and enough power to acquit itself well in loud situations. The 15" HHX hats had more interesting and complex overtones than their AAX counterparts, and thus could perhaps work in situations other than just loud rock. That would be a matter of the player retaining control of a pretty powerful instrument.

All of the new X-Celerator hats offered clarity and projection that would make them great choices for virtually any amplified situation. Beyond that, pick the size and tonality of your choice, and have at it!



**AAX X-Celerator Hats are bright and distinct. Pick the 13" for quick response, or the 15" for power.**

### THE NUMBERS

#### AAX Ozone Cymbals

10" Splash .....	\$178
12" Splash .....	\$202
16" Crash .....	\$293
18" Crash .....	\$343
20" Crash .....	\$403

#### AAX X-Celerator Hi-Hats

13" .....	\$440
14" .....	\$484
15" .....	\$530

#### HHX X-Celerator Hi-Hats

13" .....	\$576
14" .....	\$654
15" .....	\$716

(506) 272-2019, [www.sabian.com](http://www.sabian.com)



New HHX X-Celerator Hats keep the penetration, but add a darker tonality.



**ATTACK**  
drumheads  
OLD SCHOOL

# Attack Jeff Ocheltree Old School Drumheads

>> **Combining The Best Of Old And New**

by Rick Van Horn

## KEY NOTES

- Open, lively sound
- Clear stick response
- Lots of bass drum power and punch

**Y**ou might recognize Jeff Ocheltree's name. Jeff has been "drumtech to the stars" for more than forty years. His knowledge and skills have made him the first-call guy for top drummers including Billy Cobham, Steve Smith, Carter Beauford, and Danny Carey. Jeff is also known for his unique drum creations, including his Dangerous Ocheltree snare drums and the stunning drumsets he's created from Paiste cymbal alloy for drummers like Danny Carey and Carl Palmer.

So, as you might imagine, Jeff Ocheltree knows a thing or two about drum sounds. He's contributed that expertise to the creation of a new line of Attack drumheads. Jeff Ocheltree Old School heads are designed to produce the classic rock sound of the late 1960s and 1970s, when music featured drums that were up front and powerful. (Think John Bonham with Led Zeppelin, and you're in the ballpark.) Essentially, these heads are the antithesis of self-muffling heads whose goal is control. Old School heads are all about maximizing the sonic power of the drums.

### How They're Made

Old School heads feature one ply of 1,000-gauge film, in an effort to promote lively sound, great stick response, and respectable durability. They're also made with carbon-steel hoops, which Attack says allow for higher tension and greater volume than other heads provide. These hoops are thinner, both horizontally and vertically, than those on heads of other brands we compared them to—but they're heavier, by virtue of being steel rather than aluminum. These smaller hoops reduce the overall mass of the head, as well as hoop-to-shell contact, which may be a contributing factor to the heads' overall resonance and sustain.

### How They're Sold

People tend to forget that a drum's sound is affected equally by the top and bottom heads. And drummers are sometimes confused as to which bottom head works best with their choice of batter, or vice versa. Attack has attempted to solve this dilemma by selling Old School heads in sets that pair a batter head with

a resonant head, providing what they believe is optimum performance from both.

Tom head sets are available in clear top/clear bottom, coated top/clear bottom, and coated top/coated bottom versions. Snare head sets match a coated batter with a thin-weight clear snare-side head.

Bass drum head sets comprise a No Overtone twin-ply clear or coated batter and a black front head. The No Overtone design is the exception to the rule amid the Old School line; unlike the other models, it features a self-muffling ring around the inside perimeter of the head to reduce ring and promote a deep, punchy sound. Every bass drum pack comes with two thick 100%-wool felt strips, along with Jeff Ocheltree's personal tuning instructions.

### How They Sound

We tested a group of tom heads that featured coated batters and clear resonant heads. They seated on the drums well, and they tuned up quickly. After that, they quite simply sang. They were loud, clear, and distinct, with excellent stick definition (but no annoying "stick-on-plastic" attack sound). Did they ring? Yes, they did. That's a part of the "bigness" of the classic '60s/'70s drum sound. If miking were required, the toms might best be miked up with overheads, rather than by close miking. (Ambience was another large part of that classic sound.) If the drums had to be close-miked, we found that the application of Zero Rings, Moon Gel, or other after-market muffling to the Old School heads could effectively reduce ring without losing the fundamental pitch and power of the drum sound.



A felt strip is an old-fashioned—but extremely effective—way of controlling overtones and unwanted "ring" in a bass drum, without filling the drum full of pillows or blankets that reduce the "bigness" of its sound.



Since the Old School heads were designed for a "classic" sound, we tried the snare head combo on a classic snare: a 14" 1967 Ludwig chrome-over-brass Supraphonic. We were surprised at how controlled the overall sound was. We put nothing on the batter head, and while the drum had lots of life and projection, it had virtually no annoying overring. It just sounded like the quintessential snare drum from a thousand rock records. Very cool.

One thing that made the rock bass drums of the '60s and '70s sound so big and deep is that they were often played with their front heads intact, and with (gasp!) nothing inside them. And instead of sticking a microphone through a hole in the head, the mic was placed a foot or two in front in order to capture the drum's natural, fully developed sound.

That's the concept behind the Old School bass drum head design—and the resulting bass drum sound. We fitted our clear No Overtone batter and black front head onto a 22" bass drum, and then played the drum at first without any muffling whatever. We got a stadium-filling boom that could make a dramatic statement amid loud amplifiers, all on its own. Adding one felt strip to the front head, about three inches in from one side (fitting the strip between the head and the bearing edge, in the time-honored fashion) took off just enough ring to make the drum sound punchy without losing its depth and "bigness."

Again, what if close miking was an absolute necessity? It could be accomplished by moving the felt strip further toward center on the front head. When we did this, the strip virtually eliminated the front-head ring while leaving the drum's internal space—and thus its depth of

pitch—intact. (You can't say the same about a drum stuffed with padding.) The second felt strip could be used on the batter head...but why?

### Back To School

Attack's Jeff Ocheltree Old School drumheads do provide a "classic" rock drum sound. And they do it with state-of-the-art design and quality. It's a combination sure to put power and punch into any drumming performance. If control is an absolute necessity, it can be achieved easily enough by familiar methods. But you owe it to yourself to experience what a drumkit can sound like when the need for control is not automatically assumed and applied beforehand, and when the drumheads on that kit can provide lots of (you'll excuse the expression) headroom.

### THE NUMBERS

All Jeff Ocheltree heads are sold in matched batter/resonant head combinations.

#### Tom head combinations

10"	.....	<b>\$37.75</b>
12"	.....	<b>\$42.25</b>
13"	.....	<b>\$44.50</b>
14"	.....	<b>\$49.50</b>
15"	.....	<b>\$54.50</b>
16"	.....	<b>\$60.00</b>
18"	.....	<b>\$73.75</b>

Combinations are available in clear top/clear bottom, coated top/coated bottom, and coated top/clear bottom versions. All versions are priced the same.

#### Bass drum head combinations

20"	.....	<b>\$198.75</b>
22"	.....	<b>\$211.75</b>
24"	.....	<b>\$226.50</b>
26"	.....	<b>\$249.50</b>

Combinations feature clear or coated No Overtone batters and black front heads, with two thick 100%-wool felt strips.

**14" Snare drum head combination** ..... **\$44.00**  
 Combination features a coated batter and a thin snare-side head.  
**(800) 282-0110, www.universalpercussion.com**

# Road Ready IntelliStage Portable Stage Systems

>> **Need To Raise Your Profile?**

by Rick Van Horn

## KEY NOTES

- Reasonably portable
- Easy to assemble and break down
- Solid and stable

Over the years I've repeatedly encouraged drummers to include some way of elevating their drumkits as part of their regular setup. Many drummers who are handy with tools have created elevation devices for themselves. But if you're not the handyman type, the IntelliStage Portable Stage System from Road Ready Cases might just be an ideal option for you.

## What It Is

IntelliStage Systems consist of top sections—called "platforms"—and collapsible support units called "risers." (To avoid confusion with these terms, I'm going to refer to a construction that elevates a drumkit as a "drumstage.") These modular units can be interlocked to create a wide variety of sizes and shapes.

Platforms are available in 3' x 3' and 4' x 4' square sizes, as well as in 3' and 4' triangle and quarter-round shapes. Each platform can bear weight up to 185 pounds per square foot. Risers are available in four different heights. One riser expands to completely support one platform. To support four platforms, you'd use four risers.

**Using IntelliStage components, you can create a drumstage... or a full stage for your band. It just depends on how many sections you use.**

## How It Works

To create an IntelliStage configuration, each riser is expanded from its collapsed storage mode to its fully opened support mode. Then a platform is secured to the riser via internal locking mechanisms at each corner. Each combined platform-and-riser unit is fastened to the next using another internal locking mechanism. Both mechanisms are operated by a fairly large Allen wrench. Disassembly is a simple matter of reversing the process.

We found the assembly process easy to accomplish, although we did have to "persuade" a couple of the locking mechanisms to seat together properly the first time, using a hammer. After that, however, we had no further problems.

Once assembled, the 6'-square by 2'-high riser was solid and stable. The only problem we experienced had to do with leveling. Each riser contacts the floor at nine points. With one riser under each of four platforms, that's thirty-six points of contact. Even on the carpeted floor of our testing room, some of the "feet" made contact, and some didn't. This would likely







**Road Ready Cases offers rolling flight cases to contain complete IntelliStage systems.**

be the case on virtually any club stage or floor. So it's possible that you might need to "shim" some of the feet with thin layers of cardboard or similar material in order to get total foot-to-floor contact. This isn't a flaw in the IntelliStage design; it's just a physical reality when it comes to multiple contact points on a given surface.

### For Drummers Only

In addition to the regular platform/riser combos, the IntelliStage system also includes a 6' x 6' x 6" "drum riser" (their term this time) that combines four 3' x 3' platforms with 5"-long steel legs. Each leg is fitted with a level-adjustable rubber foot. Each platform section has five threaded receptacles to receive these legs, so a total of twenty legs are used. Fitting the legs to the platforms results in a 6"-high drumstage.

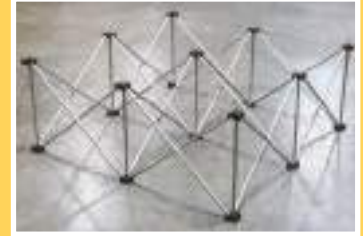
To be honest, we don't see much advantage to elevating a drumkit only 6". Since the top platforms are the same for any IntelliStage system, we'd sooner opt for one of the regular riser systems, using 16"-high risers as a minimum height. That would at least put the drummer's head at about the same level as those of the other players on stage. Our test unit came with 24" risers, which seemed an even better choice.

### Do-It-Yourself?

Road Ready Cases states that IntelliStage units can be easily assembled by a single person. Well...yes and no. The riser units are light-



**DuraFlex carpeting and matte aluminum edging offer functionality and an attractive look to the assembled stages.**



**The risers that support IntelliStage platforms use a criss-cross "accordion" construction, allowing them to set up quickly and to collapse for convenient portability.**

weight (our 24"-high models weighed only 8 lbs. each) and are a snap to open up. But the 3' x 3' platform sections weigh 27 lbs. each. (We were sent four of them, in order to create a 6' x 6' drumstage.) Individually they're manageable for set-up. But you'd need to either carry each one into the gig by itself, or find some way of bundling or containerizing them on wheels, and then rolling them in together. (Road Ready offers rolling flight cases designed to contain complete IntelliStage systems.)

### VITAL STATS

#### Platforms:

Grey carpet/Duraflex finish  
 Multiple-layer "sandwich" construction:  
 Top: 9-mm high density plywood  
 Middle: 7.5-mm honeycomb  
 Bottom: 4-mm high-density plywood  
 Aluminum profile edging

#### Risers:

Materials: aluminum, copper, ABS plastic  
 Brushed aluminum finish  
 Heights: 8", 16", 24", and 32"

#### Drum Riser legs:

Materials: steel and rubber  
 Height: 5"  
 Number required per platform: 5

No matter how you plan to move the top sections, in order to use an IntelliStage system of any kind, you're going to need a truck or a van. There's no way you're getting those platform sections into a car.

### On The Rise

Over the years, a number of industrial-style collapsible stage systems have come on the market. Virtually all have been too heavy or too expensive to be practical for use by a single drummer. The IntelliStage system may just have broken that barrier. It's not feather-light, but it is manageable in terms of size and weight. It should also be manageable in terms of cost, since street prices are likely to be half to two-thirds of the list prices shown here. What it definitely is is a professional-quality way for individual drummers to make themselves a visible presence on stage.

### THE NUMBERS

3' x 3' Platforms (tops), per pair .....	\$516
24" Riser (support unit), each .....	\$162
6' x 6' x 24"-high drumstage, as reviewed .....	\$1,680
<small>(includes component prices for four platforms and four risers)</small>	
6' x 6' x 6"-high drum riser, complete .....	\$1,099
<small>(includes four 3' x 3' platforms and twenty 5" steel legs)</small>	
<b>(562) 906-6185, <a href="http://www.roadreadycases.com">www.roadreadycases.com</a></b>	



# DTS ONE TOUCH DRUM TUNING SYSTEM



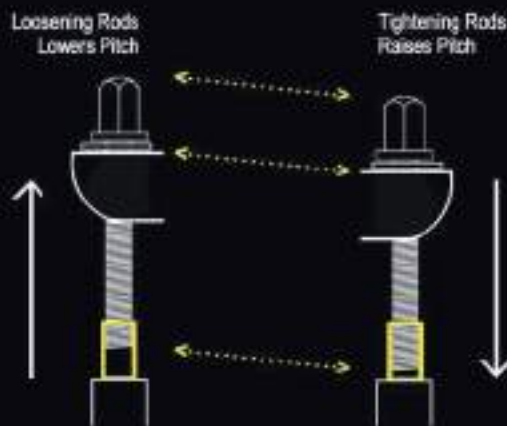
## A Completely New Approach to Drum Tuning

- The DTS offers an entirely new approach to tuning drums by using evenly applied leverage instead of turning tension rods.
- A single point of adjustment allows remarkably fast tuning.
- Sweep through the entire range of pitch - while playing.
- Installs easily onto your bottom, top, or both heads.



### Conventional Tuning:

#### Adjusting Individual Tension Rods



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In School



At the Gig



In the Studio

## It's Not Magic... It's Just Leverage.

### DTS Bottom Head Only

- Bottom head installation allows sweep-tuning.
- Tune from your throne with the drum set in place.
- Quickly balance tuning between top and bottom heads.
- Bottom heads are finally easy to tune.



Bottom Head Installation



Top and Bottom Head Installation

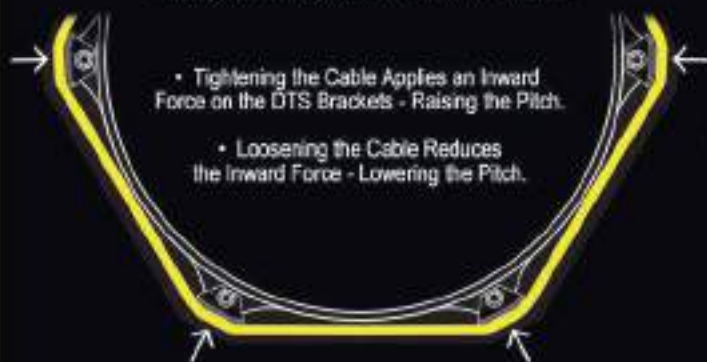
### DTS Top and Bottom Head

- Adding a second DTS to the top head increases over-all speed in tuning by completely eliminating the need for any rod adjustments.
- Sweep-tune both heads for maximum creative control and drum sound quality.

## DTS One-Touch Drum Tuning:

### The DTS Cable Distributes Force Evenly to the Brackets:

- Adjusting the DTS Tension Assembly With the Tuning Wrench Tightens and Loosens the Cable.



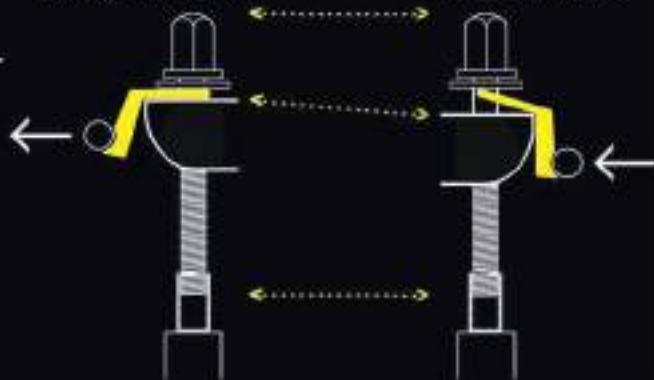
- Tightening the Cable Applies an Inward Force on the DTS Brackets - Raising the Pitch.

- Loosening the Cable Reduces the Inward Force - Lowering the Pitch.

### Bracket Leverage Controls Hoop Tension

Loosening Cable Reduces Leverage - Lowering Pitch

Tightening Cable Increases Leverage - Raising Pitch



The DTS enables fast and easy drum tuning by eliminating the need to adjust tension rods. Tuning is now accomplished by adjusting the single DTS tension bolt. This 'One-Touch' approach allows you to listen to all aspects of the drum sound change while tuning. Most importantly, the top and bottom heads are now easily brought into tune with each other producing the best overall drum sound.

See the DTS video, or download a DTS brochure at: [www.drumtech.com/DTS](http://www.drumtech.com/DTS)

# Audio-Technica Artist Series Microphones

## Cool Tools For The Working Drummer

by Mark Parsons

**A**udio-Technica recently revamped their Artist Series mics, adding new models and re-engineering existing ones. Primarily designed as high-quality live microphones for working musicians, Artist Series mics are neither the least nor the most expensive that A-T offers. Out of eight mics in the series, five are of interest to drummers. Let's work our way up the kit.

### ATM250

At 5" long and a little over 2" in diameter, and sporting an all-metal body (as do all the models in the Artist Series), the ATM250 hypercardioid dynamic looks like a kick mic. The tail-piece is sized to fit the included AT8471 clamp, which is designed to help isolate the mic from stand noises.

We placed the 250 a few inches in front of a bass drum, running it alongside a couple of other dynamic mics for reference (one "pre-EQ" d" mic and one "natural" mic). While the 250 produced a nice, warm sound, its heart was really in the latter category. While there was a small upper-mid boost that helped bring out the beater attack, and the lower end was certainly not thin, this is more of a what-you-see-is-what-you-get transducer.

Results were similar with the mic inside the drum: a nice,

realistic representation of the sound. With some significant equalization I could get it to closely approximate the sound of the pre-curved mic, but its strong point was really capturing the meat of the sound in a natural, organic way. All in all, it's a good, solid dynamic that should prove useful in several applications.

### ATM250DE

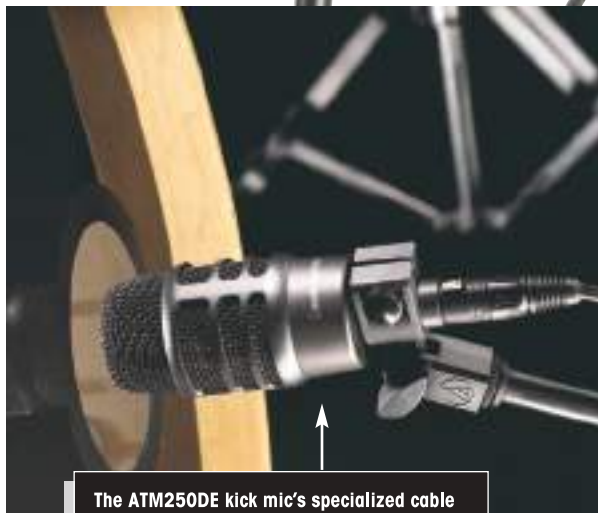
The March 2004 MD carried a review of Audio-Technica's innovative AE2500, which contained separate dynamic and condenser elements in one microphone body. A great idea, certainly,



The ATM250DE contains separate dynamic and condenser elements in one microphone body.

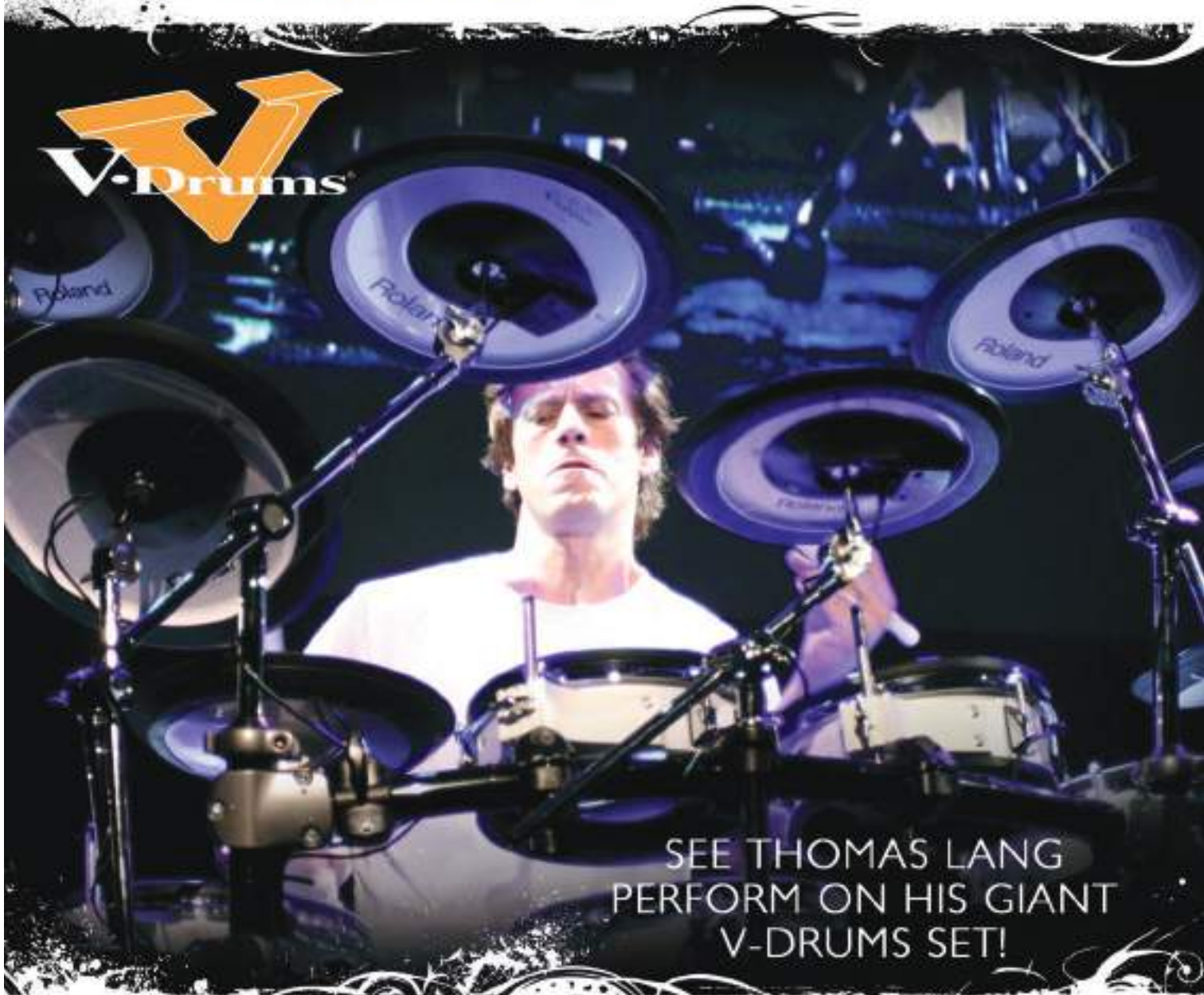


The ATM250 dynamic mic offers a traditional kick-mic design. It also worked well on large toms, produced full sounds on smaller toms, and even yielded a respectable snare sound.



The ATM250DE kick mic's specialized cable seems very well built, and it functioned perfectly during our tests. But you're not going to find a replacement at the local music store while on tour, so buy a spare before you hit the road.

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## ELECTRONIC REVIEW

If you're looking for a solid, all-purpose instrument mic that's in the same ballpark as the old favorites but has a slightly different flavor, give the ATM650 a listen.



but at \$700 a bit of a luxury for many working musicians. The 250DE offers the same concept in a more affordable package.

The 250DE looks almost identical to the 250, except that its windscreens protrude a bit more at the front end of the mic to make room for the dual elements. And the XLR connector at the other end has five pins versus the usual three. The 250DE comes with a 16' cable that has a 5-pin XLR at one end and a pair of standard 3-pin XLR connectors at the other (clearly marked as to which is the condenser and

which the dynamic).

Remove the windscreen and you'll find the two mic elements side-by-side. Because they're in virtually the same space, the sound arrives at both elements simultaneously, resulting in the two signals being in perfect phase with each other. (This is extremely hard to achieve using two separate mics.)

We again started outside the kick, with the 250DE's elements bussed to two separate tracks so we could experiment with them in isolation as well as blend them at various lev-

els. The dynamic element sounded the same as the 250, but bringing in the condenser element extended the response, adding high-end transients as well as a fuller bottom end. With the mic placed inside the drum, the dynamic element tended to reproduce the "meat" of the beater on the head, while the condenser element added a sharper beater attack and more of the shell sound. The condenser element also seemed to take EQ very well. If you want more click on top or boom on the bottom, just dial it in. And you can blend the two elements anywhere from 50/50 to 90/10, at your discretion. Nice.

### ATM350

The ATM350 is a miniature cardioid electret condenser, with a supplied clip mount for attachment to a drum hoop. The tiny mic lives inside a foam windscreen, which, in turn, is cradled inside a mount. This mount is attached to the spring-loaded clip by a thin, 4"-long gooseneck. The mic has a permanently attached 13' cable, which terminates in a mini-XLR plug that plugs into the supplied in-line power module. The module has a standard XLR connector at its other end, and also features a recessed hi-pass switch (12-dB/octave, at 80 Hz.).



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We started with the 350 on toms, running it alongside a smallish dynamic often used in this application, as well as another clip-on mini condenser also touted as a tom/snare mic. The 350 pretty much fit between them as far as tonality goes. It wasn't quite as big/round as the dynamic, but it offered better transients. It was a little less articulate than the other condenser, but a tad warmer.

On a snare drum, the 350 sang a similar tune: a little more articulate than most dynamics used for the task, but not quite as crisp as

some condensers. Overall, it produced a clear, warm, reasonably linear sound, with a good balance of beef and bite.

#### ATM650

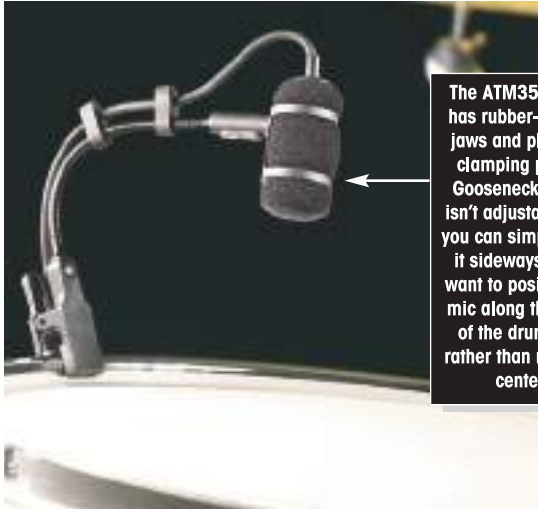
The ATM650 is a dynamic instrument mic aimed squarely at the likes of Shure's SM57 and the Audix i-5. But there are a few design differences worth noting. The first is that the 650 is hypercardioid, while the 57 and i-5 are both cardioid. This gives it a more directional response, with more isolation from the sides (although a little less at 180°, which is generally not an issue). The second difference is Audio-Technica's "dual wall floating construction," which is designed to reduce handling noise. Another clever idea is the addition of a small rubber sleeve at the base of the mic that can be removed, allowing you to use the same AT8471 isolation clamp that the 250, 250DE, and 450 use, instead of the supplied



While not as effective as a full-on shock mount, the AT8471 iso clamp moderately reduced stand-transmitted noises.

standard clip. This will help reduce stand-borne noises.

We tested the 650 on a snare and a range of toms from 10" to 16". On the snare it had good mid-range presence, but was perhaps a little thin compared to other dynamics. Not a lot, and not in a bad way—just a slightly different emphasis, and certainly musical. On the toms it again had a slightly "mid-rangier" tone than either a 57 or an i-5, resulting in its not being quite as smooth or warm as those mics. But this characteristic could help it cut through a crowded mix, either onstage or in the control room.



The ATM350's clip has rubber-padded jaws and plenty of clamping power. Gooseneck length isn't adjustable, but you can simply bend it sideways if you want to position the mic along the edge of the drumhead rather than near the center.

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The ATM450 condenser was the standout in our review group. It features a side-address system that offers placement convenience and terrific sound.

## ATM450

The ATM450 is a small-diaphragm side-address mic—a mini version of all those cylindrical large condensers we know and love. This cardioid-patterned mic has both a 10-dB pad and the same hi-pass as the ATM250DE and ATM350, and will fit the AT8471 isolation clamp.

We ran the ATM450 alongside a few different condensers. The main competition was another similarly sized model (though not a

side-address) that's often used for similar applications, and that sells for well over twice as much.

The design of the 450 makes it a natural for use on hi-hats: You can have the mic lying nearly horizontal over the top cymbal, where it's tucked out of the way. Right off the bat I liked the tone of this microphone: It was clear, clean, and smooth, with good transient response but no harshness in the high frequencies. In this application there wasn't much difference between the 450 and the reference mic.

On the snare, the 450 produced a crisp yet full response that gave the drum good presence in the track. Again it was similar to the reference mic, with the more

expensive model being only a hair fatter on the bottom.

The 450 really showed its stuff when used in the overhead position. The complex overall kit sound was full and bright, without undue sibilance. The 450 did an admirable job of reproducing the warm tones of the larger toms. On cymbals, hats, and snare it gave a realistic reproduction of the transients, giving them enough bite to stand up in a mix without being

excessively boosted in the treble range. Once again, the most noticeable difference between the 450 and the high-priced mic was extension into the lowest octave—and even this wasn't apparent until I took the kick mic out of the mix and listened to the kick drum just through the overheads. (Not that this is why anyone buys a small-diaphragm condenser in the first place.)

## Wrap-Up

All of the revised Artist Series mics we evaluated performed well, and each would be a roadworthy sonic asset. But to me, the ATM450 side-address small condenser is the star of the group. And at a street price of a little over two bills, it's a heck of a bargain, too.

## VITAL STATS

ATM250 Dynamic Kick Mic . . . . .	\$329
ATM250DE Dual-Element Kick Mic . . .	\$549
ATM350 Clip-On Condenser . . . . .	\$449
ATM650 Dynamic Instrument Mic . . .	\$169
ATM450 Small-Diameter Condenser . .	\$369

Prices shown are retail list; "street" prices are likely to be significantly lower.

(330) 686-2600, [www.audio-technica.com](http://www.audio-technica.com)



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Adjustable Cam mimics an Accelerator cam, Turbo cam or anything in between. Options? Absolutely. Both the 9000 and 9002 come with a chain or strap option to suit every player. Bottom line, Keith can play whatever pedal he wants. He chooses the DW 9000 because he knows it will help him land the next big session or tour. DW Pedals, The Drummer's Choice®.

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## New At NAMM '07

Every January the musical instrument industry gathers at the National Association Of Music Merchants (NAMM) show in Anaheim, California to display its wares for retailers (and those consumers lucky enough to wangle a way in). For drummers, a walk through the percussion hall is like being a kid in a candy store. Drums, cymbals, percussion, hardware, electronics, accessories...it's all here in profusion.

MD will be presenting a Buyers Guide later this year that will feature a comprehensive look at all the new and exciting goodies on the drum market. In the meantime, this month's New And Notable offers a tasty sampling of some of the most appealing eye and ear candy from the 2007 NAMM show.



### >> MAPEX

The 5 1/2 x 14 Solid Steel Black Panther snare starts as 1 1/2"-diameter, 5 mm-thick steel pipe. The shells are routed on the inside to a thickness of 3 mm at the center, leaving a 5-mm "sound control ring" at each end. The 17.3-lb. drum is plated in black chrome, and comes with matching hardware and die-cast hoops.

[www.mapexdrums.com](http://www.mapexdrums.com)

### >> CHOP SHOP

Check out the intricately machined lugs and "riveted aluminum" paint job that grace the custom "Bomber Pin-Up" kit.

[www.chopshopdrums.com](http://www.chopshopdrums.com)



DTXPRESS IV kits come with an easy-to-use module that includes 427 drum and percussion voices.



### >> YAMAHA

DTXPRESS IV electronic drumsets incorporate the same technology that powers Yamaha's Motif synthesizers. The Special kit features a TP100 tunable snare drum pad and three round cymbal pads. The hi-hat controller uses a real hi-hat stand, and the drums are mounted on a curved rack. The Standard kit features two round stereo cymbal pads and a three-zone snare drum pad.

[www.yamahadrums.com](http://www.yamahadrums.com)



## >> ZILDJIAN

The 22" K Dark medium ride was developed in collaboration with Cindy Blackman. It features a large bell for projection, plus special hammering and lathing for broad tonal complexities and a warm, dark sound.

[www.zildjian.com](http://www.zildjian.com)

## >> REGAL TIP

The Fat Cat brush features non-retractable nylon bristles and a rubber-covered wood handle with a rubber "ball" at the butt end for on-drum use. Signature sticks and brushes from JR Robinson are also new.

[www.regaltip.com](http://www.regaltip.com)



Ply Metal drums are said to resonate two to three octaves lower than comparable wood models.

## >> NICKEL WORKS

Ply Metal drums from Nickel Works feature plies of stainless steel and aluminum that are molecularly bonded under extreme pressure for low weight and high surface strength.

[www.drumworks.com](http://www.drumworks.com)

## >> DRUM WORKSHOP

This "wall o' toms" illustrates the hundreds of lacquer, FinishPly, graphic, and Exotic veneer finishes available from DW. Note the new Twisted Grain Exotic tom at the center of the second row from the left. [www.dwdrums.com](http://www.dwdrums.com)



## >> PAISTE

The Twenty series represents Paiste's first use of original Turkish-made bronze. Cymbal blanks are created in Turkey, then shipped to the company's Swiss factory for finishing. The resulting cymbals are said to be "full, rich, warm, silvery, and shimmering."

[www.paiste.com](http://www.paiste.com)



These drums feature proportionate-thickness Gretsch-formula 6-ply maple shells for a classic Gretsch tonality with a distinctive voice.

## >> GRETSCH

The New Classic line now includes a bebop configuration in Vintage Glass (shown here), Deep Cherry Gloss, and Ivory Marine Pearl finishes.

[www.gretschdrums.com](http://www.gretschdrums.com)



## >> VATER

The Morgan Rose Whiplash stick—one of several new Player's Series models—is just over a 2B size in the grip, with an oval tip for full sound on drums and cymbals. It features Vater's Nude Series finish and measures 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ " long by .650" in diameter.

[www.vater.com](http://www.vater.com)

## >> REMO

PowerStroke X snare drum heads feature one ply of 14-mil polyester film with a 2-mil inlay ring for easy tunability and overtone control. Tonally, the 13" and 14" heads fall between coated Emperor and Emperor X models, and are suited for rock, funk, and R&B applications.

[www.remo.com](http://www.remo.com)



## >> LATIN PERCUSSION

LP Accents Richie Garcia congas and bongos feature exclusive signature art applied over 3-ply Siam oak shells. The 30"-tall drums are fitted with rawhide heads, Comfort Curve II rims, reinforced LP side plates, and ProCare Integrated Shell Protectors.

[www.lpmusic.com](http://www.lpmusic.com)



## >> GIBRALTAR

In a totally new approach to bass drum pedal design, the Gibraltar Catapult uses a Linear Motion system with no frames or cams. It's said to provide true response from foot to playing surface, and to promote natural ankle motion in order to avoid muscle fatigue.

[www.gibraltarhardware.com](http://www.gibraltarhardware.com)



## >> SONOR

The S Class line has been redesignated as S Classix. Drums are finished in several of the company's finishes from the '60s and '70s. They feature thin shells of Scandinavian birch for "powerful treble and mid-range pitches and well-balanced deep tones."

[www.sonor.com](http://www.sonor.com)



## >> PEACE

This dizzying finish is called Seismic Zebra. It's one of five wrap finishes available in the Chromadose series. Drums feature the 9-ply all-maple shells used in the DNA series.

[www.peacedrum.com](http://www.peacedrum.com)



## >> PEARL

The new Vision series essentially replaces Pearl's venerable Export line. The 6-ply rack toms and 8-ply floor toms and bass drums come with 2-ply ProTone heads for depth and ease of tuning. VLX kits feature 100%-birch shells in four high-gloss lacquer finishes. VSX kits feature blended birch/basswood shells in five Delmar wrapped finishes. A chrome-plated steel SensiTone snare drum is included with each kit.

[www.pearldrum.com](http://www.pearldrum.com)



The 14-mil EC1 is thicker than industry-standard single-ply heads for a solid, sturdy feel and extra durability.

## >> EVANS

EC1 heads have been developed to control upper frequencies while promoting solid attack and a rich, dense low-end component.

[www.evansdrumheads.com](http://www.evansdrumheads.com)

VIC FIRTH  
www.vicfirth.com

>> **VIC FIRTH**

New Signature Series sticks from Vic Firth include this one for Abe Laboriel Jr. It's 17" long and .630" thick for plenty of power, but features an extended taper for great rebound and overall feel. The tip is shaped to create a well-defined sound.

[www.vicfirth.com](http://www.vicfirth.com)

>> **MEINL**

The Byzance Jazz series was designed in cooperation with top German studio drummer Wolfgang Hafner. The thin Turkish-made cymbals were developed for the "natural, vintage sound that traditional jazz requires."

[www.meinlcymbals.com](http://www.meinlcymbals.com)



>> **YAMAHA**

Yamaha's 40th Anniversary Washi drumset is a limited-edition Recording Custom kit wrapped with washi paper (a type of rice paper used in traditional Japanese arts). The all-birch shells feature high-tension lug casings, vintage wood hoops, and 60° bearing edges for warmth.

[www.yamahadrums.com](http://www.yamahadrums.com)

The set's artwork depicts scenes from the Genpei War of 1180 to 1185, a pivotal point in Japanese history.



>> **TOCA**

These Acrylic Mini Timbales should appeal to percussionists and drumset players alike. The 6" and 8" individual drums' acrylic shells produce full-bodied tone and formidable attack. The drums feature chrome rims (for solid rimshots) and a traditional tuning system, and will attach to any  $\frac{3}{8}$ " rod.

[www.tocapercussion.com](http://www.tocapercussion.com)



## >> DDRUM

This percussion extravaganza features high-end USA Custom series drums in gold lacquered chrome, with outboard acrylic Decabons and an array of ddrum triggers.

[www.ddrum.com](http://www.ddrum.com)



## >> GON BOPS

Alex Acuña signature bongos are made from North American ash to complement Alex's signature congas.

[www.gonbops.com](http://www.gonbops.com)

The Acuña bongos are designed to offer a crisp, articulate sound for stage and studio use.



## >> SLEISHMAN

The Sleighman Twin Pedal features a mirror-image design that gives both pedals exactly the same action. The pedal offers a tremendous range of adjustability in terms of action and feel.

[www.sleighman.com](http://www.sleighman.com)

## >> LUDWIG

The popular Zep Set configuration has been added to Ludwig's affordable Accent Custom series.

[www.ludwig-drums.com](http://www.ludwig-drums.com)



## >> ZILDJIAN

Backbeat sticks are double butt-ended for an extra-strong backbeat. They're available in 5A and 5B sizes, with a choice of Anti-Vibe or Purple Dip (grip-enhancement) feature at the rear. The front of the stick is slightly tapered and finished in clear lacquer.

[www.zildjian.com](http://www.zildjian.com)



## >> TAYE

The XP1 bass drum pedal system from Taye's Metalworks division is reversible and modular, so it can be used singly or drive a double pedal from either side. A second tower can be added to a single pedal to create a double pedal; remote pedals can also be created easily.

[www.taye.com](http://www.taye.com)



Adjustable factors include baseplate length, footboard length, cam rotation, cam "shape," and the left/right horizontal position of the beater.



## >> GMS

Already known for high-quality wood drums, GMS has entered the acrylic-drum fray with kits like this one, which features a distinctive racing-stripe pattern.

[www.gmsdrums.com](http://www.gmsdrums.com)



### >> PREMIER

Premier has upgraded their entire affordable Cabria series. The new XPK range (shown here) features 100%-maple shells, die-cast rims, improved ISO mounting systems, double-braced hardware, and Remo drumheads, and is available in a selection of high-gloss lacquer finishes. APK and PK drums feature similar upgrades.

[www.premier-percussion.com](http://www.premier-percussion.com)

### >> TAMA

This one-of-a-kind kit was made for System Of A Down's John Dolmayan.

[www.tama.com](http://www.tama.com)



This Tama kit features original cartoon artwork by a different famous artist on each drum, giving it an estimated value of \$150,000.



### >> ORANGE COUNTY DRUM & PERCUSSION

This illuminated kit features sandblasted acrylic shells, with stainless-steel hardware and wood reinforcing hoops to reduce overtones.

[www.ocdrum.com](http://www.ocdrum.com)

### >> AQUARIAN

New Super-2 heads are designed with a 5-mil top ply and a 7-mil bottom, to provide 2-ply durability while producing attack, projection, and depth more reminiscent of a single-ply head.

[www.aquariandrumheads.com](http://www.aquariandrumheads.com)



### >> PRO-MARK

The Abe Cunningham stick is one of several new Autograph Series models from Pro-Mark. At 16<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" long and .620" in diameter with an oval-shaped wood tip, this one's built for power.

[www.promark.com](http://www.promark.com)



For more product shots and info from NAMM '07, go to [www.moderndrummer.com](http://www.moderndrummer.com).





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# INDEPENDENCE & COORDINATION

**Welcome** to *Modern Drummer's* theme issue on coordination and independence. In the following *fifty-plus* pages, you'll find countless tips and exercises that we *know* will raise your drumming game.



Look for this icon, which designates the coordination & independence section. Enjoy!

## the **KEYS** to **COORDINATION**

Independence Masters Offer Tips To Understanding One Of The **Most Challenging Aspects Of Being A Drummer.**

**G**et five drummers around a practice pad, throw out the word “coordination,” and watch what happens. Apparently coordination means different things to different drummers.

For some, it conjures up the hyper-rhythmic visuals and stunning dexterity of Virgil Donati or Horacio “El Negro” Hernandez. For others, the muscular musicality of Thomas Lang or Mike Mangini leads the way to coordination mastery. Others still will offer the bi-lateral innovations of Kenwood Dennard or the inexplicable polymetric assaults of Pete Zeldman as sure signs of advanced rhythmic life forms. And as for pedagogy, drummers cite the classics of four-way independence—Marv Dahlgren and Elliot Fine’s *4-Way Coordination*, Gary Chester’s *New Breed*, and, of course, Jim Chapin’s *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer*.

“I pretty much ate, drank, and slept with Jim Chapin’s book as a kid,” Bill Bruford (Earthworks, Yes, King Crimson) recalls. “It still has one of the clearest explanations of jazz and swing coordination, totally applicable today also as hip-hop and

funk exercises. I recently spent some time again with it using left-hand lead.”

Considered to be totally unplayable upon its initial publication in 1948, *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer* has since become the Bible for coordination, the text every serious drummer must consume, digest, and master, even if it becomes a lifelong quest.

“Pianists and organists as far back as Bach had used independence to play a line with one hand and a counter line with the other,” Jim Chapin told *MD's* Rick Mattingly in 1994. “So why did drummers have to play everything hand-to-hand? I started thinking about doing something with the other hand at the same time. The idea was in my head by the middle of 1939. All I did was notate the mechanics.”

But back to that roundtable discussion: *MD* put the idea into practice, asking a handful of drummers these questions: How did you begin to practice coordination? How did you meet and master your biggest coordination challenges? And who are your coordination heroes? Check out the in-depth replies from these contemporary coordination masters...and then get to work!

## CHRIS ADLER

**Gig:** Lamb Of God

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** *Sacrament* CD, Lamb Of God North American headlining tour

**Coordination influences:** Aerosmith's Joey Kramer

**MD:** What books were most essential in developing your coordination?

**Chris:** I've never used a book or video to help my coordination. I don't recommend avoiding books, but in many ways my playing has benefited by my not being able to formally create, categorize, or dissect it. I believe if I were able to do so, I would inadvertently set up barriers, and defining and categorizing might not allow me to as naturally blend unconventional ideas.

**MD:** How did you go about tackling difficult patterns?

**Chris:** Once I had some basic 4/4 patterns down, I randomly experimented—starting a pattern with my right hand and a different one with my right foot, building on that with my left hand and foot. If a pattern was exciting to me as a listener, it came

much easier than trying to force a counted pattern or rudiment that I was "supposed" to know. There are no cheat codes to independence, it's about finding your comfort zone. And that takes considerable practice and time.

**MD:** Is it possible to practice coordination ideas off the drums before applying them to the kit?

**Chris:** Absolutely. Since I don't have access to my kit 24/7, I'm always tapping along to rhythms in my head—or to the sound of any random appliance, machine, or engine in earshot. This is the best time to try new things and come up with your own patterns. There's no pressure and no fumbled attempts. Then you try out the ideas the next time you're at the kit. I wouldn't be close to where I am as a drummer without the mental experiments I've worked on away from my kit.

Daragh McDonough

**MD:** What exercise or routine made the biggest difference to your overall independence?

**Bill:** An awareness of how your mind works on left/right control is useful. Some people start opening doors with their left hands, doing domestic chores leading with the left. It's not about coordination *per se*, but it will help develop your weaker side.

**MD:** How important is it to count aloud while working on independence exercises?

**Bill:** Counting while playing is, of course, another coordination. Counting internally or, better still, out loud, really helps fix the pulse and the various subdivisions in your brain. But it's an exercise to internalize the rhythm; I don't count to myself when playing for real.

**MD:** How does developing advanced coordination help your overall playing?

**Bill:** I consider the use of language when I'm thinking about strategies on the drums. If we all played drums as well as we speak, it would be a fine thing. Sometimes one word will do, but sometimes a witty one-off speech full of fancy phrases and a couple of allusions in Greek is needed. I can address you in a deafening monotone with repeated clichés if you want, but you'll get tired of that pretty quick.

Good coordination is going to advance and expand your vocabulary, so what you have to say can become richer, varied, and more interesting.

**MD:** What inspires you to come up with challenging coordination patterns?

**Bill:** I think hearing the pattern first, before you attempt to play it, is very useful. If your teacher can play it slowly first, so you can hear what it sounds like, or you can program your drum machine to do it, that will help. Also, try to write down notes for any of the limbs and try to play them at the same time, from the very simple to the very complex. Personally I like to see the "line-up" of the notes on the paper, clearly showing which limbs, if any, strike together. My brain seems to "get it" quicker that way.

The aim of all this technique business is to be able to play what you hear, when you want to. When we're speaking, most of us have the necessary tongue, throat, and lip movements on autopilot. There is no time lag between the thought and the expression of that thought. That's what you're working on with coordination. Then what becomes of much more interest is not the mechanics of the expression, but the quality of the thought expressed.

## BILL BRUFORD

**Gig:** Earthworks

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** *Earthworks: A Video Anthology* DVD, Anderson, Bruford, Wakeman, Howe's *An Evening Of Yes Music Plus* DVD, Bruford-Borstlap 2007 tour

**Methods mastered:** Jim Chapin's *Advanced Techniques*

**Coordination influences:** Miles Davis/Tony Williams "Seven Steps To Heaven"



## KEITH CARLOCK

**Gigs:** Wayne Krantz, Steely Dan, Oz Noy, Rudder

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** Steely Dan 2007 tour, CDs: Wayne Krantz's *Your Basic Live '06*, Oz Noy's *Fuzzy*, upcoming Rudder and Walter Becker discs

**Methods mastered:** Gary Chester's *The New Breed*, Ted Reed's *Syncopation*

**Coordination influences:** David Garibaldi

**MD:** How do you go about tackling difficult patterns?

**Keith:** You have to start slowly and isolate the limbs. I'll start with maybe the right hand with right foot, and then add the left hand and left foot. Usually you're playing combinations of singles, doubles, and flams, so to know how the limbs are working together helps it all come together much more quickly than thinking about each limb separately. Being able to play anything at different tempos is always a challenge and a great thing to practice.

**MD:** How does developing advanced coordination help your overall playing?

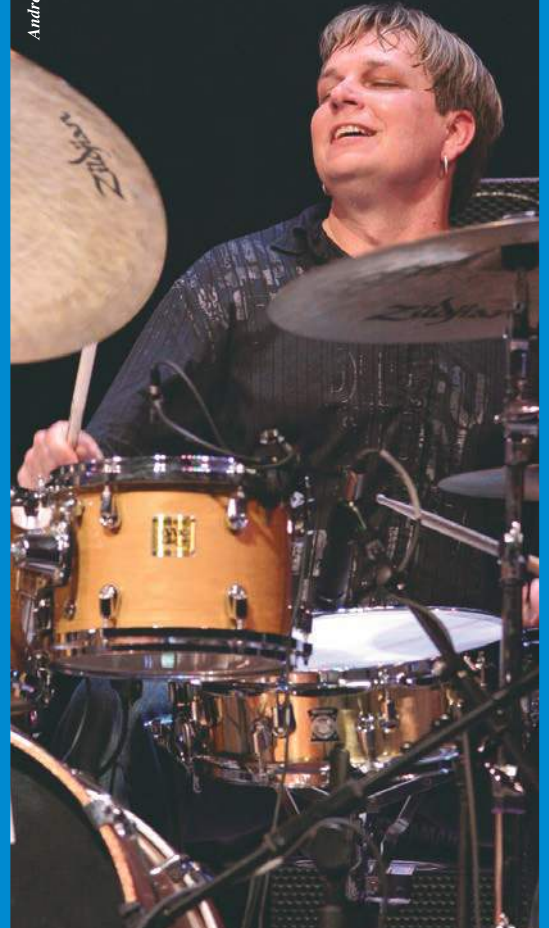
**Keith:** If you're always trying to play something complex because you can, then it doesn't make sense and it can be a distraction. It's important to think about the feel of what you're playing first, and if there's room to reach into your arsenal of coordination ideas to make it more interesting without disrupting the flow and feel of the music you're playing, then that's great.

A lot of young drummers think music is background noise for them to apply all of the licks they've been practicing. Advanced coordination and good technique are tools for us to play music, not the other way around.

**MD:** What inspires you to come up with challenging coordination patterns?

**Keith:** Most of the time it's something that happens by accident on a gig. I may be going for something I "heard" at the time, but maybe I didn't quite make it and something else came out instead that was not exactly intended. I love it when that happens because it gives me other ideas that I haven't thought about before, and it motivates me to develop them further. "Accidents" can be good and creative too!

Andrew Lepley



## BILLY COBHAM

**Gig:** Billy Cobham band

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** *Drum & Voice 2*, *Meeting Of The Spirits*, *The Art Of 4*, and *Colours* CDs, Billy Cobham & Asere's *A Latin Soul* DVD

**Methods mastered:** Sam Ulano's *Drummer's Rudimental Guide And Foot Development*

**Coordination influences:** Buddy Rich on "West Side Story"

**MD:** What exercise made the biggest difference to your overall independence?

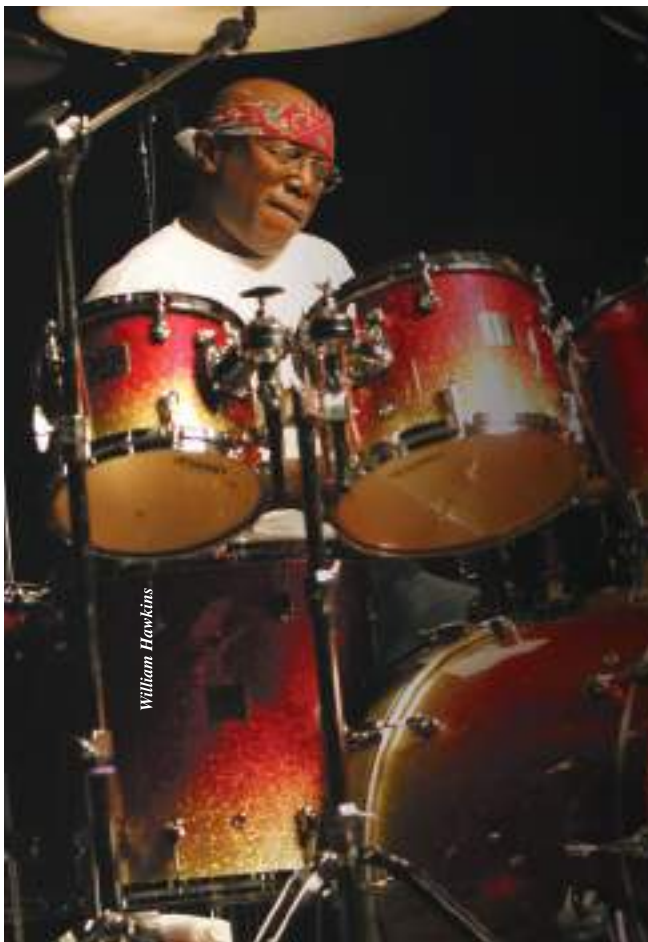
**Billy:** Being able to work on the inner clock/metronome within my mind that controls my body clock throughout my life. Example: in 4/4 time, play the bass drum four beats per bar, play the hi-hat on 2 and 4, and play a single paradiddle (first, one beat per bar) at the same time. While maintaining the speed with both feet, play the paradiddle two beats per bar. Continue this until you can play four paradiddles per

bar while maintaining an even tempo.

**MD:** What tips can you offer the beginning drummer to help develop their coordination and independence?

**Billy:** Learn to sit and address the drumset properly, the same way you would approach eating at a table: Keep your feet on the bass drum and hi-hat pedals so that they become an integral part of those instruments. Always maintain flexibility in your upper body. Use your stomach muscles to store and project power.

William Hawkins



## VIRGIL DONATI

**Gigs:** Planet X, Bunny Brunel & The Jazz All Stars

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** Donati's *Live In Stockholm* DVD, Planet X's *Quantum* CD



**MD:** How do you go about tackling difficult patterns?

**Virgil:** First, just try really slowing down. It helps you understand how the parts interact. The second option is to add one layer at a time. If it's a pattern that involves all four limbs, start with two layers. Then once you control that, add another, and then another.

**MD:** What tips can you offer beginning drummers to help develop their coordination and independence?

**Virgil:** It's important to become familiar with all the smaller units of a measure. Most of us can learn to feel downbeats quite comfortably, but it takes work to understand and then feel all the other possibilities—random 8th notes, 16th notes, all kinds of tuplets, and so on. This will give you a foundation to be able to place beats on various parts of the measure, develop a feeling for subtle rhythms, and eventually make it possible to understand how to play independently.

**MD:** Is it possible to practice coordination ideas off the drums before applying them to the kit?

**Virgil:** Many times I've found myself on a freeway practicing polyrhythmic independence on the steering wheel. Ideas like transitions from 5:3 to 5:4 and from 7:3 to 7:4 are some of my favorite mobile practice routines.

**MD:** What inspires you to come up with challenging coordination patterns?

**Virgil:** At a certain stage, rhythm becomes instinctive, just like breathing. I'm constantly hearing and feeling rhythmic possibilities. Some ideas I can sit down and play without effort, others I may need to work on for extended periods to be able to execute them flawlessly. If I hear something, there's an inherent drive that motivates me to give it life on the drums, or on the piano if I'm composing. This is my ultimate direction with this interweaving of independent rhythms—to put them to the service of music.



## TERREON GULLY

**Gigs:** Christian McBride, Stefon Harris

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** CDs: Christian McBride's *Live At Tonic*, John Ellis's *By A Thread*, Joe Locke/Geoff Keezer's *Live At Seattle*, and Stefon Harris's *African Tarantella*; Sabian/Premier clinics

**Methods mastered:** Thomas Lang's *Creative Control*

**Coordination influences:** Tony Williams on *Four And More*

**MD:** How did you begin to practice coordination among your limbs?

**Terreon:** I started by playing the jazz pattern on the ride cymbal along with the hi-hat, then adding triplet exercises with the bass and snare drum. That's what I practiced the most. I would practice that for an hour every day, really slowly, gradually getting faster. There are some things I'm still working on to get to a faster speed. Even now, I warm up and practice using that coordination approach. Playing the 8th- and 16th-note triplets in combination with the left hand against the right

foot and the ride cymbal was most challenging. The combinations are never-ending.

**MD:** What tips can you offer the beginning drummer to improve their coordination?

**Terreon:** Practice slow and steady with a metronome. That may sound simple, but it's the truth. Go slow enough to where you can play the pattern without messing it up. Often we focus on speed, but it's more important to play it correctly and in the pocket. Coordination studies should lead to good music.

You have to play as much as possible versus just practicing. In modern jazz you practice separating the mind and body; it takes a lot of coordination and a lot of listening to separate everything. You have to play the song, listen, and respond. In funk, you're just laying down a pattern. You're not required to interact in the same way. People see great jazz drummers and don't even realize the amount of coordination happening because they're so fluent and musical.



## GAVIN HARRISON

**Gig:** Porcupine Tree

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** Italian clinic tour, *Rhythmic Horizons* DVD, Porcupine Tree's *Fear Of A Blank Planet* CD

**Methods mastered:** Ted Reed's *Syncopation*

**Coordination influence:** Billy Cobham

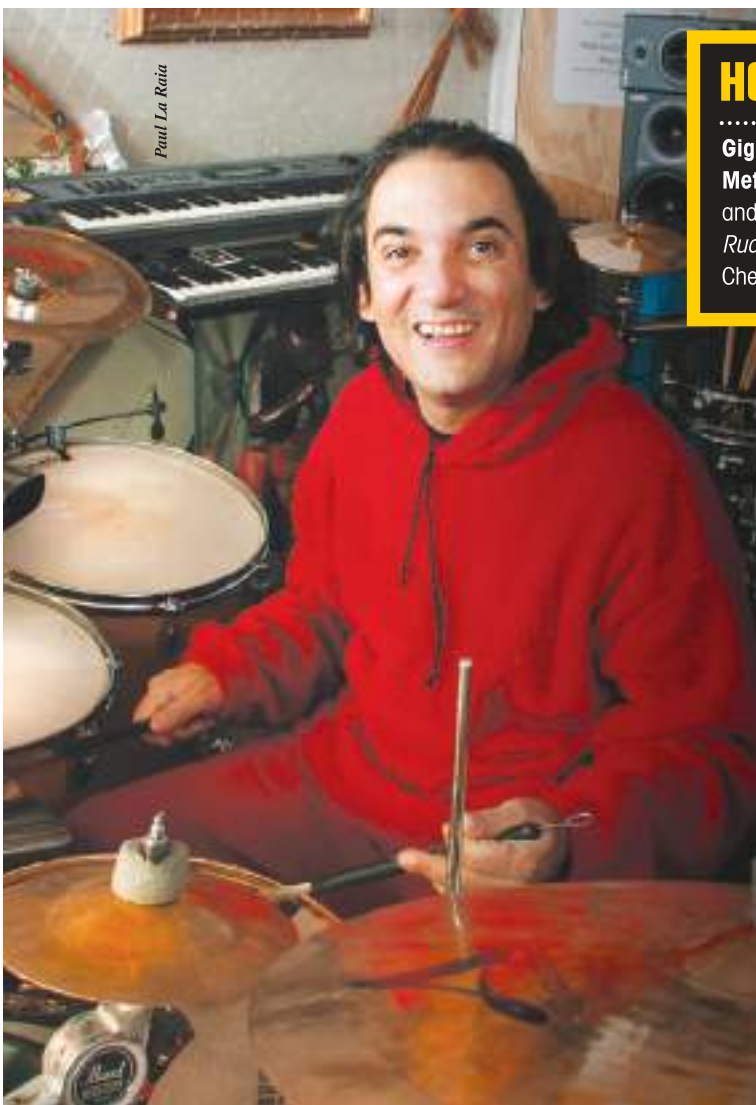


**MD:** How do you go about tackling difficult patterns?

**Gavin:** Usually I write them out so that I can see which limbs are meant to be playing together at any given time. These become the anchor points that I listen for when I'm playing the exercise. Sometimes I struggle with a pattern because there's a moment in it where, let's say, I have to play two snare notes with the left hand and two notes on the bass drum—but the bass drum begins on the second snare hit. Once I've understood where the problem is, I can design an exercise that will really focus on it. I break it down into small enough pieces to get at that problem and make sure things line up.

**MD:** Do you recall any recordings by drummers that contained fun coordination challenges that you worked on?

**Gavin:** I remember seeing a Billy Cobham workshop on TV in the early '80s. He did a repeating pattern like this: 8th notes with the right hand playing snare, tom 2, tom 3, tom 4, just four notes repeating. Then with the left hand he played 16ths in between the right hand on snare, tom 2, and tom 1, three notes repeating. The right hand went in a clockwise motion while the left hand moved counter-clockwise, but the two hands played different-length cycles: right = 4, and left = 3. It sounds very musical because of the pitches, especially if you turn your snares off.



## HORACIO "EL NEGRO" HERNANDEZ

**Gig:** Italuba

**Methods mastered:** Jim Chapin's *Advanced Techniques*, Buddy Rich and Henry Adler's *Buddy Rich's Modern Interpretation Of Snare Drum Rudiments*, Benjamin Podemski's *Standard Snare Drum Method*, Gary Chester's *New Breed*

**MD:** What exercise or routine made the biggest difference to your overall independence?

**Negro:** I used to practice Gary Chester's book with the metronome on 40 bpm, then play it again at 80, and 120. It felt great sixteen years ago!

**MD:** What tips can you offer the beginning drummer to help develop their coordination and independence?

**Negro:** It's very important to understand what type of music the student is into, and then apply the coordination studies according to that style of music. If beginners learn patterns, they'll limit themselves. But if they learn coordination, they'll learn the key to an endless number of patterns.

**MD:** How important is it to count aloud while working on independence exercises?

**Negro:** It's definitely imperative to learn where the pulse of whatever we're playing is, and that's why we learn to count. But counting is also like a fifth limb. Coordination is something we have to study not only for our inner development, but also to be able to play our instruments while creating a total freedom to also listen, accompany, or respond to whatever is happening around us on the bandstand.

## BILLY KILSON

**Gig:** Chris Botti

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** Billy Kilson's BK Groove: *Pots & Pans* CD, forthcoming albums by Bob James and Chris Botti

**Methods mastered:** Ted Reed's *Syncopation* (Alan Dawson approach), George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control*

**Coordination influences:** Max Roach, Philly Joe Jones, Elvin Jones, Tony Williams

**MD:** How did you go about tackling difficult patterns?

**Billy:** Patterns is a word or phrase I try not to use. It's important for the creative drummer to not think of patterns but to think of them as coordinated ideas. Coordinated ideas allow for more freedom than playing patterns, and they allow you to better respond to the surrounding musicians on the bandstand or in the studio. The most basic exercise—Alan Dawson's version of *Syncopation* is my foundation for

tackling difficult coordinated ideas.

**MD:** What inspires you to come up with challenging coordination ideas?

**Billy:** No question, you gotta hear it to play it. As far as inspiration to come up with challenging coordination patterns—it's spontaneous. Fortunately, after years of experience following my apprenticeship with Alan Dawson, the initial inspiration is instantaneously extracted either from other instrumentalists during their solos or an embellishment of a melody.



## THOMAS LANG

**Gig:** Save The Robots

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** *Creative Coordination & Advanced Foot Technique* book/DVD

**Methods mastered:** Dante Agostini's *Methode De Batterie* and *Syncopated Solfeggio*, Terry Bozzio's *Video Trilogy*, Marvin Dahlgren and Elliot Fine's *4-Way Coordination*

**Coordination influences:** Jon Hiseman's United Jazz And Rock Ensemble's *Ganz Shoen Heiss* and *Man About Time Too!*

**MD:** How did you first begin to practice coordination between your hands, feet, and then all four limbs?

**Thomas:** I would develop a foot pattern, play it as an ostinato, and play a strict matrix of overlapping patterns on top of it. I would practice a rudiment with my feet, but I didn't want to neglect my hands. So I would play two different rudiments in two different phrasings and at different note-rates at the same time to a metronome setting that worked for both components. It came from a desire to practice more efficiently. That way I practiced technique, endurance, accuracy, timing, counting, orchestration, coordination, and independence all at once! It was the most efficient way to practice certain drumming elements, and that eventually evolved into a style of drumming.

**MD:** How important is it to count aloud to yourself while working on independence exercises?

**Thomas:** You have to be able to count it; your inner counter has to be ticking at all times. Eventually you'll start feeling cycles and the counting will turn into an instinctive feeling of cycles and overlapping cycles. Today I feel how polymeric patterns fit together and how layers of different cycles and time signatures sound together. I've conditioned myself to feeling the cycles by learning to count them correctly in the beginning.

**MD:** How does developing advanced coordination help your overall playing?

**Thomas:** If you can play ultra-complex

polymeric multi-pedal orchestration layers under a "cheese-che chudda" [rhythm] orchestrated over five toms and two snares at 220 bpm with relative ease, then you can play "pea soup" with a lot of ease. That said, I never feel the urge to squeeze a couple more rhythms into a groove just because I can. That would never cross my mind.

Coordination helps you with the simplest beat. You condition yourself to master nuances with all four limbs at the same time. That's why you practice this, to be able to play dynamic and musical patterns with all four limbs in perfect time. The magic happens in the subtleties and nuances. I love playing simply. Being able to play complex stuff makes playing simple stuff real easy. That's why I do it, because I like to have it easy.

**MD:** What inspires you to come up with challenging coordination patterns?

**Thomas:** The fact that they've never been played and/or heard before. You can listen to what's buzzing in your twisted muso mind and write out a pattern that nobody has ever played or heard before. Then you practice it until you can play it. It's composing, being creative and innovative.

What inspires me the most is everything that is still unplayed, the blank spots on the drumming map of today. That's why I love being a musician. You still have the chance to conquer new territory every single day of your life.

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## SIMON PHILLIPS

**Gig:** Toto

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** Toto's *Falling In Between* CD, Toto world tour

**Methods mastered:** Max Abram's *Modern Techniques For The Progressive Drummer*, Carmine Appice's *Realistic Double Feet*

**Coordination influences:** Billy Cobham, Virgil Donati, Marco Minnemann

**MD:** How did you begin to practice coordination between your hands, feet, and then all four limbs?

**Simon:** The first time I recorded a track with double bass drums as a constant shuffle groove, I couldn't figure out whether to lead with my left foot or my right. While rehearsing the track, I tried both ways and one just felt more comfortable—meaning the groove was smoother—and that was it. It was a triplet rhythm, and I found leading with my right foot was easier since the back-

beat landed with the left foot. It was then that I started to work on coordination.

**MD:** How does developing advanced coordination help your overall playing?

**Simon:** That's the big question! You can practice all this fancy stuff until you're blue in the face, but you have to be able to play a shuffle—or play a track from start to finish—without a click and hardly change tempo! These are two different areas of playing the drums, and not everyone is interested in going down that path.



Mike Haid

# THOMAS LANG



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## DAFNIS PRIETO

**Gigs:** Michel Camilo Trio, Dafnis Prieto Absolute Quintet

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** CDs: *Absolute Quintet*, Michel Camilo's *Spirit Of The Moment*, Michel Camilo US/European tour

**Methods mastered:** Jim Chapin's *Advanced Techniques*

**Coordination influences:** Jose Luis Quintana (Changuito), Steve Coleman

**MD:** What tips can you offer beginning drummers to help develop their coordination and independence?

**Dafnis:** In order to develop coordination and independence, you don't have to wait until you sit on the drums. You can do it even when you're walking or sitting in a subway or in the car. Try to do that kind of exercise with a point of view; how are you going to use this information in the actual performance?

Sometimes this is very tricky because you can sound on the

performance as if you were practicing an exercise, and that's not the idea of playing the drums or music.

**MD:** How does developing advanced coordination help your overall playing?

**Dafnis:** Every time I play the drums, I try to see what I play as one thing and one sound, not as different things at the same time. That helps me to contribute to the overall sound of the music: the drums and the sound of the band I'm playing with.



## ANTONIO SANCHEZ

**Gigs:** Pat Metheny, Chris Potter, Joshua Redman

**Current/upcoming recordings:** Pat Metheny's *The Way Up* DVD, debut solo CD

**Methods mastered:** Ted Reed's *Syncopation*, George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control*

**Coordination influences:** Ignacio Berroa, Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez, Jose Luis Quintana (Changuito)

**MD:** How did you begin to practice coordination between your hands, feet, and then all four limbs?  
**Antonio:** It was intuitive. When I began formal lessons, I started studying it more methodically as the music I was trying to play became more demanding. I would play a simple ostinato (a pattern that stays constant) with one hand or one hand and one foot, and then add another hand playing an exercise from Ted Reed's *Syncopation*. You can increase the level of difficulty by adding limbs, increasing tempos, playing the exercise in double time, etc.

**MD:** How do you go about tackling difficult patterns?  
**Antonio:** I'll get the sound in my ears of that specific pattern so that I can hear how everything fits together. Then initially I start to play it at a medium tempo. If it's too hard, then I'll slow it down until I find a tempo that's more comfortable. If the pattern is based on an ostinato, I'll internalize it as much as I can, like playing clave with the left foot and the tumbao pattern with the bass drum.

**MD:** What exercise or routine made the biggest difference to your overall independence?

**Antonio:** Ostinato-based exercises. Try this: On the ride cymbal play a swing pattern with the right hand, play hi-hat on 2 and 4, and play quarter

notes on the bass drum. Once that is comfortable, play half notes on the snare drum with your left hand, then quarter notes, then the first two triplet partials of every beat, then the second and third triplet partials of every beat, then half-note triplets, then quarter-note triplets, etc.

You want to feel like your body completely dominates the ostinato so that you can really concentrate on what the left hand is doing. Then you can switch the ostinato around, like playing the same ride pattern but inverting the hi-hat and bass drum patterns. You can also play the exercise with the bass drum while the snare drum plays the second triplet of every beat.

**MD:** Is it possible to practice coordination ideas off the drums before applying them to the kit?

**Antonio:** I started practicing the left-foot clave while on vacation. I would just do the patterns with my limbs. Just barely feeling the motion through my body was enough to understand it and internalize it. Then I got back home, sat down at the drums, and, bingo! I could play left-foot clave, bass drum tumbao, cascara with my right hand, and improvise a little with my left hand—and that was on the first day!

## STEVE SMITH

**Gigs:** Vital Information, Steps Ahead, Soulboop, Steve Smith's Jazz Legacy

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** Vital Information's *Vitalization* CD, Steve Smith's Jazz Legacy *Live On Tour* DVD, Steve Smith And Vital Information 2007 tour

**Methods mastered:** Ted Reed's *Syncopation* (Alan Dawson approach), Jim Chapin's *Advanced Techniques*

**Coordination influences:** Tony Williams, Jack DeJohnette, Elvin Jones, Roy Haynes

**MD:** How did you begin to practice coordination between all four limbs?

**Steve:** All coordination involves some kind of ostinato. There needs to be at least one constant that you're playing rhythms over, under, or around, depending on your perspective. The first step in learning any ostinato is playing it to the point where you don't have to think about it anymore and it's an automatic response. This comes from slow, relaxed, methodical repetition and then developing the ability to play over the ostinato in small, manageable steps.

My first ostinato was playing four beats to the bar on the bass drum and playing my hands on top of that. Then I learned to add 2 and 4 on the hi-hat (by "rocking" the left foot heel-toe, heel-toe), and eventually I was able to play the jazz ride beat with my right hand on a cymbal and play rhythms out of Ted Reed's *Syncopation* with my left hand on the snare drum.

**MD:** How does developing advanced coordination help your overall playing?

**Steve:** I've worked on advanced coordination and, in general, it has served to give me a stronger rhythmic center. One concept that I started working on about twenty years ago is keeping a left-hand ostinato and playing over that with

the right hand. This has helped to give me more freedom between my left and right hands with the left hand taking the lead, as I had already done a lot of work developing coordination with the right hand in the lead.

Another coordination idea I've worked on that has helped my centering is playing a 3/4 ostinato with my feet, like the Max Roach piece "The Drum Also Waltzes." Max was the first to play an unaccompanied solo drum piece using the basic ostinato of the bass drum on beat 1, the hi-hat on beat 2, and space on beat 3. Over this, with my hands, I first learned to play melodic phrases in quarter notes, 8th notes, and triplets. Later I became comfortable playing all the rhythms from one through twelve over the 3/4 ostinato.

To explain this, I started by playing just beat 1 over the 3/4 ostinato, then two-over-three, then three-over-three, which is just playing three quarter notes in a row. Then I did four-over-three, five-over-three, and then six-over-three, which is just six 8th notes in a bar of 3/4. Then I advanced to seven-over-three, which is adding one more note to six-over-three, to eight-over-three, which is simply doubling four-over-three. Then nine-over-three, which is a triplet on every beat of the bar of 3/4, then ten-over-three, which is doubling



Andrew Lepley

five-over-three, then eleven-over-three—of course this is adding one more beat to ten-over-three—and finally twelve-over-three, which is four 16th notes to each beat of the 3/4 bar. Once I had this down, I had great flexibility and freedom in hearing and playing flowing rhythms over a pulse.

**MD:** What inspires you to come up with challenging coordination patterns?

**Steve:** An idea usually inspires me to develop new levels of coordination, and you don't need to "hear" the idea to develop it; you need to spend time developing your ideas in a logical, methodical way.

Lately I've been developing the coordination to recite South Indian konnakol syllables and accompany myself by playing grooves on the drums. This is probably not unlike learning to sing and play at the same time, but I've never done that before. I've counted and played for years, which is a fantastic coordination ability to have, but the counting can be the ostinato that you play "around."

The approach that I've taken with the Konnakol is that I think of it as a very complex rhythm played on top of the drum groove ostinato. I've performed examples of this on my new Vital Information CD, *Vitalization*.

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## BILL STEWART

**Gigs:** John Scofield Trio, Larry Goldings Trio, Marc Copeland, Bill Stewart Trio

**Current/upcoming gigs/recordings:** John Scofield Trio CD (tba), Bill Stewart Trio CD (tba)

**Methods mastered:** Jim Chapin's *Advanced Techniques*, Ted Reed's *Syncopation*

**Coordination influences:** Max Roach, Ed Blackwell



**MD:** How did you begin to practice coordination between your hands, feet, and then all four limbs?

**Bill:** I first practiced coordination by trying to play what I heard other drummers do, either on records that my parents had or from watching the drummers who worked with my dad at his gigs. Later on, I remember John Riley showing me how to use Ted Reed's *Syncopation* creative ways to challenge your independence. But, overall, most of my coordination progress was based on trying to play ideas that I wanted to play independently.

**MD:** How do you go about tackling difficult patterns?

**Bill:** I think it's very important to practice difficult coordination passages at a very slow tempo. Sometimes they're easier to play sloppily faster, but at a slow tempo, you really hear if you're playing the polyrhythms accurately. Then, when you do speed them up, you'll be more accurate. Also, I've sometimes found it helpful to write out passages that are challenging. That way you have a visual aid as to where all of the notes lie.

**MD:** What inspires you to come up with challenging coordination patterns?

**Bill:** I'll sometimes play one or two rhythms and then get an idea for something else to put against them. It might be something easy or something difficult. If it's difficult for me, I might not try it on the bandstand—that might be something for the practice room first.

Also, I like to accompany myself on the drumset, playing something somewhat repetitive or structured on one or more parts of the set and then improvising on other parts of the set with my other limbs. Max Roach and Ed Blackwell did a lot to advance that concept.

One of the challenges of coordination on the drumset in a musical situation is not just playing rhythms accurately, like a machine, but to put something into the feel of each rhythm that you're playing. This involves being able to control not just the rhythmic accuracy, but the independent dynamics, accents, tone, and feeling of each limb, such as laying back rhythmically on one limb, but not others. These are the things that make up a drummer's "touch."

On the opposite end of the spectrum, sometimes it's nice to think monorhythmically. Just think one main rhythm and then reinforce chosen parts of that rhythm with other limbs. This, of course, also involves coordination.



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**EXTRAS:** companion booklet featuring many of the DVD exercises, group performances featuring Billy Sheehan (bass) and Toshi Hiketa (guitar)

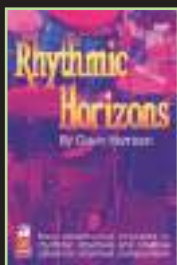


#### GLOBAL BEATS FOR DRUMSET AND PERCUSSION BY WALFREDO REYES JR.

**LEVEL:** INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED  
Hal Leonard, \$24.95

Among the topics covered on this DVD, which focuses on being "split-brained," are adapting traditional beats like the samba to the drumkit, and playing percussion rhythms and drumset beats simultaneously.

**EXTRAS:** Reyes, who has logged time with Traffic and Santana, plays his "hybrid" beats with a live band.



#### RHYTHMIC HORIZONS BY GAVIN HARRISON

**LEVEL:** ADVANCED  
www.drumset.demon.co.uk, \$34.70

You've got to pay close attention to grasp the multi-layered polyrhythmic concepts Porcupine Tree drummer Gavin Harrison demonstrates on this double-sided DVD.

**EXTRAS:** printable PDF files of all the lessons, song and solo performances, play-along MP3s, alternative audio mixes, and foreign subtitles



#### DYNAMIC DRUMMING 3: PLAYING WITH PRECISION AND POWER

**FEATURING CHRIS COLEMAN**  
**LEVEL:** INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED  
www.drumworksinc.com, \$44.99

The second half of this disc features Gospel

drummer/educator Chris Coleman focusing on topics like constructing grooves with a bassist, playing with a sampler, and five-way independence.



#### THOMAS LANG CREATIVE COORDINATION & ADVANCED FOOT TECHNIQUE

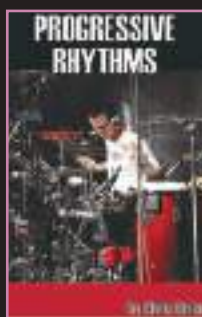
**LEVEL:** ADVANCED  
Hudson Music, \$49.95

In this three-DVD monster of a tutorial, four-way coordination and independence master Thomas Lang deals with developing advanced foot techniques and presents his well-organized, five-step "Matrix" formula—

an endless combination of hand/foot exercises that builds from basic to ultra-advanced, combining singles, doubles, and rudiments between hands and feet.

**EXTRAS:** PDF files of all 177 exercises

### BOOKS



#### PROGRESSIVE RHYTHMS BY CHRIS BRIEN

**LEVEL:** INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED  
www.chrisbrien.com, \$45

Australian master Brien covers hand/foot technique, groove playing, independence, and improvisation.

**EXTRAS:** access to online video files of the performances and explanations of several exercises from the book



#### MAXIMUM MINNEMANN BY MARCO MINNEMANN AND RICK GRATTON

**LEVEL:** ADVANCED  
World Music 4all, \$24.95

Entertaining drumming sensation Marco Minnemann reveals his uncommon, over-the-top, daily drumset practice routines in this mind-bending collection of rudimental exercises, twisted groove warm-ups, and

challenging time-stretching exercises.

**EXTRAS:** CD audio examples

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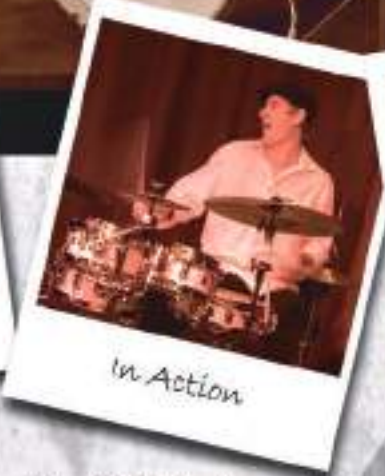
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**THE CODE OF FUNK**  
BY DAVID GARIBALDI

**LEVEL:** ADVANCED

Hudson Music, \$29.95

Legendary funk master David Garibaldi presents an advanced and very useful educational package unlike anything else on the market.

**EXTRAS:** fully transcribed and analyzed charts of eight Tower Of Power tracks, video tutorial, music-minus-drums play-along CD,

two DVD-ROMs that offer interactive audio files for Acid (PC) and Garageband (Mac) as well as Audio Stems for Pro Tools



**FUNK DRUMMING: INNOVATIVE GROOVES & ADVANCED CONCEPTS** BY MIKE CLARK

**LEVEL:** INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED

Hal Leonard, \$19.95

One of the most sampled drummers in history, Mike Clark gives readers mutated funk grooves to practice, from Latin, swing, and Elvin Jones-esque triplet feels, to his own idiosyncratic creations with Herbie Hancock's Headhunters.

**EXTRAS:** accompanying CD



**VIRGIL DONATI**  
ULTIMATE PLAY-ALONG

**LEVEL:** ADVANCED

Alfred, \$24.95

Eight brain-draining, nicely transcribed charts from technique fiend Virgil Donati's *On The Virg* album, as well as some of his group Planet X's recordings.

**EXTRAS:** CDs feature complete songs with drums, plus several slowed-down versions with and without drums



**CONTEMPORARY DRUMSET PHRASING: CREATIVE GROOVES AND FILLS FOR FUNK, FUSION, JAZZ AND MORE** BY FRANK KATZ

**LEVEL:** ADVANCED

Hal Leonard, \$19.95

One-stop shopping for outrageous fusion grooves, courtesy of Drummers Collective instructor Frank Katz (Brand X, Dave Douglas). Some of the most arresting, syncopated, and con-

temporary hip-hop, jazz, rock, and future-funk grooves ever assembled in one book. Jazz phrasing, orchestrated fills, and displaced rhythms are covered.

**EXTRAS:** CD, live performances by Brand X



**INDEPENDENCE ON THE DRUMSET**  
BY RICKY SEBASTIAN

**LEVEL:** INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED

Hal Leonard, \$19.95

Another Collective instructor, Ricky Sebastian (Donald Harrison Jr., Harry Belafonte), uses some fun coordination studies to attack the challenges of independence.

**EXTRAS:** accompanying CD




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Over the past decade, an elite group of international super-drummers has changed the face of drumming. They've raised the bar on speed, ambidextrous technique, soloing, stick tricks, multi-pedal coordination, and independence to unimaginable levels.

At the top of this short list is the amazing Marco Minnemann. Combining the compositional depth of Frank Zappa and the technical skills of Zappa's legendary drummers rolled into one bionic rhythm machine, Minnemann is light-years ahead of the pack in terms of interdependence among his limbs. In fact, one could argue that he has been instrumental in developing the advanced concept of complex interdependence.

I first sensed this phenomenon approaching several years ago, when I was introduced to Minnemann's *Illegal Aliens* project. It was not only his insane drumming that floored me, but also his songwriting and production skills. His artistic maturity also stood out from the other adventurous musical projects of the time that featured over-the-top drumming. No question, Minnemann was special.

As fate would have it, here we are, ten years later, and this now-veteran drumming master continues his quest to challenge himself and the drumming world to achieve bold, new musical creations that reach far beyond mere technical acrobatics.

the

**INCREDIBLE**

**marco**

**MINNEMANN**

**BEYOND CHOPS**

story by Mike Haid • photos by Alex Solca





Minnemann has been a prolific songwriter and producer for many years, covering a spectrum of diverse musical styles between his early years with his band, *Illegal Aliens*, and his six eclectic solo recordings. Along with his diverse pop material, hardcore metal, techno-electronica, modern pop/punk creations, and sophisticated fusion, Marco has created an interesting concept he calls "speech to music," orchestrating spoken word dialog to music. His challenging instructional books (*Extreme Interdependence*, *Ultimate Play-Along*, and the latest, *Maximum Minnemann*), a recent thirty-six-song double CD set, *Contraire De La Chanson* (Marco plays all the instruments and sings), and DVDs *Extreme Drumming* and the brand new *Marco Show*, lay testament to his tireless pursuit of developing some of the most innovative, musical, and highly advanced drumming techniques of our time.

It's completely appropriate that Minnemann should appear on the cover of a theme issue about coordination and independence. The drummer's advanced interdependence concepts have allowed him the freedom to play any combination of patterns in any time signature with any limb, simultaneously playing separate note groupings with all four limbs (usually with his feet constantly shifting across multiple foot pedals). Yes, it's Marco's metric madness!

Marco has also developed technically amazing, visually exciting soloing skills with this advanced technique. But his real magic is that he makes even the most complicated rhythms sound and feel as smooth and relaxed as his emotionally driven, rock-solid, basic grooves.

Last year, Marco toured with Zappa alumni Terry Bozzio and Chad Wackerman on a percussive tour de force known as *The BMW Tour*. His performances on that tour solidified his place atop the list of modern-day drumming geniuses.

Most recently, following in the footsteps of fellow international super-drummers Virgil Donati (Australia) and Thomas Lang (Austria), Marco has relocated from across the pond to Southern California—as if there weren't enough superstar drumming talents residing in the Los Angeles area. (Vinnie Colaiuta, Dave Weckl, and Simon Phillips all live there, to name a few.)

What's the attraction for these superheroes to congregate in sunny Southern California? And how can so many phenomenal players survive in such close proximity to one another? In Marco's case, his relocation into the jungle of heavyweights shouldn't be a difficult one.

So, without further ado, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to "The Marco Show"!



# MARCO'S KIT

**MD:** When and why did you begin your pursuit of interdependence?

**Marco:** I never intended to write any books or try to influence a new generation of drummers with this concept. The concept of interdependence evolved directly from the fact that I wanted to learn how to play some of the drum patterns that I was programming for my original compositions back in 1996. When I started this I found that it was very difficult to break these patterns down and play—for instance, double stroke-roll patterns on my left side against triple-stroke combinations on my right.

I remember this began in between tours, while I was in Spain. I had two weeks off and decided I would start working on all of the various combinations that I could imagine against one another. I began with two elements, hands against feet, then right side against left side, and finally right foot/left hand against left foot/right hand combinations. These were the first exercises I learned, based on all 16th-note right/left groupings that are possible in 4/4—LLLL, RRRR, LRLR, RLRL, and so on. This was quite a challenge, but it was fun.

All of that became the first chapter of this new technique. So while writing down all of these ideas, I practiced until I felt comfortable with them. Then I began the next chapter of adding triplet combinations and playing them against the 16th-note groupings. These combinations led to very interesting modulations in the rhythm. I started to feel my independence on the drums really grow.

From there, I would try to progress into more complicated ideas, including odd meters. But that's really how it all started. By 1997, I had enough material for a book. The concept was not developed in order to release a book or anything. It was more of a personal challenge for myself. But I eventually showed these ideas to Rick Gratton, who is a great drummer and who has a great book of his own, *Rick's Licks*. He was the one who told Warner Bros. about me. They offered me a deal to release my first book, *Extreme Interdependence*.

**MD:** How long has it taken you to really feel comfortable with the majority of your interdependence techniques?

**Marco:** It's taken years to get comfortable with this technique. At the time the first book came out, I sounded like a complete beginner. All the while I was writing music and working with my band, I was learning this tech-

**Drums:** DW Vertical Grain in honey oak lacquered maple finish

- A. 6x10 snare
- B. 16x20 gong drum
- C. 5x13 snare drum
- D. 8x10 tom
- E. 9x12 tom
- F. 7x8 tom
- G. 11x14 floor tom
- H. 13x16 floor tom
- I. 17x22 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

- 1. 14" K Special Dry Custom hi-hats
- 2. 18" K Constantinople crash
- 3. 8" EFX bell (inverted) on top of 10" K splash
- 4. 8" K splash
- 5. 8" EFX bell (inverted) on top of 17" K Fast Dry crash
- 6. 8" ZHT mini-hat (remote)
- 7. 20" K Custom Dry ride

- 8. 8" EFX bell (inverted) on top of 15" Vintage crash
- 9. 12" K Custom Studio hats (remote)

**Electronics:** Roland

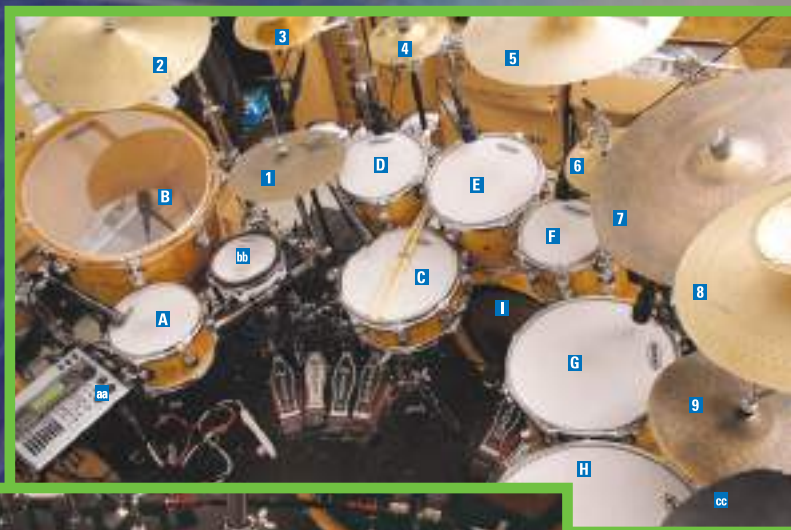
- aa. TD-20 module
- bb. PD-80 pad
- cc. CY-8 cymbal
- dd. KD-7 pad (two, not shown, played with feet)

**Hardware:** DW, including 5000 and 9000 series bass drum pedals and remote cable hi-hat stands

**Heads:** Evans Power Center on snare batters, Hazy 300 snare-side, coated G2s on tom batters with clear G1s on bottoms, EMAD clear on bass drum batter, Resonant on front

**Sticks:** Pro-Mark Marco Minnemann 721 model

**Microphones:** Audix i5 and D1 on snare drums, ADX51 on hi-hats, D2s on rack toms, D4s on floor toms, D6s on kick and gong drums, SCX25 for overheads



## Marco On His Setup

"I have learned that the more drums and cymbals I use," Minnemann says, "the more open mics I need, which causes the overall sound to get jumbled and out of focus. For this reason I've scaled down my set to the things I use most. I have three crashes, two splashes, a ride, and on occasion a China cymbal. I still use three separate hi-hats around the kit. I got rid of my foot snare and replaced it with two Roland foot pedals for triggering sounds. I'm also using an additional Roland pad on my left side and a rubber Roland cymbal pad on the right."

That setup is much different from the kits Minnemann plays on his new DVD, *The Marco Show*. "Those were all experimental kits that we put together for the video," he explains. "The small kit that we used for the big band section was a DW Classic series that Don Lombardi brought in. I was open to whatever seemed to work at the moment, and basically went with whatever configurations might challenge me a little in my approach to each musical setting."

When asked if he positions the various sizes and types of drums and cymbals in a way that supports his unique musical approach, Marco responds, "Yes, I do. For instance, I have one hi-hat on the right side that I play with my right foot, and I also have a gong drum and a cable hi-hat on the left so I can execute left- or right-lead foot playing. Each drum and cymbal is positioned to make the interdependence concepts most interesting from a musical standpoint."

nique on the side. I really sounded bad at first. I remember doing a session with the band H-BlockX, and during the breaks I started practicing a paradiddle on the right side and a ratamacue on the left. One of the guys came into the room to see who was playing. When he saw me, he was shocked. He said, "What's wrong with you? That sounds horrible." [laughs]

For the first couple of years, I sounded really stiff. I started playing double-stroke combinations against single-stroke combinations, and once I felt comfortable with that I added paradiddle combinations against different paradiddle combinations. I found that there were endless combinations that I could work on. I was very patient with myself because I really wanted to achieve this goal. When I began to get it, the feeling was amazing.

I feel that when you have a special talent, you should take it as far as you can. Nothing in the world can buy that or replace it. The energy that I put into learning these difficult concepts comes back to me when I finally learn them. Then that gives me the motivation to move ahead to the next challenge.

I remember when I first played the Modern Drummer Festival, my solo was pretty much all rehearsed and composed because I had worked so hard on the concepts, like five-against-seven and things like that, which were very difficult for me at the time. Nothing was really improvised. This began to bother me. So I kept working hard on these concepts, waiting to eventually develop a freedom of speech with this new language that I had created. It wasn't until about 2002 that I started to feel that I could go into a solo, without



thinking, and create freely.

What I discovered is that I had a strong vocabulary of patterns that I could randomly choose from to compose a solo on the spot and improvise from there. This is what led to the concept for the Maximum Minnemann book. My idea was to now take all of these

technical patterns from the Extreme Interdependence book and practice them in a way to create new ideas. This allows you to create interesting conversations with the speech that you learned from the first book. What I did to create the ideas in Maximum Minnemann was to sit down and just solo,

## ARTISTS ON MARCO



**David Garibaldi** (Tower Of Power)

I've known about Marco and his great playing for quite some time, but I didn't meet him until this past October in Birmingham, England at DrumFest 2006. I've watched his *Extreme Drumming* DVD quite a few times, but it was great to finally see the man in person.

During his DrumFest performance, Marco's electronics, which were integrated into his drumset, failed to work properly—and it happened at the beginning of his set. Marco didn't think so, but his solo was full of form and some really cool compositional ideas. He said he had to resort to tricks because of his failed electronics, but I saw no trickery, just some great drumming. The man has practiced!

I think in situations like that, the work you've put in takes over. He's a perfect example of a person who has a vision for himself. He's worked hard to make that vision a reality in his life—great stuff!

**Simon Phillips** (Toto)



I first met Marco in Munich in the mid '90s, when he interviewed me for a German magazine. I didn't know Marco's playing, but I had heard good things from the guys at Meinl—the distributors of Tama in Germany. However, during the course of the interview, we must have been talking about the grip I used. He just happened to have a slick handy, so I showed him how I held it and he concurred that was pretty much the same way he did. Then he tapped a few beats with his left hand and I could see immediately that he had quite impressive technique. Interesting!

I think it must have been the next year when I witnessed his playing for the first time at the Frankfurt trade show. There were a few drummers performing that day, of which I was one and Kenny Aronoff was another. Well, Marco had a rather interesting setup—two hi-hats, a Gong drum, etc. Then, when he started to play, I was standing next to Kenny. About five minutes into his solo, Kenny looked at me and asked, "What the f\*\*\* is he playing?" I replied, "I have no f\*\*\*\*\*g ideal!"

Marco was quite amazing. And the most important thing for me was that he could lay down a nice solid groove when he wanted. That is so important, and it makes for a much more rounded player.

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—Marco Minnemann

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floor tom D4 x 2 

hi-hat ADX51 x 3 

overheads (live) CX112 x 2 

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## MARCO MINNEMANN

using the Extreme Interdependence concepts, until I discovered an original idea that I thought sounded good, and then I wrote down the pattern.

**MD:** What are the most important aspects to developing your level of interdependence?

**Marco:** You must have patience. In my clinics I try to explain this learning process like a pyramid. When you start, you have all of these hand combinations, which are basically written as letters—LLRR, RLRR, and so on. All of these letters fill up the large bottom of the pyramid when you begin. Eventually you learn some of these combinations and they become automatic, which means you've reached the next level of the pyramid. Eventually, your goal is to reach the top, the smallest point of the pyramid, where you've learned and memorized all of the patterns and you aren't thinking of individual letters anymore, but whole words and complete sentences. So it's like learning a new language. You have to understand how certain words fit

together to make complete sentences without thinking about how to spell each word. This takes years of practice and concentration.

**MD:** What other important information do you offer in your clinics?

**Marco:** I think drummers—and all musicians—need to go back and listen to music that was created before click tracks and machines took over the world. In my new music I don't record with click tracks anymore. To me, recording to a constant click track takes away a certain amount of freedom. It's like a tiger in a cage. He can't move freely and express himself the way nature intended for him to.

**MD:** Can you explain how you incorporate your interdependence skills into music and how they help in developing song ideas?

**Marco:** Here's an interesting concept. When I was working with guitarist Paul Gilbert on his DVD *Space Ship Live*, he wanted to create a complex rhythm pattern. But we didn't have much time, and he's not a strong sightreader. So I tapped out this constantly changing

## ARTISTS ON MARCO

### Mike Keneally (former Zappa guitarist)

When I asked Marco to do some shows with me, I was expecting virtuosity, I was expecting freakish limb independence, and just general insanity. What took me by surprise, and delighted me so much, was how well he used all that skill in the service of musical invention and spontaneous orchestration—he's like an entire orchestral percussion section, albeit the most ridiculously capable section you could imagine, shrunk down into one tall, thin genius.

Once I started hearing more of his solo albums, I understood. Marco is a composer, with a magnificently wide range of interests and capabilities. When we're working together, his choices mesh so well with my sensibilities, it's scary sometimes. I've recorded him for a concept album/opera I'm writing called *Scambot*, and I'm excited about doing a lot more recording with him when our schedules allow. I have a feeling that together we can create some of the most outlandish music imaginable.

When I hear Marco's drumming, I always hear multiple levels of rhythm happening at the same time. It's not unusual to hear him play three ostinatos at blistering speed. He also brought a wonderful sense of humor to the tour—just watching him play all the rhythms of the dialog from the Monty Python movie *Life Of Brian* cracked me up. (He was inspired to do that by Frank Zappa's "Jazz Discharge Party Hats," where Steve Vai's guitar doubles Frank's talking.)

One of the highlights of the show for me was improvising as a trio with Marco and Terry. I can't wait for us to hit the road together again.



### Chad Wackerman

After Terry Bozzio and I had been touring our drum duets show for some time, Don Lombardi from DW suggested that we add Marco and make it a trio, which eventually turned into the BMW tour. Marco basically became the new member of our drum "band." We had two rehearsal days in LA before the tour started, and I expected Marco would bring something new, exciting, and unique to our show. I wasn't disappointed. Marco did an amazing job and brought a terrific amount of energy and stunning chops to the show.



### Doane Perry (Jethro Tull)

Marco's extraordinary technique and independence have been widely acknowledged at this point. However, there is one aspect of his musical character that cannot be overlooked and which is intrinsically linked to his deep musicality. That component is his sophisticated, mature compositional ability.

To get an idea of the range of which Marco is capable, listen to the multi-layered compositions and intricate, polyrhythmic approach of his Illegal Aliens records. Check out the subtle, evocative landscapes he creates on *Ochids* or *Motor*, all the way to the completely original, outrageous, funny, and seriously musical statement he delivers in "What Have The Romans Ever Done For Us?" from *Contre La Chanson*. This man is more than a superlative drummer, he's a world-class musician—and a great person to boot!



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Chris Adler Autograph Model  
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### BILL BRUFORD Earthworks

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American Maple, SD4, Wood-tip



### SIMON PHILLIPS Toto

Simon Phillips Autograph Model  
American Hickory, TX707, Wood-tip

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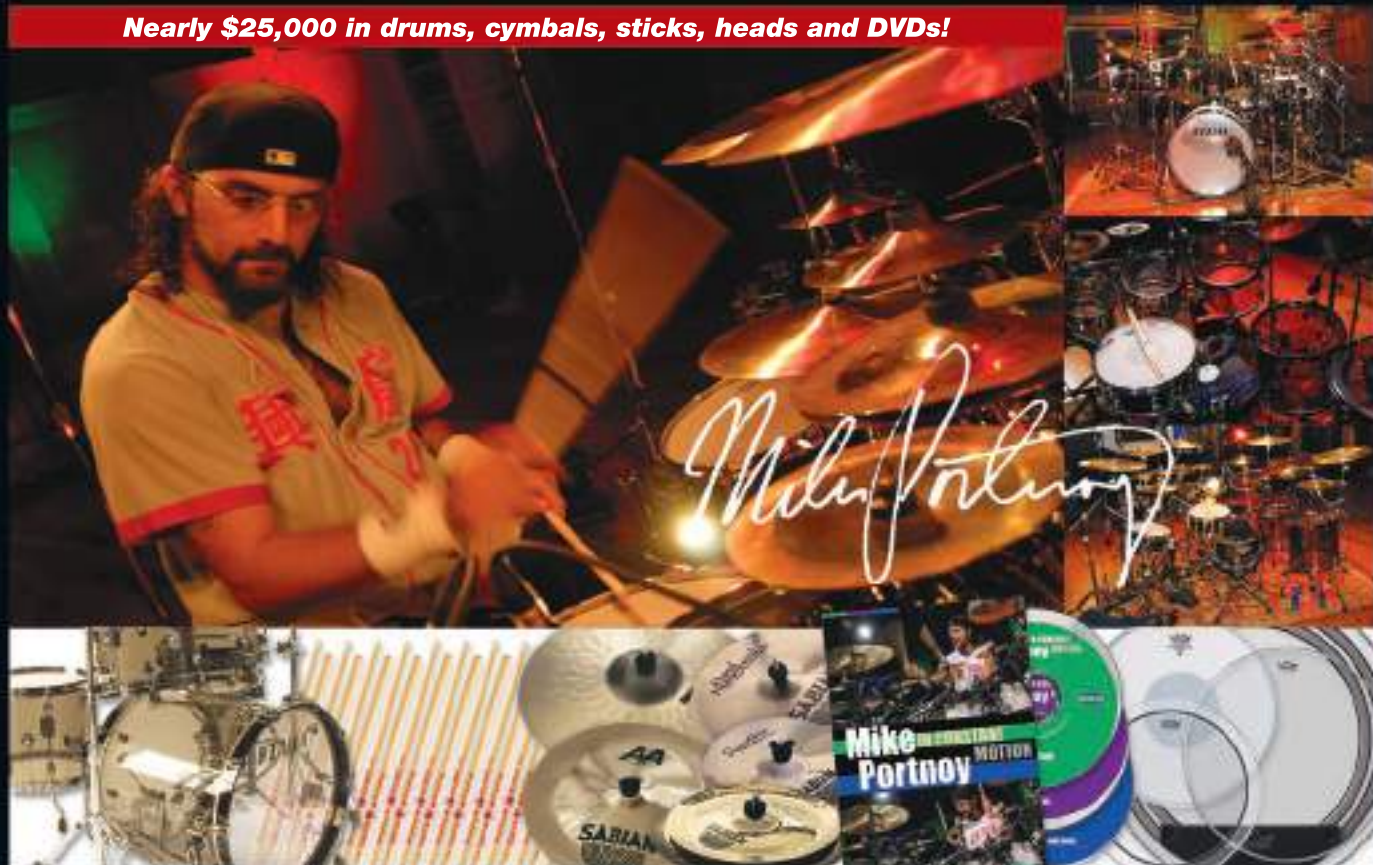
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<b>Remo Drumheads</b>	Complete set of heads for ICM Kit	Complete Head Set (7-pc.)	Pinstripe Pro-Pack and PowerSonic BD Heads	PowerSonic BD Head
<b>Pro-Mark Sticks</b>	12 pair MP Autograph Drumsticks	12 pair MP Autograph Drumsticks	12 pair MP Autograph Drumsticks	6 pair MP Autograph Drumsticks #TX420N
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# MARCO MINNEMANN

rhythm over eight bars. He said, "That sounds cool, but how can we all remember that much information?" Then I explained to him that I was simply tapping out the vocal rhythm to Queen's "We Will Rock You." This is the same concept I use when I'm creating my patterns for independence. When I'm playing

named Ryuichi Sakamoto. Sakamoto's music involves another complexity, which is the complexity of designing sound and mood, which go hand in hand. So at an early age I transcribed music like "The Black Page" and other complex pieces. I learned to play jazz when I was eleven or twelve. But as a

## MINNEMANN DOCUMENTED

### Here are the recordings Marco says best represent his playing:

Artist	Album
Marco Minnemann	Contraire De La Chanson
Marco Minnemann	Mjeze
Marco Minnemann	Broken Orange
Marco Minnemann	Orchids
Marco Minnemann	Motor
Marco Minnemann	The Green Mindbomb
Marco Minnemann	Comfortably Homeless
Marco Minnemann	Time
Marco Minnemann	International Telephone
Marco Minnemann	Disarmed
Marco Minnemann	Normalizer
Marco Minnemann	Space Ship One
Marco Minnemann	Burning Organ
Marco Minnemann	In Exile
Marco Minnemann	Fly Eyes

### Here are his books and DVDs:

The Marco Show (DVD)  
 Maximum Minnemann (book)  
 Extreme Drumming (DVD)  
 Ultimate Play-Along (book)  
 Extreme Interdependence (book)  
 Live In LA (DVD)  
 Mendoza Fest, Argentina 2005 (DVD)  
 TUDW 2004 (DVD)

### And here are his favorite recordings:

Artist	Album	Drummer
Frank Zappa	Sheik Yerbouti	Terry Bozzio
Frank Zappa	Joe's Garage	Vinnie Colaiuta
Frank Zappa	Ship Arriving Too Late	Chad Wackerman
Frank Zappa	The Man From Utopia	Vinnie Colaiuta, Chad Wackerman
Led Zeppelin	Houses Of The Holy	John Bonham
The Police	Reggatta de Blanc	Stewart Copeland
The Police	Ghost In The Machine	Stewart Copeland
The Police	Synchronicity	Stewart Copeland
Miles Davis	Man With The Horn	Al Foster, Vincent Wilburn
Jeff Beck	There And Back	Simon Phillips, Jan Hammer
Allan Holdsworth	Secrets	Vinnie Colaiuta
Buddy Rich Big Band	Live At The Top	Buddy Rich
Jethro Tull	Roots To Branches	Doane Perry
Tower Of Power	Back To Oakland	David Garibaldi
John Scofield	Loud Jazz	Dennis Chambers

five over seven, or five over nine, or whatever, I shift the note groupings to different voices on the drumkit to create songs or melodies. Then I repeat these melodies and it helps me to memorize the sticking, the pattern, or the phrase. Sometimes these ideas turn into songs. This makes practice more fun, more productive, and more musical as well.

**MD:** When did you develop your fondness for odd meters and complex music composition?

**Marco:** My love for odd meters came at an early age because I grew up listening to Frank Zappa's music, and to a great composer

teenager, I was also into music like Slayer, Metallica, Iron Maiden—heavy stuff like that. Queen, Led Zeppelin, and The Police were also early influences, and still are. But Frank Zappa really opened the door for me because his music was complex and fun. That's why I play music—to have fun. If I'm going to learn something complex, I'll learn it because I want to learn it, not because I have to.

Zappa had a rock attitude paired with complexity, and fun, edgy lyrics that, as a teenager, I thought were really cool. But still, if you wanted to be able to learn his music, you had

continued on page 88



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# Maximum Minnemann

## A Quick Look At Marco's Latest Book



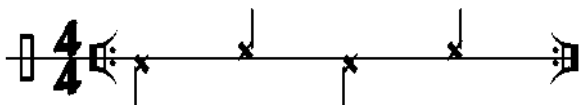
With the incredible success of my previous book, *Extreme Interdependence*, I thought the next logical step in the learning process would be to expand on these interdependence techniques with a rudimental and rhythmic perspective as the main focus, which has been my approach ever since I started playing.

### Maximum Rudiments

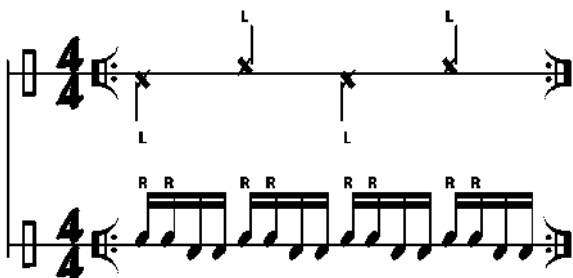
It's interesting to note that, throughout the years, most drummers have discovered their own unique and special interpretation of the basic twenty-six rudiments. For me, I'm always trying to come up with new ways to apply all limbs interdependently of one another in a creative, musical, dynamic, and progressive practice routine. Included here are a couple of simple and brief applications of the rudiments that I practice consistently.

Each rudiment is presented on one line, with notes written above and below. The key is to assign any limb of your choice to either the top or bottom notes and then rhythmically improvise using any remaining limbs with various rudiments, rhythms, or ostinatos that you'd like to add and experiment with.

Let's start with a basic quarter-note ostinato played between the left foot on the hi-hat on beats 1 and 3 and the left hand on the ride cymbal (or hi-hat) on beats 2 and 4.



Combine this ostinato with a basic double-stroke roll between the snare and bass drum, and you get this:



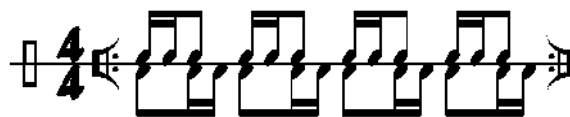
Now add the previous left hand/left foot ostinato to these two patterns with the right hand on any sound source, and you have one heck of a "maximum interdependence" exercise.



### Rhythmic Overlaps

Overlapping rhythms can best be described as simply taking one rhythm and applying it to any limb of your choice and then reapplying the same rhythm to another limb, but starting or displacing it on a different part of the beat. This causes the rhythms to overlap one another on different parts of the beat, which creates a new rhythmic perception. It's almost like looking into a mirror and seeing yourself backwards.

Simply assign and apply any two limbs to these overlaps until you can freely and easily apply them around the drumset.



### Double Bass Pyramids: The Third Pyramid

Next up is a great "pyramid" double bass drum exercise in which you play a three-note rhythm between the double bass and snare while applying a quarter-note ride pattern over the top in 3/4.



For maximum results with this concept, experiment with your own double bass pyramid combinations in other meters and various odd-note groupings.

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# MARCO MINNEMANN

continued from page 85

to play your ass off. I could really hear a lot of his influence in my early compositions, but I feel I quickly formed more of my own identity in my music. When I first started recording my

I've learned how to focus the whole composition process to a point where I don't think about it anymore. You can't plan this type of progress, but I can feel it in my writing. I quick-

**Marco:** I don't practice at all now that I live at the beach! [laughs] Yes, I try to practice at least an hour or two each day on this independence concept. It's a part of my everyday

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music, I was trying hard to develop my production skills, so I spent a lot of time creating tracks with lots of complexity. A lot of the complex elements are still in my composing, but

ly recognize a good song and quickly hear what will work to give the song what it needs.

**MD:** How much time do you spend practicing? Do you have an organized practice routine?

routine. I used to push myself very hard, all the time, trying to work as much as possible. I would take many offers from bands and tour all the time, and work myself to death. Now I strive for more balance in my life and select my work more carefully to do more things that I really enjoy.

I make sure to practice the rudiments every other day with each side of my body. As a warm up, I play all twenty-six rudiments while also keeping time. For example, I'll alternate quarter notes between left foot on hi-hat and my left hand on a 10" tom. Then I'll play all twenty-six rudiments between my right hand and right foot. This strengthens independence, speed, and hand/foot technique together.

The next day I'll just play an improvised solo for at least forty-five minutes and push myself as far as I can go. I play freely until I come across an idea that I really like. Then I'll focus on that concept and build independence around that idea. I keep a book with me so I can write down any new ideas as they come. When I improvise like this, I reach "the zone," or a partial state of hypnosis, free from thought, very similar to the state that you reach just before you fall asleep. I love that feeling of letting go and just creating musical ideas without thinking any technical thoughts.

The following day, I'll go back to rudiments and switch sides, keeping time with the right side and playing rudiments with the left. My goal is always to keep things exciting and fun. Then I'll make time to write and record music. These are things that I do everyday, but I pace myself throughout the day. I don't burn myself out by doing all of these things nonstop each day. I'll work a couple of hours, do something else that has nothing at all to do with music, and then come back to it later in the day. This keeps me fresh and focused and allows me to enjoy what I do.

**MD:** You also play guitar and keyboards. How do they work together to help in your songwriting and drumming skills?

**Marco:** I began playing guitar and piano when I was six and didn't start on the drums until I

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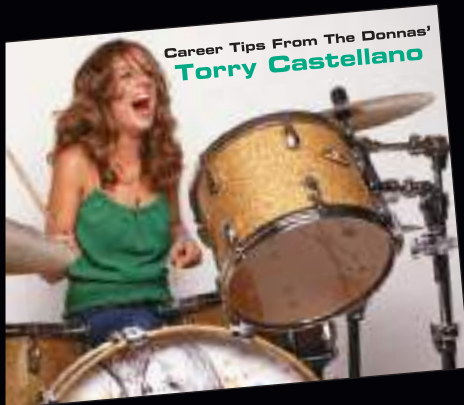
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# MARCO MINNEMANN

was eleven. So I had five years of keyboard and guitar before learning drums. I continued to play these instruments all these years. And I have written music all along.

In the late '80s I began using the MIDI machines to program my song ideas. This was a new technology and it was exciting to program all the strange drum patterns that I had in my head but was never able to play. So I went crazy with all of these ideas, like quintuplet groupings and metric modulations, and I could even adjust the tempos. But when it came time to record the music, I felt that I owed it to myself to try and learn to play all of

this strange programmed stuff. And that's how I came up with the idea to teach myself these independence skills. So it was actually a necessity that was triggered by my writing of music.

**MD:** The first things that drew my attention to your music were the maturity of the songwriting and the quality of the production.

**Marco:** It's nice to hear that, because when people started to notice me around 2001 and 2002, it was mostly from my book and DVD. Not too many people had really heard my music. Now people are starting to discover my music, and it feels good to know that even the

production of the music that's now ten years old seems to hold up well. Because it's easy for people to say, "Oh, that sounds like it's from the '80s or '90s," because of the MIDI sounds or the old technology. I feel that if you play your music with honesty and the passion that it desires, then hopefully it becomes a timeless piece of music. That's what composition is supposed to be about.

**MD:** Your new double CD set, *Contraire De La Chanson*, features thirty-six diverse tracks. Please talk about your songwriting process.

**Marco:** You wouldn't believe how many songs I've thrown away because they didn't work for me. I probably have two hundred songs on my hard drive that I've never used. I see it as similar to creating a great painting. You can mess it up by adding one thing too much.

I released a CD called *Orchids* which was very dark, with a lot of slow tunes and a heavy aura. Then I did a CD with a friend of mine, Mario Brinkman, called *MOTOR*, which was total electronic-type music. I follow what seems right to me at the time. It's all a learning process and it's all fun. This way you learn new ideas without repeating yourself. It's a psychological process and very important to develop. I feel that many players never realize their full potential of creativity in their music. For me, if I have something in my head, I have to let it out so that I can physically see it in front of me. Whether it's music, a book, or a DVD, once you can let out the source, then you can move on and approach a different style.

I released *Broken Orange*, which was a total jazz thing. My latest release, *Contraire De La Chanson*, is basically random song ideas that I recorded in hotel rooms around the world, then finished in my friend Michael Wolff's studio in London. So every time I release something out of my mind, and I have it in front of me, it opens the door for a new direction.

**MD:** How did you develop your "speech to music" style of composition used on "What Have The Romans Ever Done For Us?" from *Contraire De La Chanson*?

**Marco:** I got a lot of positive feedback from some of the short "speech to music" things that I did on my first DVD. So I thought it might be fun to do a whole chapter from a movie. It was not to impress anyone with this concept, but simply to do something fun and challenging. So I was watching one of my favorite Monty Python movies, *Life Of Brian*, and that's when it hit me. Because I knew the dialog so well, it was easy for me to chart out music to the scene, "What Have The Romans Ever Done For Us?" I recorded the guitar parts first,

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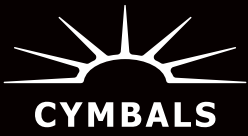
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punching in every five or ten seconds, orchestrating each person's voice with a different guitar tone. Then I added some bass and keyboard sounds and did the drum tracks last. It was a labor of love, and most people get a

good laugh from it.

**MD:** What were the challenges of driving the Buddy Rich big band on your new DVD, *The Marco Show*? Did the video session go smoothly?

**Marco:** The pressure of recording DVD footage is probably my least favorite thing. You're forced to give 100% in a short period of time. This is something I'm very insecure about. It's very hard work and very physically and mentally draining. But the footage we shot with the big band was a lot of fun. We had no time to rehearse, so we played each song three times and that was it. I can remember driving to the studio, thinking this is going to be really fun or really awful. But it all worked well, considering that the bass player and pianist were on the other side of the stage and the monitor system was not that great.

There were actually a few times when I had to keep looking across the stage to the bass player to find out if we were in sync. And, not having played with a big band that often, I learned quickly that you really have to drive the band to keep the tempo from slowing down. If you listen too closely to what the horns are playing, it will drag the tempo down, so you really have to push the time to keep the energy moving forward.

I was very happy with all of the big band performances and with the fusion stuff on the DVD I played with Mike Keneally and Bryan Beller. We did all of those performances the same day. I went to the DW factory the next day to film some solo music segments, which weren't intended for the DVD, though some of them turned out well enough to be included. There is also some very nice bonus footage of performances from Italy that almost didn't make it onto the DVD because it was not shot in high definition.

**MD:** Do you feel that most drummers come to your clinics really wanting to learn anything, or are they mostly there to see a superhero flash his superpowers? Does it become more of a spectacle than an educational event?

**Marco:** One thing that has been disappointing over the past few years is that many drummers seem to get the wrong idea about what I'm trying to achieve with my educational books, clinics, and DVDs. I'm very thankful for my success in developing these tools, but it seems to have created an atmosphere of competition that was not intended. I've heard many drummers take these concepts and develop them in a very non-musical way. This technique was developed to be fun and challenging, not designed for us to challenge each other like some type of athletic competition. That's not what I'm about, and that's not what my concepts are about.

I may have been a bit foolish to allow the first book to be titled *Extreme Drumming*,

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## MARCO MINNEMANN

because it may have given the wrong impression. That's why I'm very proud of The Marco Show DVD, because it's all about the music, and it allows me to demonstrate my concepts in a very musical way, which is why these concepts were originally developed.

**MD:** What was it like working with Terry Bozzio and Chad Wackerman on the BMW tour?

**Marco:** It was an honor and a dream come true to play with Terry and Chad. I grew up listening to them and playing along to their great drumming with Frank Zappa. I have so much respect for them. It was interesting that Terry was sometimes concerned about his time and tempo. Because Chad and I grew up in the '80s and '90s, and we were raised in the click track generation, it was more natural for us to develop a more mechanical time approach. But Terry grew up in the '60s, when there were no click tracks and music was more loose and free, which is the sound and style that I really love. So Chad and I had to listen closely to Terry when he was leading the trio so we could lock in with his time feel. It was great fun, because there were dynamics and character in Terry's playing that made it all feel so natural and flowing.

At first it felt a bit strange asking Terry and Chad to play specific parts that I had written for musical ideas that I brought to the table, but they were very cool and very open to my suggestions. Terry acted very challenged with some of my ideas at first, but it didn't take him long to get in the zone. This helped break the ice, and we ended up having a great time.

An important thing I learned from them was patience. The first couple of shows were a bit uncomfortable because I could sense that many in the audience were anxious for me to go for it and do some crazy stuff, almost like they wanted a drum battle or something. But that's not what this was about. Terry and Chad were comfortable to ease into the solos and gradually build the dynamics.

The show started with me doing a solo performance, then I took a break while Terry and Chad played a duet, then we all came out and played an improvised set together. There were moments when we would play specific parts together, and we would play "The Black Page" together, which was always fun. Each night we would take turns leading each other into the trio performance. So you never knew where it was going or how it would start. It was challenging for me to listen to these two creative drummers and try to fit in with taste and dynamics.

**MD:** Do you have a home studio set up in San

Diego yet?

**Marco:** Yes, and I am doing more of that type of freelance work now. I just recorded tracks for a hardcore band from Italy, which was pretty insane. I'm also working on a new hybrid drum setup that incorporates electronic triggering. I've added a few pedals for triggering sounds and have been creating some interesting patterns. This is a new and exciting direction for me.

**MD:** With many of the world's greatest drummers located in Los Angeles, and so much competition, why did you move to Southern California?

**Marco:** I didn't move here to compete for studio work. If someone calls me to record, that's great, but that's not why I'm here. I'm not trying to get into all the clubs to play gigs or get a lot of studio work. I'm focusing on my career as an artist and to record my music. I also travel to London quite often to work in the studio with Michael Wolff, who is a great producer/writer. But I mainly moved to San Diego because the weather is fantastic and a lot of my friends, who are great players, live here.

Another big reason I moved to America was to get my green card. It's gotten more and more difficult to enter the States. Since I work here a lot, it just made sense to move here. Besides, from my studio window I see the ocean. It's very calming. To live on the beach with my girlfriend and write and record my music, surrounded by nature, is all I could ever ask for.

**MD:** In all that you've accomplished, what have you learned about yourself?

**Marco:** I have a deep respect for music. I enjoy writing songs and touring. I spend each day writing, recording, and practicing. This is my life. Despite all the fuss about my technique, at the end of the day, music always wins.

I already have another double CD of new music recorded that I will release at the end of the year. That said, I have learned to practice patience and enjoy life more. This has become very important to me. I've worked very hard to develop all the skills that I've acquired, and now I feel I can balance my life more and pace myself. I've learned to let go and find an inner peace inside all of this musical madness. But, of course, I still want to learn to play 13/16 with my left hand/right foot against 9/16 with my right hand/left foot. [laughs]



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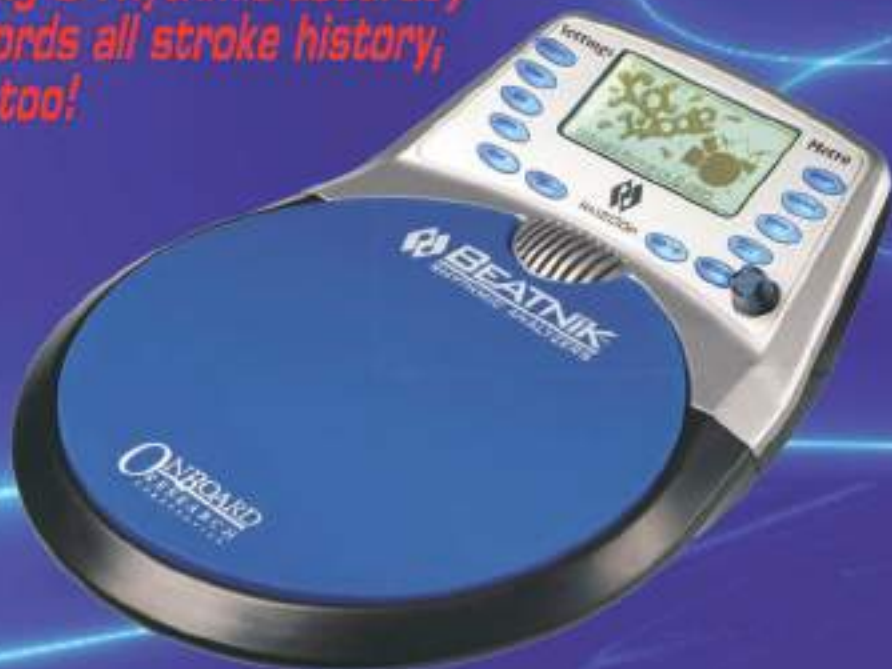
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# Fear Of Flying!

## A Coordination Mindset

by Billy Ward

**People seem to think that drummers are naturally more coordinated than your average Joe, but I'm not so sure. Many times, a young drummer will give up on a coordination obstacle because it seems too difficult. They might think, "I'm not good enough for this," or "Those other guys that play this must be more naturally gifted than I am."**

This article is about one particular coordination problem I faced as a young drummer. Banging your head against the "I simply can't do this" brick wall of failure is very frustrating. When this happens, I remind myself that, as a child, walking was a very difficult skill to learn. There was lots of falling down, bumping into things, and bruises and cuts. Yet now? I can talk on the phone, chew gum, and sing five equally rhythmic notes over every three steps that I take. (Gotta love a nice mosey in 3/4 time!)

Being able to walk across that room without falling down was an important milestone in my life. The next time I remember an obstacle as big was when I was eleven years old. My drum teacher was leading me through Jim Chapin's classic book, *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer*. I was getting hip to Max Roach's drumming with Charlie Parker, so the exercises—based upon swing ride patterns with jabbing left hand and bass drum foot—were completely valid to me. I loved that book!

But then I hit that dreaded page, the one where the jazz ride pattern (tie—yup te—yup te—tie, etc.) continues and the other hand is supposed to play quarter-note triplets against it. All the while, the bass drum is playing four on the floor and the hat is on 2 and 4. (These were "old school"—style lessons, so my left hi-hat foot was rocking from heel—on 1 and 3—to toe—on 2 and 4.) For some reason, this exercise was a severe roadblock for me. So much panic ensued that I froze on it, arriving at my next week's lesson with the excuse of, "I just don't get it yet." In reality, I had given up on it. I wasn't practicing it. I wasn't even trying. It was too scary for me.

Looking back on those days, I think I was like the airplane passenger who is afraid to fly. I was seeing all of the implications of getting on that aircraft, thinking, "30,000 feet up in the air? You've got to be kidding me!"

Two small miracles snapped me out of my funk. Miracle one: My teacher said, "My other student, Dave Appel, can play this exercise. Why can't you?" I was used to occupying the "best student" chair, so this really fired up my ego, which willed me

once more onto that scary airplane. And miracle two: I realized that flying this airplane was simply about having my hands and feet playing together as one, just like everything else I'd done before. I didn't have to look down from 30,000 feet and feel all the wind and cold air that was no doubt slamming me. I only had to control the plane—push the buttons and let nature take its course.

Play the following pattern. (It's a simple singsong! It could have lyrics like, "Not, so tricky to do, so tricky to do, so tricky to do," etc.)



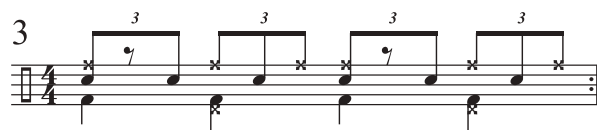
Now let's play this same exercise with this sticking.



Of course, this sticking makes the exercise harder, but it can be learned and made comfortable by simply slowing it down. So slow it down, slow it way down. Once you have it together, slowly take it up to a tempo that you like.

You probably see where this is going. If you can play the previous sticking pattern, you're playing the jazz ride rhythm with one hand along with the quarter-note triplet part in the other. And this is my singular advice to anyone trying to gain some greater independence between his or her limbs. You see, it only looks like independence. You're actually just playing a pattern that you need to learn.

Okay, now let's take a look at the dreaded exercise in question.



Here your right (or lead) hand is on the ride cymbal. Keep your other hand on the snare drum. Play it. Yes, it's the same sticking pattern as before (played with flat flams). Okay, maybe it fell apart because of the new sounds. If you listen to it a cer-

# “ My advice to anyone trying to gain some greater independence between the limbs: It only *looks* like independence, you’ re actually just playing a pattern.”

tain way, you may get that falling sensation that you get when looking down from great heights! Slow it down. In fact, move it back to just the snare drum with the feet going as well.

Sometimes thinking about adding the next piece of the puzzle blows up the entire thing, so think about it. Then sing it. And then, and only then, move your right hand over to the ride cymbal. Start slowly, then move up to speed—and then..take the leap!

Eventually, you’ re going to get to a point where, when you play these types of coordination patterns, you’ ll mostly be operating on autopilot. In this case your right hand, right foot, and left foot will be playing, but you’ ll only be thinking about one thing—the melodic phrase with your left hand, which in this case is quarter-note triplets.

There are many more difficult things that we drummers end up needing to coordinate. For me, it’ s often my biggest challenge to remember that certain types of shoes don’ t hold shakers. (I like to

place shakers in my shoes when I play. It’ s a great sound. Try it.) It also takes a kind of coordination to play a song the way the previous guy on the gig played it, rather than the way your own body is screaming to play it. But not trying is no excuse. Slow it down with part of your body on autopilot. Then build it up slowly, and, especially in the beginning, don’ t look down! Good luck!



T. Bruce Willett

**Billy Ward** is an in-demand session drummer and clinician. He’s worked with Carly Simon, B.B. King, Robbie Robertson, Ace Frehley, John Patitucci, and Joan Osborne, among many others. His book, *Inside Out: Exploring The Mental Aspects Of Drumming*, is published by Modern Drummer Publications. His DVD, *Big Time*, is considered a must-have. Billy can be reached through his Web site, [www.billyward.com](http://www.billyward.com).



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# Coordination Building

## Windmills Of The Mind & Body

by Jeremy Hummel

**MUSIC KEY**

H.H.	R.C.
T.T.	
S.D.	
F.T.	
B.D.	
H.H. w/ foot	Add 1
	T.T.

**I**s it possible for people who have below-average coordination to play drums well? Absolutely! Coordination is an interesting subject because much of it has to do with motor function and

sequencing that develops at an early age without us ever realizing it. At the same time, there are exercises that can be designed to help one's coordination in different activities.

For example, I've had some beginning students who

weren't sure if drumming was for them because they "weren't very coordinated." However, with the help of a few exercises that I gave them—coupled with their own drive to become better—some of their problems were fixed.

In this article, I want to share some of the exercises that have helped my students. A few of them are very basic, while others are more advanced independence-building exercises. You can watch me demonstrate these examples at my Web site, [www.jeremyhummel.com](http://www.jeremyhummel.com).

### Brain To Body Connection

One of the most common coordination hurdles for beginners is the tendency for the right hand to always play the same thing as the right foot. For example, someone who hasn't had much experience with separating the limbs could have trouble with the following beat.

Learning to separate the hands and feet can be a very trying task for some people. Overcoming this obstacle has as much to do with knowing what you want to hear as it does with muscle memory. Once you get the desired sound in your head, you can be more deliberate with what the limbs are doing.

If the right foot wants to match the hi-hat on every 8th note, try focusing on the interplay between the bass drum and snare drum. In other words, instead of hearing the hi-hat as the dominant component, sing "boom-boom-ba, boom-boom-ba." If the brain tells the body what it wants to hear, the bass drum hits will become more confident and controlled. But it's only after the body understands what the brain is telling it to do that muscle memory can take over.

This technique of applying what you hear in your head to the body can be done at any playing level. I sometimes use this technique if I'm experimenting with new ideas and stumble on a challenging part. I usually know in my head how I want it to sound. Then it's a matter of applying that to my limbs. Sometimes it's about finding the right color on the drumset, sometimes it's about the sticking. Maybe I have to play two lefts or two rights to execute the idea, when initially I wasn't thinking of it that way.

### It's About Trust

A lot of success with coordination and independence is learning to trust your limbs. You've got to be willing to let something go. So, which limb will that be? Do you feel comfortable enough with a particular limb's part to not focus on it? If so, that's the one to let go on automatic. It's human nature to want to have control. However, the mind needs to be open in order to bring new concepts to life.

I relate the "letting go" concept to being involved in multiple conversations at a party. For example, imagine you're seated on a couch between two people. You begin by having a conversation with the person on your left. But in the midst of this, the person on your right taps your shoulder and starts talking to you. As your conversation shifts to the person on the right, the person on the left also begins talking to someone else. Even though you're mainly focused on your new dialog, you can still hear what the person from the first conversation is saying. While you aren't focused on it, you're still aware of it.

This is just one of many examples in everyday life when the senses have to multitask. The same concept can be applied to the drumset, where you can split your attention but still have it all work together.

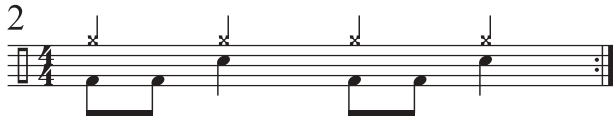
### Help Yourself

One of the most important things you can do to facilitate new coordination or independence ideas is to make sure you're physically setting yourself up for success. Any unnecessary movements could hinder your progress.

One concept to explore is paying attention to the "points of origin" in your movements. Allow your limbs to be in the moment so you can express yourself with a crazy fill, if that's what you want to do.

It's much harder to pull off that type of thing if your stick heights are inconsistent, especially if it's a repeated pattern. So the next time you play, see if your hands and feet are returning

to the same starting position after every stroke. For example, play a really simple groove based on 8th notes.



Does your snare stick return to its original starting position after each backbeat? Not only will having consistent stick heights make you better prepared for each note, it'll also make for more consistent playing. Some players unintentionally play their snare drum at varying dynamic levels because of their changing stick heights.

Most of us are familiar with the concept of not letting the bass drum beater rest against the head after hitting it. The primary reason for this is to avoid dampening the drum's resonance. Additionally, if the beater stays on the head between strokes, you're adding an extra movement before you can play the next hit—one to bring the beater back and one to return to the head. Think of it this way: You wouldn't want to slam your stick into the snare head on every hit. The same theory applies to the bass drum.

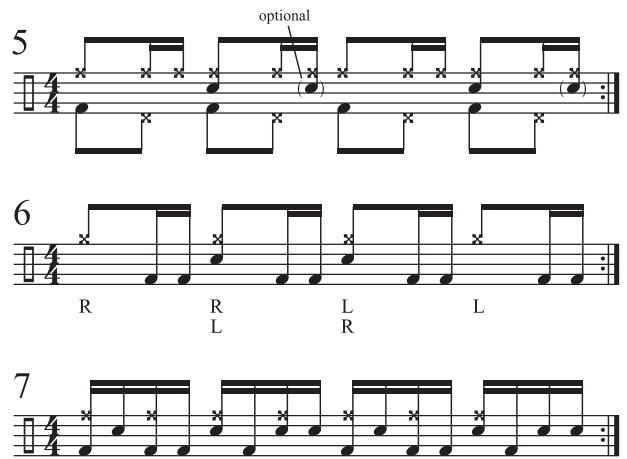
I hope that some of these concepts will help assist your mindset as you're expanding your coordination and independence. The following examples are exercises that are designed to help you separate and coordinate your limb movement. Go at your own speed as you work through them. Treat it like a car: You have to pass through ten miles per hour to get to twenty, twenty to get to thirty, etc. It's also important to maintain accurate spacing between the notes as you increase your speed.

Lastly, remember to take any exercise and expand on it to make something of your own. Challenge yourself!

The following two exercises are useful for improving your movement around the kit. Work on each one individually, then play one leading into the other. (If you don't have two rack toms, feel free to make the part work with what you have.) For a challenging variation on these exercises, add the left-foot hi-hat on the "a" of each beat while keeping the bass drum on quarter notes.



Here are a few more syncopated examples.



Once you get these exercises under control, challenge yourself further by increasing the tempo or by leading with the left side of the body.

To see Jeremy perform these examples, go to [www.jeremyhummel.com](http://www.jeremyhummel.com).



**Jeremy Hummel** was an original member of Breaking Benjamin. He helped that group achieve platinum status with their second release, *We Are Not Alone*. He has since turned his efforts to session work and drum instruction in Pennsylvania. Jeremy can be reached at his Web site, [www.jeremyhummel.com](http://www.jeremyhummel.com).



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# Groove Making

## Basic Coordination Challenges

by David Garibaldi

### MUSIC KEY

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

**T**his month's big questions: How can I play grooves like the ones I hear on my favorite recordings? The drumming I love is so creative and cool. Can I do that too? Well, first the good news: Yes, you absolutely can. The "bad" news? You have to practice! It's that extra effort that will get you where you want to go.

### Personal Experience

Developing drumming skills is a broad topic. I started developing coordination from trying to copy my favorite beats. I love the drummers of James Brown, so that's a continuing influence in my drumming—even today.

The era I grew up in was at the time that JB's music was emerging as cutting-edge funk. The JB drummers—as well as Zigaboo with The Meters, Bernard Purdie, Gregg Errico, and James Gadson—were on the ground floor of this rhythmic revolution. These men became my heroes, and I still look to them for inspiration.

Two things stood out as I started to listen to these players: their use of the bass drum, and the ghost note. Conceptually, most of their beats were based on 8th-note hi-hat patterns with a conversation between the bass drum and snare. I also heard two distinct sound levels in their hands: accented notes, and non-accented "ghost" notes.

All of the drummers I mentioned played this way. But to my ears, Bernard Purdie had the most polished sound. He played with a lot of finesse, and his ghost notes were softer and more controlled than most other drummers'. Through my listening, I discovered that the ghosted snare drum note was one of the most important components of a funky beat. I also noticed that the more I developed my hands, the more transparent the ghost notes became.

I listened to my favorite drummers for hours, trying to analyze their individual styles and rhythmic vocabulary. I wanted to have the same feel as they had. Just coming close was not going to satisfy me—I wanted it all! I particularly liked the aggressive edge that they had in their groove. But I also loved the sophistication of jazz, so my playing reflects that element as well.

### The Breakdown

There are sixteen 16th notes in one measure of 4/4 time—and there are infinite ways to combine the hi-hat, snare drum, and bass drum using those sixteen notes. Experimenting with those combinations never gets old. And if you work on developing *your* voice, there's no danger of you sounding like anyone else. Each of my favorite drummers has something a little different from the others. So there are many ways to develop coordination, and it's a very personal journey, with the biggest factor being: How do *you* want to sound?

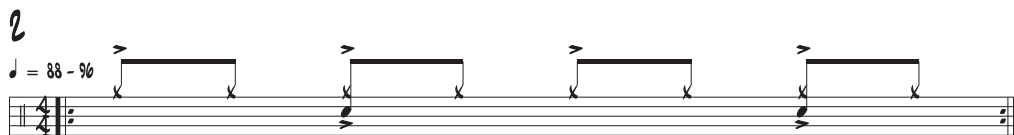
### Gettin' Busy

With most students who are unfamiliar with funk drumming, I give them a list of recordings to start listening to. You have to develop a frame of reference. Then begin with the following exercise. (For starters, set your metronome between 88 and 96 bpm.)

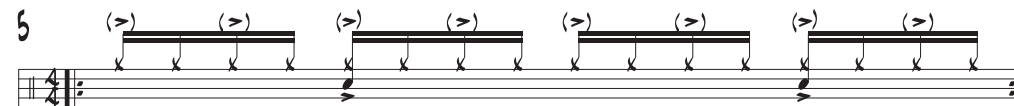


How many songs require a simple beat like that? Basic timekeeping always comes first. In Example 1, the hi-hat part introduces the idea of two sound levels: accent and non-accent. The accent emphasizes the quarter-note pulse.

The more you feel the quarter-note pulse, the stronger your groove will be. A great way to explore this is to play the following hand patterns while reading selected pages of Louis Bellson's *Modern Reading Text In 4/4* with your bass drum. I use pages 4–11, 14–25, and 28–31. It's very important to count aloud as you play these exercises. Counting will strengthen your awareness of the quarter note.



Here's another hand pattern, this time using 16ths in the right hand. When playing continuous 16th notes on the hi-hat, the accents are more like subtle, slightly heavier notes. They create an 8th-note pulse within the 16ths.



### Make It Funky

After building your basic coordination, try the following groove, which is similar to what I heard the JB drummers do. Here's where we start developing the ability to play ghost notes on the snare drum. From a coordination standpoint, the right hand plays an 8th-note ostinato, while the bass drum and snare drum engage in a "conversation" with one another.



You can develop the coordination to play this type of groove pretty quickly. But that's only part of the story. Add the two-sound levels component to the beat, and things become more challenging as well as very musical.

The two-sound levels concept is well documented in many of my articles. A detailed look at this idea can be found in my book *Future Sounds*. The dynamic relationships between the hi-hat, snare drum, and bass drum are very important. In part, groove is evenness of time and evenness of sound.

Examples 7–10 are bass drum and snare drum variations, which appear on the following pages. They are to be combined with the hi-hat variations in examples A–F. (You should also try reversing the hands for added practice.)

7

♩ = 88 - 96



8



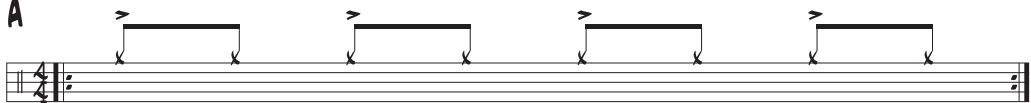
9



10



A



B



“These Are  
Happening!”

-Papo Pepin

Pearl



**C**

**D**

**E**

**F**

There are infinite ways to build upon these ideas. Once you have the basic coordination down, then you can start to personalize the grooves with your own unique vocabulary. The goal is to be able to play continuous 16th-note grooves with complete freedom by coordinating your limbs in as many ways as possible. It's very individualized. But after you develop some basic coordination skills and you get the concept of sound levels in place, the beat-making process becomes music-driven.

We'll revisit this topic soon. See you next time. Enjoy!



**David Garibaldi** is the award-winning drummer with legendary funk band Tower Of Power.



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# Declaration Of Independence

## Seven Truths With Musical Proof

by John Riley

**MUSIC KEY**

T.T.	●	R.C.	×
S.D.	●		
F.T.	●		
B.D.	●		
H.H.	×		
w/ foot	×		

We hold these drumming truths to be self-evident:

**1) All four limbs are not created equal.** Need proof? Try one of Tony Williams' favorite coordination assignments.

♩ = 40-300

**2) The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.** For example, try this Antonio Sanchez phrase.

♩ = 200+

**3) The more skills you have, the more interesting your music can be.** Elvin Jones created a beautifully flowing phrase with intricate phrases like this:

♩ = 120+

**4) The most effective practicing is that which creates more playing opportunities, not fewer.** Try this Al Foster puzzle.

♩ = 120+

**5) It's you playing you, not the technique playing you.** Exhibit A: Bill Stewart.

swing 8ths

**6) Music compels you to play because it uplifts the spirit.** Just listen to Ed Blackwell.

♩ = 180+

**7) Music comes from a deep tradition, which insists on humility.**


You can't hide in the music, because music keeps you honest and humble. Independence and technique are simply a means towards a greater range of musical expression.

♩ = 110+



John Riley's career has included work with such artists as John Scofield, Woody Herman, and Stan Getz. His latest book, *The Jazz Drummer's Workshop*, was recently released by Modern Drummer Publications.






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A Zildjian New  
Beat HiHats. 1960




Bill Stewart  
K Custom Dry Complex Ride. 2004



Marco Minnemann  
ZHT Mini-HiHats. 2006



Peter Erskine  
K Custom Left Side Ride. 2003



Alex Acuña  
Azuka Line. 1996



Terri Lyne Carrington  
K Custom High Definition Ride. 2003



Vinnie Colaiuta  
A Custom Series. 1991



Elvin Jones  
K Constantinople Line. 1998

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# The Essence Of Independence

## Is The Answer Right Under Your Nose?

by Joe Crabtree

**C**ommon questions that crop up among drummers include, "Why do I tense up when I play fast?" "Why do I find it so difficult to play that pattern on double kick?" "Why does my playing not sound tight, even though it feels like I'm playing well?" **The answer to all these questions might not be right under your nose, but it could be right *behind* it.**

Your brain is an incredible thing. Without it, you wouldn't be able to play the drums at all, never mind that complex Vinnie Colaiuta lick. However, the brain has its limitations. One of these is the fact that it can only process one thing at a time. For example, right now it's dealing with reading this text. If I ask you how your foot feels on the floor, your attention is directed there. You probably weren't aware of how your foot felt until I asked the question. For the period of time you were thinking about how your foot felt, you were no longer paying attention to this article.

When you tense up while playing, or when you have difficulty playing a particular double kick pattern, it's very possible that the problem is with some fundamental aspect of your technique that you're unaware of—because your focus is on something else.

### Multi-Tasking

When you play a groove or fill on the drums, you're simultaneously using two, three, or even four of your limbs together. Even though you can only focus consciously on one thing at a time, you can effectively program parts of the brain to work on autopilot. This is how you're able to do most complex tasks.

Say you're working on grip and stick control. You have a list of things to look out for while you're working on a single-stroke roll: Am I letting the stick rebound naturally? Am I gripping the stick too tightly? Is the stick coming up to the same height each time? Am I striking the drum in the same place each time? Are my shoulders relaxed? Am I breathing naturally?

It's easy to feel like you're doing all of these things, when in fact you might only be doing one or two at a time. When you're checking to see if the stick is rebounding naturally, your shoulders might be getting tight. When you're making sure the sticks are coming to the same height, you might be hitting the drum in a different place every time.

$$2 + 2 = 3$$

Here's a quick exercise to demonstrate the difficulty involved in focusing on two things at once.

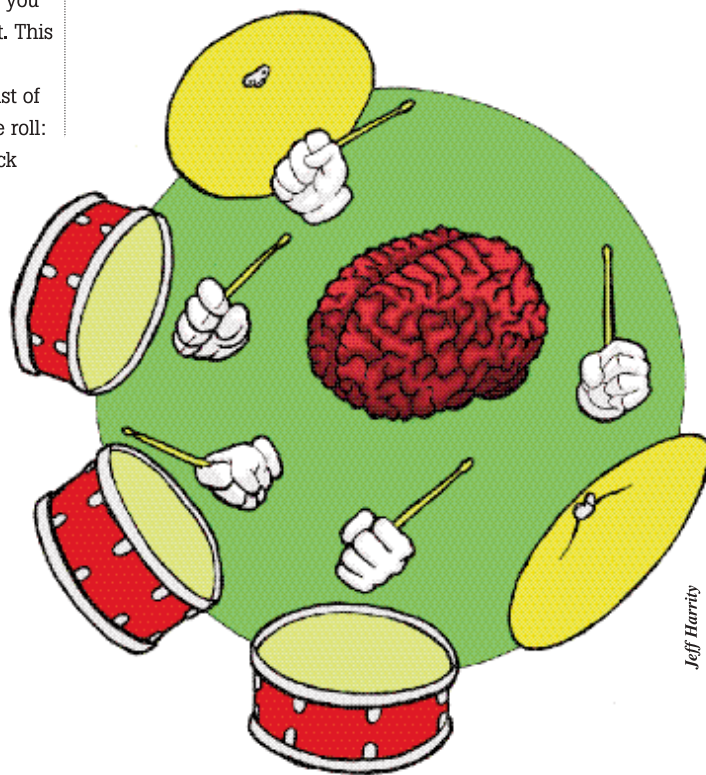
Sit upright. Hold your right hand in front of your face so you're looking at your palm. Now make your hand into a fist. Next, lower your hand until the back of your hand touches your leg, and extend your fingers—except for your index finger, which remains held in place by your thumb.

Now, go between those two positions, playing 8th notes at about 60 bpm. (At each second, your hand hits your leg with your fingers open. Half a second after that your hand is up and in a fist.) Make sure you fully extend your fingers when you hit your leg, and that you make a tight fist when your hand is in the air. Now, forget about your right hand for a moment, and do the same exercise with your left hand.

With each of these exercises, you're moving your arm up and down, and essentially just having to tell yourself to open your fingers when you hit your leg. You'll probably find you can get this up to quite a speed without a problem.

Now do the exercise with both hands alternately. When your right hand is on your leg, your left hand should be in front of your face. Make sure the fingers are stretched out when your hands touch your leg and are clenched when your hands are in the air. If it's easy, speed it up a bit.

You'll probably find that you can't go as fast when you're doing both hands together. You may be surprised to find that it's more difficult than you anticipated. The point to note is that when you did each hand on its own, it was easy. Putting the two together



Jeff Harty

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# When you have difficulty playing a particular pattern, it's possible that the problem is with some aspect of your technique that you're unaware of—because your focus is on something else.

didn't really feel like anything new. But what really changed was that you had to divide your attention. You couldn't check to make sure your right fingers were open when your left fingers were closed, because you could only focus on one hand at a time.

Even when you start to notice that something

is going wrong, you generally just notice that it's going wrong. You don't immediately realize specifically what isn't happening that should be. Apply this to your drumming, and it soon becomes clear that while you're trying to play a complicated lick, the basic elements of your technique might be suffering, and you

don't really have much of a chance to notice it. You need ways to break down complex patterns in order to make sure that the components are all running smoothly.

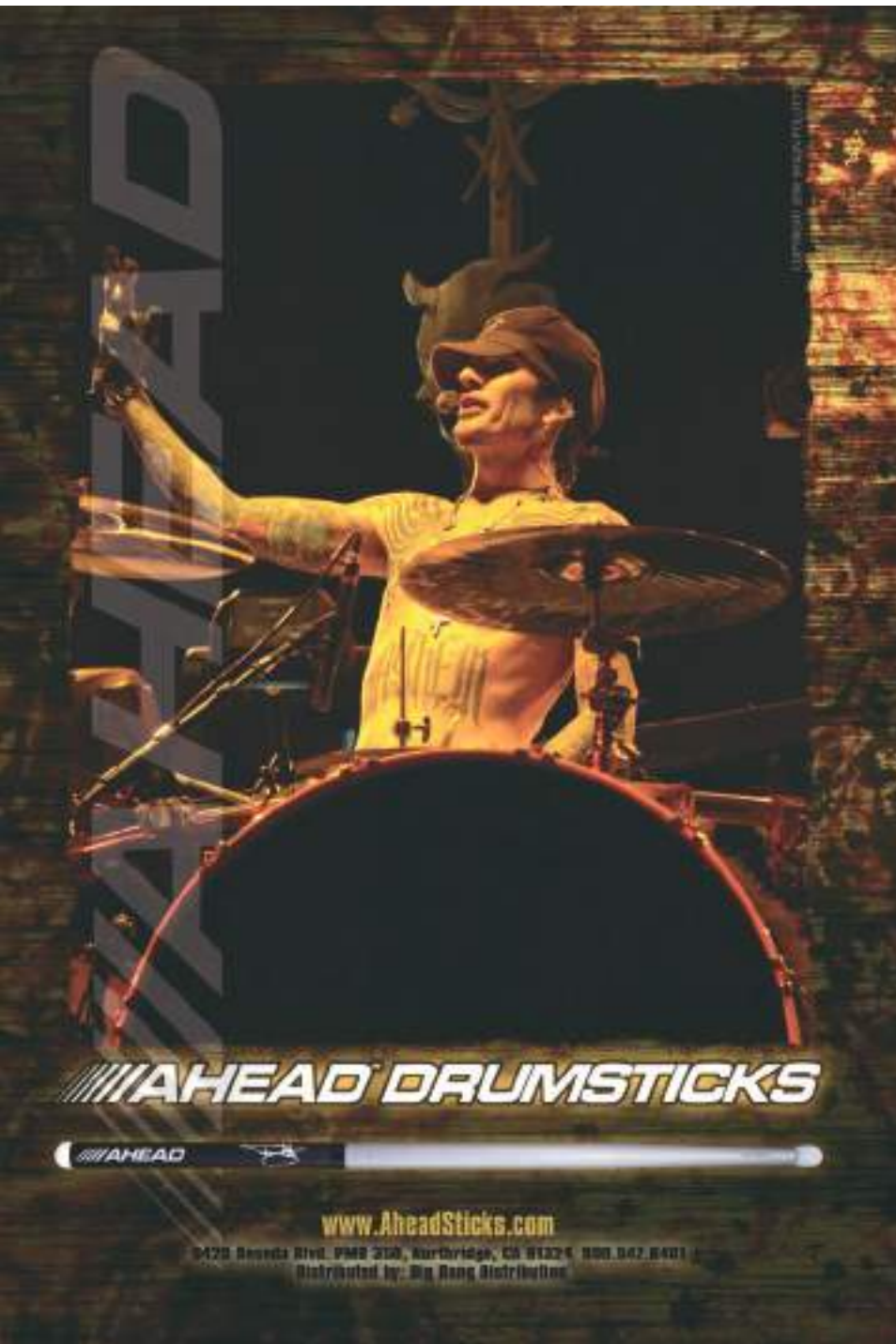
Consider the previous exercise, and think about how you could improve your performance. We know that the problem is one of directing conscious attention, and we know that by repeating an action we can start to burn it into "muscle memory" and essentially put it on autopilot. So, the first thing to do would be to spend more time working on each hand by itself. Then put both hands together slowly, and see which multiple actions you can group and focus on as a single item. That might be thinking about what it feels like to stretch open your right fingers while clenching together your left fingers, and vice versa. The ultimate goal is to focus the actions in such a way that the hands are performing as well together as they do individually.

The overall performance of any system—a car engine, a factory, an airport—depends on the performance of its parts. The closer the interaction of the parts, the more the inefficiency of one will affect the whole. In short, we want to make sure that the engine's cylinders are all firing properly, the factory's conveyor belts are running at the right speed, the airport's planes are taking off on time, etc.

There are two areas of focus here. The first is the action of each individual element: Is it doing what it should be doing? The second is the interaction of that element with the rest of the system. This is more difficult to isolate, but focusing on the first half of the equation will help the interaction part. And to do that, it's time to...

## Do The Hokey Pokey

Take any groove, figure out the part that each limb has to play, and make sure you can play it by itself. For example, with a single-stroke roll, play the right hand part and watch the motion to make sure it's smooth and efficient. Then, put the left hand in, while you keep focusing on the right hand to make sure that nothing in its motion changes. Take the left



The advertisement features a central image of a drummer in a yellow shirt and sunglasses, playing a drum set. The background is dark with a large, stylized 'AHEAD' logo. Below the drummer, the text 'AHEAD DRUMSTICKS' is written in a bold, italicized font. At the bottom, there is a close-up of an Ahead drumstick with the brand name 'AHEAD' visible on the grip. The website 'www.AheadSticks.com' is listed at the bottom, along with the address '9429 Nevada Blvd, PMB 2128, Northridge, CA 91324, 800.947.8401' and the distributor 'Distributed by: Big Bang Distribution'.

hand out, again keeping focused on the right hand. Shake your left hand all about if you like. Then repeat this exercise for the left hand, putting the right hand in and out.

You'll probably find that it's much more difficult to play the left-hand part by itself than the right-hand part (assuming you're a right-handed drummer). That's because you're used to playing "1 + 2 +" and locking in with the click. If you have to play "e e e a" (the off-beat 16th notes in a 1 e + a 2 e + a pattern), then although you're making exactly the same motion with the stick, the click now occurs in the middle of a stroke (rather than when you hit the drum). So there's nothing physically obvious to try to line up with the stroke.

Because the smaller subdivisions move by so quickly, we tend to focus on the main ones, like quarter notes, and maybe off-beat 8th notes. The ones in between are often neglected. But if those smaller subdivisions aren't played in time, they'll affect everything else. This is a common cause of a groove not feeling tight.

So if you want to improve your single-stroke roll and the performance of your weaker hand in one fell swoop, practice the weaker-hand part (like our off-beat 16ths) to a click by itself, until it's as smooth and efficient as the stronger-hand part. Then add in the stronger hand in the Hokey Pokey fashion, making sure that the movement and efficiency of the weaker hand stays the same.

You can apply the Hokey Pokey exercise to a groove too. Make sure you can play each limb's part on its own to a click. That includes ghost notes. Once you've figured out the most efficient way for each limb to play its part, you want to make sure that this doesn't change when you introduce the rest of the system. This is the essence of independence exercises. Imagine videotaping yourself playing a groove. If you zoomed in so you could only see one limb, that limb should look as smooth and efficient as if it were the only thing that was playing.

### It's In The Details

If you find yourself having trouble making rudiments or double kick patterns sound clean and accurate, try the following exercise: Play the pattern with one limb quiet and the other accented. Pay attention to the rhythmic pattern that the accented limb is playing. Now swap and accent the other limb. Again, pay attention to the accented limb.

Now play both limbs at the same volume, but try to hear the pattern that the first limb is

playing. Then try to hear the pattern that the other limb is playing. This exercise will give you practice at directing your attention to all components of a pattern to make sure they're doing what they should be.

A nice way to undertake this exercise is to use two different sound sources. For a single-stroke roll, play the right hand on the hi-hat and the left on the snare. The interplay of the off-beat 16ths and the click will be obvious. For double kick patterns, try playing the exercise slowly and replacing the right foot part with your right hand (on a floor tom or the snare). That will give you a chance to really hear what the left foot should be playing.

### Expand Your Focus

Oftentimes, even when you feel like you're doing everything you should be doing, something still won't fall into place like you expect it to. Perhaps the problem is being overlooked as you focus on other things. Try to approach the problem from as many different angles as you can, and it won't be long before you identify the holes. Once you know what and where they are, it won't be difficult to patch them up.

You can contact the author at [www.joecrabtree.com](http://www.joecrabtree.com).



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# Coordination Escape Plan

## Developing Independence With Ostinatos And Polyrhythms

by Chris Pennie

MUSIC KEY	
China	×
R.C.	⊗
S.D.	⊘
B.D.	⊙
H.H.	⊚
w/foot	⊛

**I**n this article, we're going to talk about the mental and physical process of developing independence. No matter what style of music you play, your hands and feet need to

**learn to work separately from each other in order to create a time feel.**

Creating independence is a limitless endeavor. One way to develop it is through ostinatos. An ostinato is a repeating pattern that's played with one or more limbs. They're common in every genre of music. The challenge is figuring out ways to break apart the figures and arrange them on the kit.

One of the ways I started developing independence with my band, Dillinger Escape Plan, was by playing a simple pattern between the left hand and the right foot. Then I would accent the guitars parts with my right hand on a China or a crash.

To begin, repeat Example 1A many times, until you're comfortable enough to start incorporating the right hand against it.

**1A**

Now add the China on the downbeat and on the "&" of beat three. This creates a syncopated pattern.

**1B**

In Example 1C, I've created a longer phrase with more accents on the China. Remember to keep the volume between the left hand and right foot consistent.

**1C**

The next step is to apply some polyrhythms to the ostinato. The cymbal part in Example 2A is phrased on every third note to create a three-over-four polyrhythm.

**2A**

In Example 2B, the China plays a five-note pattern over the left hand and right foot to create a five-over-four polyrhythm.

**2B**

Those are some basic independence ideas I've used with Dillinger in the past. Now let's work on some four-limb independence exercises.

In the following examples, we're playing multiple ostinatos across the kit with all four limbs. We'll work on the limbs separately, and then put them together.

Example 3A is a ride-cymbal ostinato that outlines a four feel.

**3A**

Now add a three-note snare pattern. We'll play this against the ride, creating a four-over-three feel in the hands.

**3B**

In Example 3C, I've added double strokes in the feet. Now we have a four-limb pattern that resolves after three measures.

**3C**





Here's another exercise built on the hand pattern in Example 3B. This time we're playing paradiddles with the feet.



Example 4A applies a similar three-limb ostinato in 5/4.



Now add the left hand. The following snare pattern outlines a five-note grouping over the ostinato's 16th-note feel.



These types of ideas are endless. You can arrange these same patterns on different limbs, which will create totally different feels. Then you can move the same pattern onto different voices (toms, cymbals, etc.) to create some other interesting ideas. Feel free to experiment. The most important part of practicing these ideas is to deal with each limb part by part. That way you'll get a feel for how each one locks in with the others.

Some great books on coordination and independence include Gary Chester's *New Breed I and II*, and Marco Minnemann's *Extreme Interdependence*, as well as several *Modern Drummer* publications.



**Chris Pennie** is the drummer and co-founder of hardcore rock band Dillinger Escape Plan. You can contact him through the band's Web site, [www.dillingerescapeplan.com](http://www.dillingerescapeplan.com).





# Mixing Match-Ups

## With 16th Notes And Triplets

by Ed Breckenfeld

MUSIC KEY	
H.H.	✕
S.D.	●
B.D.	○
H.H. w/ foot	✕
R.C.	✕

Here's a series of three- and four-way coordination exercises that focus on shifting between 16th notes and 16th-note triplets.

Each example focuses on one bass and snare pattern to make you aware of how each figure relates to a steady ride pattern.

Though these ideas were designed as coordination challenges, the melodic nature of some of the combinations will make cool-sounding beats, fills, or solo ideas. Start slowly at first to be certain that the kick and snare connect solidly with each hi-hat note. Also be careful not to let the change from 16th notes to triplets affect the steadiness of your hi-hat pattern. Setting your metronome to an 8th-note pulse will help keep the rhythm even. Examples 1–4 explore three-note groupings.

Examples 5 and 6 involve single strokes.

Now try the following double-stroke ideas.

Examples 9–11 incorporate paradiddles and double paradiddles.

Once you're locked into each pattern, try applying different cymbal combinations to each exercise. Examples A–I move the right hand to the ride cymbal, so you can add left-foot hi-hat patterns for a four-way coordination workout. With cymbal and hi-hat patterns going at the same time, it's very important to make sure that your limbs are lined up correctly.

**D**

**E**

**F**

**G**

**H**

**I**


For a heavier sound, play the ride cymbal patterns on a floor tom. Or try the left-foot hi-hat patterns on a second bass drum. And if you *really* want to get wild, try the bass and snare combinations on different drums or cymbals, or use different limbs to play them. Let your imagination run wild. And have fun!




**Ed Breckenfeld** is a longtime Chicago area drummer and drum instructor who records and performs with various Midwestern artists including The Insiders, Pride Of Lions, and Jim Peterik's World Stage. Ed can be reached through his Web site, [www.edbreckenfeld.com](http://www.edbreckenfeld.com).



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# Down The Middle

## Split-Body Exercises For Grooves And Fills

by Monty Sneddon

### MUSIC KEY

H.H.   
 T.T.   
 S.D.   
 B.D.   
 H.H.   
 w/ foot

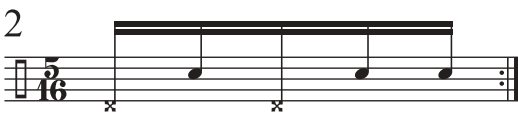
In this article, we're going to take a look at a series of ideas for grooves and fills (or a combination of both) that split patterns between the right and

left sides of the body. You can hear similar advanced coordination figures in the drumming of modern technique masters like Virgil Donati and Thomas Lang.

The following exercises are designed to challenge your coordination. But even though they may look complex at first, with consistent and focused practice you'll eventually be able to master them.

### Left-Side Keys

First off, take a look at the four keys for the left side of the body. Each one consists of alternating left-hand/left-foot 16th notes with a left-hand double thrown in at the end to resolve back to the top. I've only supplied four key patterns, but feel free to create some of your own.



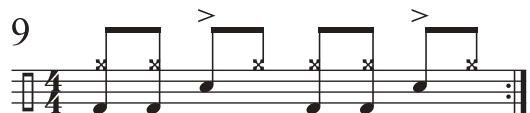
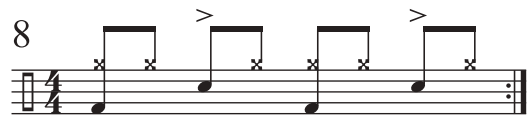
### Right-Side Fills & Grooves

Now check out the following patterns for the right side of the body. These examples are divided into two subcategories: fill patterns and groove patterns. Play each of these exercises between the right hand and right foot.

Examples 5-7 are fill patterns.



And here are three right-hand grooves.



### Combination Patterns

Now that you've mastered these basic ideas, let's look at how to use them in a musical way.

First, pick one of the left-side keys and a right-hand groove. Then take some time to get reacquainted with each of them individually. Once they feel comfortable by themselves, combine them. Example 11 shows what you get when you combine Examples 1 and 8.

continued on page 116

# Triple Play.

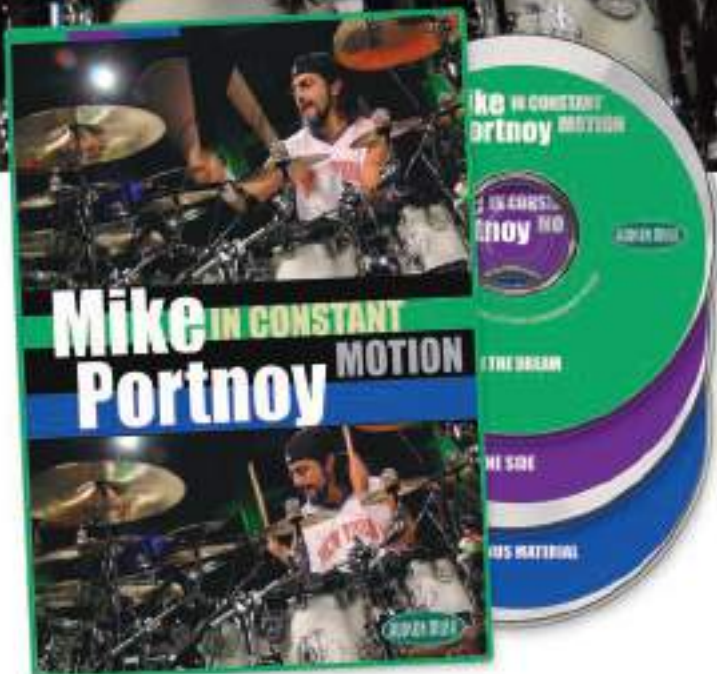


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## ROCK PERSPECTIVES

continued from page 114

I wrote the pattern in 3/4 time to allow the groove to resolve naturally. But because of the snare accents, the listener will hear it in 4/4.

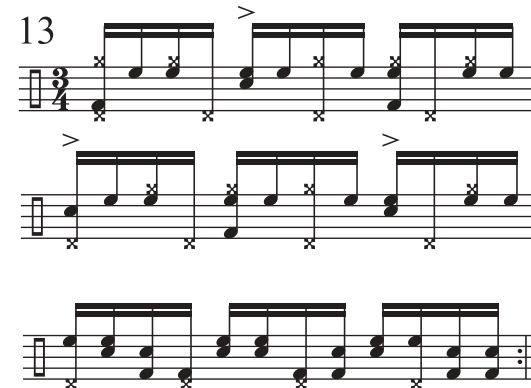


### Two-Sided Fills

You can also create fills using the same concept. To do this, take one of the left-side keys and combine it with one of the right-side fills. Here's our first key (Example 1) combined with our first fill (Example 5).

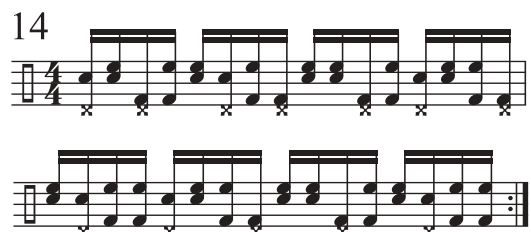


Now combine Examples 11 and 12 to create a three-bar phrase. Take your time and always use a click. You should keep the tempo down until you're really comfortable with each part of the pattern.



### Endless Variations

You can create longer, over-the-barline fills by combining different keys and fills. Example 14 is a two-bar phrase that starts with a combination of Examples 2 and 5 (measure 1), and ends with a combination of Examples 1 and 5 (beat 2 of measure 2).



As you see, there's no end to the ways that you can combine various patterns between the two sides of your body. I've only given you a handful to get you started, but I'm sure you'll be able to create a whole lot more. Happy practicing!





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# Fountains Of Wayne's BRIAN YOUNG

## Reviving Power Pop Drumming

Story by Waleed Rashidi • Photos by Alex Solca

If at any point in 2003 you were situated near an FM radio or MTV-equipped television, chances are you heard Brian Young's drumming. That's because the mega-hit song "Stacy's Mom," from power-pop rockers Fountains Of Wayne's third album, *Welcome Interstate Managers*, grasped the airwaves with infectious hooks and sing-along melodies that were seemingly unavoidable.

Though it was that particular track, with its simple rock-based rhythms, that helped solidify Young's drumming on the musical map, spinning Fountains Of Wayne's catalog and that of the other bands the drummer has been a part of reveals an incredibly grooving performer with a wide array of cool ideas. Credit Young's significant drumming upbringing, as well as his musical influences, which include a host of '70s radio hit-makers like Blondie's Clem Burke, Cheap Trick's Bun E. Carlos, Fleetwood Mac's Mick Fleetwood, and studio great Russ Kunkel.

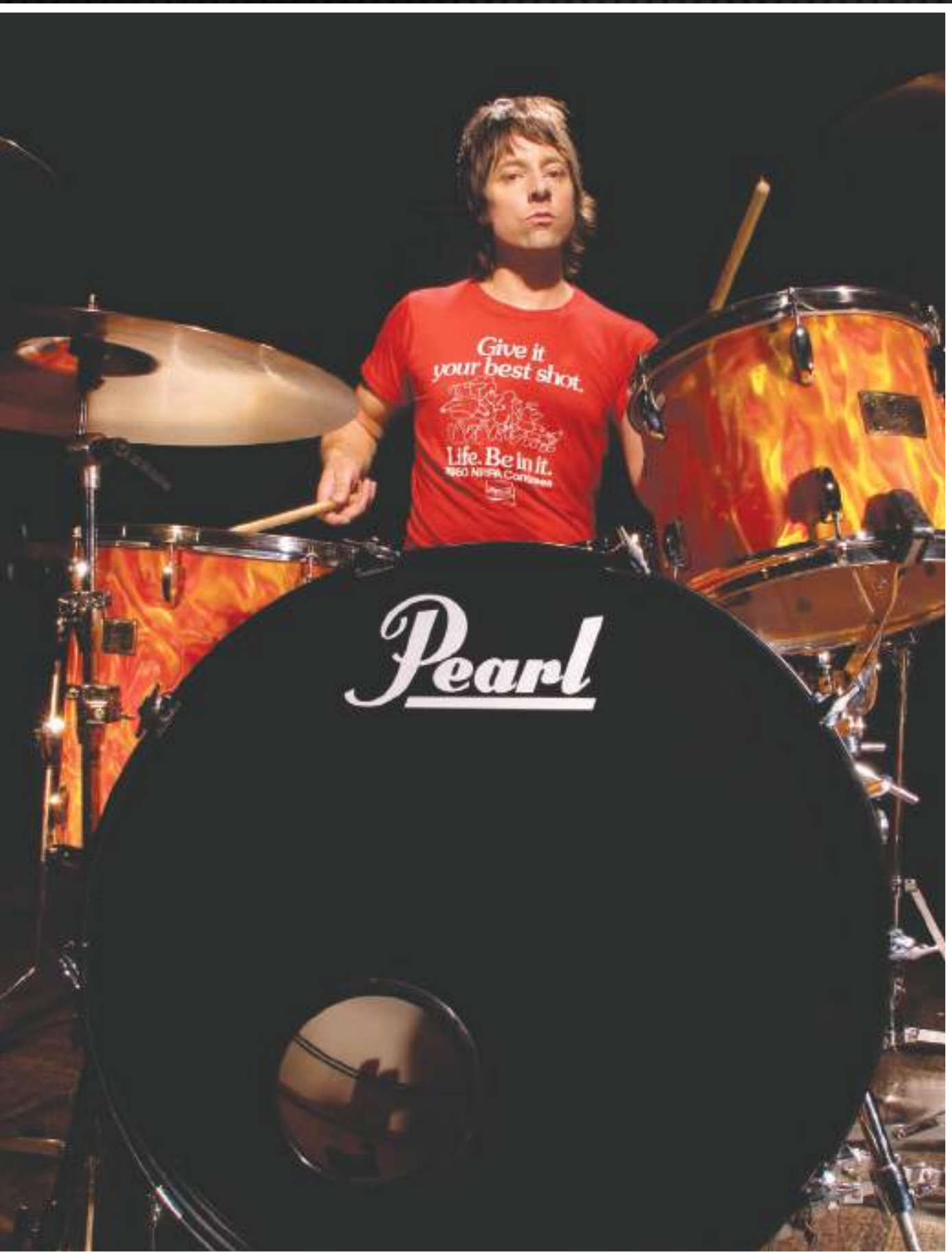
Three decades since those drummers broke radio ground, Young—along with bandmates/songwriters Adam Schlesinger and Chris Collingwood—is steadily forging ahead in reviving power pop on the airwaves, over ten years after Fountains Of

Wayne opened for business. The band's latest installment, *Traffic And Weather*, has Young following his own observations. "To be honest," he admits, "I'm much more into simplicity and playing what's good for the song."

Whether he's using his Vic Firth Rutes on songs like "I-95," giving his kit a rumbling, Ringo Starr-inspired feel, or exploring fat, dead sounds on "'92 Subaru," Young maintains a steady fifth-gear cruise that his Fountains Of Wayne mates can consistently depend on.

Young is originally from Pittsburgh, though he spent some of his upbringing in Arizona and in New Jersey, leading his bandmates to tease him about being from *everywhere*. "We're in Topeka, Kansas," Young says, "and they're like, 'Hey, Brian's from here!'" The drummer later took root on the West Coast, including Seattle—where he was a member of seminal indie-rock act The Posies for two albums. Young eventually ended up in Los Angeles, his current home. "When you're growing up," he says, "you think it's this unattainable thing to actually be doing this crazy stuff for a living. When it happens, it's fantastic."







**MD:** What was your transition from The Posies into Fountains Of Wayne like?

**Brian:** It was a bit different because in The Posies I got to play way too much; it was a little bit less about the honesty of the song itself and a little bit more about creating a sonic picture, i.e., just rocking out. But Fountains Of Wayne worked out pretty well because we all speak the same language.

**MD:** How did Fountains Of Wayne discover you?

**Brian:** I had a friend who worked at their label and I asked her if she knew of anything going on, because at that point The Posies were kind of slowing down. She turned me on to Fountains Of Wayne, and it's funny, because when I auditioned for them I sat down and played the beat to "Swingtown," the Steve Miller tune, and they all looked back, nodded their heads, and we jammed.

**MD:** What year was that?

**Brian:** That must've been around '96. It's been a long time, but we did take a couple of years off in there. When we recorded our last album, we didn't even have a record deal. I remember Adam put up the money to do the recording, we convened in a studio in upstate New York, and we didn't know what to

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# FOUNTAINS OF DRUMS

expect. We all showed up with basically nothing. I had a stick bag, and the engineer mentioned to me, "You know, it would've been a lot cooler if you showed up with nothing at all." We were kind of going through the studio basement, looking for gear and taping stands together. It was funny.

**MD:** And look what came out of that session—quite impressive!

**Brian:** Yeah, it just goes to show that you never know.

**MD:** It took a little while for the band to ramp up in success. What was the catalyst in making it all happen?

**Brian:** After being in so many bands and musical situations, I believe it's really all about timing. I also think that all of those years with moderate success really tempered us. I know so many bands who sold a couple million records their first time out, but then their second record sold nothing, and they just didn't know what to do. So they disbanded and quit music.

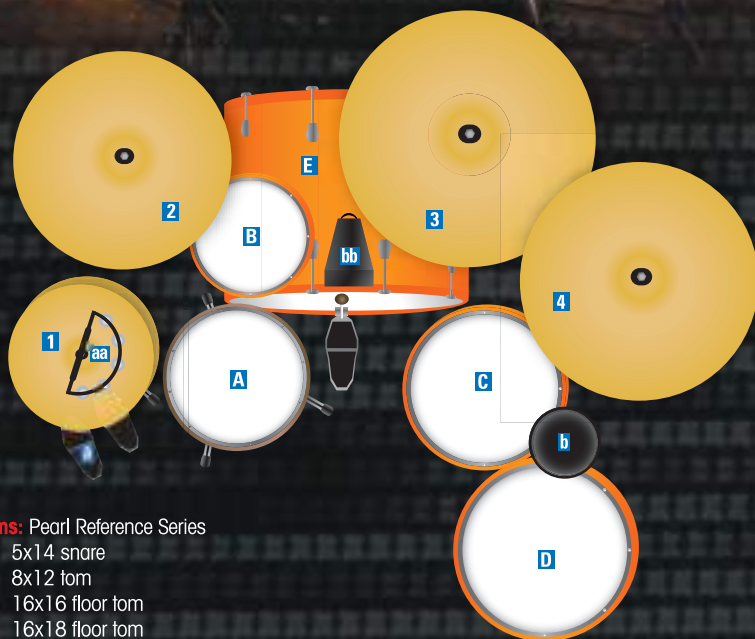
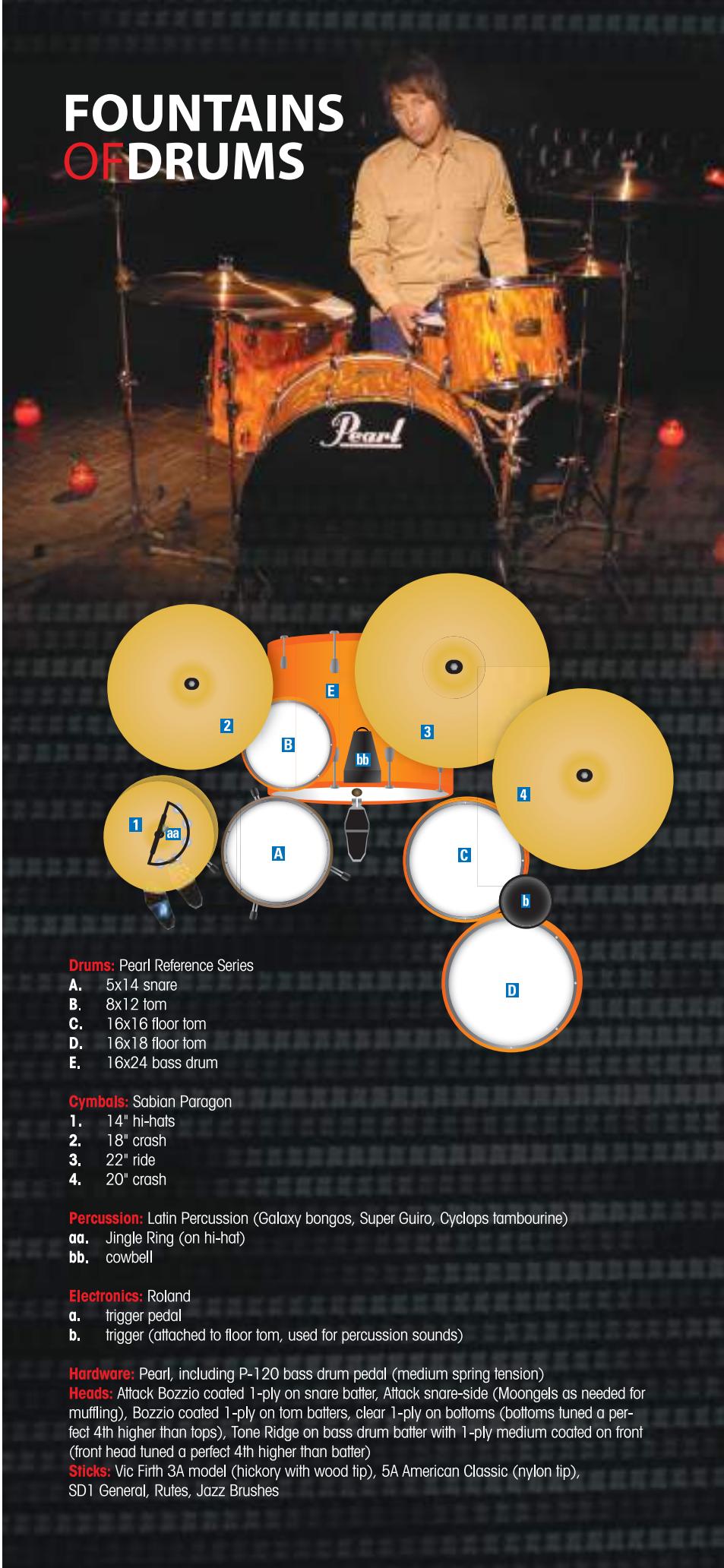
Thankfully we had moderate success for a few years, success we were basically happy with. We probably wanted to take it to the next level, but how do you do that? I must say, it was quite a whirlwind to be nominated for the Grammys and have a big video on MTV. Like I said, we were around for long enough where it was like, "Wow, this is fun." But we kind of know that isn't exactly what it's all about.

We had enough of a history where people appreciated our work before we had this big pop hit, which can be the kiss of death if you don't have anything behind it holding it up.

**MD:** What was it like recording *Traffic And Weather*?

**Brian:** We recorded it over the last year or so. We usually do things in little chunks, where we'll go to a studio somewhere and get three or four tunes down. It's very much a traditional type of pop band setting, where there are two main writers in the group, and they'll come in with an acoustic guitar and we'll just cut the song right there. So there's really no rehearsing. We've been playing together for so long, it usually ends up being early takes.

The recording of "Fire In The Canyon," for instance, was the first time I'd ever heard the song. It was a take on which I was just trying out various things, but it became "the one." We kept it even though on the first chorus I played something completely different from what I did on the second, where I did a samba-kick pattern. It takes a while to accept things like that sometimes. But you realize that in the end it's about the song and the feel, and if that somehow elevates or



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propels the song, that's what counts.

On the single, "Someone To Love," it's like a disco beat basically with kicks on all four quarter notes, à la Clem Burke. I immediately did my best "Heart Of Glass" impression, down to the fills. I noticed that my kicks and snares flamed a bit and wondered if Clem's did too. I checked them out and, yeah, his did too. That made it okay.

**MD:** How much freedom do you have to write your parts?

**Brian:** I usually find that guys who write like this have a pretty good idea of a beat or groove. But once you play around with it a little bit, you work out little patterns. I certainly contribute to arrangements, patterns, feels, and stuff like that. But basically, every producer I've worked for has some sort of a groove in mind.

The cool thing about Fountains Of Wayne is that we do a whole lot of different stylistic stuff. We'll do a country brushes thing. Or, on the song "Yolanda Hayes," there's a big swing bridge with horns. It's fun to set up that stuff.

**MD:** Have you always maintained such a strong musical connection with your bandmates?

**Brian:** Yeah, we grew up with similar album collections. Plus I came out of a pop band, The Posies, and even though that was a bit different for a pop band, we're basically all pulling from the same bags of tricks.

**MD:** And what are some of these bags of tricks that you're talking about?

**Brian:** Obviously Beatles records, The Hollies, and I've always been a fan of bands like

Blondie and Cheap Trick. I guess a big influence is the '70s pop you might've heard on the radio riding around in your mom's car.

**MD:** Do you feel like you've always been a pop drummer?

**Brian:** When I grew up, I was always into more "drumistic" types of players; Neil Peart was a big influence. From there I got into Bill Bruford and Yes, and then I got into things like Simon Phillips on Jeff Beck's *There And Back* and The Mahavishnu Orchestra with Billy Cobham. But at some point, out of practicality, if you're just playing music, you should revert back to your pop roots.

**MD:** Do you ever throw in anything that might be Cobhamesque in a Fountains Of Wayne song?

**Brian:** That's a good question. The title track on *Traffic And Weather* is a drum machine groove, and I just overdubbed cymbals and percussion. I also overdubbed those Ringo-esque, sneaker-in-a-dryer type drum fills. But as far as really digging into that bag of super drummer prog-rock kinds of tricks, I don't know. I guess that's always in your bag, right? But I don't know if I consciously do it. It's such a stylistic band that I think if I *did* play that sort of thing,

I'd get "the look." [laughs]

**MD:** Do you find yourself getting into "Chris mode" or "Adam mode" when you start writ-





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ing and playing with them?

**Brian:** I'll certainly say that Chris is a little more esoteric. Adam is a little more methodi-

cal. He'll have a better idea of the picture he wants to paint. Fountains Of Wayne songs are really like these little paintings and stories. He usually has a good idea of where those are going. With Chris, he has some lyrics or a picture, and we just kind of vibe it out while we're recording.

**MD:** Do you always work with a click?

**Brian:** It depends. Sometimes it's with a click, sometimes it's not, and sometimes we start a tune with a click and then turn it off.

**MD:** Do you ever tempo-map your tracks?

**Brian:** No, but I've read about that in *Modern Drummer*. [laughs]

**MD:** There are all sorts of little loops and extra percussion on your new album. How much of that is your doing?

**Brian:** Well, Adam is pretty keen on loops and samples. The backing track to "Traffic And Weather" is something he put down from a keyboard plugged into an Alesis module. The percussion stuff is pretty much my department.

Over the years, the percussion has worked out so well that when I walk in with a guiro, the guys don't freak out and say, "What in the hell is that for?"

It's more like, "Let's give it a shot." I used jingle bells on one tune. And on "Traffic And Weather" there's a cuica and a clave part, which I think we're going to trigger live.

My thing is to play as much of it as I possibly can, and only use the trigger pad when I have to, when I absolutely can't pull it off. For example, I figured out how to play the clave part on "Traffic And Weather" with my left foot. I've always really prided myself on the added percussion. It really adds so much.

There's a song called "Valley Of Malls" on Utopia Parkway. We didn't have a guiro and we really wanted it, so we rubbed a Bic lighter on the faders of a Neve console, and we put an SM57 right on the console, and it sounded really cool!

**MD:** What are you most proud of with *Traffic And Weather*?

**Brian:** For me, the sound of this record is fantastic. I think our stuff in the past sounded great, but I think we really reached something on this record as far as sonic quality. It's really great to hear your playing when it's recorded and mixed so well.

**MD:** What kind of sound were you going for?

**Brian:** Like I said, we're a stylistic band, kind of like a Top-40 group on steroids, if you will. But we try to stay true to what we're doing and what the song dictates.

On "'92 Subaru," we talked about bands like The Doobie Brothers and other bands we really liked listening to when we were growing up. I tuned my drums accordingly and just ended up with that fat Black Beauty snare sound. One of my new favorite things to do is bring the cowbell in on the second verse.



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## BRIAN YOUNG

**MD:** Did you tech your own drums in the studio?

**Brian:** Yeah.

**MD:** What drums did you use?

**Brian:** Just my Pearl Reference kit with a Masters Custom snare.

**MD:** Did you change heads for different songs?

**Brian:** No. I'd grab a different snare drum or maybe change a cymbal here or there. But essentially it's the same setup. It's the same room and same mic placement, but I think the engineer gives enough leeway so that whoever mixes it can pull the room in and out to make it more intimate or bombastic. "This Better Be Good" has a big, bombastic drum sound, and I used the same setup on that tune as on the others.

**"WE ARE A STYLISTIC BAND, KIND OF LIKE A TOP-40 GROUP ON STEROIDS."**

**MD:** You've built up a very cool discography. What are some of the latest projects you've been involved with?

**Brian:** I did the new America record, which was a lot of fun. I guess at some point Gerry [Beckley] from America met Adam somewhere. They started talking about recording some songs, and Adam's idea was to make an America record like it should be made and not overproduce it. These guys have been in the business so long and have such great tunes, we figured, Let's let them make a record. And just like we do, they got into a room and just started playing this stuff. It was very organic and very natural.

I've been in LA for about three years, and since we hadn't been touring, it's been cool to be a Los Angelino. I'm just doing shows with everybody. For instance, Saturday night I played a gig at the Cinema Bar, a great little place that seats like thirty people. You know, that's me. But it's kind of strange, because

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## BRIAN YOUNG

when you're in a band that's had success, other people are afraid to ask you if you're into playing with them. I'm usually into it.

**MD:** How did you get your start behind the

kit?

**Brian:** When I was a kid, I had friends who were drummers and it seemed like the fun thing to do. I remember playing gigs right

## YOUNG ON RECORD

### RECORDINGS

#### Artist

Fountains Of Wayne  
Fountains Of Wayne  
Fountains Of Wayne  
The Posies  
The Posies  
America  
The Long Winters  
The Twilight Singers  
Jim Carroll

#### Album

Traffic And Weather  
Welcome Interstate Managers  
Utopia Parkway  
Amazing Disgrace  
Success  
Here And Now  
The Worst You Can Do Is Harm  
Blackberry Belle  
Runaway Live

### FAVORITES

#### Artist

The Beatles  
The Knack  
Rush  
Led Zeppelin  
Cheap Trick  
Yes  
Small Faces  
Chicago

#### Album

Abbey Road  
Get The Knack  
Moving Pictures  
In Through The Out Door  
In Color  
Fragile  
Ogden's Nut Gone Flake  
Chicago V

#### Drummer

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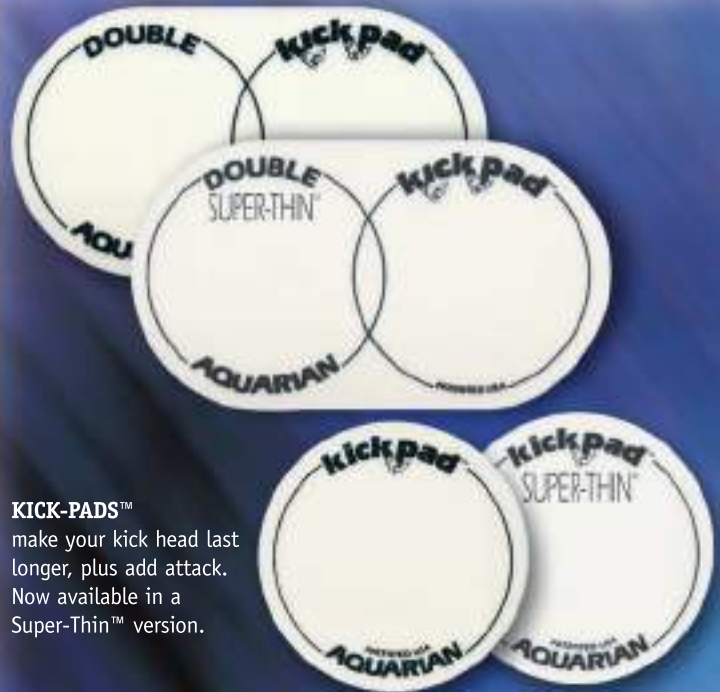
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## BRIAN YOUNG

away, being thrown into the fire, when I was fifteen years old. I had a teacher, and I don't know what he had going on, but I remember that as soon as I started studying with him, he started calling me, saying, "Hey, what are you doing this weekend? I have a gig for you." I'd ask, "Do you think I can handle it?" He'd say, "Oh yeah, man, no worries."

I'd show up at the gig, and the other musicians would ask, "Hey, where's Pete?" And I'd say, "I don't know, but I'm playing tonight." And they'd be like, "You're kidding." And I would just get my ass kicked all weekend long. But I guess it was one of those things where I had a good attitude so they

stuck with me, maybe out of necessity. But I learned the ropes from the curb up. I basically grew up playing a lot of country and pop music.

At some point, my family moved to Arizona, where I got a pretty good dose of Top-40 and country music. I lived in a town called Prescott, which had a famous strip called Whiskey Row. It's just bar after bar of live music, so it's a cool place. If you had the initiative, you could have many opportunities to play. That was a really good learning experience for me. But between sets I had to sit in the alley because I wasn't old enough to be in the club.

Eventually I packed my bags and moved to

Los Angeles. I took classes at the Grove School Of Music with Peter Donald and Joel DiBartolo. I then met a band from Seattle that was riding the indie wave. We were called Dead Of Winter and almost had a record deal. I moved to Seattle with them. When that band fell apart, I met The Posies.

The Posies were the kind of band that would tour constantly. It was just ridiculous. If we had two weeks off of our regular schedule, we'd go tour Spain rather than taking a two-week break.

**MD:** You joined The Posies in the middle of the group's career.

**Brian:** Yeah, that was one of those cattle-call auditions. Their bass player's name is Joe Skyward, and I happened to be playing in a band at a club on a Tuesday night and he happened to be there. It's just one of those things. It happened by chance. He came up to me after the show, said he dug my playing, and wanted me to audition for the band.

**MD:** At what point in your life did you decide that drumming would become your career?

**Brian:** After I finished high school I wasn't sure what I was going to do. I didn't have a clear picture of anything. And honestly, I hadn't considered being a professional drummer. I guess I was already doing that, so it was kind of a natural progression to keep going at it. When I look back, I think, I must have been crazy. But, you know, I wouldn't change anything. I'd certainly do it all over again.

I always loved the Charlie Watts quote when asked about what it was like being in The Rolling Stones for twenty-five years: "Five years of playing and twenty years of hanging about." That's pretty much right on the money!

**MD:** What advice can you offer to young players coming up who want to explore pop/rock drumming?

**Brian:** I'd say be honest about the type of music you like. And don't let people tell you that you can't do something. Most importantly, find people that think the way you do and like the same kinds of music that you do. Then, just play. I think people get that all screwed up, when in its most natural essence, it should be just guys in a room playing the music that they enjoy.

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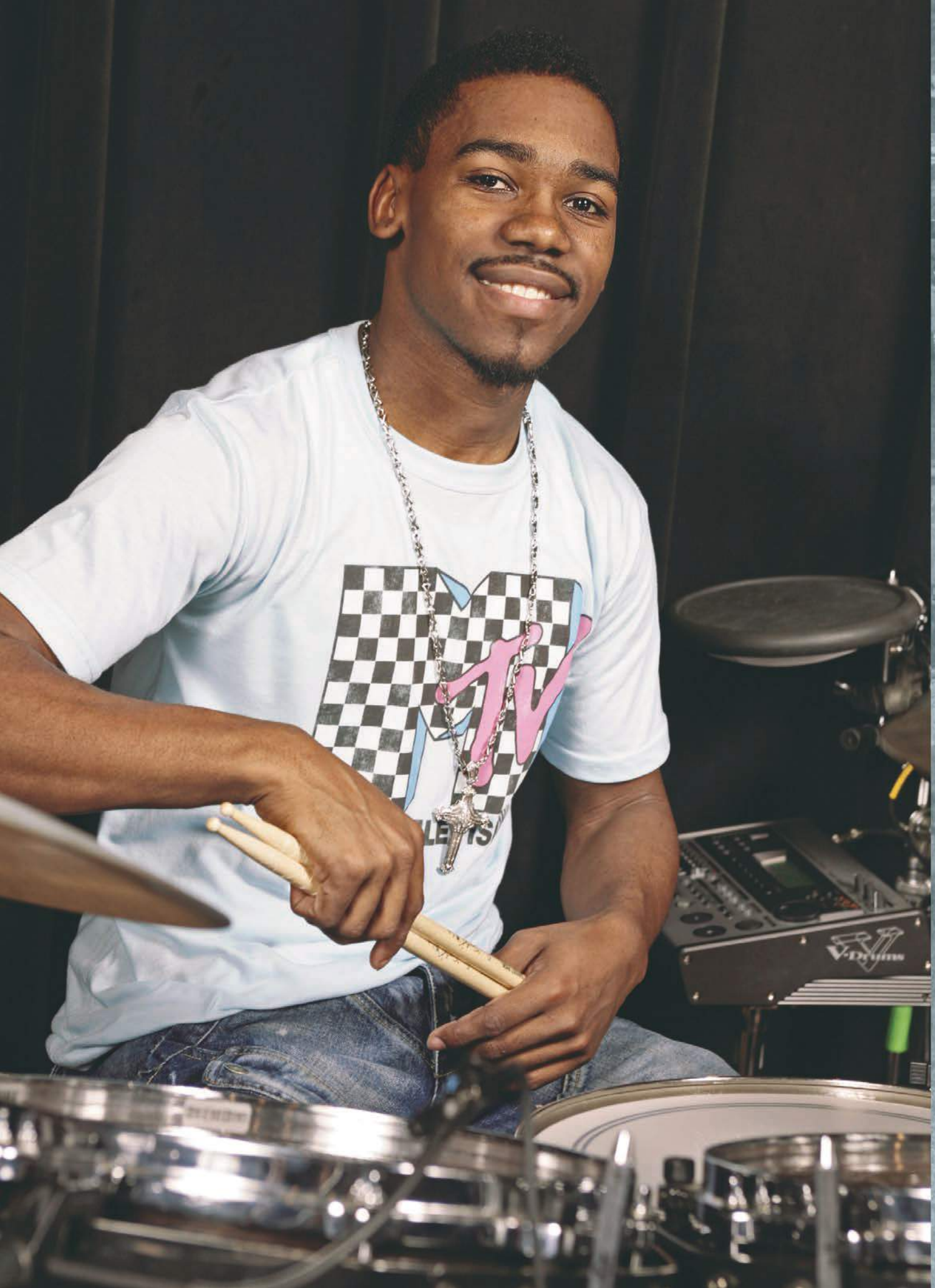
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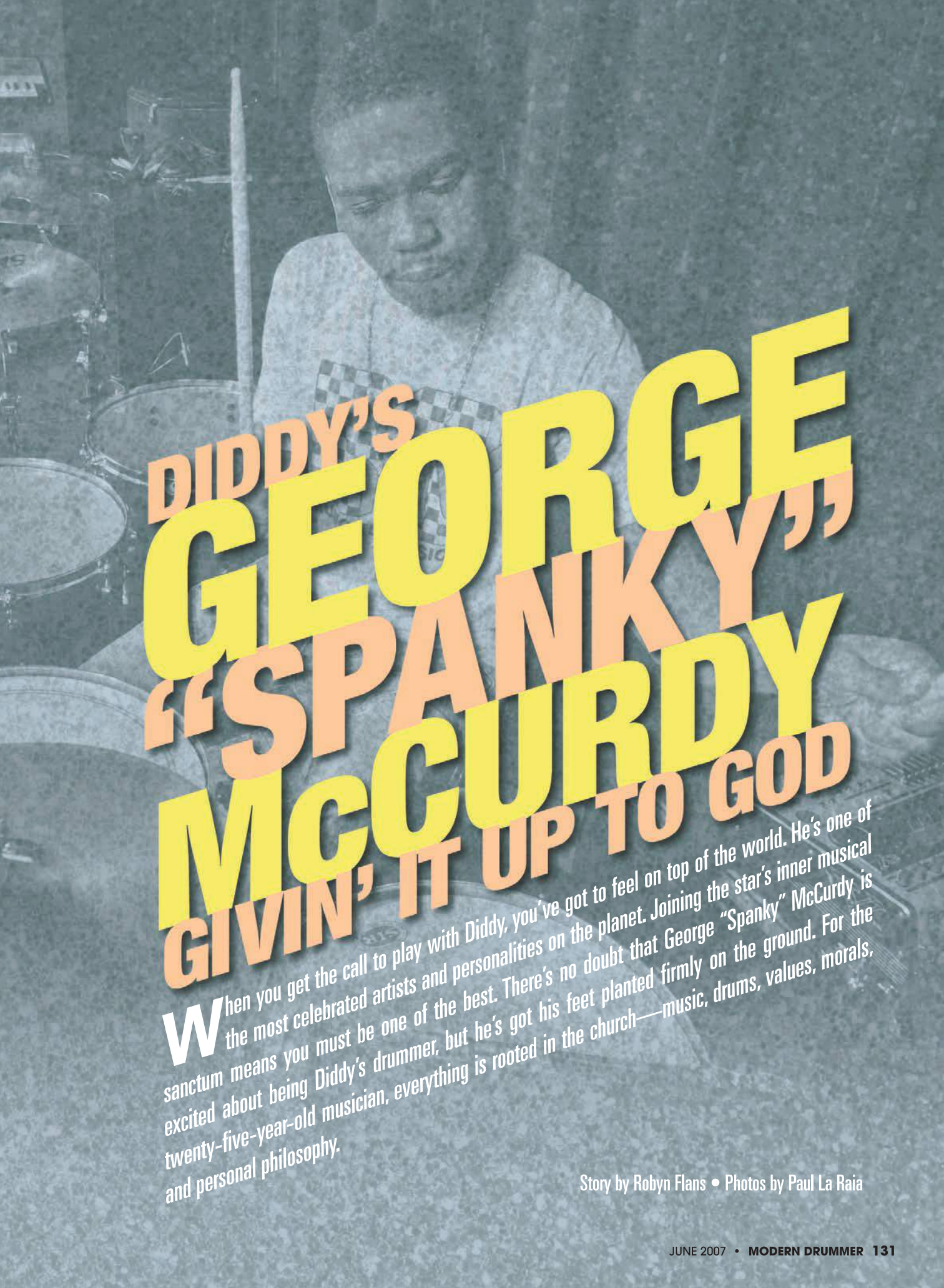
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Story by Robyn Flans • Photos by Paul La Raia



**"If you're not 100% confident, Diddy will feel it and he'll EAT YOU ALIVE."**

**I**t all began for McCurdy at age three, beating on tabletops, eventually graduating to his first performances as an eight-year-old boy at church services. "I remember being so nervous playing that first Sunday," McCurdy recalls with a laugh. "It was cool up until the congregation started shouting and the service got intense. I couldn't hold it down. I had to let the other drummer play."

McCurdy got a lot of experience after that. He played drums in school, took private lessons, played in the school orchestra, and even received a scholarship to Kinhaven Music School in Vermont. "It was amazing," he recalls. "I was thirteen, playing Beethoven, Mozart, and all that."

Back in high school in Philadelphia, McCurdy played in the all-city jazz band, and, upon graduation, enrolled in a community college in town. But school wasn't "it" for the young man. As the gigs with a local choir

became more frequent, his attendance suffered. McCurdy still wasn't quite sure what he was going to do with his life, until he began working with hot Gospel act Tye Tribbett & G.A. and they did their first recording. Beginning to make money with the unit, the young drummer realized this indeed was his destiny.

Since then McCurdy's career has skyrocketed—playing with The Backstreet Boys and now working with Diddy. Oddly enough, his mother, Diane, has mixed feelings. "I really wanted him to get a college education," she admits. "Sometimes you have a plan for your child, but they have a different plan. It seems to all be working out, though."

Working out, indeed. The buzz about McCurdy is big. His aggressive, funky, soulful style has put him on the map as one of the new, exciting drummers emerging on the scene. But the guy who goes by the name of "Spanky" remains modest and humble: "I really owe it all to God."

**MD:** How did you get your nickname?

**Spanky:** My mom said when I was little, I used to be chunky like Spanky on *The Little Rascals*. I was also a bad little guy. [laughs] I used to get spankings all the time.

**MD:** Do you have favorite drummers you listen to?

**Spanky:** I have a lot of favorites, but I really respect Lil' John Roberts and Brian Frasier-Moore. Gerald Heyward, Jojo Mayer, Dave Weckl, and Vinnie Colaiuta are also some of my biggest influences.

When I was a kid, we used to have a Thanksgiving jam, and Lil' John and Brian played. I took private lessons with Lil' John

for a couple of years. Both Lil' John and Brian are like big brothers to me. But that jam is still the most amazing shed I've ever been to. It was two drumsets, two keyboards, an organ, two guitar rigs, two bass rigs, and me playing a third drumset in the middle of the room. That started when I was about thirteen.

**MD:** So when you decided that a career in music was what you wanted to do, what was the game plan?

**Spanky:** I didn't really have a plan. I was pretty young and immature. Then my parents moved to Delaware, and the next thing I knew, I was on my own. So I decided to

get my own apartment in Philly. Also, when I was twenty, I had a daughter, Taelyn, and I had to step up. There was definitely some down time, but I stuck with it and God blessed me and opened up doors.

**MD:** What was your first big break?

**Spanky:** The Backstreet Boys. Brian was doing Babyface and he called me to fill in for him on some Backstreet Boys rehearsals. They gave me a CD to learn and flew me out to LA. Once I got there, there was so much to learn. That's a whole other level of playing—besides the drumming, there are triggers that you have to control. It was a challenge and I was excited.

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## GEORGE "SPANKY" McCURDY

**MD:** How did you step up to that challenge? When you got the call, what were the steps you took to get it together?

**Spanky:** When I got the call I immediately put the CD on in my apartment. I didn't have drums there, so I practiced by air drumming. I still do that today.

The music was cool, but I wasn't ready for

level with the pads and sounds?

**Spanky:** In church, you can do any kind of hi-hat pattern you want and you can do ghost notes on the snare. On a major touring level, you can't do any of that—no ghost notes, and be careful with the hi-hat patterns; it's either going to be 8ths or 16ths. That's what I had to learn, and fast. The first song, Brian was



all the pads and triggering involved on the gig. I started watching some clips of Lil' John on a Janet Jackson tour, as well as video of Brian playing. I watched how they incorporated the pads. I would fake that with the air drums, pretending there was a pad on my left. But I wasn't going to be ready until I actually got to the rehearsals. But that's how I do things. I'm spontaneous. I got there, and Brian was there for a short time to coach me. On the first couple of songs, he was going, "Okay, don't do that, don't do this." The next thing I knew, he left, and I was on my own.

**MD:** What did you learn about playing on that

going, "No, no—no ghost notes. There are triggers on the snare, so if you're doing ghost notes, the trigger is going to pick up everything."

**MD:** Didn't you play with Justin Timberlake after that?

**Spanky:** Yes. I did a bunch of studio work with him.

**MD:** When you got home after working with The Backstreet Boys, what happened?

**Spanky:** I was back home gigging with Tye Tribbett & G.A., and we did our second record, *Victory*. That album was nominated for three Grammy Awards and six Stellar Awards, and it won three. After that I went

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## GEORGE "SPANKY" McCURDY

out with Mary Mary, another Grammy-winning Gospel artist.

**MD:** Now you're playing with Diddy. How did that come about, and what goes into doing the gig?

**Spanky:** I have to give a shout-out to Warren Campbell, Teddy Campbell, and Nisan Stewart, who I met through my girlfriend. Nisan called me and said, "Spanky, Puffy just called and said he wants the baddest band in the land. Are you available?" I said, "Most definitely." That was last September. I got the gig, and we immediately did the NFL season opener in Miami, and when I say there were thousands of people there...man, that was amazing.

**MD:** What do you need to know to play with him?

**Spanky:** Oh, man! Puffy relies on the drums. If you're not confident, or if you're shaky and wavering, he'll feel it. He'll say something like, "Look, play those drums!" You definitely need confidence. He says, "I need some swagger. Make those drums sexy." As long as you've got the character and style and you have the sex appeal, it's what he wants. If you're not 100% confident, Diddy will feel it and he'll eat you alive.

**MD:** Some of his music is R&B-based and some is based in rap. Is that difficult for a drummer?

**Spanky:** Not for me, because, growing up and watching Lil' John and Brian, they play all types of music. It's just adapting to the styles. A lot of Puffy's old stuff is straight hip-hop. Learn the hip-hop beats, learn the patterns, do little fills here and there. His new stuff is R&B-based, so you have to switch up.

**MD:** If you were giving tips to young drummers, where would you go to learn hip-hop?

**Spanky:** Get a CD player and listen to the beats and play them over and over again. Once you play them enough, they become a part of you.

**MD:** Who would you recommend listening to?

**Spanky:** Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson. He's definitely another inspiration of mine.

**MD:** As a drummer, what do you have to know about playing along with rappers?

**Spanky:** This was something new that I had to get used to. Puffy said, "Look, there are certain parts in the song where I say this or I say that, and I need you to go with me." I have to hit that stuff with him, so I had to really dissect the lyrics so I could accent all of the hits with him. Once I did that, everyone

else in the band followed me.

**MD:** It seems like it would be a very challenging gig.

**Spanky:** Yes. It's definitely challenging. Puffy is a perfectionist. He wants things the way he wants them. I don't blame him. When Puffy came in, and something wasn't the way he wanted it, he definitely asked, "Hey, what's the problem?" There were eleven-hour rehearsals. Either you were going to step up to the plate or you were going to punk out and get sent home. Some people did get sent home.

**MD:** Were you ever afraid you were going to get sent home?

**Spanky:** No. After a while, I took a walk with him and said, "Just let me know what you want, and I'll give you whatever you need." I thought, I'm not going to get sent home because of my playing. Let me communicate with him. And that's what happened. He'd say, "Right here, do this...right here, do that. Show your tail. And you go ahead and have fun."

**MD:** And are you having fun?

**Spanky:** I'm having so much fun. The band is crushin'.

**MD:** When you play with Diddy, what is your setup like, a mixture of acoustic and electronic?

**Spanky:** When I first got there, they gave me a CD with all the snare and kick sounds. They said, "These are the sounds for all the songs." I'm looking at the CD, thinking, "What do you want me to do with this?" I had to step up to the plate. I had to go home and learn the ins and outs of the Roland SPD-S [sampling pad], and I had to use my laptop and program all the sounds into the SPD-S.

A great friend of mine, Daryl Robinson, another amazing drummer in Philly, showed me how to use the SPD-S. By the time I went back to New York for more rehearsals with Diddy, I was ready and I had everything programmed. I couldn't make it seem like I didn't know what I was doing, so I went home and learned it, and now I can incorporate that into my playing.

**MD:** Do you have any advice for young drummers coming up?

**Spanky:** Number one, it starts with passion. If you don't have a passion for what you're doing, you're not going to want to get better or do research on artists. It has to be in you. It's in me. God gives us gifts and our gifts aren't limited. We limit ourselves.

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Punk Legend

# Marky Ramone

by Michael Dawson



Paul La Raia

**A**lthough he's not the only drummer to have adopted the Ramone surname—Tommy was the group's original sticksmith and Richie took over for a period in the mid-'80s—Marky Ramone held the longest

tenure with the legendary punk pioneers, recording eleven albums and performing 1,700 shows over a fifteen-year time period. He also appeared in the 1979 cult-classic film, *Rock And Roll High School*.

In recent years, Marky's been a catalyst behind various Ramones compilations as well as the documentary DVD *Raw*, which was created from the drummer's camcorder footage. Marky has also appeared on several records as a collaborator and as a leader. In 2002, Marky and The Ramones were inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame. They also received an MTV Lifetime Achievement Award in '03. Marky continues to spread the

Ramones legacy by performing at least sixty shows each year.

Before he became known as the relentless rhythmic force behind The Ramones, Marky (born Marc Bell) began his career at age sixteen with the New York power-rock trio Dust. This band raised some eyebrows in the early '70s with their Brit-inspired heavy metal sound. Then the young drummer teamed up with punk icon Richard Hell (of Television fame) to form The Voidoids in



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1976. Marky stayed with Hell for a year before joining The Ramones.

We caught up with Marky on a rainy New York afternoon—immediately after he completed a two-hour taping of his Sirius Satellite radio show, *The Punk Rock Blitzkrieg*—to take a look back at some of the highlights of his thirty-five year discography.

### Dust, *Dust* (1971)

The drumming on the *Dust* stuff is totally opposite from what The Ramones was all about. It's busier, there were more fills, and there aren't as many 8th notes in the right hand. It was basically quarter-note arm playing.

*Dust* was my first album, and I was very excited to do it. The album's great because it has a lot of energy. I used a Rogers drumset, and it took me about four days to do the basic tracks. There are a lot of different accents and grooves on this one. The beat on the opening tune, "Stone Woman," has a soul kind of feel. I've always liked soul drummers, so I applied their feel to that song.

### Dust, *Hard Attack* (1972)

This album has a really good drum sound. From our advance, I was able to buy an oversized Ludwig set. So that's why the drumming is a lot heavier. I'm doing a lot of crossover triplets, double-stroke rolls, and a lot of different accents.

There's also a lot of Keith Moon [of The Who] influence. He was great because he had his own style, and he wasn't a technician. When you get too technical, you start to sound like everybody else. I eventually got into guys like Mitch Mitchell with Hendrix, Ginger Baker of Cream, Clive Bunker from Jethro Tull, Carmine Appice with Vanilla Fudge, and Hal

Blaine, who played on a ton of hit records. I took their influences and mixed it up.

### Richard Hell & The Voidoids, *Blank Generation* (1977)

After *Dust*, I did a blues record with Johnny Shines. He was good friends with Muddy Waters and B.B. King. That record was all 6/8 beats and shuffles.

The next thing I did was *Blank Generation*. I knew Richard from hanging out at CBGBs. There's a lot of jazz influence on this record. "Blank Generation" has a swing 4/4 beat. This type of playing comes from guys like Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, and Joe Morello, as well as Mitch Mitchell, who was really a jazz drummer.

Most of the songs are close to the same speed as some Ramones songs, but I wasn't playing 8th notes yet. I was still into heavy-handed quarter-note arm playing. And I used a Ludwig Vistalite set for that album. I did the tracks in two days.

### The Ramones, *Road To Ruin* (1978)

I got into The Ramones because I was hanging out at CBGBs in New York. Tommy Ramone wanted to produce, and I wanted to move on from Richard Hell. Dee Dee Ramone was a friend of mine, and he asked me if I wanted to join The Ramones. We arranged an audition, but I knew that I was going to get it. I was in the New York scene, and they knew me. They would come see *Dust* before The Ramones even existed.

After I joined, the guys gave me twenty-eight songs to learn in two and a half weeks for a show. Then I had to learn and record the studio tracks for *Road To Ruin*. I just studied day and night.

The Ramones were all about straight 8th-note playing. Johnny and Dee Dee played

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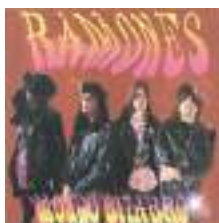
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constant down-stroke 8th notes. So that's what was required of the drumming. I had to learn how to play 8th notes in the right hand, and keep it going for an hour and twenty minutes. It isn't easy. To conserve energy, I don't use any part of my body that I don't have to. I just find a groove and keep focused.

The first song I recorded with The Ramones was "I Want To Be Sedated." I used a white over-sized Rogers drumset with a 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Slingerland chrome-over-wood snare. I had the bottom heads off of the toms, and the mics were inside the drums. I used Evans heads on the toms and bass drum, and I put tape with tissue underneath it to deaden the sound a little. On the circumference of the bass drum, I put 2" foam against the batter side, which defined the sound. The snare had a Remo Emperor with no muffling, and I always played rimshots.

This was also when I started to use Paiste cymbals. You can hear the difference between the cymbals on the first cut, "I Just Want To Have Something To Do." On the hi-hat side I used a Zildjian crash, and on the ride-cymbal side I used a Paiste. The Paiste is the one that sounds like broken glass.

It took me two days to do the drum tracks. We all played together, just in case we got a perfect track. That didn't happen, but if we got a good drum track, the other guys could overdub their parts. This is my second favorite record in terms of the drum sound. This album also has one of our biggest songs, "I Want To Be Sedated."

### The Ramones, *End Of The Century* (1980)

Phil Spector liked The Ramones. He thought we had the ingredients of bands like The Beach Boys, The Ronettes, Jan & Dean—stuff that he produced in the '60s—but with Marshall amps and heavy drumming. He wanted to produce us, and I had a great time working with him.

It took me about a week to do the tracks. But it took four or five months to make the album because of the overdubs, the mixing, and the additional strings, horns, and percussion parts. It ended up being our best-selling individual album.

On some of the softer songs, like "I Can't Make It On Time" and "I'm Affected," I used a towel on the snare drum, which is an old recording trick. I also brought in some RotoToms, which I used to get a certain sound off of the echo chambers in the studio. They're on "I'm Affected" and "This Ain't Havana." "Rock 'N' Roll High School" and "Do You Remember Rock 'N' Roll Radio?" also appear on this album.

### The Ramones, *Pleasant Dreams* (1981)

Graham Gouldman was brought in to produce this one. He was responsible for a lot of the English Invasion songs of the '60s. I liked his production. And I love this album.

At this point, I had a sponsorship with Tama. So I used a set on this album, with a Rogers Dynasonic snare. I also used some kettle drums on "This Business Is Killing Me."

"It's Not My Place" has an early rock 'n' roll Bo Diddley-type groove during the verse. It

was different from what The Ramones would usually do, but it matched the '50s feel of the song. "The KKK Took My Baby Away" is another popular track from this one. It took me two or three days to do the basic tracks.

### **The Ramones, *Subterranean Jungle* (1982)**

The songs on this album are good, but I hated the production. Richie Cordell got this ridiculous drum sound, almost like a drum machine. And the snare drum was tuned really low, which gave it a papery sound. That sound was popular because new wave and dance music were coming in. A lot of bands were going electronic and experimenting. But I didn't want to experiment. I like natural acoustic-sounding drums with no bullshit to them.

To this day, I make sure that I get the sound that I want. The producer is the producer, but you've got to watch out for yourself, too. You have to have some kind of consistent sound so that people know it's you. You might not always achieve it, but always try.

### **The Ramones, *Brain Drain* (1989)**

After we made *Subterranean Jungle*, I was asked to leave the band. I wasn't into drugs, but I was a periodic drinker. And when I drank, a lot of strange things happened. And that was affecting the attitude of the band. So I had to go away for a while to learn that it's more important to continue my musical career than it is to drink. I did various odd jobs, like putting up wrought iron gates on crack houses. I did that for three years to get back in touch with reality. And I've been sober for twenty-three years now.

My replacement, Richie, eventually quit the band for business reasons. But he did some good playing on three Ramones records. When he left, they had eighteen shows booked that they couldn't get out of. They tried to use Clem Burke from Blondie, who's a good drummer. But he only lasted for two shows. So Johnny was thinking about retiring. Then Joey told him that he saw me at a club in New York and that I'd been sober for four years. And he thought that they should get me back. But when I came back, everything was the same. They were still crazy people. But if they weren't crazy, they might not have created punk rock.

The first song that I did when I re-joined was "Pet Semetary," for the Stephen King movie. We did the album with Bill Laswell

producing. He had worked with Iggy Pop and many other bands, like Motörhead. He had me play facing a brick wall. I had no contact with him or the band except through the headphones. The drums sounded good, but they're way too far upfront.

But this was a good comeback album. And there are elements of hardcore punk in there. A lot of punk bands wanted to play faster than us, so they dropped the 8th notes in the ride. But it's much easier to play quarter notes with that polka-punk beat than it is to play like we did. We did songs like

"Ignorance Is Bliss" to prove to all the young bands that we could do hardcore, too.

### **The Ramones, *Loco Live* (1991)**

This album was recorded live in Spain to about 12,000 people. It's the fastest we ever played. We were playing so much that it was getting easier and easier, so we didn't think about the tempos getting faster. But I do feel that the speed interfered with the original intent of the groove; it was *too* fast. But a lot of kids love it and often ask me how I played so fast. It's all fingers and wrists. I basically

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hold the stick with the thumb on top and the fingers underneath. That way I can use the last three fingers to get extra speed.

**The Ramones,  
Mondo Bizarro (1992)**

I'm extremely proud of the drum sound on this one. I was sponsored by Pearl at that time, so I used one of their blue birch sets with my Rogers snare drum. I used Remo Emperor heads with the bottom heads still on the toms.

I was able to do a lot of good drum fills on this one. Ed Stasium, the engineer from *Road To Ruin*, was producing. I was very happy about that because I knew he was going to get a great drum sound. I told Ed to listen to the song " (I'm In With The) In Crowd" by Dobie Gray. That song had a great tom sound that I wanted to get. I told Ed to try to get as close to that as he could.

I wasn't using the foam muffling in the kick anymore. I just leaned a towel against the batter side with a square piece of duct tape on the front head, so it wouldn't ring too much. "Poison Heart" came from this record.

**The Ramones,  
Acid Eaters (1993)**

This was our acknowledgement to some of our favorite '60s bands. I picked nine of the songs, and we had Pete Townshend [of The Who] sing vocals with Joey on "Substitute."

This was around the time that Green Day, The Offspring, and Rancid came out. They paid homage to The Ramones and were very open about their influences. We were grateful for that. Bands like them kept this genre of music alive.

I wasn't particularly happy with the drum sound on this record. I was convinced to use the studio's in-house kit, and that the drums would sound good in the mix. But I don't really like the way they came out.

**The Ramones,  
i Adios Amigos! (1995)**

Daniel Rey's production on this one is great. I used Evans heads on a silver sparkle Pearl maple set with a Ludwig Black Beauty snare. Between Ludwig and Rogers, you can't go wrong. Older snares have a certain charm that I like. Maybe it's because I grew up with them, and I'm used to their sound. I've tried a lot of newer drums from different companies, but there are things that I'm looking for that they don't have.

I also used Paiste Rude cymbals. They work great live because they really cut through the guitars and bass.

**The Ramones,  
We're Outta Here (1997)**

This was our last show. After twenty-two years, it was time to end. You want to go out sounding good. You want fans' memories of you to be intact. So that was the end of The Ramones.

**The Misfits,  
Project 1950 (2003)**

I got involved with The Misfits because I felt bad for their frontman, Jerry Only, who's a really nice guy. He had bought the rights to the band name after a long legal battle and then formed the third incarnation of The Misfits. But his band walked off on him. So I said I'd play for a while to help him out. It ended up lasting three and a half years. We only did this one album, which was ten 1950s songs. I picked about six of them.

**Marky Ramone,  
Start Of The Century (2006)**

I had a lot of songs written after The Ramones retired. The topics were different from what The Ramones would usually write about. But I wanted to do some records with my band The Intruders and put them in the Ramones bin. Unfortunately, the record companies that put out those two albums weren't set up properly to promote them. Now I own the rights to both records, so I re-released them along with an eighteen-song set of Ramones songs that I did with some friends. This project gave me the opportunity to show off a lot of my influences, and there are a lot of different beats and fills on the tracks.

**Osaka Pop Star  
And The American Legends Of Punk  
(2006)**

I like my playing on this one, and the songs are good. The record's been doing very well. The videos for "Wicked World" and "Insects" were picked up for the in-house programming at Hard Rock Café.

In closing, I want to wish everybody the best of luck. Believe in yourself, try to be as original as possible, and keep practicing.

Hey! Ho! Let's Go!

More on Marky? Go to [www.markyramone.com](http://www.markyramone.com).





# Ian Wallace

**I**an Wallace, one of the world's most respected and versatile drummers, died this past February 22 at the age of sixty, from complications related to esophageal cancer. An early member of King Crimson, Wallace later played drums behind Bob Dylan, Don Henley, Bonnie Raitt, Crosby, Stills & Nash, and Jackson Browne. He also recorded with such artists as Stevie Nicks, Roy Orbison, The Traveling Wilburys, and Ry Cooder.



Mark Coleman

Wallace was a native of Bury, England, and began playing in rock bands in the early 1960s. He was a member of The Warriors, featuring future Yes singer Jon Anderson, and joined King Crimson in January of 1971. He went on to be hired by singers and band-leaders whose reputations rested on their musical integrity. Besides those listed above, he also toured or recorded with Larry Coryell, Brian Eno, Robben Ford, Peter Dinklage, Alvin Lee, David Lindley, Lonnie Mack, Steve Marriott, Procol Harum, and Joe Walsh.

*Modern Drummer* featured Wallace in the April, 1985 issue, and offered several Update profiles over the succeeding years. The most recent of those appeared in the June 2006 issue. Ian was also the author of an *MD* article describing his use of electronics on tour with Don Henley, which appeared in the August 1986 issue.

In the 1990s, Wallace toured the US and Europe with The 21st Century Schizoid Band, a group comprised of fellow ex-King Crimson members Mel Collins and Ian McDonald, as well as Level 42's Jakko Jakszyk. While living in Nashville from the late '90s to 2004, Wallace worked with T. Graham Brown, Billy Burnette, Rodney Crowell, Dean Dillon, Rosie Flores, The Nashville Chamber Orchestra, Dan Penn, Kim Richey, and Rick Vito. He also played in some of the city's top jazz combos, including those led by pianist Beegie Adair and vocalist Annie Sellick.

In 2003, Wallace released his first solo CD, *Happiness With Minimal Side Effects*. He moved to LA in 2004 to work on the musical *The Ten Commandments* with composer Patrick Leonard. And in 2005, the first Crimson Jazz Trio CD, *King Crimson Songbook*

*Vol. One*, was released. At the time of his death, Wallace was working on his second album with The Crimson Jazz Trio, featuring pianist Jody Nardone and bassist Tim Landers. That album will be released posthumously.

"All you have to do is look at what Ian played on to know that a great artist has passed," said Rodney Crowell. "The only time we recorded together was on *The Houston Kid*, but I was a big fan of the things he did with Jackson Browne, Bob Dylan, King Crimson, and David Lindley." Lindley, who worked with Wallace for years in El Rayo-X, spoke especially highly of the drummer's authority and eclectic range.

Don Henley spoke of similar qualities when describing Wallace during a May 1990 interview in *Modern Drummer*. "Ian plays simply," Henley said, "although he can get very complex. He can also play jazz very well. I just like his style.... He's a hell of a nice guy and a hell of a drummer. That's why I wanted him in my touring band." Bonnie Raitt also praised Wallace's "killer drumming." On the liner notes of *The Bonnie Raitt Collection*, she talked about the wondrous groove Wallace brought to a cover of Toots & The Maytals' "True Love Is Hard To Find."

"Ian's playing was underrated," said King Crimson guitarist Robert Fripp of his longtime friend and collaborator, "even though his professional credentials are remarkable. But right now, the loss felt is not that of an exceptional drummer, but of a good guy whose instincts were true, with a heart in the right place. I never saw malice in him."



Fred Carneau

Ian on tour with Crosby, Stills & Nash in 1984



Lisa Wales

On tour with Don Henley in 1990.

Donations may be made in Ian Wallace's name to MusiCares, 3402 Pico Blvd, Santa Monica, CA 90405, or to UC Regents/Mary Maish MD, c/o UCLA Center For Esophageal Disorders, 10833 Le Conte Avenue, CHS 64-124, Los Angeles, CA 90095.



# Army Of Anyone' s Ray Luzier

by Ed Breckenfeld



Alex Solica

**MUSIC KEY**

open	O	R.C.	C.C.
H.H.	•		•
T.T.	•		•
S.D.	•		•
F.T.	•		•
B.D.1	•		•
H.H.	•		•
w/ foot	•		•
		B.D.2	Add'l
		T.T.	

Propelled by the breakout success of the single "Goodbye," Army Of Anyone' s self-titled debut is winning over modern rock fans with its blend of radio-friendly hooks and head-bobbing grooves. Though the new band boasts a lineup of alt-rock

royalty with former members of Stone Temple Pilots and Filter, AOA' s secret weapon is ex-David Lee Roth drummer Ray Luzier. His performance on the album is up front and center, combining strong grooves with eye-opening fills that will have you reaching for the repeat button. Here are a few prime moments to check out.

### "It Doesn' t Seem To Matter"

The album opens with a tension-building 16th-note crescendo that culminates in a classic flam and bass drum fill before releasing into the powerful verse groove. (0:00)

Near the ending of the track, Luzier gives a taste of things to come with this 32nd-note flourish. The switch from six-note to four-note groupings gives the fill a palpable feeling of acceleration. (3:07)

### "Goodbye"

Here' s the blockbuster drum feature from the end of this hit single. Ray runs the gamut of double bass licks, with each idea receiving its own distinct presentation. This is a stellar display of technique, serving notice that Luzier is a force to be reckoned with. (3:13)

### "Non Stop"

The combination of a pair of single strokes with a three-note double-bass ruff produces a flashy quintuplet, which Ray uses to kick this song off with a bang. (0:00)

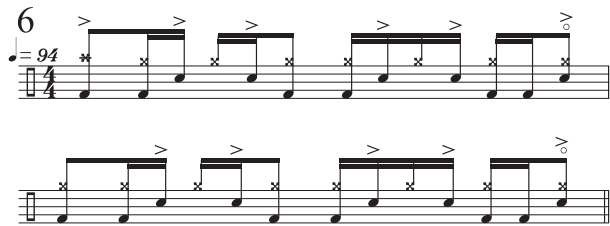


Here's another great lick from later in the track. The accent pattern in this fill matches the guitar rhythms. By designing his ideas around the other bandmembers' parts, Luzier ensures that his chops-heavy fills are seldom out of context or gratuitous. (1:08)



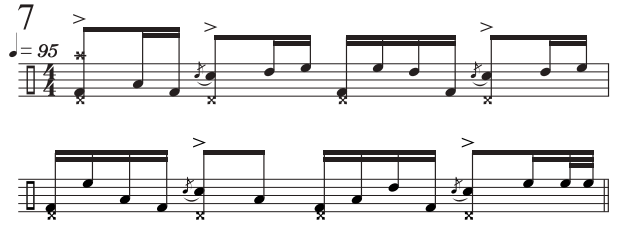
### "Disappear"

Ray's verse beat for this tune has the flowing feel of a 12/8 groove, even though the time signature is 4/4. This unique feel works well with the strummed rhythms of the guitars in the track. (0:05)



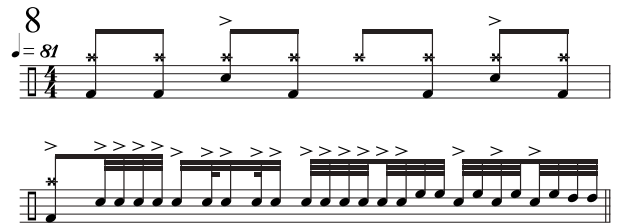
### "Father Figure"

This song revolves around another cool groove. This time the toms drive the track's crunchy guitar riff. (0:05)



### "Leave It"

Towards the end of this heavy song, Luzier squeezes plenty of excitement out of a fill that involves no kick drums. The syncopation in the second beat of the fill sets up the straight 32nd-note finish. (3:27)



Ed Breckenfeld can be reached through his Web site, [www.edbreckenfeld.com](http://www.edbreckenfeld.com).



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# Jim Marshall

## The Man Behind The Camera

by Jason Sutter

**J**im Marshall may not be a household name, and you probably wouldn't recognize his face. But you certainly would recognize the faces he's captured on film. Think of legendary photos that have become a part of our pop culture, like Jimi Hendrix on his knees, grinning at his guitar in flames at the Monterey Pop Festival...or Janis Joplin clutching her bottle of Southern Comfort backstage...or Johnny Cash playfully flipping the bird at the camera. Jim Marshall is responsible for these classic rock photos, and for hundreds more.

In a career that spans more than forty years, Jim has shot over 600 album covers. His images have graced the covers of *Rolling Stone* and *Time*, and have appeared in thousands of publications throughout the world. He has been referred to by many of his peers, including Annie Leibovitz, as the rock 'n' roll photographer. Jim recently celebrated his seventieth birthday with the publication of two new books of his photographs, *Proof* and *Jazz*.

But there's more to Marshall's story than simply his body of work. Like so many other behind-the-scenes cata-

lysts, Jim helped to create what rock 'n' roll looked like in the 1960s and '70s, and how it's remembered today. Whether it was backstage with Ringo, in the hotel room with Moon, or in the limo with Bonham, Jim Marshall not only documented the legends, he lived among them.

Having admired Marshall's work for years, I recently had the good fortune of being photographed by the master himself. I took advantage of this opportunity to talk with him about what it was like to be there from the beginning of rock 'n' roll. Although Jim's photos speak for themselves, here are his comments on what it was like to photograph some of the drummers we know and love.

**Jason:** You've been quoted as saying, "I've found that drummers in bands are a lot of fun." Why do you think so?

**Jim:** I think they're more maniacal; drummers are more nuts than guitar players or lead singers. Two of the craziest were Keith Moon and John Bonham...totally nuts. I remember seeing



The Who's Keith Moon



Jimi Hendrix...on drums

**“Candlestick Park in San Francisco, August 29, 1966. I was the only photographer at the front of the stage and backstage. No one knew it was going to be the last Beatles concert ever” —Jim Marshall**



The Who at the Isle Of Wight in 1970. There was a lowered purple Rolls Royce behind the stage, and I asked Roger Daltrey if it was his. He said, “F\*\*k no! It’s Moon’s!” Moon had bought the car and had it painted purple just to piss off the people at Rolls Royce.

**Jason:** Did the drummers’ “craziness” make it difficult to photograph them?

**Jim:** No. I’ve never had a problem with the bands I’ve worked with. I think it’s a matter of mutual respect: trust given, trust received. I’ve photographed a lot of drummers over the years, most of them many times. Ringo I only shot once, at The Beatles’ last concert.

**Jason:** How did you come to be the sole photographer of such a historical performance?

**Jim:** The last Beatles concert took place in Candlestick Park in San Francisco on August 29, 1966. The producer, Tom Donahue—who was basically the father of underground FM radio—asked me if I wanted to come and shoot. I was the only photographer at the front of the stage and backstage. It was ten thousand seats short of being sold out. No one knew it was going to be the last Beatles concert ever. I don’t think they knew.

**Jason:** What was it like behind the scenes that day?

**Jim:** It was right out of *A Hard Day’s Night*. We circled Candlestick Park over and over, trying to get in. Don’t forget, there were no cell phones back then. We finally got hold of someone to let us into the park, but then the gatekeeper didn’t want to let the cars on the green! Meanwhile, there were people doing kamikaze runs at the convoy, just trying to

get in. It was nuts.

**Jason:** How do photo shoots differ today from those you did in the ‘60s and ‘70s?

**Jim:** Back then, I just went in and shot stuff. It used to be “hang and shoot.” I went to all the festivals. If it was happening, I was there shooting. I went to the Monterey Pop Festival for a couple of magazines, and I shot everything. Same with Woodstock. That’s the biggest difference: the access. That was really important for the photos I took. Again, it was a matter of trust. I haven’t shot The Rolling Stones in *years* because now you’re only permitted to shoot one number from the



Led Zeppelin’s John Bonham in a relaxed moment

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front of the stage and one from the soundboard, and then you gotta leave. You don’t see backstage shots anymore. Rock music has become such a big business, I don’t know that it’s that much fun for the musicians anymore. They just come out and do their thing and go home.

**Jason:** Who are some of your favorite drummers?

**Jim:** I loved Keith Moon. Doug Clifford from Creedence Clearwater Revival was great. Charlie Watts, of course. I also loved Buddy Miles. He was a powerful drummer, and he was crazy. I never saw him with Jimi Hendrix, but I used to see him with The Electric Flag. Another one of my favorite drummers was Billy Cobham. I photographed Buddy Rich once at the Monterey Jazz Festival. It’s only an okay shot, but it was *Buddy Rich*, you know? [laughs]

**Jason:** Who are some of the more contemporary drummers you’ve shot?

**Jim:** There’s Matt Sorum with Velvet Revolver. I’ve been shooting Matt since he was in The Cult in the ‘80s. I also shot John Otto with Limp Bizkit, because Fred Durst is a big collector of my work. And I just shot you with Smash Mouth.

**Jason:** I was amazed at how easy it was to



Doug Clifford  
of Creedence  
Clearwater Revival



Hendrix Experience drummer Mitch Mitchell

get you to shoot my band and me. How would other musicians get in touch with you for a photo shoot?

**Jim:** I live in San Francisco, and I'm in the phone book. [laughs] People think I'm retired, unapproachable, or too expensive. That's just not the way it is.

**Jason:** For those who would like to find out more about your work, what resources would you recommend?

**Jim:** There are my two recent books, *Jazz and Proof*, and my first book, *Not Fade Away*.

They're available at any bookstore or online at [JimMarshallvault.com](http://JimMarshallvault.com). You can buy prints on my site as well. I'm also represented by numerous galleries, including Fahey/Klein Gallery in Los Angeles and the Morrison Hotel Gallery in Los Angeles, La Jolla, and New York City.



Jim Marshall (left) and Jason Sutter

**Jason:** Your photos have provided us with an amazing window into the past. Any parting words about your journey as an artist?

**Jim:** Photography was never just a job for me. I was documenting history without knowing it. I was *there*. That's what I did. I took pictures.

**Jason Sutter** has recorded and performed with The Rembrandts, Vertical Horizon, and American Hi-Fi, among many others. He is currently on tour with Smash Mouth. For more info, go to [Jasonsutter.com](http://Jasonsutter.com).

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# Daniel Rodriguez Jr.

## Guitar Center Drum Off! '06 Grand Champion

by Waleed Rashidi



**H**onestly, tonight, it really didn't go the way I wanted it to," says 2006 Drum Off! winner Daniel Rodriguez Jr. Those are some surprising words, especially coming from the mouth of the twenty-two-year-old Long Island resident, who learned just minutes earlier that his solo took top honors at this year's national finals, held at the Henry Fonda Theater in Los Angeles.

In reality, this year's event finally went completely Rodriguez' s way, who began competing in various Drum Off! events in 1999. In fact, 2004 brought Rodriguez to his first Drum Off! finals, and though he wasn't awarded top honors, his tenacious attitude found him overcoming some initial hesitation and he was right back on stage in the 2006 finals.

Born and raised in Brooklyn into a family of musicians, Rodriguez got his launch in music right from the start, and was particularly inspired by his father, a bassist, who took him to many gigs. "From there I caught a little rhythm," Rodriguez says.

Some instructional videos, plus lots of listening to drummers like Dennis Chambers, Tony Royster Jr., Dave Weckl, and Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez, assisted Daniel' s development. Though he couldn't afford private lessons, the young drummer did attend music classes at the Harbor Conservatory For Performing Arts, where he studied hand percussion and timbales. He also took up the bass and piano, which he says helped him develop his groove. "I can play [drums] with my dad and I' ll know exactly what he' s going to do," says Rodriguez. "If he' s doing a rhythm, my kick is right there, right in the pocket."

A married man and a soon-to-be father, Rodriguez hasn't quit his day job as a security guard in Manhattan—well, not just yet. However, his weeknights and weekends are currently booked

solid, mostly performing in Gospel acts and with his Christian Latin jazz salsa band, Justice, whose latest album, *Sin Conocer A Cristo*, features Rodriguez' s radical kit work.

So, what does Rodriguez think gave him the edge during this year' s competition? He credits his independence as well as learning to incorporate the clave rhythm. "I try to be different," he says. "I want to solo and keep time with my left foot. Especially with Latin music, I try soloing with my hands, doing something with my right foot, and doing something totally different with my left. I' ve been doing that since the age of twelve, and it' s not easy."

Rodriguez, who plays Yamaha and DW drumsets, also says that he likens his solos to playing a song. "This year, I feel like I won because I was grooving," he adds. "I mixed two or three different styles, including funk and blues, in addition to Latin jazz."

With his Drum Off! win, Rodriguez' s dreams for endorsements came true, along with another much-needed prize—a brand-new Scion, which is replacing his 1972 Chevrolet Caprice Classic.

Armed with a new car and a new title, Rodriguez is feeling optimistic about his drumming future. "I feel right now that I' m reaching for the stars and I want to go forward," he says. "I want people to know me... My life is based on music—I literally see, breathe, and eat music. I don' t know what' s going to happen, but I want to do it all. Give it to me, I want it!"



Despite his can-do attitude, Rodriguez admits that he' s a humble man and doesn't like showing off in front of people—except, of course, during drum solos. "But even out there," he says, "I was nervous. My stomach was turning upside down! Drum Off is the greatest event ever created. It' s a dream come true for me, and for anyone who wants to join the competition. I' m just happy and thrilled to make it to the final round, and it' s a privilege and honor to be a part of Guitar Center' s Drum Off."



## RECORDINGS

### Ratings Scale

- ★★★★★ Classic
- ★★★★☆ Excellent
- ★★★☆☆ Good
- ★★☆☆☆ Fair
- ★☆☆☆☆ Poor

### WILLIE JONES III VOLUME III



Jones earned big street cred while backing up jazz heavies and serving a long tenure with Roy Hargrove. But the gifted drummer soars highest as a leader on his own label. On this third outing, the pristine piano trio format brings out Jones' best. With discerning taste, melodicism, and absolute swing, Jones' crisp yet fluid attack finds an ideal complement in pianist **Eric Reed's** exquisite touch. The opening track, "Shoulders," is a dazzler, showcasing Jones' stunning musicality as he outlines jackrabbit phrases. It's fun and splendid stuff, generously fueled by Jones' deeply satisfying swing. (WJ3) **Jeff Potter**



### MY MORNING JACKET OKONOKOS



The live album was once a means for cult acts to cement their reputations on stage to reach the uninitiated. Now it's a medium that seems more archaic with each show that offers a recording of the concert minutes after in the lobby. So more power to My Morning Jacket for making like it's 1977 with a stellar double-live disc featuring smoldering extended jams and a booming mix. They channel Pink Floyd, Crazy Horse, and The Dead on songs like "Lay Low," where drummer **PATRICK HALLAHAN** sets up the guitarmony coda with a jerking rhythm that bounces off the steady, pulsing loop. You can see the magic, too, on the DVD of the same name. (ATO/RCA) **Patrick Berkery**

### OZ NOY OZ LIVE

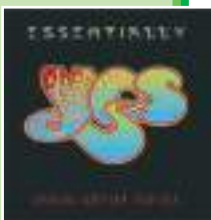


Guitarist Oz Noy's snakey space funk has found in **KEITH CARLOCK** the perfect foil. (Check 2005's *Ha!*) But lest you think this bristling jazz rock is only about mayhem, on four of eleven tracks **ANTON FIG** proves there is more than one way to burn. Typically, Carlock amazes with his swampy snare drum rolls, zigzagging pocket, and flash sticking (check "Steroids"), but Fig is equally surprising, storming the nearly backwards beat in "Just Groove" and laying down a simmering, web-like shuffle in "Natural Flow." *Oz Live* is an excellent primer in both excitable sticking and groove-keeping from two masters of the game. (Magnatune) **Ken Micallef**

## SIGNIFICANT REISSUES

### YES

Though the titanic progressive rock band Yes has toured steadily (in one form or another) throughout their four-decade-long career, many music fans are unaware that they've released a slew of studio albums well after their classic '70s period, all of which contain a respectable amount of intriguing music. The *Essentially Yes* five-CD set collects latter-day studio releases *The Ladder*, *Talk*, *Open Your Eyes*, and *Magnification* and adds *Live At Montreux 2003*, a show featuring the return of beloved keyboardist **Rick Wakeman**. Drummer **ALAN WHITE** mans the kit throughout, always surfing the rhythmically sophisticated waters beautifully. And as multi-instrumentalist, White makes important pianistic contributions to the orchestra-backed *Magnification*. **Adam Budofsky**



### ALSO CHECK OUT

**TODAY IS THE DAY** TEMPLE OF THE MORNING STAR (Relapse) /// **HUGH HOPPER** HOPPER TUNITY BOX (Cuneiform) /// **BRUTAL TRUTH** SOUNDS OF THE ANIMAL KINGDOM, KILL TREND SUICIDE (Relapse) /// **SLY & THE FAMILY STONE** DANCE TO THE MUSIC, STAND!, FRESH, THERE'S A RIOT GOING ON, SMALL TALK, A WHOLE NEW THING, LIFE (Epic/Legacy)

## TAKING THE REINS



### ALEX GARCIA'S AFROMANTRA UPLIFTING SPIRIT

The title doesn't lie: Drummer/composer/arranger **ALEX GARCIA** delivers hard-charging positive energy here. The tight Latin jazz quintet builds payoff after payoff. And Garcia's command of crisp Afro-Caribbean grooves and aggressive jazz chops, bolstered by **ARYAM VAZQUEZ'** vibrant conga layers, reaffirms his arrival as a major contender. (Afromantra) **Jeff Potter**

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# MAKING PROGRESS

by Adam Budofsky

## EXPLODING STAR ORCHESTRA, COUGAR, GHOST

Within the first song on *We Are All From Somewhere Else*, Exploding Star Orchestra reminds one of avant-big band jazz, TV spy show themes, and mallet-happy rockers Tuatara. And it goes on from there, traveling psychedelic streets, Mingus-like evil-jazz avenues, and lots more crazed musical roads. The players seem to be having big fun tumbling through the stylistic ground—and somehow avoid sounding disjointed. And it sure is a blast listening in, not least for the jubilant percussives of **MIKE REED** and Tortoise mates

**JOHN HERNDON** and **JOHN McENTIRE**. (Thrill Jockey)

The press release accompanying Cougar's *Law* refers to the band's early commitment to "careful meditation and refinement," and their instrumental music is certainly both meditational and refined. (The liner notes thank the Wisconsin Percussion Studio and a law professor for lecture samples—hints



to the jungles *this* Cougar inhabits.) But such headiness doesn't mean drummer **D.H. SKOGEN** has to play politely. In fact, he gets his rocks off aplenty here, infusing the cool sounds with itchy energy. (Layered Music)

Japanese progressive-psychedelic-folk band Ghost continues to put out demanding, beautiful albums nearly twenty years on. Their latest, *In Stormy Nights*, again features the orchestral drums and percussion of **JUNZO TATEIWA**, whose sometimes skeletal, always patient approach is a big reason the band's sound remains timeless and cliché-free. (Drag City)

## KILLSWITCH ENGAGE AS DAYLIGHT DIES

★★★★★



The word "relaxed" and double-kicked metal performances are generally mutually exclusive items. But Killswitch Engage drummer **JUSTIN FOLEY** manages to bring a sense of calm and comfort amidst chaotic guitars and unpredictable tempo shifts—even when he's kicking pulse-bursting 16ths. Credit his unusual soft snare and tom tones, which are dialed in round and warm, rather than metal's typical edgy and bright. Foley plays a trick passage on "The Arms Of Sorrow" and absolutely slays it on "Unbroken," and both are testaments to his stellar presentation. We'll call this one the finest "feel good" metal album of the year. (Roadrunner) **Waleed Rashidi**

## LYNNE ARRIALE TRIO LIVE

★★★★★



Working in a similar vein to Bill Evans, pianist Arriale and her trio (including drummer **STEVE DAVIS**) improvise in glistening fashion, with much attention paid to sonic detail. The focus is on beauty and space, not hard bebopping lines-a-plenty. This would present a beige palette for a less creative drummer, but Davis, like Jack DeJohnette, works in crystalline relief, accompanying the pianist's thoughtful notes with graphic stick work, rustling cymbal action—and surprisingly funky grooves, given the often delicate nature of Arriale's music. An accompanying DVD of the performance recorded in Burghausen, Germany provides plenty of close-ups. (B'Jazz) **Ken Micallef**

★★★★★



## TV ON THE RADIO RETURN TO COOKIE MOUNTAIN

Fans of Brooklyn indie rock mavericks TV On The Radio might feel squeamish about the band's jump to the majors for their sophomore full-length. Rest assured, not one measure of *Return To Cookie Mountain* sounds compromised for access to Jimmy Iovine's coffers. If anything, the quintet plays with more diabolically twisted smarts, and drops more blighted rhythmic grime. When falsetto melodies reach for the skies in "Province" (featuring vocals from major fan **David Bowie**), **JALEEL BUNTON** keeps the half-time groove down and dirty. As singsong harmonies float through "A Method," Bunton taps out a loose march pattern that gains force and precision as the track drifts off dreamily into parts unknown. Such musical dichotomy suits Bunton's knack for nailing the perfectly imperfect part. (Interscope) **Patrick Berkery**

## JAM BENDERS

by Robin Tolleson



### MOE, GREEN LIGHT, THE CODETALKERS, TEA LEAF GREEN

*The Conch* is the most hard-driving release yet from moe., and drummer **VINNIE AMICO** is at the top of his game. Amico raps a crackling around-the-kit fill heading into "Blue Jeans Pizza," shows versatility throughout the groove shifts on "Tailspin," and rips flourishes in "Wind It Up" reminiscent of vintage Kansas and Zappa. (Fatboy)

Charlotte, North Carolina-based Green Light brings a rock attitude to the jam on *Patient Like The Moon*, utilizing **Kevin Gill**'s soulful guitar work and the articulate bass of **Dustin Hofsess**. Drummer **ADAM SNOW** has the right touch for all the grooves, whether they're evoking the spirit of Hendrix, Miles, or The Meters on the super-sync'd "Action Packed." ([www.greenlightmusic.net](http://www.greenlightmusic.net))

The Codetalkers maintain the spacey vibe of former leader Colonel Bruce Hampton on *Now*, with oddball lyrics adorning hot riffs that would make Jerry Reed smile. Drummer **TYLER GREENWELL** grooves hard and occasionally pulls out some showy licks on funky tunes like "Ike Stubblefield" and "Victor The Snake Man." ([www.thecodetalkers.com](http://www.thecodetalkers.com))

Tea Leaf Green often sounds like Black Crowes, until the jam begins and drummer **SCOTT RAGER** starts stretching out. Rager pilots the demanding "If It Wasn't For The Money" with a barely contained abandon, checks in with a cool backwards beat on "The Garden (Part II)," and playfully rebuilds the groove on "Jezebel" into a frantic escapade. (SCI Fidelity)

## MY LATEST OBSESSION DRUMMERS ON...

### JOHN HOLLENBECK ON ZIGABOO/AMERIE

If you define obsession as listening to something ten times in a row in one sitting, then this is my latest obsession: "1 Thing," the title track from the album by the artist known as Amerie. I got turned on to it by Ted Reichman, the accordionist in my Claudia Quintet, and I in turn have been making everyone I know listen to it. (My friends in The Bad Plus instantly fell in love with it!) "1 Thing" was produced by Rich Harrison, who based the whole tune on a short looped sample from The Meters' tune "Oh Calcutta." After listening to the original, what I found most striking about "1 Thing" is how Rich cranked up drummer Zigaboo Modeliste in the mix and added some nice bongos. Besides the infectious groove, there is so much detail that there's something new to hear with each listening!



John Hollenbeck can be heard on Dan Willis's *Velvet Gentlemen*.

# MULTI-MEDIA

## JEFF QUEEN PLAYING WITH STICKS

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If you're looking for a total package dedicated to developing strong, balanced hand technique for drumming, this is the ticket. Queen, a four-time world snare drum champ, unleashes everything he's got on this well-produced disc. Covering all bases of modern rudimental snare drumming techniques, *Playing With Sticks* should be a must-see for every marching percussionist and drum corps player interested in taking their playing to the apex of their abilities. The well-designed format begins with the basics of fundamental stick techniques, including grip and height control, advancing into detailed info on Moeller- and velocity-style techniques, grid and 4-2-1 exercises, timing, rolls, diddles, flams, and many hybrid techniques. Queen performs and explains his stick tricks and speed techniques, plays some amazing snare solos, and offers many useful practice tips. PDF files of many of the exercises are included on the disc. Are your hands ready for this? (Hudson Music) **Mike Haid**

## ISLAND GROOVES WITH CHRIS HANNING

DVD/CD-ROM LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE \$16.95



*Island Grooves* is an excellent instructional DVD/CD-Rom package dealing primarily with soca and calypso. Drummer Chris Hanning demonstrates the basic rhythms, variations, and fills used in these two important styles, and explains how the drums are incorporated into a typical island ensemble. What makes this package particularly valuable is the short history of the music, giving a context to the drumset in the "engine room" (percussion section). Hanning also briefly discusses reggae, shango, zouk, and other regional grooves. The DVD includes lessons and on-screen music examples, while the CD has sheet music and play-along tracks. The entire package is professionally done, informative, and successful at effectively bringing up to speed anyone interested in calypso, soca, or steel-band drumming. (Panyard Inc.) **Martin Patmos**



## MIKE STERN LIVE—THE PARIS CONCERT DVD LEVEL: ALL \$14.98

If you've never witnessed a Mike Stern gig at his 55 Bar watering hole in New York, this live DVD is almost better than being there. Recorded in November, 2004 at the New Morning club in Paris with bassist **Richard Bona**, saxophonist **Bob Franceschini**, and drummer **Dennis Chambers**, this is a monster performance from a dangerous band. Playing the guitarist's supercharged funk 'n' bop, Chambers expands on his gargantuan reputation, executing ridiculous backwards metric modulation, typically blazing single-stroke rolls, and even some surprisingly delicate straight-ahead jazz. Recorded in excellent audio and video, this is a must-have document for Dennis fans. (Inakustik) **Ken Micallef**

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# KISS KISSOLOGY— THE ULTIMATE KISS COLLECTION, VOL. 1: 1974-1977

DVD LEVEL: ALL \$29.98



A case could be made that KISS's **PETER CRISS** was the most influential rock drummer of the mid/late-70s. Though many young percussionists coming of age during this period went on to find greater inspiration in John Bonham and Neil Peart, chances are Criss & Co. represented their first taste of "the rock." Volume 1 of *Kissology* is a six-hour visual history of the band's glory years—a time when they were not only the biggest band in the world, but also rewriting the book on rock 'n' roll showmanship. Spread out over two discs are long-vaulted TV appearances, rarely seen promo clips, documentaries, and four complete concerts. It's these live performances where we're reminded that Criss was the chugging engine that powered the bombastic KISS locomotive. A 1976 concert at Detroit's Cobo Hall gives the best example of the drummer's Charlie Watts-meets-Thor thwack, while two 1977 concerts show a softer side of the catman as he rasps "Beth," the string-laden ballad he co-wrote that still stands as KISS's highest-charting single. (VH1 Classics) **Jon Wurster**

## CUT TIME MORE DRUMMING ON DVD

### THE DRUM PAD'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Chicago's premier drum shop hosts this all-star 20th-anniversary celebration featuring the **BOZZIO/WACKERMAN** duet, **JEFF HAMILTON**, **STEVE SMITH/ZAKIR HUSSAIN**, **MIKE MANGINI**, **JIMMY CHAMBERLIN**, and **MIKE PORTNOY**. Multiple camera angles and quality audio make this an enjoyable production. ([www.altitudedigital.com](http://www.altitudedigital.com)) **Mike Haid**



### MEGADETH THAT ONE NIGHT LIVE IN BUENOS AIRES

Modern and classic thrash tunes, including "Blackmail The Universe," "Hangar 18," "Wake Up Dead," "Symphony Of Destruction," and "Peace Sells" showcase **Dave Mustaine's** still-intact growl and drummer **SHAWN DROVER's** ability to match lightning-speed riffs with blazing double-kick action and fluid "left-hand lead"/non-crossover technique. The bursting-at-the-seams Argentinean crowd, hanging on every guitar line, makes this an intense and momentous vid. (Image Entertainment) **Will Romano**



### AUSTRALIA'S ULTIMATE DRUMMERS WEEKEND 2004

The **AUDW 2004** two-DVD set contains almost six hours of footage, featuring **MARCO MINNEMANN's** incredible hand speed; a creative, double bass-laden solo from **GREGG BISSONETTE**; jazzy funk from Australian **DAVE BECK**; and the all-around education that is a **STEVE SMITH** clinic. Also includes impressive turns by **CHAD WACKERMAN**, **DOM FAMULARO**, and many others. (MusicTek) **Ilya Stemkovsky**



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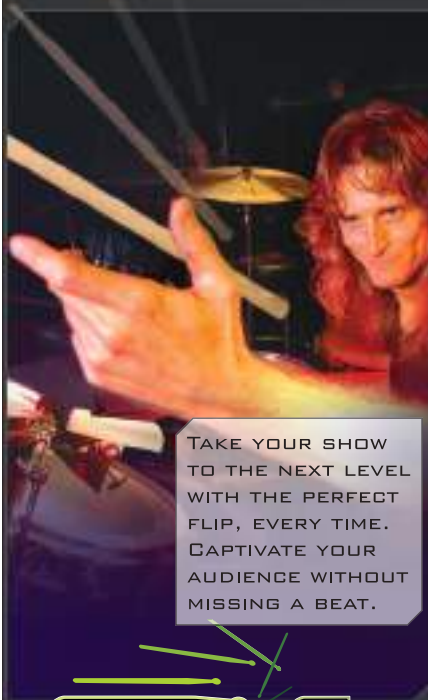
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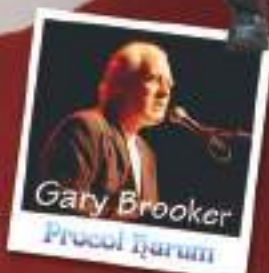
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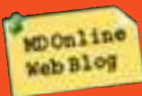
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**REGAL TIP**  
by Calisto

## Guitar Center Drum Off! Finals

The Henry Fonda Theater in Hollywood turned into ground zero for all things drums and drummers this past January 6 as it hosted the annual Guitar Center Drum Off! Finals. The event featured fiery drum solos by each of the contest's finalists, plus myriad performances from top pros. Now in its eighteenth year, Drum Off! brings 3,000 drummers together to compete for thousands of dollars in prizes and national recognition while providing an opportunity for these drummers to get one step closer to their career dreams.

Launching the event was the **Street Drum Corps**. Announcing themselves as "hailing from the future," the trio began furiously hammering 16th-note patterns on various recycled goods, including oil barrels, exhaust pipes, and buckets. The act eventually fired rhythms and tempos in all directions, incorporating a megaphone and a theremin into its mix.

The high-energy pop-punk of **The Matches** followed, whipping the audience into shape for the four Drum Off! finalists, who took the stage immediately thereafter. Representing the four national regions were California's **Jesus Garcia** (West), Michigan's **Scott Pellegrom** (North), Texan **Isaias Gil** (South), and New York-based **Daniel Rodriguez Jr.** (East).

The panel of judges featured a who's who of drumming talent, including **Taylor Hawkins** (Foo Fighters), **Adrian Young** (No Doubt), **Dean Butterworth** (Good Charlotte), **Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson** (The Roots), **Steve Ferrone** (Tom Petty), **Kenny Livingston** (Sugarcult), **Keith Harris** (Black Eyed Peas), and **Thomas Lang**.

The smiling Garcia started with light rudiments all over the kit, featuring blazingly quick hand-over-hand technique. After turning up the volume, Garcia's salsa-flavored, classy style was turned up-tempo. His punishing grand finale tapered off with a light simmering down.

Gil made his presence known by initially standing up with cymbal rolls, quickly alternating hands around the kit with delicate cross sticking. But the quiet soon gave way to sitting down and smashing China crashes, propelled by extreme dynamics and some ridiculously quick rudiments.

Opting to lead with tribal tom patterns over a clave groove, Rodriguez, who took home top honors, was the heaviest-handed of the bunch, breaking his strong-armed rhythms over a cowbell and double-kicked phrases. Rodriguez concluded his set with more tribal-inspired patterns. (See this month's *On The*



Stephen Perkins brought his unique style to the stage, jamming with bass great Mike Watt.



Finalists included (from left) Jesus Garcia, contest winner Daniel Rodriguez, Isaias Gil, and Scott Pellegrom.

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Move for more on Daniel.)

Pellegrum aimed for a world-beat approach, with striking cross-sticked fragments. His single-handed rolls around the kit were both eye and ear catching, which eventually led to some full-bodied tom slams. Like the three others before him, Pellegrum reeled his solo in with a sweet yet strong send-off.

Following the competition, **Stephen Perkins** took the stage. After opening with a solo timpani-and-splash cymbal performance, Perkins settled behind his mammoth DW kit and was joined by bass legend Mike Watt for several experimental, high-energy punk-tinged jams.

Closing out the night was a one-armed set by **Travis Barker**, behind the kit with +44. With his right arm out of commission due to an injury, Barker soldiered on with his left foot on snare-trigger duty and his left hand all over the kit, masterfully taking care of business. Such unique versatility showcases the true drumming talents that only an event like the Drum Off! Finals could offer.

Percussion partners for Drum Off! 2006 included DW, Evans, Pearl, Pro-Mark, Remo, Roland, Sabian, Tama, Vic Firth, Yamaha, Zildjian, and *Modern Drummer*.

Waleed Rashidi



Travis Barker rocked the house with +44, despite an incapacitated right arm.



Drum Off! judges included (from left): Kenny Livingston, Steve Ferrone, Dean Butterworth, Drew Hester (guest), Keith Harris, Taylor Hawkins, John Tempesta (guest), Thomas Lang, and Adrian Young.



Contest judge Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson did duty as a DJ at the after-contest party.

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# Beat It Wally! Benefit

The stars aligned for drummer **Wally Ingram** in Glendale, California's Alex Theatre this past January 31, as an incredible lineup of talent gathered to support him in his fight against cancer.

Organized by Wally's friends, producer/drummer **Butch Vig**, and the Guacamole Fund's Tom Campbell, the show featured Sheryl Crow, Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne, Keb' Mo', Kevin O'Neal & The Radiant Voices, Eric McFadden, and Paula O'Rourke—all past and present musical cohorts of Wally's—as well as Freedy Johnston, Victoria Williams & Tom Freund, The Section Quartet, and The Martinis (featuring Joey Santiago & **David Lovering** of The Pixies). Drummers and percussionists included **Tony Braunagel**, **Fritz Lewak**, **David Stanoch**, **Pauli Ryan**, **James "Pie" Cowen**, and **Tad Wadhams**.

Highlights included Vig's band Garbage, playing their first live show in over two years, a surprise performance by Parliament-Funkadelic's George Clinton, Crowded House (making their first live appearance in ten years), and Crow's touching salute to Wally "from one cancer survivor to another."

Wally, who has recently gone into remission, performed with many of his friends at the event. Bonnie Raitt remarked that Wally was "the only person I know who could bring together a group of talent like this!" The successful evening was truly inspired, which says as much about Wally as it does the participants. Visit [www.wallyingram.com](http://www.wallyingram.com) for donation information.

**David Stanoch**



From left: Jeff Young, Jackson Browne, Bonnie Raitt, Wally Ingram, Keb' Mo', Fritz Lewak, and Mark Goldenberg.



The star-studded finale jam session featured (from left): Jeff Young (keyboards), Tad Wadhams (percussion), Leah Katz (viola), Nick Seymour (of Crowded House, theremin), Daphne Chen (violin), Richard Dodd (behind Daphne, cello), Jackson Browne, Sheryl Crow, Eric Gorfain (behind Jackson and Sheryl, violin), Paula O'Rourke (behind Eric), guitarists Keb' Mo', John Modell, Bonnie Raitt, and Tim Smith (Sheryl's guitarist), and bassist (on Tim's right) Kevin O'Neal. The percussion backline (from left): Tony Braunagel, Pauli Ryan, James "Pie" Cowen, Wally Ingram, David Stanoch, and Fritz Lewak (on drumset). Far right keys: Rick Olson.



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From left: James "Pie" Cowen, Sheryl Crow, Fritz Lewak, Wally Ingram, Bonnie Raitt, and George Clinton.

From left: James "Pie" Cowen, Butch Vig, and Wally Ingram at soundcheck.







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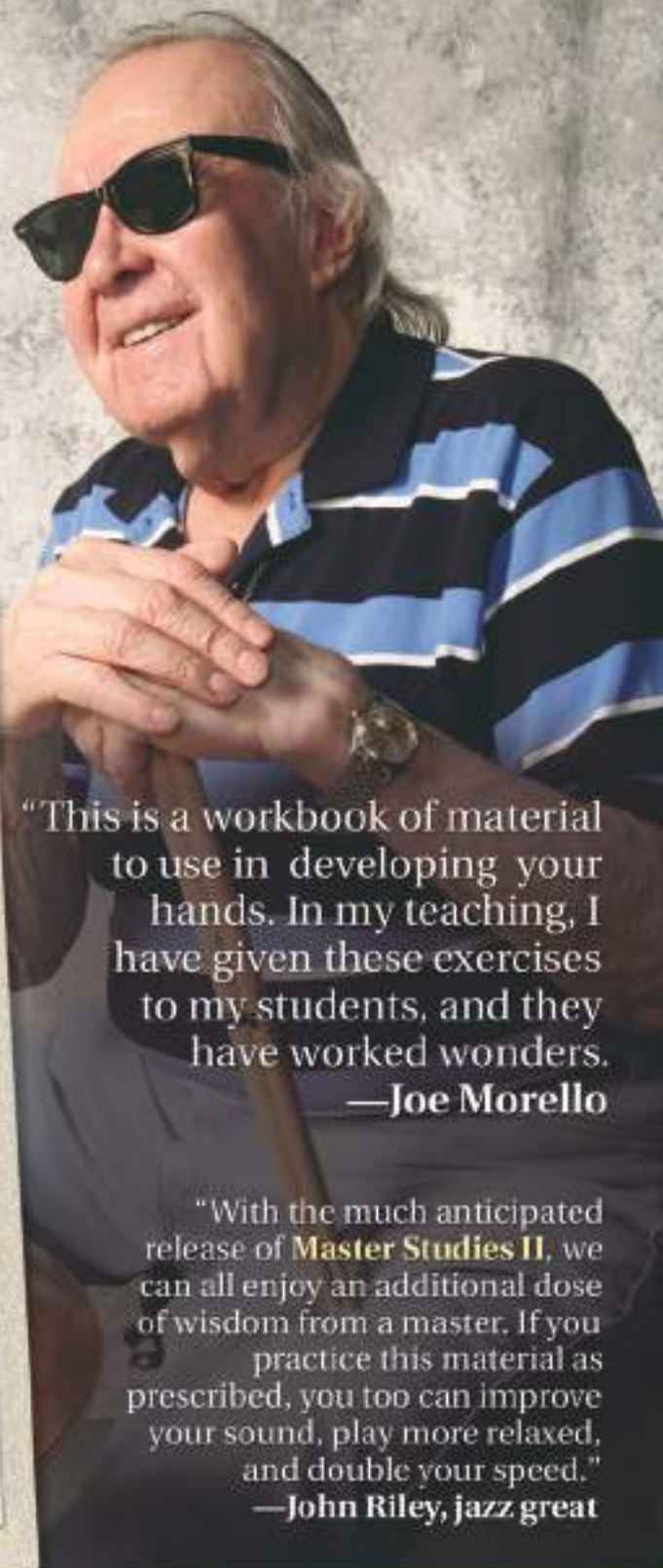
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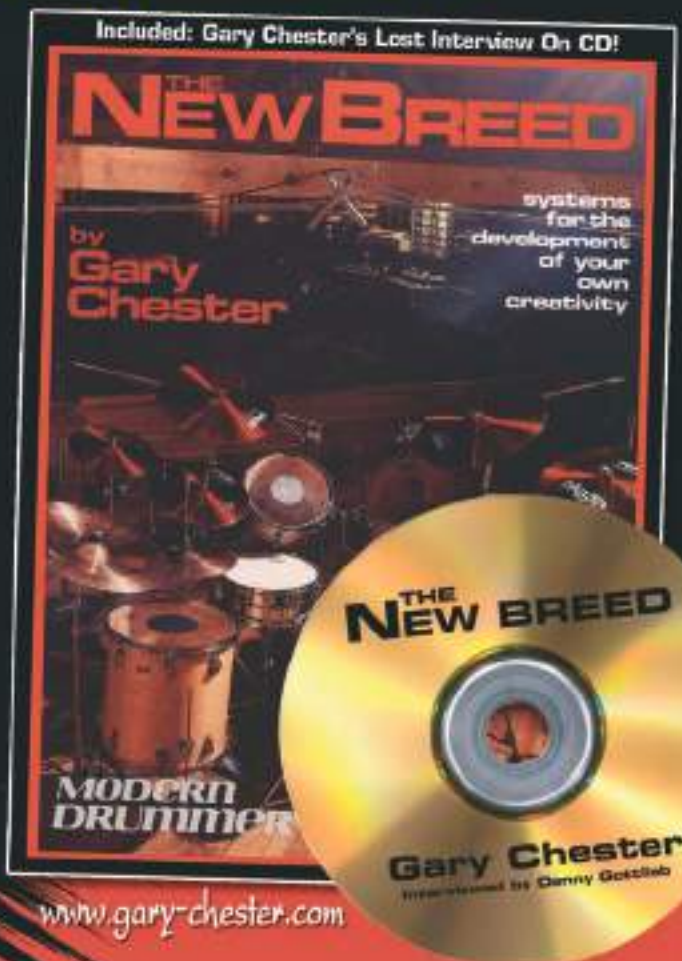


"I am so thrilled that we have this recording of Gary, with him going through his concepts, inspiring us all, in his own words."—**Danny Gottlieb**

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"Gary Chester was my teacher. While I studied with him he taught me some unique exercises that helped me improve as a drummer. I still use those exercises today. Amazing book, amazing teacher, and an amazing person."—**Kenny Aronoff**

"The things I learned and skills I developed through Gary's studies are applied all the time. He systematically, yet subconsciously for the student, I believe, taught the drummer how to concentrate."—**Dave Weckl**



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In 1984, three years before his death, Gary Chester sat down with drumming great Danny Gottlieb to discuss his unique concepts. The interview is fascinating. Among the many concepts Chester covered are:

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# Drummers Help The Children Of Home Safe

Fundraising efforts for The Classic! Dinner Auction Gala and Golf & Tennis event this past January 28 in Delray Beach, Florida raised over \$500,000 to benefit the children of Home Safe. E Street Band saxophonist Clarence Clemons and music-industry friends including drummers **Max Weinberg**, **Carmine Appice**, **Nicko McBrain**, **Slim Jim Phantom**, **Narada Michael Walden**, and **Kenny Aronoff** got the party started by raising \$20,000 during a live jam session.

Home Safe provides for the care and treatment of abused, abandoned, and neglected infants and children in Palm Beach County, Florida, with facilities from Boca to West Palm Beach. For more information, call (561) 832-6185.



From left: Max Weinberg, Slim Jim Phantom, Kenny Aronoff, Nicko McBrain, Carmine Appice, Narada Michael Walden, and Clarence Clemons got together for a jam session to benefit the children of Home Safe.

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## New York Drum Festival



The 2007 New York Drum Festival, to be held July 12–15 in Auburn, New York, is a community event for anyone interested in hand drumming or drumset playing. Workshops for all levels will be led by an internationally acclaimed faculty headed by Rusted Root drummer/percussionist **Jim Donovan**. Friday, July 13 will feature an interactive evening devoted to the drumset, with Donovan presenting a program titled “400,000 people... Carlos Santana...And Me,” and a clinic/performance by *MD*'s **Rick Van Horn**. Visit [www.jimdonovanmusic.com/NYDrumFest07](http://www.jimdonovanmusic.com/NYDrumFest07) for more information.

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Ford



Osborne



Moore



Rabb

Saturday, May 19, 2007

Sunday, May 20, 2007

10:30 AM

Hannah Ford  
courtesy of Rebeats

Steve Fajano  
courtesy of Rebeats, Vic Firth and Evans

12:30 PM

Donny Osborne  
courtesy of Drum Workshop, Zildjian, Pro-Mark, Roland and Rebeats

Johnny Rabb  
courtesy of Roland and Drum Workshop

2:30 PM

Stanton Moore  
courtesy of Steve Maxwell, Gretsch, Drum Workshop, Remo,  
Bosphorus, Vic Firth, LP, XL, Audix and PureSound

Peter Erskine  
courtesy of Drum Workshop, Hal Leonard, Zildjian, Roland, Evans,  
Shure, NoSoModernDrummer, Vic Firth, Alfred and Rebeats

note artist appearances are subject to availability and may change without notice

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# Who's Playing What



Sheila E

Drumset and percussion star **Sheila E** is now playing Zildjian cymbals.

New Yamaha drummers include **Chris McHugh** (Keith Urban) and **Gorden Campbell** (R&B and Gospel great).

German studio ace **Wolfgang Hafner** is now a Meinl cymbal artist, and has collaborated with the company to create the new Byzance Jazz line.

Wolfgang Hafner



Joe Plummer

New C&C Custom Drum endorsers include **Joe Plummer** (Black Heart Procession/Modest Mouse), **Tuesday** (Whild Peach/Outkast), **Jesse Sandoval** (The Shins), **Justin Peroff** (Broken Social Scene), **Jay McMillan** (Jack's Mannequin), **Nick Christus** (Minus Story), **Katie Nicholis** (Forward, Russia!), and **Scott McPhearson** and **Jorel "F Fly" Flynn** (independent).



Tuesday

**Joe Plummer** and **Jeremiah Green** (Modest Mouse), **Chris Guglielmo** (Bayside), and **John Moen** (The Decemberists) are now playing Silver Fox drumsticks.

Now using Vater drumsticks are **Tommy Clufetos** (Rob Zombie), **Keith Zebroski** (Miranda Lambert), **Mark Oyarzabal** (Honeytribe), **Dan Whitesides** (The Used), **Eric Carter** (Kids In The Way), **Charles Haynes** (Me'shell Ndegeocello), **Brittany Harrell** (Veara), **Chris Profeta** (Hellogoodbye), **Luke Abbey** (Gorilla Biscuits), **Justin Muir** (Monty Are I), **Tom Falcone** (Cute Is What We Aim For), **Chris Tsagakis** (RX Bandits), **Chris Commons** (These Arms Are Snakes), **Nate Navarro** (Cobra Starship), **Stu Clay** (Daphne Loves Derby), and **Swav Piorkowski** (Ill Scarlett).

New Vater Prodigy Artists—showcasing talented younger drummers—include **Hannah Ford**, **Nick Smith**, and **Lil' Mike Mitchell**.

Tommy Clufetos



Hannah Ford



Kofi Baker

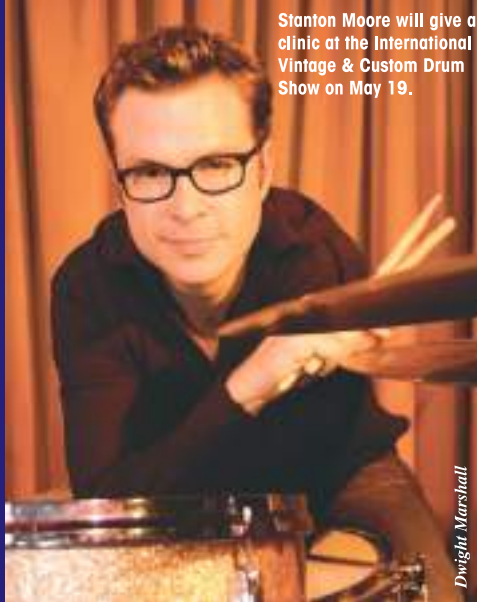
**Kofi Baker** (son of Ginger Baker) is now endorsing Page cable-tension drums. Kofi and his new kit (with Page's Jeffrey Hudson and David Page) are shown here at a recent gig at LA's famous Baked Potato club.

# International Vintage & Custom Drum Show

The 17th annual International Vintage & Custom drum show—commonly known as “The Chicago Show” in the drum community—is set for May 19 and 20 at the Kane County Fairgrounds in St Charles, Illinois (about 35 miles west of downtown Chicago). The 15,000-square foot exhibit area will feature nearly 100 exhibit spaces filled with vintage drums, parts and accessories, cymbals, custom drums, and related products. A consignment area (staffed by vintage drum expert Doug Carrington) is provided for anyone who has drums or related products they would like to sell.

Free drum clinics will be presented throughout both days of the show. Local drummer **Hannah Ford** opens the clinic program on May 19. The sixteen-year-old Ford recently won the Louie Bellson drum contest. Perennial favorite **Donny Osborne** is next. Osborne was a child prodigy and protégé of Buddy Rich before kicking off his own successful adult career, which included over twenty years with Mel Tormé. Rounding out the first day of clinics is New Orleans jazz and funk specialist **Stanton Moore**.

The second day of clinics will feature local educator **Steve Fagiano**, Roland electronics artist **Johnny Rabb**, and jazz phenom **Peter Erskine**. “The clinic program couldn’t work



Stanton Moore will give a clinic at the International Vintage & Custom Drum Show on May 19.

Dwight Marshall

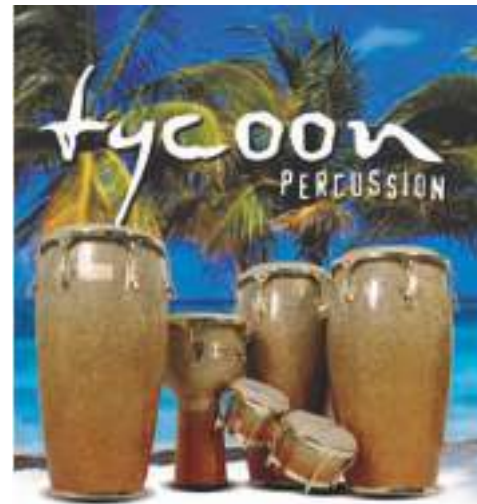
without the tremendous support of the artists’ sponsoring companies,” says show producer Rob Cook. “In addition to helping with clinician expenses, most of those companies provide raffle and door prize products.” Clinic sponsors include Rebeats, Alfred Publications, Audix, Bosphorous, Drum Workshop, Evans, Gretsch, Hal Leonard, Latin Percussion, *Not So Modern Drummer*, Pro-Mark, Puresound, Remo, Roland, Shure, Steve Maxwell’s Drum Shop, Vic Firth, XL Specialty Percussion, and Zildjian.

“One facet of the show that is different this year,” adds Cook, “is that we have attracted a higher level of interest from the press. *Modern Drummer* is a show sponsor and will have a presence at the show. And, since we are installing broadband access for the streaming coverage, we will also be providing wireless Internet access for our exhibitors and the general public.”

Still in the works at press time are plans for a master class and drummers jam featuring Peter Erskine, to be held at Steve Maxwell’s drum shop in downtown Chicago. “Steve’s shop is a huge draw for out-of-town drummers coming to Chicago,” says Cook. “It includes a museum section featuring rare celebrity kits and snare drums. The shop will be open both Friday and Saturday nights this year.”

For further information contact Rob Cook at rob@rebeats.com, or call (989) 463-4757.

**Peter Erskine will appear on May 20.**



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**Barker**

"I'm not just a punk drummer!"

Most of our favorite drummers could go unsung, weeks, or months without being stopped and recognized in public. Often, they sit behind the kit, shrouded by synths and amps, barely making themselves visible to city camera lens. Such is not the case with 1982's Travis Barker.

and remember the image with the massive display from the album's pop-over singles "Adam's Song" and "Hired My Age Again?" Lila was great for the drummer, yet also disturbingly difficult.

"I sat, stinked," Barker explains, "I had people climbing up on my balcony and..."

being the king of party town during their live sets. Barker however, doesn't join the 200 issues of what his bandmate shares ringmaster duty. "Other was in high school I was more like Mark and Tom," Barker points out, "with the same set of jokes, except for the..."

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# It's All About The Cymbalism



Nicholas Lawson of Okotoks, Alberta, Canada, describes his drumset as “a pretty standard five-piece kit.” His cymbal setup, however, is anything *but* standard, and it practically obscures the drums.

“Cymbals are the one thing I never get tired of,” says Nicholas. “I love the fact that I can choose anything from a loud, bright sound to the dark sound of a traditional model. My first drumset was a used Pearl kit with one set of hats, one ride, and one crash. Over the years, I just kept adding cymbals and stands to that kit. Sometimes I traded in old equipment, or just saved up and bought it new. My dad and I enjoyed going to drumshops, checking out equipment, and talking to as many drummers as we could. It became our hobby.”

Eventually Nicholas upgraded the drums to his current Mapex Saturn kit with Tama Iron Cobra bass drum and hi-hat pedals. The kit sits amid a forest of stands holding 14" Paiste Innovations hi-hats, 13" Sabian AA Metal-X hi-hats, 20" Sabian AA Rock and AA medium rides, a 15" Zildjian Dark thin K crash, 16" Sabian AAX Dark and AAX Stage crashes, a 17" Sabian AA Metal-X crash, 18" Sabian AAX Studio and AA El Sabor crashes, an 18½" Chad

Smith Signature Explosion crash, an 18" A Zildjian crash, a 19" Sabian AA Metal-X crash, a 16" A Zildjian China, and a 9½" Zildjian Zil-Bel. A Hat Trick hi-hat jingler and a cowbell complete the sound spectrum.



PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. High-resolution (300 dpi) digital photos are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted.
2. You may send more than one view of the kit.
3. Only show drums, no people.
4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid “busy” backgrounds.
5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit.

Send photo(s) to: Kit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.



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