

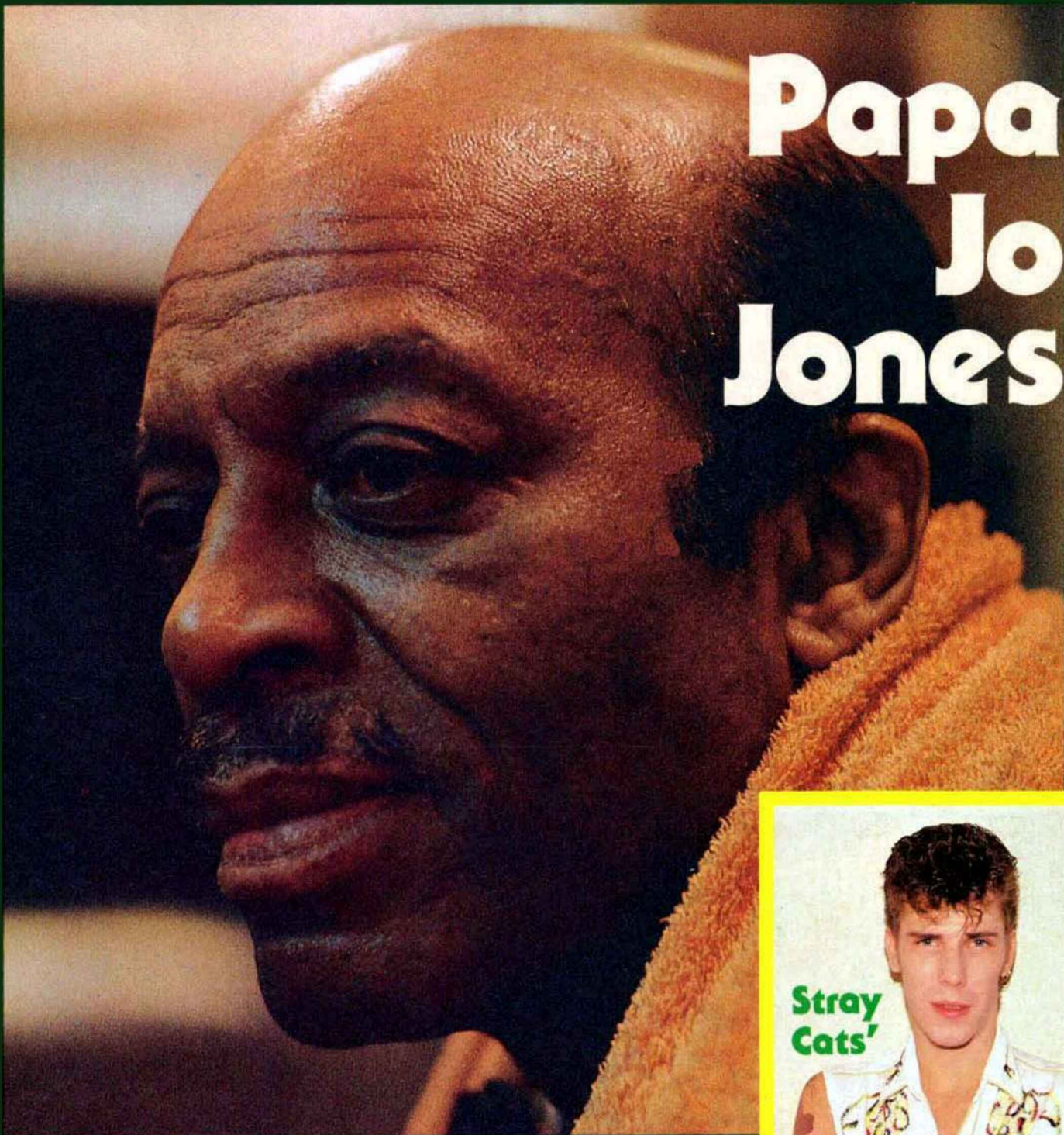
# MODERN DRUMMER™

The International Magazine Exclusively For Drummers



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(In USA)

JANUARY 1984



## Papa Jo Jones

**L.A. Studio Drummers Roundtable  
Taxes And The Working Drummer**

**JOAN JETT'S  
Lee Crystal**

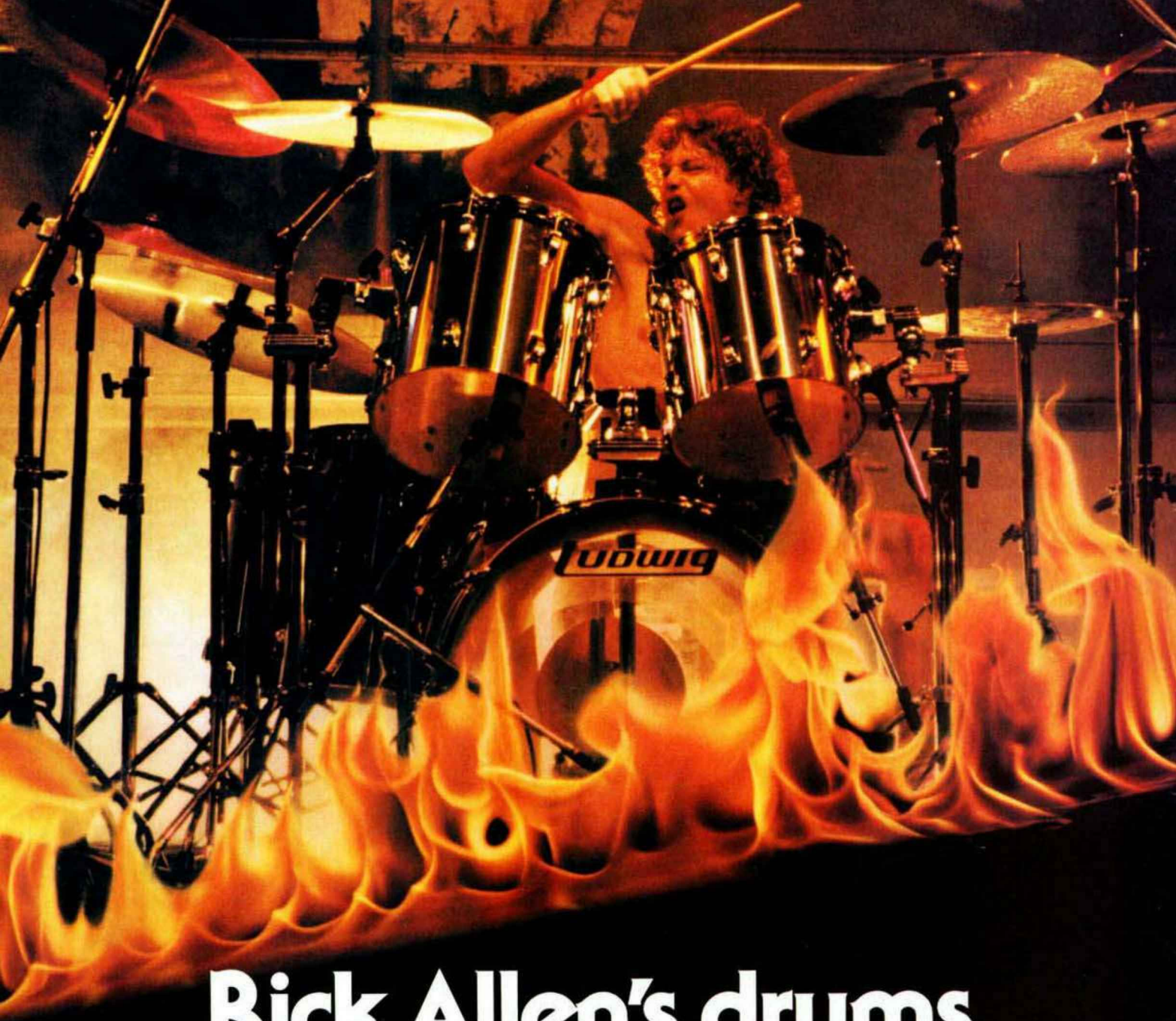
**Rod Morgenstein  
On Odd Time**



**Stray  
Cats'**

**Slim Jim  
Phantom**





# Rick Allen's drums have to take a lot of heat.

Melting-point rock 'n roll. That's what you get when Rick Allen turns on the burner under Def Leppard.

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Cover Photos—  
Jo Jones by Raymond Ross  
Jim Phantom by Robert Santelli

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Where there's a "Papa," there must be some children, and for Jo Jones those "children" are all of the drummers who have played jazz during the last half-century. Since his days in Kansas City with Count Basie in the '30s, Papa Jo has been defining the role of the modern jazz drummer. Here, we offer a unique portrait of a very unique man.  
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### SLIM JIM PHANTOM

Slim Jim, the visual and energetic drummer for the Stray Cats, discusses the band's rapid rise to success as a rockabilly band of the 1980s. In this article, Phantom explains how his technique and setup contribute to the Stray Cats' distinctive sound as well as their image.  
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Although he is best known as the drummer for Tavares, Jackie Santos performs with musicians of various genres, such as the solo vocalist Armstead Christian and the jazz group, The Steve Soares Quartet. This versatile musician discusses the challenges involved in being the drummer for a group of five singers, as well as his early influences and plans for the future.  
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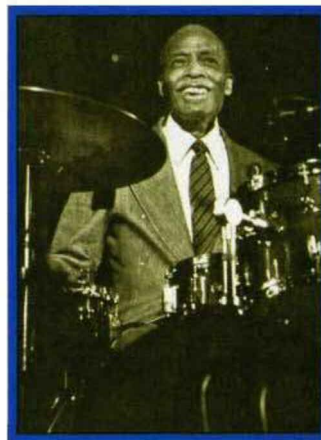


Photo by Tom Copi

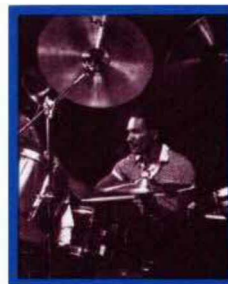


Photo by Paula Staron  
Focus Photography

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# EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

## The MD Reader as Writer

I often receive inquiries regarding the publication of articles in MD column departments. Readers sometimes notice a statement which we print in each issue saying that we welcome manuscripts, and they feel that they have ideas which would be suitable for publication. Often these individuals write to us for further information on exactly what we're looking for, the procedure involved, whether or not their manuscripts are actually read, and if accepted, how long it will be before the material will appear in print.

Before you venture to write anything for *Modern Drummer*, you might want to ask yourself a few basic questions: Will this article help a substantial group of drummers improve some aspect of their ability as players, or enlighten them on a particular approach to the instrument? Will the article save the readers time, money or effort? Will it help them arrive at decisions, draw conclusions, or do their jobs better? These are some of the factors the editors consider when they evaluate an unsolicited manuscript.

There are a few things you can do to stack the odds in your favor. Arranging the subject matter in a logical sequence, clarity in phrases and sentences, accuracy, staying with the subject matter, making a valid point, and submitting typewritten, double-spaced copy are a few of them. And if musical examples or artwork are used, they should be submitted on separate sheets of paper.

What happens to your material once you send it to us? Every manuscript is initially screened by one of MD's editors. If it does not meet with at least one of the basic requirements listed above, it's returned to the author. An article may also be rejected if the subject matter is too basic, or too complex, if we've previously dealt with the subject in depth, or if we already have something similar in our files.

Many articles fall between the cracks. They are not exactly what we are looking for when they arrive, but they are close enough for us to work with. Minor changes are handled by our editorial staff. If the article needs more extensive changes, we discuss it with the author, who is then offered the opportunity to re-work the material.

Naturally, we receive a number of articles that are right on target. When this occurs, the author is notified of acceptance by mail, the article's title and author's name are logged into our editorial computer, and the manuscript is filed in an individual departmental bin.

The time between acceptance and publication may vary from a few months to a year. Why so long? Well, your article may be slotted for a department with a considerable backlog of material, or a department which only appears every third or fourth issue. We might also hold up your material so that it can be tied in with an upcoming feature story. Hopefully, this explains why we cannot give an author a precise publication date when we accept the article.

Once your article is up for publication, it's pulled from the file and work commences. An editor is assigned to your article, our Art Director prepares a layout, and several other editors further refine and proofread your material at various key points in the production process.

As you can see, there's a lot involved in getting an article into MD, but I don't mean to discourage anyone. We recognize that many of our readers are professional drummers and teachers, and therefore have knowledge that they might be able to share through an MD column. If you genuinely feel that you have something to offer, you might begin by writing to us and requesting our Writer's Guidelines, which will give you more detailed information regarding stylistic requirements and payment. Perhaps someday you will experience the satisfaction and pride that comes with seeing your work published in *Modern Drummer*.

RS

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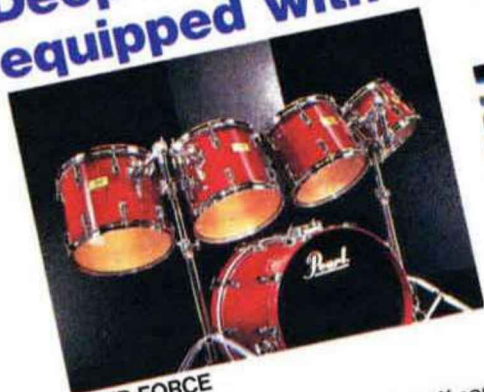
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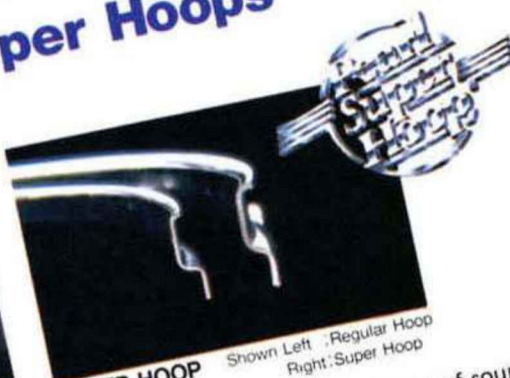
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# READER'S PLATFORM

## M'BOOM AND GULLUTTI

Bravo on an excellent article on M'Boom. Max and the others must truly be exciting to see live. I hope they will begin touring, so we can all see this percussion history happening. It was also great to see the interview with Boston drummer Bob Gullutti. I've seen him two times live; once in concert with the Tim Birne Group in Worcester, MA, and at a club here in Hartford, CT, with Jerry Begonzi. He's totally incredible to watch and hear, and now with this very intelligent and thought-provoking interview, I can understand more of what I saw. Keep it up!

Tom Marks  
Hartford, CT

## ALEX VAN HALEN

Compliments to Robyn Flans on the fantastic article on Alex Van Halen. I'm so glad Alex is finally getting recognition for being the great drummer that he is. The article was one of the year's best. It was not only interesting; it was also knowledgeable. It's about time people realized that Alex is as good a drummer as his brother, Edward, is a guitar player, and we all know Edward is the best. I'm glad you shared with us the other half of the Van Halen name. We all appreciated the cover story on Alex and the recognition he so justly deserves.

Jay Baron  
Santa Monica, CA

It is very disgusting for MD to print the statement Alex Van Halen made about Martha and The Vandellas. Van Halen should be the grateful one. I'd assume MD had more professional standards in what they print. Also, why so much "rock"? Rock drummers are not the only people who read this magazine. "Rock 'N' Jazz Clinic," "Rock Perspectives," and "Rock Charts"—why are these columns labeled like this? Plus you put these columns under EDUCATION. Please give other drummers a break. Get rid of the labels and include all forms of drumming. When you start labeling, you're always going to leave somebody out.

Stanley C. Swann III  
San Antonio, TX

## ERIC CARR

I would just like to say that Michael Epstein's article on Eric Carr was great. It's nice to see great rock drummers given credit for their abilities. Thanks for printing an article on one of the best drummers in rock today.

Mike Smith  
North Kingston, RI

## MURPHY VS. GROMBACHER

This letter is in response to a letter written by Ralph Murphy, Jr. I'd like to know who you think you are by putting down other drummers? Your comment on Myron Grombacher was utterly tasteless; apparently he had what it took to break into the record business. *Do you?* Apparently *not*! Who in the music industry would want to put up with your kind of attitude?

Just remember: *everyone has something to offer*; and the next time you want to criticize someone's musical ability, keep it to *yourself*.

Tony Migliore  
Michigan City, IN

I am writing in response to comments written about Myron Grombacher, 14-year-olds, and your magazine. Myron Grombacher is a fine musician at playing rock 'n' roll. And if the person who made those comments was any kind of musician, he would open his closed mind, and give any other musician the respect he or she deserves in his or her particular style of music. I've heard J.C. Heard playing. He's a fine musician in his particular style too!

Fourteen-year-olds are musicians and people too. Just because they're young doesn't mean they can't play. They practice and study like anyone else. *Modern Drummer* doesn't go after any certain age group. They write for the drummers, percussionists and musicians as a whole. Therefore, Myron Grombacher, 14-year-old drummers and MD all deserve an apology.

Troy Jones  
Columbus, OH

Mr. Murphy sounds like he has a personal dislike for Myron Grombacher. That's fine. Everyone has a personal dislike now and then. But as far as your article on Mr. Grombacher, I feel it was something long overdue. It was also well put together and very informative.

Mr. Murphy stated that Grombacher was a non-musician and a hyperactive sounding machine, who can't tune his own drums.

In return to these blind statements, I'd like to say I've listened to Grombacher's recorded work and seen him play live a couple of times. His speed and timing are a big part of the driving force behind Benatar's sound.

Your article was not directed to 14-year-olds as suggested by Mr. Murphy. I am a woman who is a drummer at age 25, and Myron Grombacher has been most inspirational to me in music. Grombacher is not only a fine musician, but he is also a great entertainer.

One last thing—when you make the kind of money Grombacher makes, you don't need to tune your own drums. I'm sure the man paid his dues to get where he is at. Thank you MD for writing about him.

Splash Warming  
Vista, CA

## SAM ULANO AND RUDIMENTS

In the October 1983 issue, there was a letter from a Mr. Sam Ulano in the *Reader's Platform* section of MD. I found some of Mr. Ulano's statements about the rudiments disturbing, especially his statement saying that the rudiments were outdated, and only served to tie the drummer down to hours of slavery in practicing them. First of all, there is one point I agree with and think is correct: Rudiments are not scales. But rudiments are tools! Like in any profession, choosing the right tools and learning how to use them correctly will make getting the job done easier. Being a drummer, I would be lost—both rhythmically and musically—if I did not know how to execute a flam or a single-stroke roll. Rudiments, like *all fundamental skills*, have their purpose: to help one develop the technique for the full potential of one's talent. I don't think that the rudiments tie me down from expressing myself musically. Indeed, with the background knowledge the rudiments have provided, I believe I can express myself more creatively.

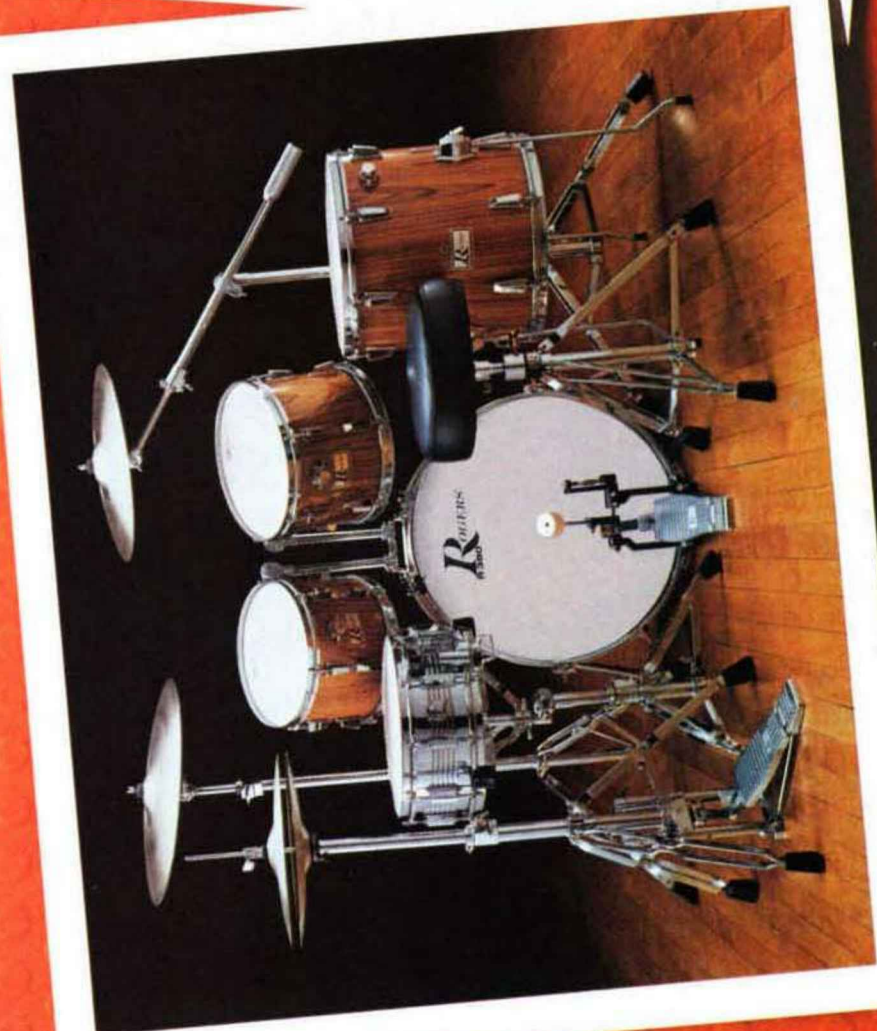
James Rau  
Seal Beach, CA

Sam Ulano's letter pertaining to rudimental drumming left me quite perplexed. To begin with, I'm aware that many drummers his age had rudiments thrust upon them as the only way to learn drums, but this is 1983 and there are as many different ways to approach music as there are musicians. The freedom of choice is something that is taught by most decent teachers. Surely Sam must admit that drums have come a long way since 1936.

I have spent a number of years in drum and bugle corps in California, the last three in a drum line that won national championship in '78 and '79. I played because I love playing drums, and drum corps was a great place to do just that. I've played with really great players and some not so great, some with good time, some not as good. Isn't that the same as anything else in life? We're all individuals. What I would really like to say is that after three years out of corps, I am still in love with rudimental drumming. I love the different textures it creates, the instrumental freedom it provides and all the grace and

*continued on page 92*





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# ASK A PRO

## BILLY COBHAM



Q. How can I develop the concept of playing rudiments around the drum-set?

Michael Banks  
New Orleans, LA

A. You can use your imagination. Take, for instance, a paradiddle. Break it up between your snare drum and your smallest tom-tom and play it equally between the two, alternating hands of course. Then you can extend it, play it between the other two toms, and use every possible combination available to you.

## BILL BRUFORD



Photo by Marko Pesikan

Q. What is the unique metal tapping sound you use with your left foot instead of a hi-hat? Is it electronic or acoustic with a mic'?

David di Risiso  
Wilkes Barre, PA

A. The metal tapping sound is one of many, infinitely variable sounds available from what is nominally known as the Simmons "Hi-Hat." It is, indeed, electronic.

## NEIL PEART



Photo by Jaeger Kotlos

Q. What kind of shells do you use? What is meant by a custom finish? What is the reason for having shells

## RAYFORD GRIFFIN



Photo by Lissa Wales

Q. I was really impressed with your playing on Jean Luc Ponty's album *Mystical Adventure*, as well as your sound. What kind of drum heads and cymbals do you use, what make of drums and how do you tune? Also when I saw you playing at the Jazz Festival at Montreal, you were using your left hand on the hi-hat and on the ride. How and why did you develop this?

Tremblay Benoit  
Quebec, Canada

A. The hi-hats are 14" Paiste and all the rest are Zildjians, which include a Rock 21 ride, a 16" and 17" medium crash, an 18" Rock crash and a 22" swish. All my drums are Jama ranging from 12", 13", 14", 15", and 18" toms, a 22" and a 24" bass drum and a Radio King snare that Paul Jamieson has done some work on. The heads are all Remo Pinstripes on top and clear Ambassadors on the bottom, with the bottom head tuned slightly higher than the top. The heads were slightly muffled with gaffer's tape and tissue.

Actually the left-hand thing developed itself. The first time I sat down behind a set of drums, my left hand crossed my right to get to the ride cymbal set up on my right. It seemed most natural for a left-handed person to ride with the left hand, to me. I never saw a reason to change this. There was no development per se. It's practical because it avoids arm crossing.

coated with Vibra-Fibing treatment, and what is the reason for brass-plated hardware? What color would you recommend for a drumset?

Mike Pfister  
Milwaukee, WI

A. Well! The drums that I am currently using are a special, thinner shell which Jama has developed called Art-star. I have found that the thinner shells really resonate beautifully. A custom finish could be anything from varnish to lizard skin. I once did a custom finish with wallpaper. With these

## PAUL JAMIESON

Q. I'm thinking about going from a 12-strand snare to a 42-strand snare, looking for a brighter tone to cut through a loud band. Will this work?

Nicholas Lachaga  
Needles, CA

A. Putting more metal down on the head will thicken the sound, making it fatter. Whether it will cut depends on how you tune it—loose or tight. For example, for the beefy sound on the new Journey single, Steve Smith is using a 42-strand snare. That cuts. It depends on what you like. Jeff Porcaro and Michael Walden like 16- and 18-strand snares, and they sound pretty good.

## PETER ERSKINE



Photo by Rick Mattingly

Q. What ride cymbal did you use on the Steps Ahead album, particularly on the song "Loxodrome"?

Brian Szczerbowski  
Hammond, IN

A. I used the same ride cymbal throughout the album—a 20" K. Zildjian ride. It's not the jazz ride; just the regular ride, which is sort of a light-medium. The great thing about that particular cymbal is that, whether I'm playing real hard on it or very soft, there's definition throughout the entire dynamic range. The cymbal is not too thick or too thin, so it's free to vibrate and generate those nice Zildjian overtones without building up too much. Also, that cymbal works well in a variety of settings—both acoustic and electric; small groups and large.

drums, it's simply a paint job and in Candy Apple Red, no less! The Vibra-Fibing on the inside of the shells is a very subtle thing. It consists of a very thin layer of fiberglass, which doesn't change the natural warmth and tonality of the wood. It just seems to even out the inconsistencies and, thus, the conflicting overtones are minimized. I think it results in a purer tone. The reason for brass-plated hardware is that I like the way it looks! As regards the color, it's what looks good to you that matters.



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*"Ounce for ounce, I think they're the most precious metal on earth."*



**PAiSte**



Photo by Tom Copi

# PAPA

by Chip Stern



"I don't waste time," Papa Jo says, the words snapping upside my head like a malevolent rimshot, the eyes bugging out and his voice becoming as hard and sharp as flint. "Time is too precious. Sheeeeeeetttt. I've never wasted time in my life for one day. In my whole life I do not waste time. I'm too busy. I've put too much out here. I didn't hold nothing back. I sleep with my door open, me and my Bible. I never done nothin' to nobody in my life. I never been to jail. Only smart people go to jail. I'm too ignorant. I keep time with the drums. I don't have no damn clock. See, there are three things that'll drive you up the wall: a clock, a watch and a calendar. Goddamnnnnn! What time is it? What time is it? What time is it? What difference does it make? It's the same day it was last year."

I try to direct the flow of Papa Jo's stream of consciousness, but that's a mistake, and only succeeds in bringing him up to full froth. "There you go Chip, anticipating. I'm going to tell you one more time: Don't anticipate me, because you don't know one damn thing about me. Don't play games with me. I'm no comedian—I take my life seriously. Put another man up against the wall with me. He can't match me—he ain't shit. No drummer ever had what I had—my coordination, my reflexes, my background. Nobody can say a word about me in the whole world I've traveled. Places I've wanted to go, I went. Places I didn't, I wouldn't and nobody could make me. I've played with everybody I wanted to play with—thems I didn't, I wouldn't." His mood softens for a second and he becomes reflective. "Man, I've had some grand times, some *grand* times with all the peoples I've met."

Yes siree, Pops. Jonathan David Samuel Jones is up 'n' at 'em again, and that's cause for celebration among drummers of all generations, because at 73, Jo Jones has forgotten more than most of us will ever know about the drums. He is Old Man River, Father Time, the benchmark against which all other drummers must be judged. He is coarse; he is elegant. He is as cold-blooded as they come, and as warm and considerate as anyone you'll ever meet. He is a web of contradictions, yet as consistent as the morning sunrise. "I don't lie," he insists. "I only lied twice in my life. First time was to my mother. She said, 'Son, you don't have to lie to me.' Now I'm living a lie."

What does he mean by that? Good question, and like so many others one would pose to Jo Jones, answers aren't readily forthcoming. Papa Jo exists on the level of folklore, myth and parable; the cracker-barrel philosopher; teller of tall tales; venerable keeper of our oral traditions. An irascible old salt of a man: "The type of fellow you'd be seriously worried about if he *wasn't* being salty," as one young drummer explained to his girlfriend at a recent tribute to Papa Jo. And sure enough, like the first blossoms of spring, nothing is more hopeful a sign than the fact that Papa Jo is fussin' and cussin', spittin' brimstone, kickin' ass and taking names. Not for nothing were his most recent performing ensembles dubbed Jo Jones & Enemies. "I think it's cute the way he yells at all his musicians," my daughter Jennifer giggled during one of his sets at Manhattan's West End Cafe. "I guess the musicians don't think it's too cute, but I think he's funny."

"When I say someone ain't shit," Papa Jo asserts, "I know who is chicken salad, and who is chicken shit. Musicians spend too much time reading their write ups and playing their records. Maybe they should try playing their write ups and reading their records," he adds, chuckling at one of his favorite jokes. "You can see it in their attitudes up on the bandstand. You see, music is my mistress—that's what controls me. I never put nobody living or dead in front of my music. I have to play to keep alive. I have to. I don't know about nobody else—they're afraid to live but they're not afraid to die. Unn uhh . . . they're going to have to come to get me."

It's good to hear Jo talking like that again, especially after the harrowing events of 1983, when he faced off death once again. As Jo recalls his first brush with death in the late '70s: "My two best friends died. First Frank Ippolito [*of the Professional Percussion Center*], then Milt Buckner [*the great pianist and organist, and Jo's musical partner through much of the '60s and '70s*], and off of those negative emotions I got cancer." But he licked it, or so it seemed when he made a walk-on appearance at a Dizzy Gillespie Dreamband concert, and amazingly enough began playing again at the West End in 1981. It's difficult to convey the intensity of those appearances; to fully depict the power and grace of his drumming, the sheer courage and will of the man. "I can't make any fast moves," he confessed, "only slow moves," but when he sat behind his drums, you could feel his mastery, while experiencing Jo's long-lost world of sand dancers, magicians, slapstick comedians, chorus girls, blues singers and nomadic musical gladiators. One marveled at his heroic fanfares on "Caravan," as he bore witness to everything he'd lived, and everything he hoped to live. Up there on that bandstand, Papa Jo looked 30 years younger and as benign as Father Time.

Yet Jo Jones could barely walk off the stand. His steps were slow and halting, his knees would not bend, and he had to be helped to his seat. More telling was the readily perceptible shaking on his left side, the ever present hint of pain. You could ask anyone who was there—no one could understand how he had played at all, let alone how he had played so commandingly. Jo Jones was drawing upon some sort of extraordinary spiritual reserve, but with each succeeding gig you could feel the clock running down. How long could it last?

When Jo Jones returned from seeing his doctors in France this past February, he was tired, broke, and alone. A 1982 fire in his apartment had destroyed most of his prized possessions and mementos. "I'm through with the drums," he insisted. "Who'm I gonna play with? They all dead. There ain't gonna be another Walter Page. There ain't gonna be another Lester Young. There ain't gonna be another Milt Buckner. You'll never hear music like that again. It's gone."

But what was really gone? "I'm over here," he revealed, "but people that slept in my bed, ate my food—steaks, chops and chicken—spent my money . . . wore my clothes, used my drums, my everything, don't even call up to see how I'm feeling. That's okay," he sighed, "I'll meet them in heaven. Oh well." But never a word about the pain—too old, too proud, too tough, and sometimes, too much. To know Jo Jones you have to pay your dues.

"Have you ever heard that expression, 'Who have seen the wind, neither you nor I'?" Jo asked me. I drew a blank. "No, Chip," Jo smiled, "you don't know what I mean—you ain't never done that kind of living in your life."

This attitude, in part, should give a clue as to what sets Jo Jones apart from the trap players we're used to reading about in these pages, and some sense of what it is that animates Jo Jones. The same contradictions that make up Jo Jones the man are part and parcel of what makes for Jo Jones the drum stylist. Not technical considerations; not the brand of equipment he plays. A lot of living. "You see, I'm playing people that I've met, places that I've been, things that I've seen. I'm playing expressions, slang, and you don't even know what I'm saying. You don't know what we playin'. How could you? You had to be there. I don't know about all that technical shit. First time I met Mr. Ellington I went to one of his rehearsals, and I heard him say to the band 'Tutti Frutti.' I went to the drug store and got me a pint of tutti frutti ice cream. Ha. I didn't know what he was saying. I didn't know nothin' about them I-Talian expressions."

But for drummers the world over, Jo Jones' trademark is more than beats, rhythms and insider's code words. It is a sound—the man who plays like the wind. While other great drummers of the '20s and '30s were painting pictures of fire and earth, Jo Jones depicted light and sky. Going beyond the tick-tick-tick of a clock, he discovered the space between the beats where time is not so much counted as felt, as epitomized by his flowing hi-hat pulse—a graceful, witty choreography of time, motion, dynamics and color that could cushion or cajole a soloist; each accent, pause and nonsequitur mirrored in his infectious smile and elegant body language. "People are always looking to connect me with other drummers," he told me years ago. "I've listened to all the drummers, but [Charlie] Chaplin was an influence





on me," he concluded with a regal tilt of his eyebrows.

Even more remarkable is his distinctive sense of touch and nuance, which owes more to a dancer's steps than to any primal, arm-flailing display of force. His soloing and accompaniment have always been cyclical, thematic and as melodic as any song. "You know why," Jo explains, "because when you play in all those territorial bands, they might call on you to sing tonight, and me to sing tomorrow. All I play is melody. Years ago, when you got on a show, they would advertise, 'The Drummer: He can sing; he can dance.' The drummer could sit with the megaphone and be the vocalist—I was the first one to sing 'All Of Me' on the radio. But you had to know the words. They wouldn't let you play on no songs where you didn't know the words."

In short, Jo Jones grew up not merely as a drummer, but as an all-around entertainer, back in an era when radio and records were new innovations, just beginning to take hold. He brought these experiences to Kansas City in the '30s, at a time when that town was a wide open party-town full of nightclubs, gambling dens, bordellos and all-night jam sessions; a creative cauldron of swing and dance beats. When he performed with pianist Count Basie, bassist Walter Page, and guitarist Freddie Greene, Jo Jones was the percussive force behind the All-American Rhythm Section; a sound so subtle and insinuating that it's entered the collective subconscious

of every contemporary rhythm player, whether they're aware of it or not. To be sure, it's almost impossible to play piano, bass, guitar or drums without referring to some of their individual or collective innovations.

"If I explained it once, I've explained it a thousand times, and people still don't get the message," Jo said with palpable irritation. "Before Basie you had a horn section, and you had a brass section, but there'd never been a *rhythm section*, see. Cats used to go off North, South, East and West, but we went one way. When Freddie Greene joined us, Walter Page asked him, 'Where you going? It don't go like that—it goes this way. One way.' There's never been a bassist like Mr. Walter Page. He could make any pianist go his way; just pull him along. He used to play with his back to Basie. Years later we did something with Mr. Teddy Wilson and he told me, 'I see what you mean.' And Basie wasn't back there pounding. Unn uhh. You had to really put your antennae up to hear him. You had to work to listen. We never did play with the band—we played with each other, spiritually and mentally—and even if everyone else was down, there was always one of us who could hold it all together."

Never in American musical history did any rhythm section create so much heat with so little wasted motion—an effortless kind of cruise control. Walter Page's bass was the trunk and Freddie Greene's brush-like strumming was the rustling of the leaves, as Basie skittered in and out of their beat in a cat and mouse exchange with Jones' understated yet indomitable pulse. In air checks from the '30s, you can already hear Jones "dropping bombs," as it came to be known, moving beyond pure timekeeping into the realm of melodic free association and off-beat syncopations. In his melodic dialogues with the great tenorist Lester Young, you could hear the roots of bebop and

modern jazz in the making; and when he tore into a hip-grinding break with Young's spiritual brother (and stylistic opposite), tenorist Hershel Evans, you could hear the birth of modern R&B and rock 'n' roll in the making. Of course, Jo Jones and his fellow pioneers of American music never called it anything but their music—making a gift of it to an entire planet. "Blues music," Papa Jo allows, "that's the only kind of music I know how to play. And you know, for all the pain and problems we endured being black

men in America," he reiterated, "we really had some wonderful times. We accomplished so much, and now it's all out here for the little kiddies. It's their turn now."

And so it seemed as if it were all over, and Jo Jones would never play again. But something happened in the hospital that helped Jo Jones find his will anew; a combination of pride, anger and love. The doctors and nurses had given up on Papa Jo, but he wouldn't cop to the tremors passing through his body. Somewhere deep down he was reaching for something, and he found it in resentment for the hospital, in the pride of knowing that he was "Jo Jones, mister!" He also found it in the visits of old friends like

Sam Ulano and Max Roach; the outpouring of love at his Swing Plaza tribute; the support of people like Bill Cosby and George Wein; and the comfort of knowing that all the people who wrote and called him through Jack DeJohnette's *Modern Drummer* ap-

**"THE DRUM IS ALWAYS THE KEY. THERE IS NO INSTRUMENT BESIDES THE HUMAN VOICE THAT HAS THE CAPACITY TO ENCOMPASS THE WHOLE PART OF THE HUMAN BEING BUT THE DRUM."-Jo Jones**



peal were on his side, through thick and thin, and wanted him to hang around just a little while longer. Papa Jo felt the love, and what other way was there for him to acknowledge it except to take a few more bows? Who knows what forces drive Jo Jones? No one can say with any certainty, but like a great prize fighter, he was once again in training to take back the crown; his limbs fleshing out and his tongue becoming sharp and cutting. "I don't want to know nothing about a drum or a woman until I'm 90," he's said, and perhaps, I suggested, he was preparing to attain that goal. Jo eyed me once again for a straight man, in between bites of a Hershey Bar, slyly sneaking a glimpse at the drums and cymbals in the next room from his rocking chair perch.

*"How'm I gonna play anything for anybody when I been dead for 20 years? Do you believe in ghosts? If you didn't catch me during the '30s, you missed it."*

The old man had caught me flat-footed again, and he relished the quizzical look on my face. "Sounds like my cue to go," I thought. "Take care and say your prayers young talent." Good night Papa Jo.

Jo Jones is a complex figure, to put it mildly. Many have been stung by his acid tongue, but many more have been helped by his guidance, generosity and advice, which he gives freely to anyone who'll listen—whether they asked for it or not. One long-time observer of the jazz scene recalled an incident at Birdland with some merriment. "Miles Davis and Philly Joe Jones were trying to sneak off the bandstand to avoid Jo, who had some sort of lesson he wanted to convey to them," he chuckled, "but they might just as well have been trying to avoid the Ancient

Mariner. They were just getting off, but Jo was already there fussing—and he had his finger out."

Others recall how he took them under his wing and looked out for them when they first came to New York. Ronald Shannon Jackson told me that, "Jo had heard me play and I had all this raggedy equipment. He made a point of taking me up to the Zildjian factory, not once, but twice, just to make sure that I had some good cymbals to play on. I don't know if he even remembers, but I sure do." Still others have been the beneficiaries of gigs, introductions, musical suggestions and parables (the meaning of which might only become clear years after the fact). In a sense, Jo is simply trying to convey the kind of fatherly direction and no-nonsense experience he received at the knees of his elders as a young man. That kind of environment no longer exists for young players trying to become musicians. "Experience is based on mistakes," he concludes, "and I wish it was in my power to just reach in my pocket and say 'here.' But it's impossible. Look at all the people I've rubbed elbows with. It took a whole lot of helping and hard knocks to make me what I am, and I myself am really hundreds of people—peoples that I've met. Where are kids today going to get the kind of apprenticeship I had, to play the kind of places I've been? They destroyed all the continuity from generation to generation during World War II when they took away the dance floors. It's like trying to go from the sandlots to the major leagues. You've got to work your way up."

"Let me tell you about a special gentleman, Mr. Freddie Moore. When you hear Freddie Moore, you're hearing drums, mister. It took me 30 years to be able to walk up to him and say hello. I saw him as a kid, but I wasn't in that league. I couldn't stay up that late at night. I couldn't go where he went. But when we came to New York, he was next door to the Woodside, and he was the most gracious man. When a strange musician came to New York, the first thing Freddie would say was, 'Have you eaten yet?' And he'd take you out to the kitchen and sit you down. Not to the bar; he didn't get you a drink. To the kitchen! 'Where are you staying? Do you need any money?' They don't make those kinds of

Photo by Allison Perry



Art Blakey, Jo Jones and Elvin Jones at Gretsch Drum Night. Birdland, circa 1960.

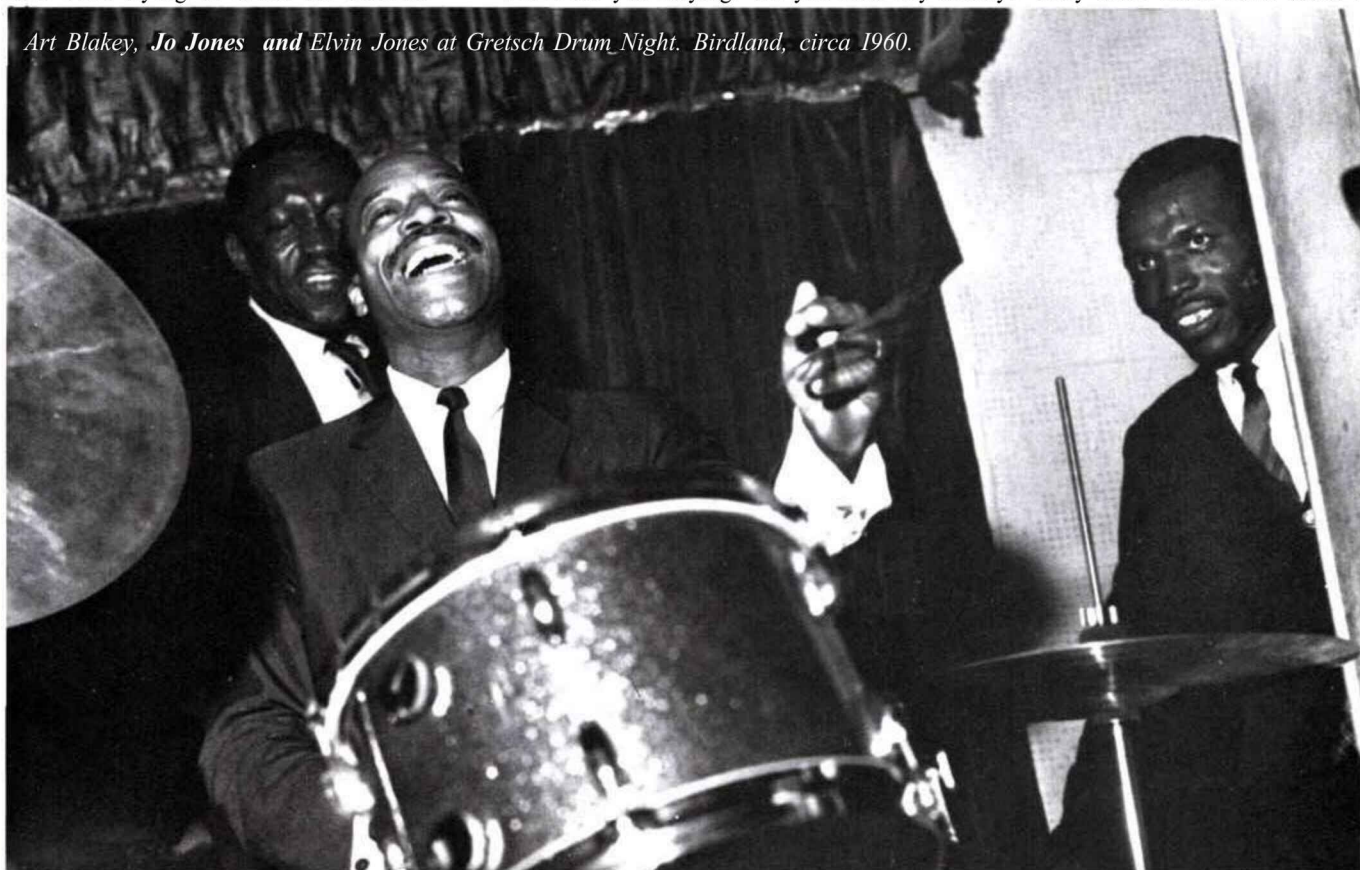


Photo by Charles Stewart





peoples anymore."

Taking that story as a cue, it's clear that Papa Jo is trying, and always has tried, to convey that kind of help to "young talent" on the way up, to ease the transition and help them avoid pitfalls. A host of remarkable black men and women helped shape Jo Jones' character and talent back in the days when virulent racism and ignorance denied African-Americans the chance to strut their stuff. But they did *anyway*. Jo strains to convey and remember that time and those people. He remembers the oral tradition. He bears the lessons. He also bears the scars.

For Jonathan David Samuel Jones—born October 7, 1911 in Chicago, Illinois, to Samuel and Elizabeth Jones—there existed not only the burden of racism's ugly cultural legacy, but the mark of an affliction which robbed him of his youth, and which in a lesser man might very well have pre-empted any sort of productive life, let alone a creative one. But Jo Jones fought back from a crippling accident with courage, grace and style.

"I was very young," Jo recalls. "I elected to try to copy one of my uncles lighting a cigar from a fire with a newspaper, and I had a terrific burn that left me an invalid for a year and a half. I had to crawl before I could walk again, and they didn't know anything about burns at that particular time. They changed two doctors at the time, and I can remember my father bringing me silver dollars and laying them in the bed. He also brought me a ukulele. I'll never forget that ukulele. I was burned from head to foot on my right side. It was very hazy for me coming out of my affliction and trying to get myself together. It took me until I was 16 or 17 years old to come out of this affliction."

Jo's father was a remarkable man, and for Samuel Jones and his family (including Jo's sister, Lillian), the nature of his work was such that they found themselves moving all over the country, living in many places. This is how Jo eventually found himself in Alabama.

Jo's recollections of this period are somewhat hazy, but it was somewhere

around the time of his accident that he made his first real spiritual connection with music. "I had an aunt on my mother's side of the family who I always referred to as Sister Mattie because she had a twin. She took me, at the time of my convalescing, to hear the Ringling Brothers Circus. I must have been about five or six or seven years old. I heard—I *felt*—this bass drum. This was Mr. Emil Helmicke, the greatest bass drum player that ever lived. Later on he played with the Goldman band up in Central Park, and he was the highest paid man in the band. The last time I saw him he was 86 years old, and I used to always go to see him after the concerts—bring him some beer, you know. I brought all the drummers up to hear him. I brought Max Roach. I brought Art Blakey. I brought Joe Harris. Just playing the bass drum, he could get eight different notes out of it. He was one of a kind. I remember that bass drum hit my stomach and I never relinquished that feeling. That was my indoctrination to music. I couldn't keep still. My Aunt Mattie held me in her arms. That's when she bought me a snare drum."

In Birmingham, Alabama, Jo studied at a black school called the Tuggle Institute. "When I came out of the Tuggle Institute, I was going to play trumpet. A fellow named George Hudson, who later went into St. Louis and played with Jeter Pillars, was teaching me to play. Later on, after I grew up, I played in the band with him. So I started on trumpet, I tried to play the sax, and I tried to play the piano. I didn't know what I was going to do.

"Somehow or other I wound up at the A&M Institute in Huntsville, Alabama. Right on the outskirts, four miles away, is a place called Normal, Alabama. At that time, one of the foremost cornetists in the whole world was there. His name was James H. Wilson, and he was the only one that could play the cadenza of a tune called "Salute Polka." That's when I began to get my musical education. When I went into the band room and he put up "Poet and Peasant," it took me two months to get back into the room. I didn't know nothing about a half note or less.

"Mr. Wilson was the one who told me about Louis Armstrong. I said, 'Who is Louis Armstrong?' I had a distant cousin that took me back to Chicago. I went to see Mr. Armstrong playing with Erskine Tate at the Vendome Theatre with that trumpet with the spotlight on him—I quickly gave up the trumpet. Then I was going to play saxophone and here comes Coleman Hawkins, so I forgot it. I switched to piano. Then years later, in Omaha, Nebraska, here comes Art Tatum. So much for piano."

In fact, though, Jo Jones might have been found performing on any or all of these instruments through the latter '20s, as well as vibes, chimes and timpani. He was also involved in singing, dancing and dramatics in the company of some of the great all-around entertainers of that period.

"I didn't think I was going to end up as a drummer. I was playing all these instruments, but I was playing drums on all of them. Then I found out that the drummer was the highest paid man in the band. I don't know why all these guys jump on the drums and think it's the easiest way out. Sheeet. When I first met Mr. Wilson Driver [one of the first jazz drummers to come out of Birmingham], he had a set of drums, a xylophone and a cornet, and he could teach the whole





thing. Same with Jimmy King. You know how many instruments Benny Carter plays? To be in Lawrence Welk's band you had to play at least six instruments, mister. The drummer had to know as much music as the conductor. I took all of that and put it on the drums.

"How did I learn the music? I learned it. I earned it. I mowed lawns. I did all sorts of chores. In 1923 I met Butterbeans & Suzie. I was running errands and getting their food at the Prolific Theatre in Birmingham, Alabama. And then I went to the music teacher, and while he gave lessons, I sat there and listened.

"I always hung out with older, experienced people—I never hung out with no one my age. In my formative years, having as a kid dabbled around in shows ... in Chautauqua shows, in medicine shows, in carnivals and circuses and little girlie shows and what have you, I was in an advantage to travel. And when I came out in show biz, there weren't nobody flying no oceans but Lindbergh, and now they think it's a rough trip to fly to California. When you joined a show, you had to be recommended from your minister or rabbi or somebody, and you had to be 25 years old before you drank alcohol. You just didn't go into no nightclub. But at the same time, that way we were juveniles and you started in show business young ... I've only known Buddy Rich since he was six. But you had a whole lot of fathers and uncles and mothers out here, you see, and that's what was so remarkable about it. I do remember that we were connected with people that had foreign intrigue. These people—Hungarians, Lithuanians, trapeze artists and what-have-you—they taught us how to eat, how to think, they taught us personal hygiene. They taught us moral and civil discipline. At that time, musicians and baseball players couldn't stay at the

**"I WASN'T BORN NO CHILD. I WAS BORN A MAN. NOT A BABY. NOT A BOY. A MAN, IN CAPITAL LETTERS. NO QUESTIONS, NO SEMI-COLONS, NO PARENTHESIS, NO COMMAS. PERIOD. A MAN!"—Jo Jones**



Photo by Rick Mattingly

best hotels. It had nothing to do with color. It was just the way you were identified. 'You're a musician? What? You're in a carnival? Out!' Because at that time the *Billboard* had a thing called the blacklist. If you picked up that issue and saw your name on the blacklist, that meant you were grounded for a year. It was impossible for you to get a job shining shoes on the Sahara Desert.

"During these periods in different parts and places I've been, when the show got stranded in a certain area—Chattanooga, Louisville, Paducah or whatever—they'd come over from those madhouses and say to me, 'You come over and play in this band.' They knew me as Jo. I'd come in and play with those bands. I didn't know nothing about white and colored. I just thought it was music, just so nobody don't bother my drums. I knew where I stood. Sometimes they didn't even have a set of drums. I'd borrow a snare and a bass drum, and use a coat hanger for a cymbal holder; I had a coat hanger, a foot pedal and a pair of sock cymbals. And these guys were musicians. I didn't know nothing about colored and white until I was 19 or 20.

"I remember seeing a black woman in South Alabama out on roller skates all by herself on a rink where she didn't have no business being. She was wonderful, and I was watching her when this white man turned to me and said, 'Do you know who that is?' I didn't. He said, 'That's Miss Bessie Smith.' Can you imagine that? A white man in Alabama calling a black woman Miss. I couldn't believe it. Bessie Smith, mister! Do you know who was the first jazz band to play Carnegie Hall? Not Benny Goodman. James Reece Europe—a black man."

After covering the United States several times over, Jo Jones found himself in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1930 (with Skeet Morgan and R.C. Hicks and their Dixie Ramblers). For the next four years, up until the time he went to Kansas City, he got his seminal experience playing with territory bands on the circuit extending from Texas up through Canada. "Trouble was," he bellows, "everywhere I went and tried to get into a band, the bandleader would say, 'Son, are you married?' I'd say, 'No, I'm not married; I'm not marrying nobody.' He'd say, 'You have to be married to be in this band.' Everywhere I turned there were people telling me I had to be married. So finally, after making six feeble attempts in two months, I married! I married on June 23, 1933. Vivian Greenne, the daughter of a minister," he smiled, drifting back with the recollection. "I begged the girl. I said, 'Will you do me a favor?' 'What?' 'Just marry me.'"

"All those guys could read music; not like the boys in Kansas City. At that time, no one could out-read these guys in Omaha. See, when I joined the union, I had to take a test. They sat me down and the first thing they put in front of me was a march called 'Chicago Tribune.' I tore that son-of-a-gun up, and that's how I got my card. Other than that they wouldn't have given me a card. They didn't have no 'ooof goof musicians."

"In Omaha, when I found a piano player who was limpid, I'd go and push him off the job. But here would come some hobo who would push me off the job. So I'd go around the corner and find me a weak drummer and push him

*continued on page 38*



The Count Basie Orchestra with Ethel Waters as they appeared in the 1943 film *Stage Door Canteen*.

Photo Courtesy of Institute of Jazz Studies/Rutgers University



# Slim Jim

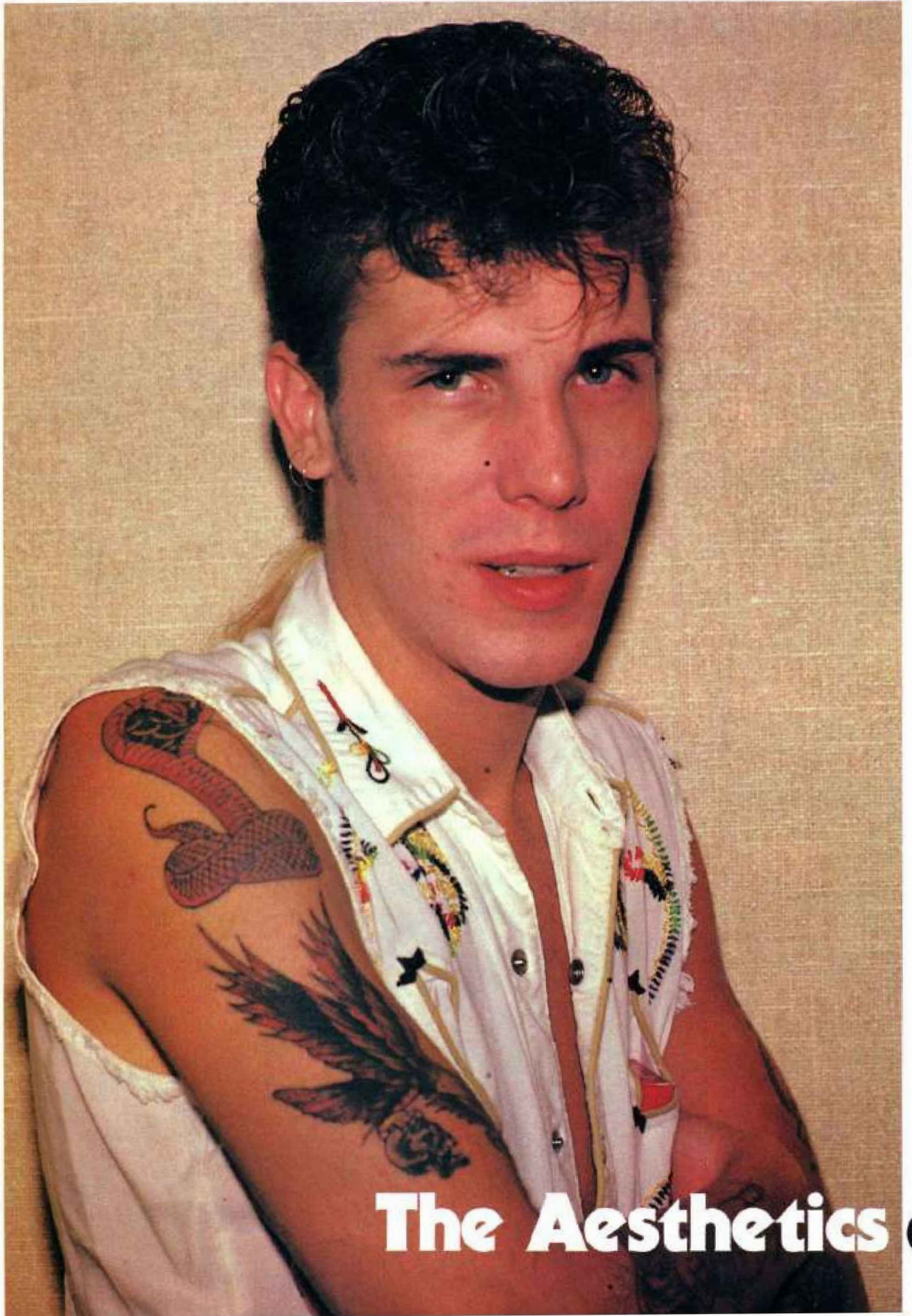


Photo by Robert Santelli

## The Aesthetics of



# Phantom

by Robert Santelli

**T**he first thing you notice about Slim Jim Phantom of the Stray Cats—aside from the tattoos that seem to crawl up and down both arms—is, well, his s/inness. Tall and incredibly lanky, Jim Phantom hardly resembles a drummer as he leans over a desk at the New York office of EMI Records and checks out a batch of photos of himself. Going strictly by looks, it's much easier to imagine a guitar or microphone in Phantom's hands than a pair of drumsticks.

But forget about his physical appearance. Jim Phantom is indeed a drummer, and a very good one at that. Phantom's style is based on precision and simplicity. His snare is big, crisp, sharp, and unabashedly aggressive sounding. Along with Brian Setzer on guitar and vocals, and Lee Rocker on bass, Slim Jim Phantom plays a very important part in the success of the Stray Cats—a band that is one of the most unlikely superstar outfits in the music business today. By delving into the raw and good-time roll of rockabilly, the Stray Cats have, in effect, defiantly thumbed their noses at the sterilized techno-pop sound that's currently sweeping through mainstream rock, and proved that not all dance music need be electronic.

Rebellious by nature, Slim Jim Phantom refuses to be stereotyped as the typical rock or rockabilly drummer. He plays his exceedingly simple kit standing up, and positions himself right out in front with Setzer and Rocker when the trio performs live. "It's about time people get to see what a drummer actually looks like on stage, not to mention how hard he works," jokes Phantom. "I'm in the band too, you know."

Because he's so young—just 21 years old—Phantom doesn't have a wealth of big-time drum experience behind him. The product of numerous bands in and around his hometown of Massapequa, Long Island, Phantom, nevertheless has been playing drums for some ten years. Thus, what he lacks in professional experience, he more than makes up for in enthusiasm. "I'm the type of drummer who likes to totally involve himself in not only his drumming, but everything else that's happening around him on stage and in the studio. I like to take in as much as I can and then have it show in the way I play my drums."

Despite the hard-guy image, Phantom is a warm individual and I found him very easy to talk to. We met in Manhattan the day before the Stray Cats were to play Jones Beach out on Long Island, a gig that surely represented a triumphant return of a band that, incredibly enough, had to go to England to score a record deal. Jim spoke about those days in England as well as the Stray Cats' brand of rockabilly and his rather unique style of playing the drums.

**RS:** More than one person has referred to the Stray Cats as a rockabilly revivalist band. Do you view yourself and the Cats as revivalists?

**SJP:** I don't think we could be a revivalist band because we're too young. We're in our early 20's, and we weren't around in the 1950s when rockabilly was happening, so for us it's the first time. I think the only ones who could revive rockabilly are the ones who were there in the first place and are now coming back on the music scene. What the Stray Cats have always tried to do is to take the spirit that was in rockabilly and update it a bit. I think we play it louder and a bit more electric sounding. In the studio, we try to take what was good about '50s music—the slapping bass sound, the twangy guitar and the big snare sound—and make it modern sounding and much cleaner. The only thing we're reviving, if people insist on using that term, is the spirit of rockabilly.

**RS:** It's no secret that, a couple of years ago, the Stray Cats packed up their gear, went to England, and got a record deal there before anything happened with the band back home in the States. Was there a feeling in the band that you'd have to break in England before you made it in America?

**SJP:** I don't know if it was a question of *having* to go there, but we

were here in New York for about a year playing local bars out on Long Island and in Manhattan a couple of times a month, and nothing was happening. We had a decent following too; a couple of hundred kids used to come and hear us all the time. But there just wasn't any kind of record company interest, and that's what we wanted to do—make a record.

**RS:** Did the Stray Cats actively pursue record company interest?

**SJP:** I guess we just played and kind of expected them to come to us. But as far as our trip to England is concerned, we were there on a whim. It was the summertime and there really wasn't that much to do. So we sold our cars and stereos, and took off. I sold my drums. We just kind of winged it actually.

**RS:** Why England and not, say, Los Angeles?

**SJP:** We heard that rockabilly has never died there, and that there were still kids wearing '50s hairstyles and clothes and stuff. I think we went out of a sense of adventure. Fortunately for us, things really clicked over there.

**RS:** Indeed it was adventuresome. None of you knew anyone over there, and nothing was set up for you in terms of gigs or even housing.

**SJP:** I had never even been out of New York before, let alone the country. It was exciting and a little bit scary at the same time. Like I said, we were very lucky that the move worked for us. But I wouldn't recommend that young bands just skip out of the States and head on over to England. We did it, but at our stage of the game, we needed some type of stimulant, and England was it.

**RS:** What did you find when you arrived?

**SJP:** Well, we got off the plane and said, "Oh wow! Great! Now what do we do?" [laughs] We stayed in cheap hotels and knocked on doors to get a gig here and there. Finally, we hooked up with a person who arranged some support slots for us in a pub. Ever since we played our first show there, which was three years ago, it began to happen for us. They were looking for something over there because there was no trend happening at the moment. So the new trend turned out to be rockabilly and we were the ones who, I guess you could say, lit the fuse.

**RS:** After having gone unnoticed in the States, your success in England must have made coming back home all that much sweeter for you and the Cats.

**SJP:** Oh yeah, definitely. It not only feels good to make it in your home country, but financially speaking, America is the only place you can make any money. When we signed a recording contract in England, we signed for the whole world, excluding America. That's why we're with EMI in America, and Arista in England and the rest of the world. You see, we knew that one day when the time was right we'd come back home and the record companies were going to want us. We knew they'd be sorry they didn't sign us when they could have signed us cheap!

**RS:** It seems as though MTV was extremely important in breaking the Stray Cats here in America because it's such a visual band.

**SJP:** That's really true. I think MTV has been helpful in breaking a lot of bands. It's helped a lot of bands who just happen to look good but can't play that well, and it's also helped bands who are genuinely good. The Stray Cats owe MTV a lot. When we first came back to the States about a year and a half ago, we were getting no radio airplay at all—I mean none. Yet we'd go into a town and sell out a thousand-seat hall, which, since it was our very first time on the road in the States, we were quite pleased with. And all the kids we met would say that they'd seen us on MTV, and that's why they came to the show.

**RS:** Speaking of the visual qualities of the Stray Cats, I recall that you once remarked that, "It's got to be the music *and* the look." Do you still believe that?

**SJP:** Oh yeah, sure. A lot of bands play real well, but they don't have a look or image to go with the music. What would the Stray

# Bangin' and Yellin'



**"YOU HAVE TO FEEL  
GOOD ABOUT  
WHAT YOU PLAY IF  
ITS GOING TO  
COME ACROSS  
WITH FEELING."**

Cats be if we wore beards, had fat bellies and just didn't care how we looked? You need to play good and look good. That's the key to success in this business. And yet, the funny thing is that even if I wasn't in a band, I'd still dress the same way I do now. It's just the way I feel—like a rocker.

**RS:** How would you define your role as drummer for the Stray Cats?

**SJP:** I think any drummer in a trio has to play fairly simple. I appreciate Simon Phillips and Billy Cobham; I met them all and they're great to talk with and everything. But in the Stray Cats, I just can't play that way. It's just impossible to play that way if the music is going to work.

**RS:** Why is that?

**SJP:** Because I have to allow Brian, our guitarist, as much room and freedom as I can. His instrument is the only one in the band that plays melody. He has to have as wide a range as possible. So me and Lee, our bass player, tend to play on the beat. I'll play a couple of rolls here and there, but I really tend to play on the "2" and the "4" while he plays on the "1" and the "3." It's pretty simple, you know, but that's what works for us.

**RS:** What you said about drummers in three-piece bands and how they should play fairly simple is interesting. If you look back to what Ginger Baker did with Cream and Mitch Mitchell did with the Jimi Hendrix Experience, and on occasion, what Stewart Copeland does with the Police, it would seem there's some room for disagreement. Perhaps what you're saying is that *your* trio demands that you play simple, because your band plays rockabilly.

**SJP:** You're right. I know that it wouldn't come into my head to play busy like Baker or Mitchell. I think when Baker and Mitchell played, a lot of drummers in that era were trying to find themselves. The role of the rock drummer hadn't been fully explained yet.

I think a simple rather than a busy style of drumming is the only way it would work for the Cats. Baker needed that busy sound because Cream was a busy group. I just like to play it simple. I mean, I like drummers like Bernard Purdie. Listening to drummers like him taught me to play the way I need to play in the Cats.

**RS:** What you're saying then is that your role in the Stray Cats is first and foremost a supportive one.

**SJP:** Definitely. I believe my role is support. If you have two guitar players, you might have more freedom because you can play against things a little more. You see, rockabilly is dance music and that's the kind of music the Stray Cats play, although we're not limited *to just* that, as you can tell with some of the stuff we do. If it's dance music—whether it's rockabilly or whatever—the drum-

mer is always going to play on the "2" and the "4" because that's what makes you want to dance, or at the very, very least, tap your foot.

**RS:** Your drumkit matches your drum style perfectly. It too is exceedingly simple.

**SJP:** Yeah. I got a deal with Gretsch recently which made me very happy because I play Gretsch drums anyway. But I use a 24" bass drum and a 6" snare drum. I use Paiste cymbals—an 18" medium ride which I also use as a crash, so I have to play a little thinner than I would a ride cymbal. I would like to use a heavier ride cymbal, but I guess since I also use it as a crash, I need to have it a bit thinner. That's all the equipment I really need. When I started playing drums I had a full kit, and I played a full kit for years and years. Actually, I just started to play a full kit again because Gretsch gave me one. So I set it up in my house and have been going crazy with it for the last couple of weeks.

**RS:** Did you find it absolutely necessary to trim down your kit when you began playing with the Stray Cats?

**SJP:** Well, I just thought it looked better. At first I didn't even use a bass drum—all I used was a snare and a cymbal. Also, I just thought to myself, "Why does a drummer have to always be in the back? Is there a rule somewhere that says that it has to be that way? Is it written down somewhere?" I had seen the guy who played with Gene Vincent, Be-Bop Harrell. He used to stand up for photographs. But he was kind of a heavy-set drummer, and I don't think he moved around much. The idea that I should stand up just came to Brian, Lee, and me at pretty much the same time. It was like, "What would happen if the whole band was at the front of the stage and no one in back? What would that look like?" Well, we tried it and we were so amazed by it that we just kept doing it. As time went on, I got better at being up there and playing the kit the way it should be played. Now I've gotten it down to where I can really play some stuff on the bass drum, which is quite interesting.

**RS:** Standing up and playing a bass drum obviously took some time to master. Do you use any different leg muscles?

**SJP:** The whole thing is balance, so I really have to put all my weight on my right leg. I'm left-handed, so I use my left leg to hit the bass drum. When I went back to using a full kit, I forgot how to use a hi-hat. I was looking at my foot and saying, "Damn it, do something!" [laughs] It actually took me a couple of days to get my right foot working again.

**RS:** The idea of a drummer not only standing up when playing, but also being out front with the other musicians in the band goes a long way towards breaking down some of the barriers drummers



have had to contend with for years.

**SJP:** Yeah, I like to view the way I play the drums, standing up, and my place on the stage as kind of a rebellion of sorts. At the time I thought of doing it, drummers were using four bass drums, gongs and stuff like that. The thing about my situation back then was that I couldn't afford any of that stuff, even if I wanted it. So I was also saying to myself, "You can be a great drummer like Carl Palmer"—who by the way *is* a great drummer—"but why not take it the other way?" When I was learning to play the drums in the early '70s, Palmer was *the* drummer, but why not take it the other way and use less instead of more?

**RS:** Can you think of any disadvantages you have encountered standing up and playing?

**SJP:** I guess if I played with a different type of band there might be some disadvantages. Sure, there are certain limitations, but at the same time, there are none that have really held me back. I would play the same way if I had a full kit in front of me. I know on the bass drum I really can't play everything I want to, but that's about it, you know.

**RS:** Describe the reaction you got from the crowd the first time they saw you standing up and playing nothing but a snare drum and cymbal.

**SJP:** It was great, it really was. You see, we had talked about it within the group to get kind of an idea on how we wanted to present this image. The Stray Cats was like a sideline group for us in the beginning. Brian was in a band called the Bloodless Pharoahs, and me and Lee were in a blues band. As it turned out, there were more people coming to hear the Stray Cats than the other bands. So we put more and more energy and time into the Cats until it became a full-time thing. At first we started playing in old-man bars where a couple of kids hung out. They'd see us and tell their friends about us. But the first time a lot of people see us, they're quite taken back. On Long Island, which is where we lived, they didn't know if we were from Mars or what, with our haircuts and pink suits, and with me standing up, playing the drums and screaming. They didn't know what we were. But after a while, they found out and it was just great. They found out it was just old-fashioned rock 'n' roll, and they liked it. Some of the kids got to the point where they'd do anything for us. They'd unload the equipment, help set things up, and that kind of thing. They were real loyal.

But it was still hard to get gigs on Long Island as the Stray Cats because there were a lot of Led Zeppelin copy bands. To play a bar there you had to have a PA and a lighting system, spandex pants, a voice like Robert Plant and a pair of socks that went with your outfit. No one would hire us—no one. That's why we played in these little corner bars that had a little stage in the back. It started with Brian playing standards by himself, and Lee and I eventually joining him. We happened to be at a gig once, and I had my drums in the car. Brian said he needed a drummer that night, and I said, "Fine." The group kind of evolved like that, despite the fact that there were so few places to play original music out on Long Island.

Photo by Randy Bachman



**RS:** You did get some work in Manhattan, as you mentioned before. What were gigs there like?

**SJP:** We got work in Manhattan, but the thing was, you could only work once a month. We worked at Max's and CBGB's, but club owners won't hire you this weekend if they know you're going to play another club in the city next weekend. So what we used to do was call ourselves the Tom Cats, the Bob Cats, and the Wild Cats to get steady work. If you wanted to get record companies to come down and see you, you had to work Manhattan. But in order to make some money, we had to play those Long Island bars.

**RS:** What are your musical roots? You said you played in a blues band before joining the Stray Cats. When did you discover rockabilly?

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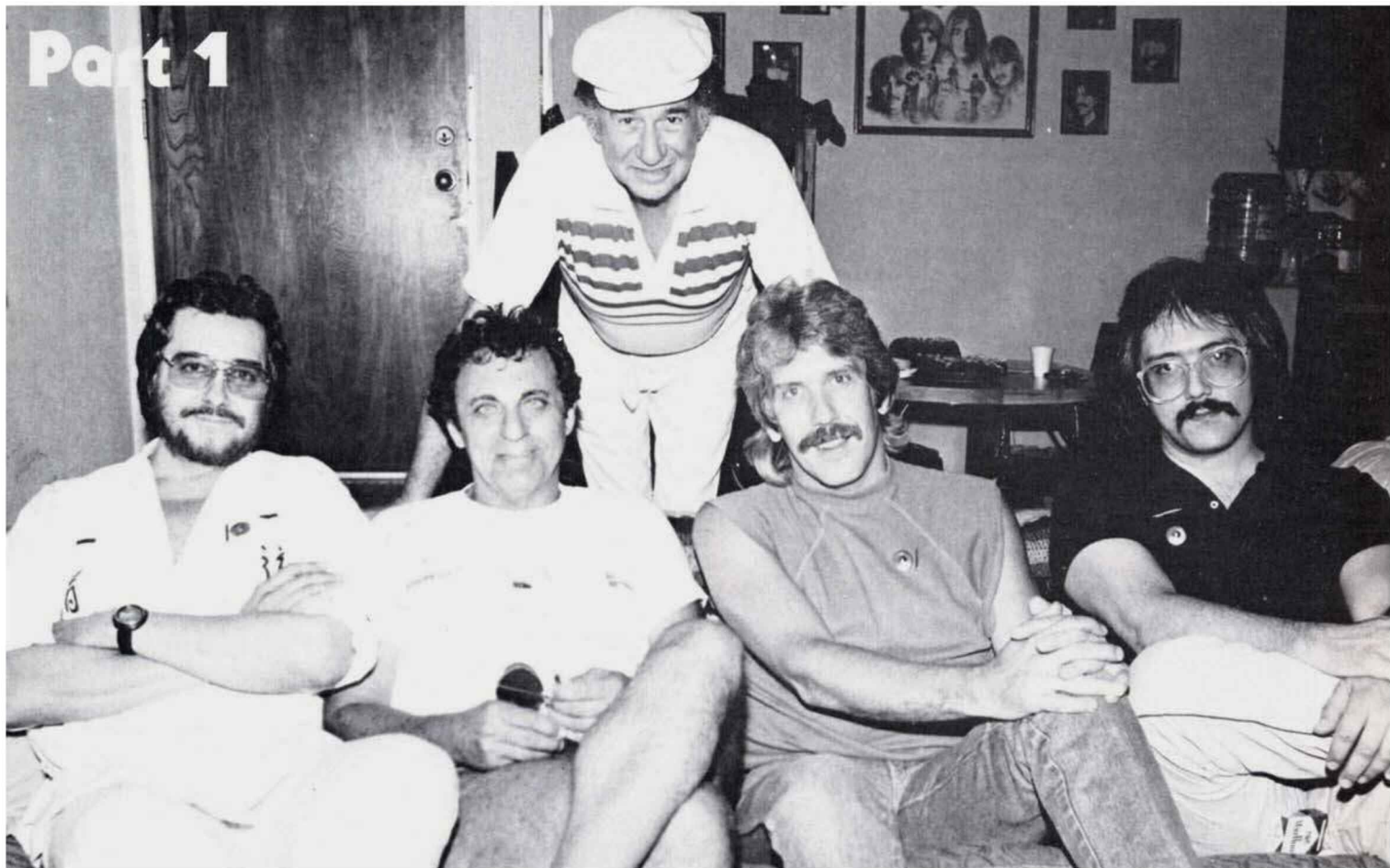
# L.A. Studio Drummers Round

**T**imes have certainly changed. Circa 1964, the exposure of the Beatles altered the lives of most would-be musicians of that era. For those who fancied playing instruments, the dream seemed to come together in the image of four lads playing in a self-contained unit. For drummers everywhere, Ringo Starr became the one to emulate and his situation became the one to covet. In previous decades, drummers like Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich and Louie Bellson had provided that kind of inspiration, and now Ringo Starr became the idol of the '60s generation. It was staggering at the time to find out that another drummer played the first Beatles' recording session. Who was this Andy White person who played drums on "Love Me Do"? A "studio drummer?" What was that?

For a long time, a shroud of mystery covered the fact that our favorite groups on vinyl were not always the same individuals we saw in concert. Certainly the records never revealed anything to the contrary. But as the facts began to unravel, a new hero emerged: the studio drummer. In recent years, the desire to play in a group has been, in many cases, replaced by the goal of session work. And yet, interestingly enough, many of the top recording players never set out to be session players, and even now, are interested in returning to the basics of ensemble effort. (Cases in point, Jeff Porcaro with Toto, Rick Marotta with Ronin, Yogi Horton with Chew and Larrie Londin with his new Nashville group.) Is it simply a case of "the grass is always greener," or do they know something we don't know?

In an attempt to answer that question and others relating to the studios, MD asked a number of L.A. studio drummers to get together and talk about what they do. Because of tight schedules, two separate meetings were held. The first was with Hal Blaine, Shelly Manne, Jim Keltner, Craig Krampf and Vinnie Colaiuta. At the second meeting, Jim, Craig and Vinnie were joined by Jeff Porcaro and Rick Marotta. It was obvious throughout these discussions that everyone enjoyed the contact with their fellow musicians, and the opportunity to bounce ideas off their peers. Anybody who still believes the myth that all studio players dislike each other and stab one another in the back to get gigs need only read the following discussion to see the warmth, affection and respect which each of these musicians holds for the others.

Photo by Rick Malkin



**Jim Keltner, Hal Blaine, Shelly Manne,  
Craig Krampf, Vinnie Colaiuta**



**RF:** A lot of drummers are asking how to get into the studio.

**Hal:** You get into the studios through a series of involvements—one band to another—which might lead eventually to a band that records, or demos, or whatever, and you start getting studio experience. Once you get a taste of that, a lot of values change and you say, "Who needs this? I'd like to work in the studios."

**Shelly:** I came into the studio in a strange way. When I came out here, jazz musicians weren't being hired to do studio work. I was pigeonholed—"He played with Stan Kenton and Woody Herman; he's going to play too loud. He's a jazz musician, he can't read and we'd better not use him." But then a drummer was needed to do a picture called *Rear Window* with Jimmy Stewart. I was hired for a jazz-oriented segment.

**Craig:** What time was this?

**Shelly:** 5/4.

**Craig:** I meant what year? [laughter]

**Shelly:** It was 1952. I went in, read the part well and made a hero out of the contractor. From then on, he knew I could cover other areas because it wasn't just jazz on the date, so he started hiring me all the time.

When the time comes for you to get your break—you have to be in the right place at the right time and a lot of luck is involved—you have to be able to do the job. If you can produce what's needed when that moment comes, your future is pretty secure after that.

**Vinnie:** It's still pretty new to me, but the same thing happened. I was playing in clubs and stuff, but it was, "Can we use him on a rhythm track?" Finally some bass player will stick his neck out on a chopping block for you and hire you. But I'm finding out that it's still kind of a struggle. I wonder sometimes if some of these cats can really hear. You make a hero out of the contractor, but I don't think some of them can tell.

**RF:** How important is reading?

**Shelly:** I think it's very important in studio work to be able to read.

**Craig:** There are various types of studio work too. There are different crews that run together—the film crew, the commercial crew, and basically where the majority of my work is, rock 'n' roll albums. At 18 and 19, I could sight read anything. In the last ten years, I think I've seen five legitimate, what we would call "real" drum charts. In rock they deal with chord charts a lot. I got a call for a movie about two years ago and they passed out music. I was scared to death, but that's my fault for letting that slip a little bit.

**Shelly:** But it's not only just reading; it's being able to see it and hear it at the same time.

**RF:** Is the emphasis on feel or reading in the studio?

**Jim:** It's on both of them.

**Shelly:** Feel isn't that important in the studio. If you're playing drums, you're supposed to have some kind of feeling, but half the time when I go to a studio call, it's with click tracks. So the time thing is already set up for you. Now within that time thing, yes, it's up to you to get a good feel. If you do a movie with Jerry Goldsmith, there's no feel involved whatsoever; you're following a conductor. But if you go in having to play a bossa nova or rock, the way I play it, you have to try to get some kind of a feel, but your ears give you the feel.

**RF:** Basically, are drummers like you guys called upon in the studio to contribute your own sound?

**Jim:** I say yes and no on that. Like Shelly said, when you do certain movie dates and things like that, you're not called for your style. You're called because the contractor knows you can handle it.

**Shelly:** You used to be called for your style more. I should clarify that, though. In a rock-oriented studio call, I would say you'd be called for your style.

**Jim:** In the rock thing, that's generally true.

**Shelly:** But all studio dates are not rock oriented. In the case Jim is talking about, style doesn't enter into it. Whether you can read it and make the parts is what's important. When I started out in the studios, you were taken more for your style. They knew that you could give something creatively to what the music was supposed to be. They would hire you because they knew you would be creative and could add a sound.

**Jim:** Like when you did *Man With A Golden Arm*.

**Shelly:** Exactly. Even more so, another one was *A Walk On The Wild Side*. My drum part on that was blank and so Elmer Bernstein, the composer, said, "I want some sound here to start it off with. Maybe it should be metal or something that sounds like metal." So I grabbed a triangle and held it in my hand. It was no big deal, but I opened it and closed it, and he said, "That's it." Imagination, in that kind of studio work, is 75% of the game. You have to use your imagination, not only in studio work, but in playing music too. In fact it's in everything. Einstein said that imagination is more important than knowledge.

**Vinnie:** It's like drums. You go to a drum clinic and people watch you play. They come up to you and want to know how you did this and that. What they don't realize is that what you're doing is because of the context of the music, your imagination and your creativity, not because you're physically doing this or that.

**Hal:** Almost everything we've talked about so far runs the entire gamut. Some people want you to do nothing but what is written; some people want you to do everything on your own; and you'll get everything in between. The musicians who have had the experience, who have been fortunate enough to have gotten into it slowly and then got busy, busy, busy, where they have finally done everything, are the musicians the contractors call because they know they don't have to wait. They know you're reliable, you're going to be on time, you're going to be sober, and you are prepared for anything.

**RF:** Have you ever gone into the studio and had someone say, "I want you to sound like the guy who did the drums on ... "?

**Shelly:** I did a date with Jimmy Bowen, "Fever." I had never worked with Jim, but I had made the original record of "Fever," and it said on my part, "play like Shelly Manne." So I played it just like I played it originally. The guy came out and said I wasn't doing it right. When I told him I was Shelly Manne, he turned around and went back in the booth.

**RF:** What are some of the difficulties of studio work?

**Hal:** An engineer who is just starting.

**RF:** In his recent MD interview, Steve Gadd said you shouldn't get bugged with the engineers. You should just be happy that you were hired.

**Jim:** I really liked when he said that because that's the truth. That's where I hope I've matured. I don't want to fight anymore.

**Shelly:** You have to have that attitude.

**Jim:** You have to if you're going to do studio work. If you don't want to do studio work, you can just say, "Forget them all" and not do it.

**Shelly:** It used to be that the engineers, the microphones and everything in the studio were there to serve the music and the musician. It's turned totally around now. The musician, especially the drummer, is supposed to be servicing the engineer, and that's bullshit. If you get a certain sound on your instrument, you get your own sound. They're trying to make you sound like somebody else who they particularly dig and who is particularly easy to record. You can't be concerned with that. They lock you in a closet. I heard some records the other day recorded years ago, and I'm not trying to say "Give me the good old days," because I like a lot of the music I hear now, but they used three mic's hanging up on the ceiling and the orchestra sounded great. In the orchestras nowadays, there are 12 mic's on the drums alone.

**Hal:** Those kids are trying to make a name



Photo by Rick Malkin



## Hal

for themselves.

**Craig:** It takes a while for engineers and producers to have confidence in you. So when you get a call with an engineer or producer who hasn't worked with you, sometimes they're not aware that your set is going to be alright and you go through havoc. Then attitude comes in. I've let engineers try all sorts of things. You keep your patience because you can come off cocky or egotistical otherwise, but you let them do their thing when, in your own mind, you know that if they try this mic' on your kick drum, it will work.

**Hal:** All you have to say is, "Sure, okay, yeah, right."

**Shelly:** How about when you go into a date where the drums sound rotten and about two hours later, all of a sudden, they sound good. All of a sudden, the engineer has found it at the end of the date.

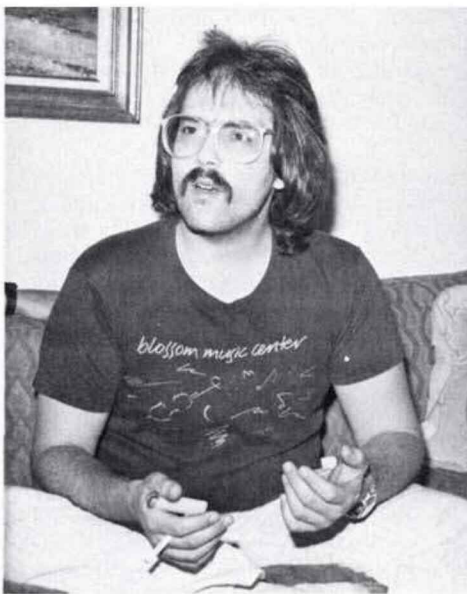
**Jim:** There are great engineers, mediocre engineers, engineers with no ears and some with great ears. To me, an engineer is a person who has substance and loves music as well, or should. Ideally, an engineer should be a musician.

**Hal:** An engineer who comes out of the booth and turns the mic' a 16th of an inch is becoming a hero because the producer is sitting there. You talk about misconceptions. These producers don't really know absolutely everything, so they get an engineer who might have worked on a hit record. The engineer says, "Don't worry. No matter how bad this band sounds, I'm going to make you a hit." That's a joke.

**Shelly:** It's been like that for a long time. On one of my first record dates, in 1939, the big thing was, "The bass drum is too loud." So I took the pedal off the bass drum. We made a test pressing and the guy said, "The bass drum is still too loud." I held up the pedal and said, "I didn't have one." But why should everybody sound the same anyway?

Another inequity is, I'm not a rock drummer, but a lot of times I have to play rock things. I'll see the part and say, "I need a week to psyche this part out, between the bass drum, the left hand and the hi-hat." Then I find out the composer heard a record on the radio driving to work one day and the drummer took three weeks to lay down a bass drum track, a hi-hat track, etc., and this composer wants it all coming out all at once. Mercy, that's one of the problems with technology. You never know how anything is done anymore.

Photo by Rick Malkin



## Vinnie

**RF:** Has state-of-the-art technology made recording more tedious and difficult?

**Jim:** It comes down to the engineer and the producer again, and what their ideas are. The records nowadays are made differently.

**Craig:** Every artist and every record is different, and there is no right way or wrong way—whatever works for that particular artist or the producer. There was a great quote from Gary Chester. He said, "As far as drummers, you're only as great as good as you make the producer and artist look great and good." Every situation is

different.

**Jim:** And that comes back to attitude. When I first started getting into the studios, that was the main thing people would talk about: "Check Hal out sometime. He's always the guy who's there to the very last and always up," while some guitar or keyboard player would be bitching.

**Craig:** People who are like that usually do get weeded out. Usually life catches up to people and I think attitude is a big part of the studio.

**Hal:** I personally have gotten along by being funny. I know that's how it is with Shelly too. When there are certain tensions that you can feel, if you can make people laugh, that will break the tension. I think a lot of people hire us for that reason.

**Craig:** I think the drummer has to be in control in most situations. It does start with us and if that's not happening, the track is not going to happen.

**Jim:** This guy here [indicating Craig] gives more . . . I have heard a lot of people talking about you, and also, just by watching you play sometimes on TV and such, I can tell that you're giving every ounce of everything you've got. That's what's happening.

**Craig:** You've got to give 110% or 120%. Otherwise, what are you doing?

**Jim:** That'll make the record happen. You can't go in and expect that your drums are going to be featured. If you're going to be there, you have to cooperate and that's all there is to it. Save your own sounds for your own thing. That's what I'm doing.

Photo by Rick Malkin



## Jim



Photo by Rick Malkin



## Craig

Right now, I'm messing with sounds of my own and I have a bass and snare drum sound I really love. Instead of complaining about it all the time I'm just going to have to use it on something of my own. I'll create a project for it.

**Craig:** I recently did a project where the producer didn't want to get into any new sounds or experimental sounds. I have a bunch of them saved and someday it will be right where someone wants more out of me sonically.

**Vinnie:** I want to ask something. Giving 120% because you really believe in the music, or enjoy what you're doing, or because you're trying to fulfill what you were hired to do is one thing. But say you're on a date, you're playing a track and you are personally really into this for whatever reason. You start a tune and about four bars later the producer says, "Okay, stop and let's try it again. Okay, go." Then four bars later, the producer says, "Okay, just bass and drums. No hi-hat." After about 26 times of that, doesn't it start irking you? It becomes a real chore.

**Jim:** Right there is the point we've been making: attitude.

**Vinnie:** I'm not talking about showing your attitude, but dealing with it in your mind.

**Jim:** We all can understand that.

**Craig:** Whenever that happens to me, I run the statement through my mind: "Records are forever." And that will usually help me get through any situation. That's what fascinates me about records; whatever I play

at this given moment, time and space will remain forever and I can't live with myself if it isn't a good performance. It's hard sometimes, though, when you have certain producers who say they like a live situation, but to get it live, they have to run through things for 12 hours, and that take after 12 hours has to be as inspirational as take #1.

**RF:** You mentioned that, in rock drumming, you may be called to perform your own style. How did you develop your style, and how do you know how to incorporate it in a session?

**Jim:** That's like asking how you talk the way you talk.

**Hal:** It's just a natural evolution.

**Jim:** Even physically, the way you're built has something to do with the way you play. Recently, I was looking at some pictures of Buddy and he's not a big man, but his arms

Photo by Rick Malkin



## Shelly

are big. He has no wrists; the arms just come down to these big mitts. Shelly has the same kind of hand, but Shelly is a big man. I'm kind of a big guy but I have these little tiny wrists and relatively small hands. I know that has got something to do with the way I play. I'm not sure what, but I know it has something to do with it. This guy here [indicating Vinnie] really epitomizes it. You've got real long arms, and the way you play, you look like your arms are extra long. They're like whips.

**Vinnie:** I often wonder how drummers get a real big sound playing little skinny sticks. I can't because my hands are real big and my arms are real skinny.

**Craig:** And for younger drummers, I think

Photo by Rick Malkin



## Rick

this is an important point. I had a friend who "became" John Bonham. He could do anything Bonham did, but had no style of his own. I think we're each here to work with who we are. Hal is here to be the best Hal Blaine there ever was, Jim is supposed to be the best Jim Keltner there ever was, and I'm trying to be the best Craig Krampf

Photo by Rick Malkin



## Jeff



there is. You take from all these influences throughout music in every form of music, try to absorb it, and how that winds up being you, I don't know. That's fascinating.

**Shelly:** It's not a compliment when somebody says, "Man, you play just like Buddy Rich." It's a compliment technically, probably, but not entirely.

**RF:** Even sitting enters into it. You, Vinnie, happen to sit real low. And everyone wants to know how high or low you should sit.

**Jim:** I try to copy every drummer I know. I take everything I see. Certain people you can't copy. I would never try to copy Vinnie. The guy is ridiculous. [*Vinnie pretends to shoot Jim.*] I've always tried to copy something, whether it be subconscious or conscious. As for how to sit, I've checked that out a lot. When I was actually working opposite sets with Shelly Manne, eventually my seat would be where Shelly's was in order for me to be able to see, but it doesn't always work out.

**Vinnie:** I was watching Tony Williams play one time. This cat is really strong and I remember hearing stories that he could barely reach the pedals as a kid. Now he's a very little guy who sits up so high that he's almost standing. He's playing flat-footed and I can't understand it. I try to sit that high and I have no leverage at all.

**Jim:** What I think he does is change things around on purpose. He's a master on the instrument, like Miles. Once you can play things so easily and beautifully, you just have the tendency to want to go onto some other thing. You have to constantly explore and make yourself do things physically to make yourself change.

**Shelly:** Look at time signatures; that's a perfect example. Up to how many years ago, nobody played 3/4, 5/4, 7/4, 7/8 or whatever. They played 4/4 or 2/4. All of a sudden, there are new time signatures and what do you do? You have to struggle through it, and suddenly it will come to you. You always have to reach further than you think you're capable of. That's the only way you keep growing and improving.

**Hal:** Oftentimes you are called upon to do things and you say, "Oh my God. I could never do that." But somehow you do it and that gives you a little more confidence for the next time you get into that situation.

**Shelly:** Well, Vince played with Frank Zappa. I was called on a date to do an album called *Lumpy Gravy* with him. Man, all of a sudden, I saw these parts that Zappa wrote and they were frightening. I just looked at it awhile and I got by the best way I could. That experience opened it up for me, so the next time I played it, I was not as fearful of it. Finally, in my own

band, I was having things written in 7/8.

**RF:** Should a person go into music with the idea of becoming a studio player?

**Shelly:** Jim, I know that you started to play drums because you wanted to play drums and you dug the music. I don't think it came into your mind that "I'm going to be a studio great." When I decided I wanted to be a jazz drummer in New York City, I decided that that was what I wanted to do and people said, "You can only make \$3.50 a night." I said, "I don't care, that's what I have to do." You become a musician for the same reason painters paint, writers write and dancers dance. It's the same in all the arts. Now, from the accumulation—if you're good at it and if you have talent, which is a very abstract word anyway—a word-of-mouth thing happens, from one musician to another. I don't know Vinnie personally, but I know who he is because I hear other people talk about him. Hal was the pioneer of rock drumming out here and on the West Coast, and if Hal wasn't available, he'd have a set available because they wanted Hal's set. They'd even pay Hal to use his set for another drummer to play on.

**Jim:** That's how important the Hal Blaine sound was.

**Craig:** I played on his set many times myself.

**Shelly:** Studio playing is a craft and you have to be a good craftsman to do it.

**Hal:** We all start off trying to get attention, I think. We're show-offs. It goes from there to become art and craft.

**Shelly:** You're trying to find an answer to how drummers get into the studio?

**RF:** No, I'm trying to find the answer to what they should expect; what they are going to come in contact with.

**Shelly:** They shouldn't expect anything; they should just go to the studio and play.

**Hal:** When I was a kid, a studio musician was a god because he could read anything and there was nothing he couldn't play. But in those days, this was closer to the truth than it is today, because nowadays, how many people know how to play a polka?

**Shelly:** That goes back to using your ears, Hal. You can't lock yourself in a little tunnel, listen to one kind of music and understand one kind of music. If you're a musician, you should understand all kinds of music. When I'm home, I don't play jazz records; I don't play rock; I play classical music most of the time. From classical music, whether I know it or not, subconsciously I am absorbing form. Your ears have to be prepared, so if you see the music and hear what is going on, you should be able to adjust. And that's attitude again.

**Jim:** What you said a minute ago is really true. All the years I have known you, you

have said the same thing, and I know that in your own playing life, you are a man of high integrity when it comes to that. It's a love of playing to you. You would never give up jazz and, in fact, you used to always tell me I should play jazz more. You have got to love music and if you do, chances are you will love every kind of music. I used to say to people, "I love every kind of music but Hawaiian." I don't know why I said that. I guess I had to feel that I didn't like something, but now I even love Hawaiian music. It is some of the most beautiful music ever played—beautiful feeling stuff. The chords are lovely and the voices are exquisite. I love every form of music and I'm still looking for some form I haven't heard yet—some Borneo music or something.

**Craig:** Vinnie is younger than we are, but when the rest of us started, they never gave studio players credit. I was completely unaware that such a beast existed, and it's only recently that, all of sudden, young drummers have awareness of a "studio drummer." I don't think any of us started out to do that. If it hadn't been for that series on the history of rock where we could finally find out who played on what, we might not know. I was dying for years to know that stuff.

**Shelly:** If you went to every studio musician alive, people who you would call "studio musicians," none of them started out to be studio musicians. The violin players and cellists all wanted to be in symphonies.

**Hal:** All I know is, the average person who goes into the studio gets a taste of it and it's like a drug. You love hearing yourself; you love being a part of creating the music. I still cry on dates.

**Jim:** I played on a track for a movie once where I was actually crying while I was playing. I had never had such an experience.

**RF:** What track was that?

**Jim:** It was the *Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid* movie. It was where Slim Pickens was dying. He was lying by the river, his wife was crying and Bob Dylan was singing "Knockin' on Heaven's Door." We were doing everything live and the voices were all singing together—"knock, knock, knockin' on heaven's door." He's dying, I'm playing and I started crying.

**Shelly:** You're very affected by it. Saying how much you like Hawaiian music now, you probably see palm trees, and the beach, and all of that.

**Jim:** Oh, yeah.

**Shelly:** So all the images come to you. If you had done that song without the movie, you may not have cried.

**Hal:** I see things all the time. I really listen to lyrics and the story really means a lot to me.



Part 2



Photo by Rick Malkin

## Jim Keltner , Jeff Porcaro, Rick Marotta, Vinnie Colaiuta, Craig Krampf

**RF:** Often, in interviews, you guys talk about the magic moments. Is it possible to describe those moments?

**Jeff:** You can't explain the magic moments.

**Rick:** That's why it's called magic.

**Jim:** Yeah, because check this out: Many times, for me, I found out that those magic moments were not magical at all to anyone else but me. When that happens, you start thinking twice about magic moments.

**Rick:** It might be more interesting to describe the magic moments we have hearing other people. I remember hearing stuff he [Jim] played years ago that I thought no one human could come up with, or listening to Jeff play on "Rosanna." Each of us likes the other's playing more than our own.

**Jim:** That's true. Like a magic moment for me musically was when I saw Vinnie play for the first time. Everybody had been telling me about Vinnie Colaiuta—Vinnie who? But when I saw you that night, man, I just won't forget it. It was one of those moments, like when I saw Elvin the first

time, or Tony the first time. The feelings were pretty much the same. It was tremendous.

**Rick:** Like Jim said earlier, sometimes you think it's a magic moment, but when you try to explain it, no one will have even heard the record, or you walk off saying, "That was unbelievable; I really felt lifted for a minute." People look at you like, "What the hell are you talking about? You played backbeats." That's something that's so nebulous and so personal.

**Craig:** I have felt a couple, so I'm thinking, is there something . . .

**Rick:** . . . wrong with you? [laughter]

**Craig:** Yeah. I saw fireworks.

**Vinnie:** But you can't really put your finger on them, can you?

**Craig:** I can.

**RF:** Can you be specific?

**Craig:** A couple of one takers when the whole band comes together.

**Jeff:** Oh yeah.

**Craig:** There are a couple of nights that stand out. There was one night with Kirn [Carnes] on *Mistaken Identity*, a track we

had a heavy black version of. It was fast, the tempo was incredible and we had half the album done. It was the night before the Christmas break and Kirn came in at 1:00 in the morning and said, "This is not for me; this is for somebody else." The guys were starting to celebrate and we were going to meet again in two weeks. The keyboard player, after our partying for a while, walked to the keyboards, played the song at about a quarter of the tempo, and pretty soon, one by one, everybody joined in. Val gave Kim a mic—she was standing right next to the drums with a hand mic; screw leakage and all that stuff—we played the song one time at 4:00 in the morning and that was chills. You were talking about crying on the Dylan track—that was unbelievable. That was a magic moment.

**Vinnie:** Everybody had that collective vibe, right? As opposed to burning out by doing it 20 times.

**Craig:** One takers are the ones that stand out.

*continued on page 71*



# DRUMMERS AND INCOME TAX

by Rick Van Horn

article is some general information and a few tips about expenses that you might not have known could be deductible. Again, for final authority, go to a professional or to the source—the IRS.

## Job and Tax Status

The first thing to do when setting up your personal tax system is to define your job status as defined by the IRS. For a pro musician, this will probably fall into one of three categories: Employee, Partnership, or Sole Proprietor (Self-employed). Since musicians often change jobs within a year, it's a good idea to be aware of what each category entails tax-wise. You may wish to change your status should the opportunity present itself. If you are currently an employee and you join a new band just getting together, you may wish to organize that band as a partnership or as individually self-employed contractors. You may join a band already set up as a partnership and be asked to become a partner. At one time I worked as a self-employed contractor under contract to a partnership. Let me explain the basic differences.

**1. Employee Status.** This is the simplest way to go in terms of tax reporting. You are employed by either your bandleader or the club. You will file a W-4 with your employer declaring your exemptions, and the employer will take out withholding towards your taxes. At the end of the year the employer will give you a W-2 form, showing your gross income, taxes withheld, Social Security (F.I.C.A.) tax paid, etc. You file your individual return annually (Form 1040) showing your income, and itemizing your expenses if you so desire on Schedule A and certain other forms. Generally, your employer is required by federal and local laws to match certain deductions from your check towards your Social Security, State Disability Insurance (SDI), etc. If you work for one club or one leader on a long-term basis, Employee status is fine, simple, and easy to account for. The only problem comes when the bandleader is not conscientious in handling withholding or the payment of matching benefits. I know of several back-taxes suits and unemployment claims against irresponsible leaders. In self-defense, many bandleaders today choose not to handle their own payroll, but instead require their band members to de-

clare themselves as self-employed contractors. Another consideration is that, if you work on a short-term basis for several leaders (i.e., doing casuals), being pay-rolled by each of them can be complicated, since each must provide a W-2 at year end, compounding the risk of error in the final figuring at tax time.

**2. Partnership Status.** This sets up the whole band as a sort of "corporate entity" responsible for one total tax figure based on the total gross income and using the business-related expenses of all the members combined into one partnership-expense figure. The partnership must file an annual return (Form 1065) taking the gross income of the partnership, less the expenses of the partnership, and showing a final net income or loss. The partnership as a whole then distributes its net income (or loss) to each partner. Each individual partner receives a Form 1065 K-1 reporting his or her share of that net income. If the partnership has net income, each partner's share is added into the gross personal income figure on his or her personal return (Form 1040). As an individual, the partner will also file a Schedule E (Supplemental Income Schedule) showing the partnership income for income tax purposes, and a Schedule SE for Self-Employment tax, which is how a self-employed person pays towards Social Security. Partners may be required to file quarterly estimated tax returns.

As a member of the partnership, you would submit all your business-related expenses to your accountant. All expenses from all of the partners are combined to create the partnership expenses as a whole, and figured against the partnership's gross. The advantage is that even if you personally didn't have a lot of expenses, another member might and you stand to gain as a member of the partnership. There is a certain potential for problems in the preparation when one or more members of the partnership don't have their own record-keeping in good order, and the partnership as a whole must wait for (or lose) certain expense information. Also, if any member gives fraudulent information, it automatically affects all the other members, even though they may be unaware of the fraud. A partnership system in a band requires mutual cooperation and trust between all members.

**3. Sole Proprietor (Self-Employed Contractor) Status.** This sets you up as an individual business in and of yourself. You then contract out to the club, to the bandleader, or even to the other members of the band if they happen to be a partnership. You are totally responsible for reporting your gross income, your own expenses, and thus your net income or loss from your business. You'll do this on Schedule C of Form 1040. If your business has net income, it becomes part of your personal gross income on your personal return

The beginning of a new year is an excellent time to evaluate your current financial arrangements, with an eye to your income tax preparation. It's an opportunity to review last year in terms of your job status, your tax status, your expenses (how you kept track of them and how you chose to report them) and your personal method of organizing all of that information into an efficient and economically favorable accounting system. It may be a little late to make any changes for last year's tax return, but it's a great opportunity to make improvements and incorporate new ideas for this coming year.

I am not a certified public accountant, tax preparer, or representative of the IRS. *Modern Drummer* is not attempting to give you definitive or final information on your personal tax preparation. It is wise to seek professional assistance when preparing your taxes, and even when setting up your own personal tax accounting system. That assistance can come from someone you engage, such as a CPA or certified tax preparer, or in some cases directly from the IRS (in the form of reference publications, telephone question lines, etc.). The preparation of a tax system and the actual filing of tax returns are very individual and personal matters. Tax regulations are open to interpretation depending on facts and circumstances. You'll get different opinions from different preparers, and even from different IRS representatives. The best thing you can do is to find a professional person whose abilities and judgment you have confidence in, and whose attitude towards the preparation of your return reflects your own. Some are more aggressive than others in their interpretation of deductible expenses, depreciation factors, and other regulations that may save you tax dollars. What I hope to give you in this



(1040). If your business has a net loss, it can be set against other income when figuring your gross personal income total. This can be helpful if you have another job in addition to playing drums, as it reduces your personal gross income for reporting purposes. Being self-employed gives you the advantage of complete control over your financial arrangements. The people you contract to simply give you an accounting of the gross amount they pay you—usually a Form 1099 miscellaneous income report—or you keep your receipts and invoices and report the gross yourself. Then all of your business-related expenses are applied against that gross to get your net business income. If that is your only source of income, then that net business income becomes your gross personal income, which your personal expenses, including medical, deductible interest, child care, etc., are applied against. Net business profit is shown on Schedule C for income tax purposes, and once again you'll be liable for Self-Employment Tax as reported on Schedule SE. You may also be required to file quarterly estimated tax returns.

### Deductions

The interpretation of tax regulations pertinent to eligible deductions is a personal and individual matter. I don't hope to list all of the possible expenses you might be able to deduct. But the list that follows will give you some suggestions that might make you think about your own expenses, and also might offer some categories you may previously have overlooked. As far as the reporting of eligible expenses goes, there's no particular advantage to one job status versus the others. If you are employed by a bandleader, you may be able to itemize just as many deductions as you would if you were a self-employed contractor. It depends on what expenses you actually incur. If, however, you are self-employed, and especially if you are the bandleader and are paying out to others, you might be able to list some expenses that an employee would not, simply because you will be likely to incur some expenses that he or she would not, such as accounting, advertising, employee payroll taxes and benefits, etc.

The list of expenses below is for reference. Any given person may or may not be eligible for a given expense, depending on the job status, and how the expense can be justified. A very important rule of thumb is to keep your documentation for *everything*. Keep receipts, invoices, canceled checks, or anything that will verify your income and expenses. You need to be able to report your gross income accurately, and you must be able to document each and every reported expense. My philosophy has always been that it's better to go to the accountant with too many accumulated papers that will later be thrown away

as useless, than not to be able to verify a legitimate deduction. Take all receipts to a qualified tax preparer and let that person help you decide, if you aren't sure. The tax preparer should be up on the latest tax laws. You can always check directly with IRS as well. Here's the reference list:

1. *Accounting*. The nice thing about going to a tax preparer for expert assistance on your return is that this expense is deductible on the next year's return. If you pay an accountant for other services during the current tax year, that expense should be listed in the year paid.

2. *Advertising/Promotion*. If you pay to have flyers, table tents, business cards, mailers, photos or posters made, or for any other type of promotion for yourself or your band, that expense should be listed under this heading.

3. *Alarm Service*. If you have a business location, such as a storage garage used exclusively to store your equipment when not on stage, or perhaps a rehearsal studio, it is possible that any alarm equipment you install might be a deduction. Payment for a security service might also be a deductible expense. You might be able to list an alarm installed into your business vehicle, if you declare your vehicle as such.

4. *Answering Service*. If you pay for a service to take calls pertaining to booking work for you, whether as a band or a casual player, that should be listed. The purchase of an answering machine might also be listed, though only a percentage can be taken for business use if you also take personal calls on it.

5. *Auto and Truck*. If you declare a vehicle as a business vehicle, in whole or in part, then expenses relative to that vehicle should be listed (in the same proportion). There might be a depreciation factor to be listed, in addition to the interest on payments. Fuel and/or mileage to jobs can be taken by self-employed contractors going between their place of business (generally your home, in a drummer's case) and a job site. Employees, however, cannot deduct the cost of commuting to and from work. Seek advice on how that might apply to you.

6. *Bad Debts and Bad Checks*. If you are paid by check, you declare that check amount in your gross income, and then the check bounces, you can deduct that amount. If the bad check is discovered before you declare for that period and you simply do not include it in your gross income total, then you cannot declare it as a loss. Unfortunately, you cannot take a deduction for a bad check, even though you performed the work for which it was tendered.

7. *Bank Charges*. If you maintain a business account separate from your personal checking account, you may list all of the bank charges, including service charges, check printing, etc. If you do your business banking as part of your personal checking,

you might be able to figure a percentage of the bank charges as part of your business expenses, but this method is a little less exact.

8. *Commissions*. If you report your gross income before any agent or manager's commission is subtracted, you can report such commission as an expense. If you report your gross as the amount you actually made after the manager's cut, you cannot list the commission as an expense.

9. *Delivery Charges*. If you order some equipment and pay COD, you might be able to list the delivery charge as an expense.

10. *Dues*. Annual and work dues paid to any union (AFM, AGVA, AFTRA, etc.) or to any professional organization or society (ASCAP, BMI, PAS) should be listed.

11. *Education*. Private lessons or scholastic situations like P.I.T. would come under this heading, as would attendance at trade shows, clinics, seminars, PAS conventions, and the like requiring paid admission. Also included might be the purchase of music texts and *Music-Minus-One* records. There is a question of interpretation here regarding education to further or improve one's abilities in one's business, which is deductible, versus that education or training necessary to meet the basic requirements of one's profession, which is not.

12. *Employee Benefits*. If you are the bandleader acting as a self-employed contractor and handling the taxes for your employees, the benefits you provide for them, such as pension payments, medical plans, paid vacations, etc., would be shown here. The actual taxes you contribute on their behalf are listed elsewhere.

13. *Entertainment*. This would include any reasonable expense you incur to entertain potential clients, such as room managers, booking agents, etc. "Reasonable" is open to interpretation, and this is a common target for auditors.

14. *Equipment Rental*. This is fairly self-explanatory. If you need to rent equipment to do your work, that is a business expense. Rental of a drumset or a P.A. system would be a good example. Rental of a furniture dolly or trailer to move your equipment around from job to job would be another.

15. *Equipment—Miscellaneous*. This could be a large category if you are adding to your equipment quite a bit. "Equipment" refers to long-life items, such as drums, hardware, cymbals, amps, microphones, etc., and these are all considered depreciable items. The IRS defines a depreciable item as meeting the following three requirements: (1) It must be used in business or held for the production of income. (2) It must have a determinable life and that life must be longer than one year. (3) It must be something that wears out, decays,

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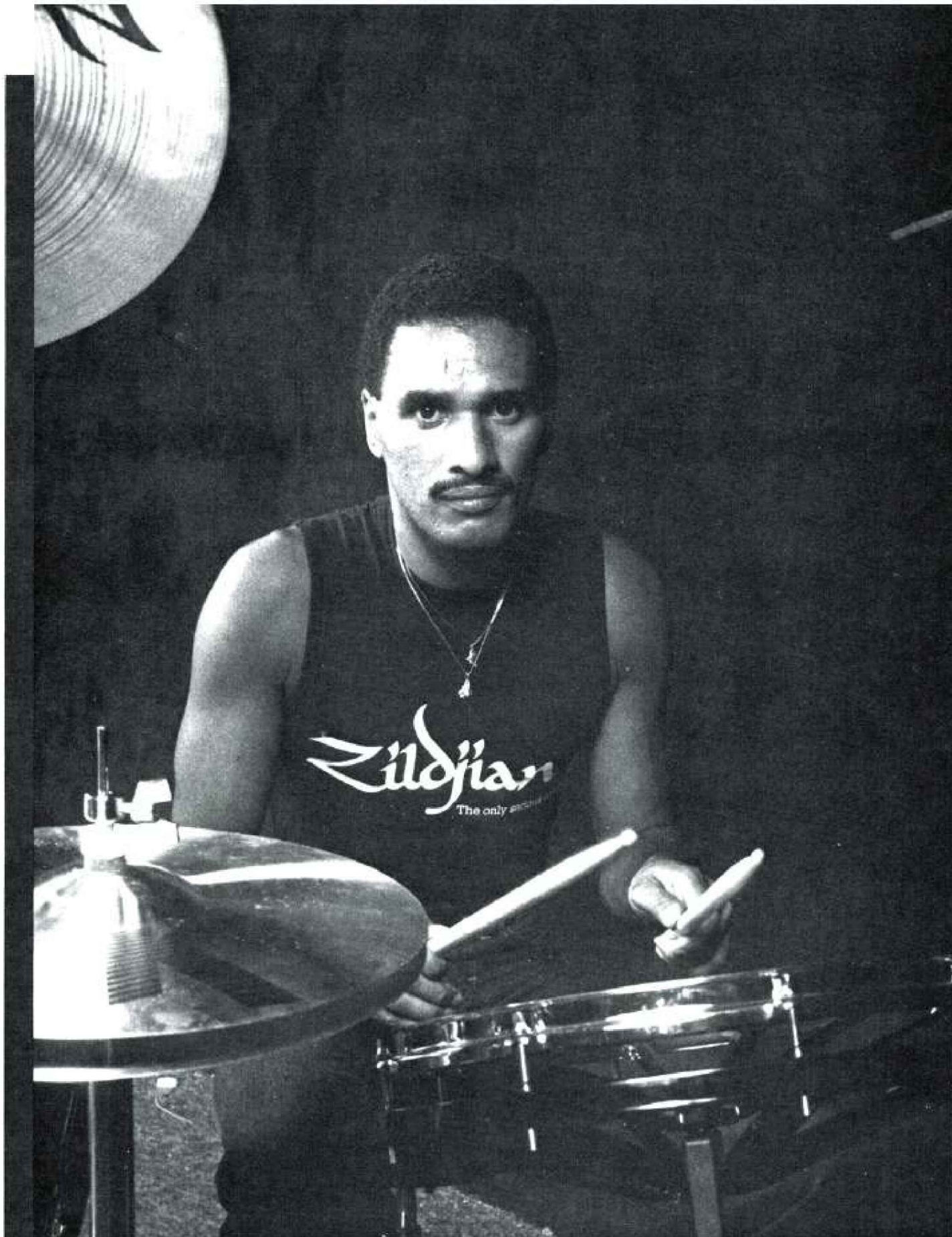


Photo by Paula Staron/Focus Photography

# JACKIE SANTOS:



**D**uke Ellington is credited with grouping all music into two categories: good and bad. And as humorous as it might be to envision record shops with all the records dumped into either a "good" bin or a "bad" bin, I don't foresee that change in the near future. Let's leave it up to our ears.

Marketing people need categories. There's nothing inherently wrong with that, and categorizing products is not isolated to the recording industry. You won't find guitars advertised in *Modern Drummer* and you won't find drums advertised in *Guitar Player*. That's good business sense. Marketing people and advertisers want to reach the people who are most apt to buy their product.

Still, the mercurial nature of music prevents it from being categorized as neatly as guitars or drums. I was an Assistant Manager at a record store in New York when Deodato's 2001 album was released. No one could decide which bin to keep it in. "Is it jazz? Is it rock?" and so it goes.

There are also marketing venues for black music and white music—soul charts and pop charts. Some bands cross over into both camps more than others.

I first met Jackie Santos when his group, Tavares, was playing the Copacabana in New York City. The band was excellent. A couple of weeks later Jackie came over to my apartment and we taped this interview. Jackie Santos doesn't really fit—to his credit—in any musical category. He's a serious student of music, with a sense of humor, commitment, justice, and an ability to play all styles of music well.

**JS:** I knew Tavares before they were Tavares—when they were called Chubby & The Turnpikes. I was 15 years old. Chubby Tavares had come in one night where I was working. He knew I'd been playing drums and he liked the way I played. He said, "Someday, you're going to be playing with me." I never thought it would be Tavares.

So, when the gig came up in '78, I was working at a club in Providence called The Engine Company. I'd put a group together to back up one of the other brothers, Victor Tavares. He wasn't with the five singers at that time. They called me right at the club and said, "Look, you want the gig?" I said, "I'll take the gig!" Two weeks later they flew me out to Mexico City. That was my first gig.

**SF:** Did Tavares have hit records out by that time?

**JS:** Oh yeah. They had "It Only Takes A

Minute." They'd just done that album, *Saturday Night Fever* with "More Than A Woman," and "Heaven Must Be Missing An Angel." That was their biggest hit. It went gold in every country.

**SF:** Did you know their previous drummer?

**JS:** Yeah. Bert Sims. He was doing all the old stuff. I've been doing extensive road traveling with Tavares since '78—Europe, South Africa and South America.

**SF:** Has there been a big turnover in Tavares since '78?

**JS:** Only the keyboard and bass players. We hire horns at every city or country we pull into. We never carry a horn section. We just have a rhythm section, the five Tavares brothers and two roadies.

**SF:** In any given year with Tavares, what's your schedule?

**JS:** My biggest years were '78, '79 and '80. I went everywhere. Things were happening. Tavares was still hot. They had *Saturday Night Fever*, "Heaven," was still popping. But in '81 and '82 it started to go down because we didn't have a strong hit. Capitol Records wasn't promoting the band. We had a lot of tunes out that were potential hits. Capitol never put the money behind us to support the tunes. The tunes made it because we supported them by working.

Tavares decided to change companies and management, and things are happening again. We're with RCA Records now. We've got a single called "Penny For Your Thoughts," which was nominated for a Grammy. Things are on the up now.

**SF:** What was the last manager not doing that caused the group to switch?

**JS:** It seemed like he took Tavares to a certain point and couldn't take it any further.

**SF:** Is the manager the go-between for Tavares and the record company?

**JS:** Exactly. He also gets gigs. We weren't working at all. I had five months off one time. We did six weeks in Africa and then there were five months without work.

**SF:** People believe that once you have an album out it's smooth sailing.

**JS:** It doesn't happen like that all the time. If you put out a hit, you've got to have two or three backing that one up to really make the money and do big tours. One record just doesn't make it. You sink all your money into that one record. Then you put out two or three more, and you start making the profits.

**SF:** Most of the money the band makes then is from tours instead of record sales?

**JS:** Well, it's a combination of the two. The tours promote the albums. Tavares doesn't pay me when we're not working.

That's why I've got two or three bands at home that I work with. I manage to keep busy in the Boston area. I've been doing some things at Mid-Guard Studios, Dimension Sound, Air Sound and Normandy Sound in Warren, Rhode Island. Normandy is one of the top studios on the East Coast. As far as clubs go, Boston is generally rock oriented now, but there are a few jazz rooms. I could never figure it out. I'd think that people would want to go out and hear some jazz. I'm not saying that rock is bad music. I love rock music. But it takes a certain amount of musicianship to play jazz and put your thoughts across.

**SF:** Tell me about the work you do with Armstead Christian.

**JS:** That's a great band: John Harrison on keyboards, Tim Ingles on bass, Sa Davis on congas and Armstead on vocals. We're putting together an excellent album. I'm also working on an album project with Australian artist Paul Almeida. His vocal ability is excellent, and he also plays bass and keyboards. When he came to the States, he asked me to contract the players for his album. Some of them include Steve Smith, Harvey Mason, John Harrison of Tavares, and Tim Ingles. We're looking for an album release in '84, followed by a world tour.

I like to work with as many different musicians as possible to grasp different feels. I've been playing with a lot of great musicians from home. The Steve Soares Quartet is an interesting group—all mainstream jazz. John Harrison and I have been playing together since '75. We were in one band called Bobby Green & Colius. At that time, I'd been working with a lot of disco bands. It was time for me to leave the disco and start playing some music that gave me some freedom of expression.

I was studying with Alan Dawson and couldn't utilize anything I was learning on disco gigs. I knew it was about time to utilize all I'd been learning, so I joined Bobby Green & Colius, and the band was great. Tim Ingles and Tim Landers were on bass. Tim Landers is with Billy Cobham now. Bobby Green was on sax and Danny Schwartz was on percussion. The group was monstrous.

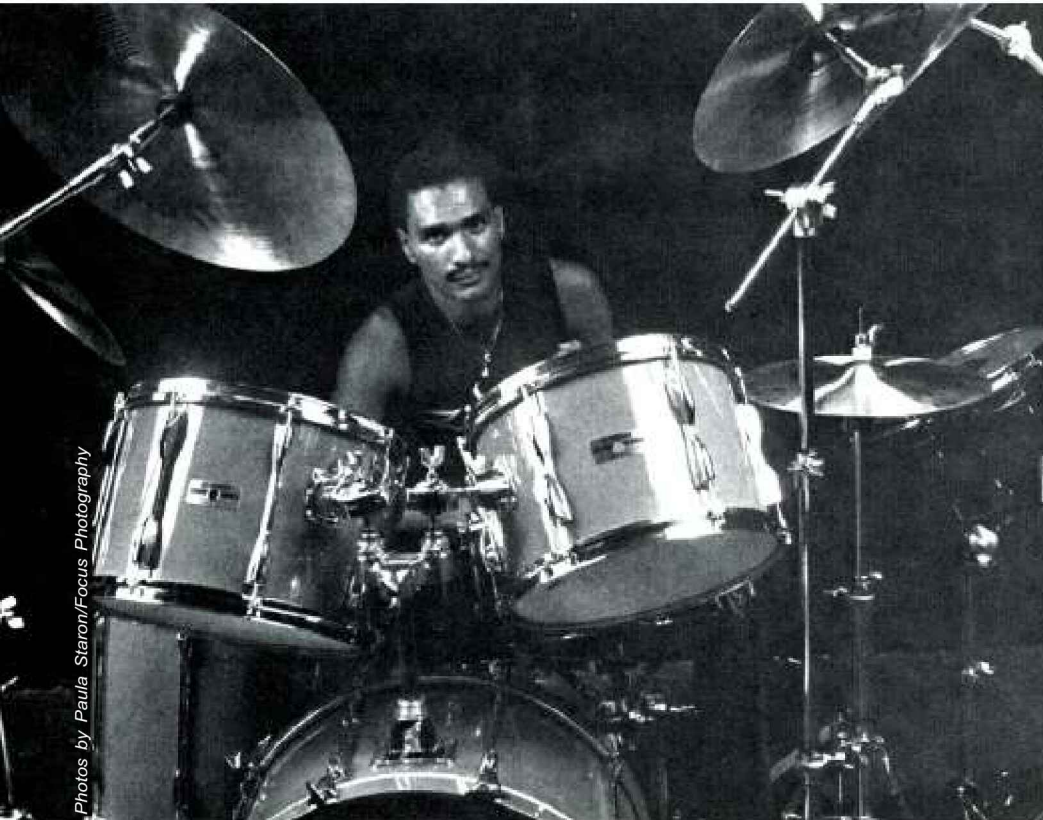
That gig was the best thing I ever did playing-wise. I used all the things I learned with Alan and just played music. Playing disco is four on the floor and "2" and "4" on the snare. I don't regret doing that but I wanted to play the other stuff, in other time signatures and just play some really hip music.

**SF:** How are you going to balance your future career?

# no labels, please

by Scott K. Fish





**JS:** I'd definitely like to get into more studio things and hopefully get into a situation like Harvey Mason and Gadd are in. I want to be able to do a lot of studio things, yet go out on the road when I want to. I don't want to *just* stay in the studio. I've done quite a few jingles, mostly for things back home. The more studio things I do, the better I get at it.

**SF:** What's the difference between working in the studio and playing live?

**JS:** It's a whole different approach. The pressure's different. I like to do things in two or three takes, and it takes a lot of concentration to be able to do that. In the studio, mistakes are money. It's a lot of discipline. If you're playing a funk tune, you've got to be able to make that thing rock solid, yet make it swing and feel good. And your reading ability has got to be up there.

When I first started playing, my reading was *never* there. But, since I've gotten together with Alan—I did five years with him—my reading is *there!* I can go in and do a studio gig without worrying about if the chart is going to be hard, or if I can handle it. I can handle it.

Armstead's music is pretty rough. He gives out charts. He writes all the music. He's a great player and a great vocalist. When he writes a drum chart, he's right on it. There are no mistakes. Alan's been the greatest influence in my musical career. His playing is phenomenal and he takes drumming to another dimension. He's my favorite player and a great friend also. He bases most of his teaching on four-way coordination—really great stuff. He had me

going through Ted Reed's *Syncopation* book 48 ways, like it was Ted Reed's *Syncopation* by Alan Dawson.

**SF:** What's the sense in learning four-way coordination if you're going to be concentrating on music that basically demands a "2" and "4" backbeat?

**JS:** That stuff is good to have in your back pocket so that if you do need it, it's there. Half of the things you learn with Alan you're probably not going to use, but when you do a gig that calls for it, it's there. It gives you a lot more confidence than *just* being able to play "2" and "4."

I can go on a Tavares gig and groove the gig; go back home and do a swing gig, a fusion gig, and cover all styles. A musician should be as versatile as possible. You're more valuable that way. You'll make more money. You'll be on call more. When I go back home, I get called for all kinds of gigs. When I'm with Tavares, I collect a salary, but when I go back home, I can make a living also.

**SF:** Does Alan work on ear training?

**JS:** I didn't go through any ear training courses with him. It was primarily drumset playing. I wanted to take up vibes. I was taking an hour lesson with him and I wanted to devote all my time to my tubs. But I want to get into vibes and get my ear happening.

**SF:** Doesn't he train your ear by having you play drumset melodically?

**JS:** Oh yeah, and he also makes you aware of the forms of tunes.

**SF:** Did you know that before you started studying with Alan?

**JS:** No. It gives you a better outlook on how the tune should go. Plus, when you're soloing off the melody of the tune, you come up with more ideas. It's not just chops or a blundering of notes. It's playing *musically*. You've got that melody going in your head and the melody's your time. Therefore, you can take your licks across the bar line and still be there. Knowing song form is very vital to your drumming. Otherwise you will just play the tune but you won't know where it's going.

**SF:** Here's a morale question. You've been with Tavares since '78 touring all over the place. Yet, when the band goes in to make a record, they use studio musicians. They used John Robinson on the last album. How does that make you feel, and how do the singers keep your morale up?

**JS:** Well, in the last few months, they've been trying to keep it up! I've been with Tavares for five years now and I've been trying to get into the studio. And I can handle it.

See, Butch Tavares is the only brother who writes. But they hire writers and producers. If you were producing a band, you'd want to use the rhythm section that you were comfortable with. You wouldn't want to hire somebody if you didn't know what type of feel they had or how they could handle studio situations. Producers have their own people. It's a hard thing to crack, but I'm on the new *Words and Music* album. Tavares has a great rhythm section of John Harrison on keyboards, Kenny Ramus on bass and Hank Smith on guitar. The band is great, and they can definitely go in and cut the albums. It just needs that initial shot to do it.

It's a hard thing. You're doing the gigs, you're doing the road stint, you're doing the rehearsing and you *want* to do the albums. When the album's not there, it kind of brings you down because you know you're capable of going in and doing whatever John Robinson's doing.

**SF:** If you've been playing the songs on the gig, John Robinson's not going to go in and play it 180 degrees different from what you were doing.

**JS:** Exactly. You're just playing the chart down, and how many ways can you play a rhythm and blues chart? It just takes interpretation and feel. Our rhythm section *knows* what Tavares wants, so it would make it easier to work with them in the studio.

**SF:** You're backing up five singers; none of them are instrumentalists. You were telling me about onstage situations where one singer will be telling you to bring up the volume at the exact moment another singer



# Latin Funk Tips

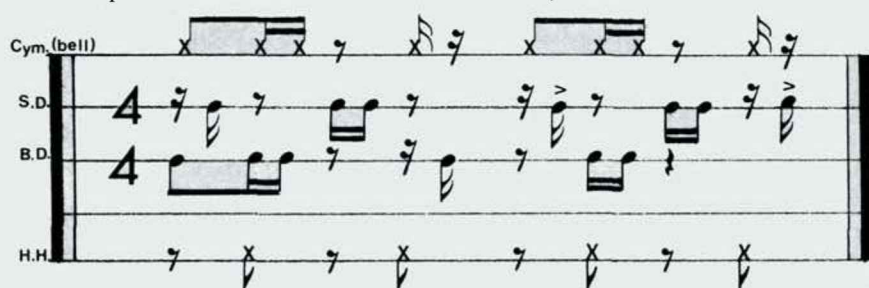
by Jackie Santos

I'd like to introduce you to a rhythm I call Latin funk. The name suggests the type of feel. Though the rhythm below is for right hand on cymbal and left on snare drum, the pattern may also be reversed (R.H. snare, L.H. cymbal).

A couple of other ideas for playing the Latin funk beat:

- 1) R.H. on hi-hat, L.H. on snare, open hi-hat on the "and" of "2" and "4."
- 2) Play top two lines on cowbell and snare drum.

Be sure to get a good balance between all four limbs. Practice at different tempos until the pattern becomes comfortable and has a nice, relaxed feel.



is telling you to play quieter. How do you handle that?

**JS:** Oh, I get that all the time. Working with singers is hard. Period. They're temperamental. Now I've got *five* of them. We've done concerts where one of the brothers will want the tune done quicker.

I've got a pretty fair knowledge of where the tune should be, but the adrenalin's flowing different every night. One brother might say, "Pick it up." So I pick the tune up. And then on the other side a brother will say, "Bring it back down again." Then another will say, "No. Leave it right where it's at." So you don't know where to go! It takes a special kind of drummer to do a Tavares gig. When I first got in the band it was nerve-wracking, but I adjusted.

**SF:** What do you do when you get three different instructions for the tempo of a song?

**JS:** I just leave it right where it's at. The tempos are never really that far off. Even if it's a hair slow or fast, it's never so far off that we can't groove with it. But you've got to keep your eyes peeled all the time. I've got to break out of playing with my eyes closed!

But, as a band, Tavares is great. I had a lot of chops and I was into playing a lot of notes at one time. Doing the Tavares gig settled me down a bit in the areas of discipline and being able to lock in "2" and "4" and groove. It's a good thing to have that, and yet, it's good to have the chops together to play a fusion gig or a jazz gig. I love to groove. And Tavares puts out some

great music. When you've got a band that feels "1" at the same time and can make it pop, it makes it that much easier. The Tavares brothers are all great singers. Great harmony. It's an interesting gig.

**SF:** Has your ability to keep time always been good?

**JS:** I used to have a problem rushing. Again, when you try to play so many notes in one bar, you're going to tend to rush. I was definitely into flash playing. My first inspiration was Buddy Rich. I used to listen to all his albums and I *was* into playing a lot of notes. It just didn't happen; my timing was never there. I had to put half my chops in my back pocket and settle down and concentrate on grooving.

**SF:** What's the secret of keeping good time? How is it developed?

**JS:** Well, Alan Dawson had me working with a metronome a lot. Just being conscious of time and hitting beat "1" right on it. If you do that, then it automatically settles in. Your timing is there after a while. I don't like to work with a metronome too much because your time could become mechanical. But a fair amount of it would be good.

**SF:** There's the argument that working with a metronome isn't realistic because you don't have it on the bandstand.

**JS:** Yeah. You've got to be flexible. I used to practice on grooves, just make it swing as much as possible and lay right in there with and without a metronome. Use the metronome to develop your time *sense*,

*continued on page 90*



Photo by Paula Slaron/Focus Photography





## Practicing With Records

When I was a young drummer, practicing with records was very difficult. Headphones and stereo sets were not available. I would turn up the volume on my small record player to the point where I could hear it over the volume of my drumset. I must admit that this was not a very satisfactory way to practice. I could not play naturally and still hear the music.

I have heard the comment that "it is not good to practice with records. You should not follow the band. You should, instead, establish the time yourself." However, Phil Upchurch, the great guitarist and bass player, has a different view. (Phil also plays drums surprisingly well.) He feels that too many young drummers play without listening to what is going on around them. Phil's attitude is that a good drummer has to play *with* other musicians. Practicing with records can be an excellent way to develop and improve listening skills. It, in turn, helps you learn to play

with the rest of the rhythm section.

Practicing with the same record a number of times gives you a chance to learn the song and the arrangement. As you learn a song, your "feel" for that particular groove should improve.

I've had students who practiced with the radio. The problem here is two-fold. First of all, you cannot go back and rehearse a particular part of the song. You only have one chance at it. Secondly, there are a lot of good songs of all styles available on records that are rarely played on most radio stations, especially AM radio.

One of the problems of practicing without records is that the skills of accompanying other musicians may be neglected. Playing fast tempos is a good example. Technical practicing will develop good overall technique, but the coordination required to play fast tempos is somewhat specialized.

When I joined Joe Bushkin's trio some

years ago, I was faced with the problem of playing fast as well as softly. I knew of Joe's playing and I prepared myself for the audition by practicing with a number of fast records, using both sticks and brushes. At the audition, Joe and I played alone, without even a bass player. This made it tougher for me. I passed the audition and got the job. I was very glad that I was prepared and had practiced with records.

### TIPS ON PRACTICING WITH RECORDS

1. Studio recordings as a rule are steadier in terms of tempo than live recordings. People do get excited in front of an audience and tempos will vary. In a studio, the musicians have an opportunity to do a number of takes until everything is just right, including the time. Therefore it is best, overall, to practice with studio recordings.

2. Select various tunes from a number of albums and record them on tape. This eliminates the hassle of changing records and disturbing the practice.

3. If playing with the sound of another drummer disturbs you, turn the bass up and the treble down. You will hear more bass and can concentrate on really "locking in" with the bass player.

4. If you have difficulty staying in time with the record, your time may not be too steady. Playing with records can improve your sense of tempo and can teach you to "keep it in the pocket."

5. Practice with a variety of styles, tempos and grooves. Don't only practice to recordings by your favorite drummer. Don't get stuck on only one kind of music, especially when you are on the way up. Learn to be flexible and versatile.

6. Update your practice tapes every few months. Pretty soon you will have a small library of practice tapes. When you practice, alternate the tapes according to what you are working on at the time.

7. Practicing with records is one way to learn and to improve. It is not a substitute for playing with other musicians. In fact, it is preparation for playing with other musicians. All forms of practicing should prepare you to play well with a group or band.

One last thought! When you practice with good recordings, you are practicing with the world's best musicians. This has to help you.



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Pictured: Tommy Snyder from "Godiego"

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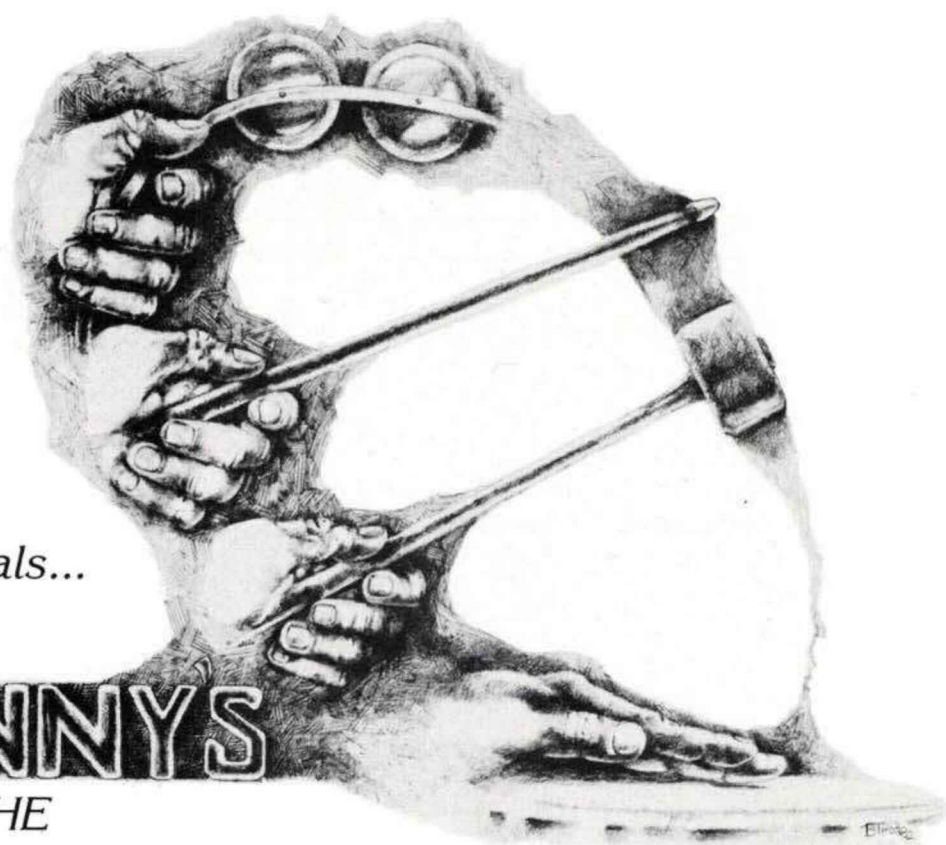
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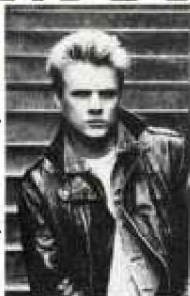


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# ROCK PERSPECTIVES

Photo by Anton Corbijn



## Style and Analysis: U2's Larry Mullen

Larry Mullen plays drums with the very popular three-piece band, U2. Larry and bassist Adam Clayton lay down a solid foundation for the guitar. U2 is a prime example of a drummer and bass player working together as a unit. The bass drum and bass guitar often play the same rhythmic patterns. While they may be simple quarter- or 8th-note patterns, the rhythms are always driving.

The first four examples are taken from the hit album *War*. On the first example, "Sunday Bloody Sunday," Larry plays a 16th-note hi-hat rhythm with accents on the snare. This is underscored by a steady quarter-note bass drum. The feeling here is driving, yet relaxed. The rhythm is allowed to "breathe," as opposed to being played stiffly.

### 1. Intro 3 times

Transcription of the drum part for the Intro of "Sunday Bloody Sunday." The notation shows three staves: H.H. (Hi-Hat), S.D. (Snare Drum), and B.D. (Bass Drum). The hi-hat plays a continuous 16th-note pattern with accents on the snare. The snare and bass drum play a steady quarter-note pattern. The transcription is labeled "2nd Verse" and shows a repeat sign at the end.

Transcription #2 is taken from "Seconds." The bass drum is not muffled. This open sound, along with a loose, fat sounding snare, gives a fullness to the drums.

### 2.

Transcription of the drum part for "Seconds." The notation shows three staves: H.H. (Hi-Hat), S.D. (Snare Drum), and B.D. (Bass Drum). The hi-hat plays a continuous 16th-note pattern. The snare and bass drum play a steady quarter-note pattern. The transcription shows a repeat sign at the end.

This next one is from the hit single "New Years Day." This is a driving song where the bass drum and bass guitar work together.

Transcription of the drum part for "New Years Day." The notation shows three staves: H.H. (Hi-Hat), S.D. (Snare Drum), and B.D. (Bass Drum). The hi-hat plays a continuous 16th-note pattern. The snare and bass drum play a steady quarter-note pattern. The transcription is labeled "3." and shows a repeat sign at the end. Below the drum staves, there is a staff for "Bass Rhythm" showing a steady quarter-note pattern.

Number 4 is "Drowning Man." Larry plays an open bass drum and brushes on the snare. He plays a repetitive three-bar phrase in 4/4, while the bass plays a two-bar phrase in 6.

Transcription of the drum part for "Drowning Man." The notation shows three staves: H.H. (Hi-Hat), S.D. (Snare Drum), and B.D. (Bass Drum). The hi-hat plays a continuous 16th-note pattern. The snare and bass drum play a steady quarter-note pattern. The transcription is labeled "4." and shows a repeat sign at the end. Below the drum staves, there is a staff for "Bass" showing a steady quarter-note pattern.



The next three examples are from the *October* album. "Fire" shows all three instruments working together rhythmically.

On "With A Shout," the beat is played on the toms and again works well with the bass guitar.

5.

6.

On "I Threw A Brick Through A Window," the rhythm stays very basic, while the snare shifts the accents.

7.



Pictured at a recent MI graduation are (l to r) GIT instructor, Howard Roberts, PIT instructors, Joe Porcaro and Casey Scheuerell, GIT graduates Sam Lee and Frank Gambale, PIT graduates Par Westblad and Neil Symonette, BIT graduate Oscar Cartaya, GIT instructor Tommy Tedesco, BIT graduate Tom Tucciarone and PIT instructor Ralph Humphrey.

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## Teaching Roll Pulsations

Over the years, I've had many students complain about their inability to fit different bass drum rhythms with their snare drum rolls. The problem is usually caused by a lack of knowledge of roll pulsations. Most drummers use roll pulsations all the time, but are just not aware of them.

A roll pulsation is the foundation of the single-hand motions on which the long roll is based, and is dependent upon the tempo of the piece being played. For instance, let's take a look at the following measure in 4/4 time:

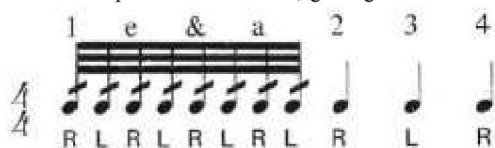


How many strokes or taps would you say fit into the quarter-note roll above? If you said "Nine," you would probably be in the majority. The nine *would fit*, but it could also be played as a five-, a seven-, a thirteen-, or even a seventeen-stroke roll!

Let's assume we're playing at a tempo where a quarter note equals approximately 60 beats per minute. This is a rather slow tempo so you'll need quite a few taps to fill up the space from one to two. If we use a roll pulsation based on 32nd notes we will have this:



Now, if we put a slash across each note, it means that each note will be played as a multiple-bounce stroke, giving us the following:



If you count the number of notes, you'll notice that we have a seventeen-stroke roll.

Let's suppose we move our tempo up a little so that a quarter note equals 80. Since our tempo is a bit faster, we won't need as many notes to fill up the space. We can now base our roll on this pulsation:



This is a 16-note triplet roll pulsation. Let's put some slashes across each note to come up with the following:



Let's now move our tempo up a few more notches to where a quarter note equals about 112. Again, since our tempo is faster, we need fewer notes.



Now we're going to arrive at the nine-stroke roll mentioned earlier.



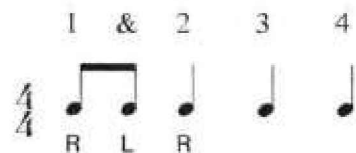
At a tempo where the quarter note equals about 144, we'll use a roll pulsation based on the 8th-note triplet. It will look like this:



Putting the slashes across the notes gives us this:



Our final tempo will be quarter note equals about 200. At this tempo, the notes will be going by like signs on the expressway at 80 miles per hour, so be extremely careful with your reading. Our pulsation is short and sweet. It looks like this:



With the slashes, we now have:



Do you see what we've done? After starting out with a seventeen-stroke roll, we've moved our tempo up to a speed where the only roll that fits is a five stroke. Knowing about roll pulsations should also make it easier for you to coordinate different bass drum rhythms with your snare drum roll.

Students involved in Drum Corps or Marching Band should have a good understanding of roll pulsations. Any time there are two or more drummers rolling, it's important that they use the same pulsation. Otherwise, the sound is comparable to playing two adjacent notes on a piano. There's a clash.

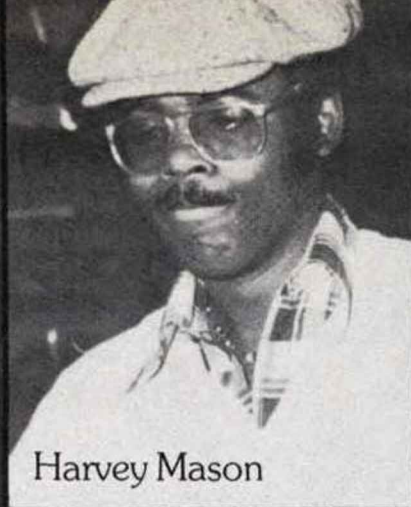
Students who have problems mastering roll pulsations should reverse the order in which they're written. Start with Example 5 and work backwards. Starting with a shorter group of notes may prove easier. Practice the routines slowly until they feel comfortable.







Peter Erskine



Harvey Mason



Steve Smith



Vinnie Colaiuta

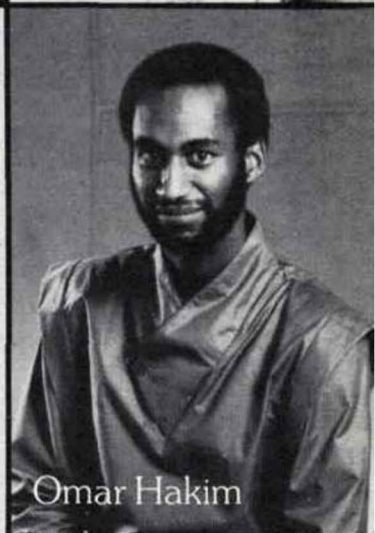


Denny Carmassi

**“What do  
these  
great  
artists  
have in  
common?”**



Akira Tana



Omar Hakim



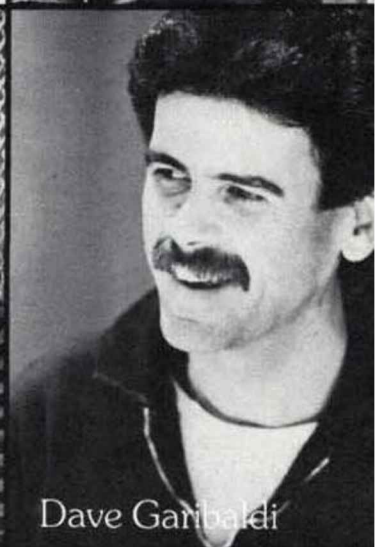
Rod Morgenstein



Danny Gottlieb



Gregg Bissonette



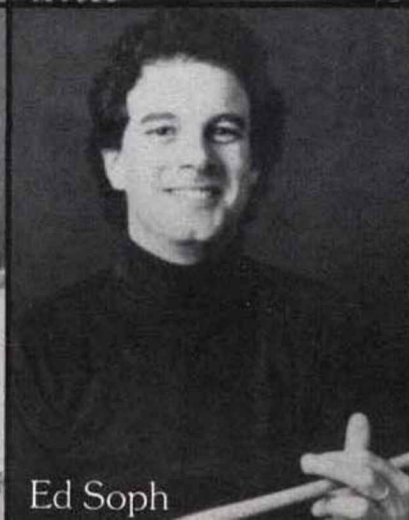
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## The Cruise-Ship Drummer

Working as a drummer on a cruise ship can offer a combination of the best attributes of road and location jobs. In addition to experiencing the luxury of not having to pack and unpack instruments and suitcases more than once, you will have the opportunity to visit different and exotic places on an almost daily basis. One cruise company may boast the greatest number of stops per cruise, another may offer places to escape civilization, while a third might offer three- or four-day gambling festivals. Many naturally beautiful destinations are selected as ports of call, and despite the dearth of man-made entertainment and distractions, some of the most enduring memories come from these remarkable places.

### GETTING WORK

The best way to obtain a job on a cruise ship is by recommendation. If this is not possible, the most efficient way of getting involved in this type of work is to visit the

cities where cruise companies have offices, and show the entertainment directors that you are interested and available. Of course, this doesn't always work because some of the major cruise companies hire foreign players exclusively. American musicians have lost favor with many cruise companies, partly due to the companies' ability to hire good, reliable foreign players. However, the cities where one is most likely to find employment are Miami, Fort Lauderdale, New York, Los Angeles, New Orleans and San Francisco. The salary offered by most companies is comparable to the salary offered by clubs, with room and board provided in addition to the basic pay.

Some ships hire self-contained rock groups for the younger cruisers (late teens through 40's). However, the majority of passengers are a little older than that simply because cruises can be expensive. The exceptions to this, of course, are the activity-filled "singles" cruises which appeal primarily to the 20- to 30-year-old age group. The average cruise is a week long; however, the length of a cruise can range from three weeks to three months.

### ON THE JOB

The bottom line for a drummer is the ability to play shows which differ from ship to ship. On one ship, the band may be expected to play everything from disco to Debussy during the course of a single show. On another, Broadway-style shows tailored to cruise audiences may prevail. The kinds of entertainers to be accompanied can vary from recognizable names to the most amateurish imaginable.

Possibly the most interesting and demanding shows are the musical acts. Though the charts are not always first rate, the performers *do* know what they want and will usually express themselves musically. After playing these acts once or twice, the music soon becomes entertaining for the band, as well. Rehearsals for the evening's show are generally handled during the daytime hours when the ship is docked, and the passengers are in town or sunning themselves on the deck.

Nearly all ship activity schedules have game nights when background music appropriate to races or party games is needed. Background music is also necessary for crew nights when staff members

display their talents. The cruise director often relies on the band for the success of certain activities. Songs relevant to the occasion are essential. Important ingredients of a masquerade, for instance, are the musicians' speed and cleverness in matching tunes to costumes. Also, on the night before arrival at, say, a Caribbean port, calypso- or reggae-style music is needed to create a timely ambience.

### PROS AND CONS

Since all situations have good and bad elements, one should be aware of the problems inherent in this life-style. People who cannot tolerate confinement should *not* consider sailing. Alcoholism is exacerbated, personality differences are amplified, and cruise-ship companies usually have rules on the books, some of which clearly define a musician's social status off the bandstand. Remember, a ship at sea is a self-contained community. It is understandably important to have regulations in order to run a ship, but some companies have a tendency to apply them quite strictly. Be prepared for possible restrictions against fraternizing with passengers, or in some cases, even talking to them. Certain decks may be out of bounds as well. The more liberal companies are certainly more pleasurable to work for.

People reminiscing about their vacation also often mention the abundance and quality of food as the focal point of their cruise-ship experience. Being around all that good food does entice one to add inches to the waistline, so good sense should reign.

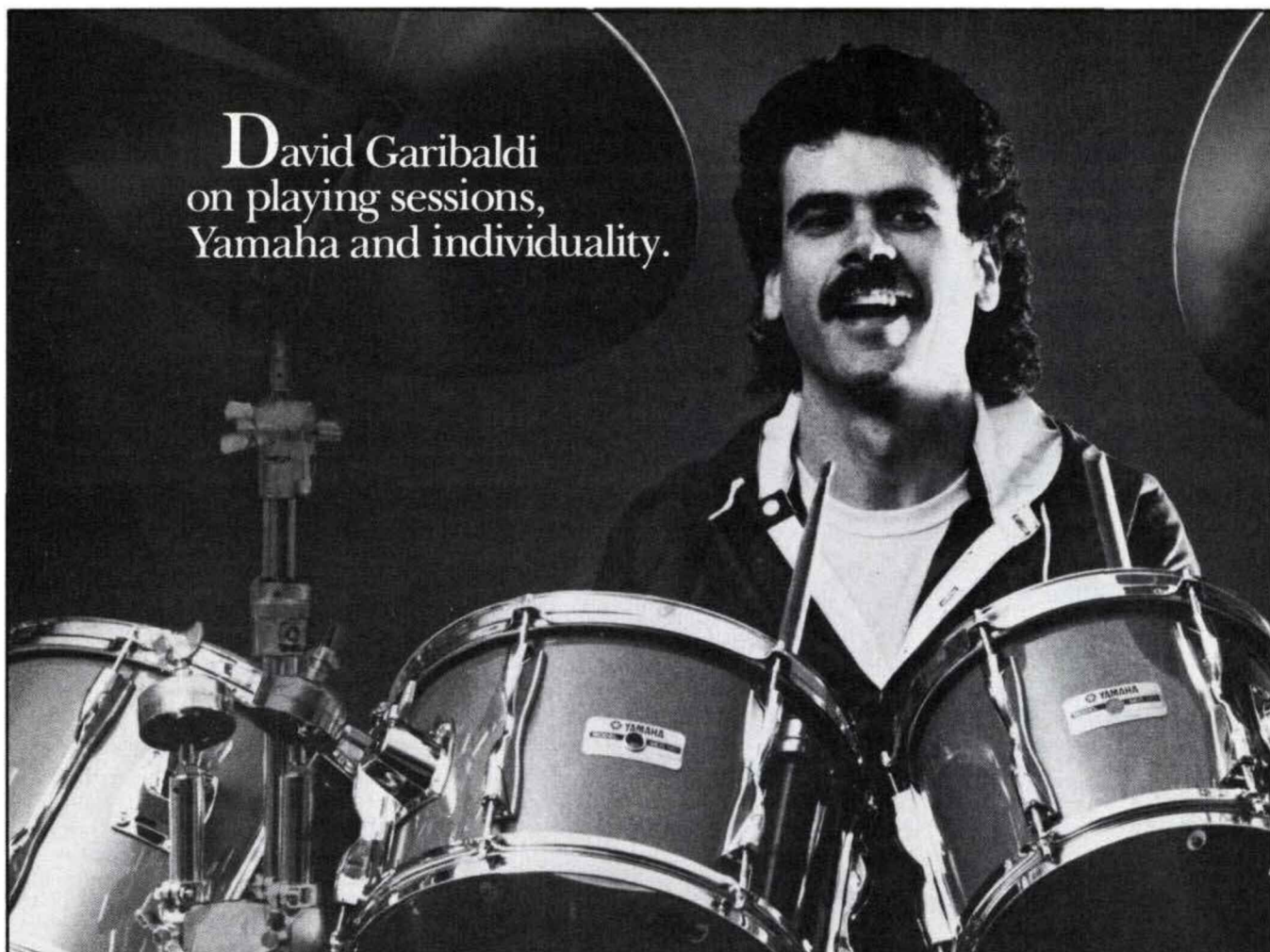
On the brighter side, there are many non-scheduled hours during each day which allow ample time for practice and study. It's easy to take out a practice pad in your room, unless your roommate objects. Also, the three or four lounges on the ship allow access to drumsets almost all the time. Valuable set practice is often possible unless it interferes with lectures, films, bingo, afternoon teas, arts and crafts, or of course, show rehearsals.

The cruise-ship drummer often has the very best of both worlds, since this situation combines practice, playing a variety of music daily, and obtaining valuable musical experience with sun, fresh air, and the opportunity to travel the world in style. Bon voyage!





David Garibaldi  
on playing sessions,  
Yamaha and individuality.



"There's a way to play in the studio and there's a way to play live. When I first moved to L.A. and started doing sessions, guys would tell me that I sounded like a 'live' player. It's in the approach, because with live work you can play a lot busier than you can on tape. You have to get right to the point when you record, especially for the commercial type of recording that goes on out here. They want you to play the right stuff and that doesn't mean playing a lot.


"Tower of Power was built to a large degree on the way that I played. Working with people here, I had to learn to turn that kind of stuff off and play what the *music* required.

"Of course, there're fundamental skills you should have: you should be able to read really well and it's also important to know how to make your instrument sound right. Getting a good recording sound with your instrument is almost more important than reading these days. And you have to spend a long time working on different things so you can get comfortable with your abilities. You have to persevere and stay faithful to what you're doing."

"I really like the quality of Yamaha's drums.

The sound of the snare and bass drum works for everything I do. The wood snare drum is a knockout. It combines the warmth of the wood sound with the brightness of a metal drum — so you get the best of both worlds. The bass drum is fantastic, really thick-sounding, with a lot of punch. Very nice for recording and I've also been using the drums for playing live around town."

"You're going to reach a point where you get tired of playing what everybody else can do, and you're going to have to come up with some things of your own if you want longevity. Music is an art form and it's expressive in that you can say whatever you want. You should never feel boxed into a corner where you have to play a certain way just to work. There's a handful of drummers everybody wants to play like, and they are the 'individuals.'"

For more information and to receive Yamaha's *Drum Lines* newspaper, write to Yamaha Musical Products, P.O. Box 7271, 3050 Breton Rd. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49510.  **YAMAHA**

# YAMAHA SYSTEM DRUMS





Photo by Charles Stewart

*Papa Jo Jones continued from page 13*

off the job. And here would come another drummer who would push me off the job. Then I met the greatest drummer who ever lived, who made me what I am today, a fellow by the name of Manzie Campbell, who played with the Siles Green show. He could take one stick and roll ten blocks with a field drum, just with one hand. He could make a roll that was like tissue paper.

"I was Chicken Little. I was smarter than they were. Don't tell me nothing. Now I have met people that traveled the whole world. They've been everywhere, and they tried to tell me, but I knew. Mr. Manzie Campbell told me how to learn to play drums, because I was trying to emulate the popular drummers in the territory I was in, and as far as I was concerned, this was my world. When I got to Omaha, Nebraska, I had made it. I wasn't going to go nowhere. Years later I did a *faux pas*. I made a boo boo. I did something wrong and this man, Manzie Campbell, came up and sat down at the drums where I was playing and he said, 'Son, you might go far. Don't make this mistake no more.'"

During this period Jo had occasion to make his first recording with Lloyd Hunter's serenaders in Chicago in June of 1931, for Vocalion, producing the titles "Sensational Mood" and "Dreaming 'Bout My Man" (with Victoria Spivey). These recordings stand as the very first examples of a drummer making melodic,

syncopated use of tom-toms on record (although Gene Krupa had used toms on his recording of "Dinah" with Red Nichols in 1929, he was still using them primarily for playing time, whereas Jo was beginning to use them for fills and orchestral colors, jumping in and out of time, pausing only to catch a cymbal in his hand for splash effects). "We were trying to play like McKinney's Cotton Pickers on those records, and I'll always be grateful to Mr. Henri Wood for the exposure he gave me to arranging, orchestration and voicing with that ten-piece band. He was really something. That man was always writing on the road, without a piano. We'd be doing these one-nighters, and he'd be using the bed as a piano, just writing and singing. I thought he was going crazy, but I watched him and he conveyed many important lessons to me in ear training.

"I learned from everyone, and I always tried to hang out and pick up as much information as I could. You had to play every kind of music with these territory bands, so I would find these guys that knew. Ely Rice and his son Sylvester Rice would put on a show, and they had all these bells up there. They had dancers and singers too. Sylvester Rice would conduct his father's orchestra, and he was the cause for me narrowing down and concentrating on the drums. During that time, I learned how to play a waltz by fooling around with Lawrence Welk in Minneapolis. You think Lawrence Welk is funny young man? Let

me tell you something. Back then Lawrence Welk had the biggest little band in America, which played from Omaha to Wichita Falls and stayed booked. Once we had a battle of the bands—Lawrence Welk and Bennie Moten. We had 15 pieces; he had six. After we got through playing, Lawrence calls out "Tiger Rag," you know what I mean, and points to this cat who gets up and solos on two trumpets! That was his way of telling us, 'Here's some "Tiger Rag" for you.'"

Of course, today we remember Lawrence Welk mainly as a prime-time curiosity, while the music that Jo Jones made with Count Basie and company is still being re-discovered by new listeners. However, it is unlikely that we would have heard any of these influential sounds if it wasn't for the influence of two very great leaders, Bennie Moten and Walter Page. Certainly, as Jo pointed out to me on several occasions, there were an incredible number of great musicians and bands centered around Kansas City during this period; veterans of dance halls, ballrooms and competitive jam sessions; names like George E. Lee, Buster Smith, and Dick Wilson that elicit a fond smile of remembrance among those who were there, while drawing a blank among contemporary audiences. But by every account, the spiritual and artistic influence of Moten and Page has been enduring.

"Bennie Moten was the greatest band-leader that ever lived," Jo asserts without qualification. "He covered the whole sphere." In fact, in one of his more self-critical moments, while listening to a Count Basie version of "Moten's Swing," Jo characterized his own band as "a poor imitation of life, and they knew it, but they were for real. Got the right people to imitate.

"Now Walter Page had a band, The Blue Devils, that was the greatest band I ever heard in my life. Walter Page was my son and my father. He was the father of us all. Without Walter Page, you would never have heard of Hot Lips Page. You would never have heard of Jimmy Rushing. You would never have heard of Basie. You would never have heard of Lester Young. You would never have heard of Charlie Parker. You would never have heard of Jo Jones. Walter Page taught me how to phrase on the drums, taught me how to drop bombs . . . a beautiful man. The Big 'Un, Walter Page. Now Walter Page had the Blue Devils, and eventually Jimmy Rushing left him to join Bennie Moten; then Basie, then Hot Lips Page; then by 1932 Walter Page joined Moten, too. When Walter Page gave up his band and joined Moten along with Dan Minor and Buster Smith and what-have-you . . . this is why the Basie rhythm section was so special. Because Bennie Moten played "1" and "3." Walter Page played on "2" and "4"; but when they wedded together you



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had "1, 2, 3, 4." The two mediums met, from the "1" and the "3" against the "2" and the "4," like a bouncing ball. Mac Washington was the drummer with Moten, and what they call 'bombs' now, he made 'stumbles.' He made that connection from the interlude to the chorus. Nobody could drop in the bucket like him.

"When Bennie would hear the band all messed up, the minute he put his hands on the piano—just like Fats Waller, plump!—the whole thing settled. When Bennie Moten sat down that's the only time I heard piano. I didn't hear no piano from Basie and Bus Moten. They was too busy drinking and hanging out with chicks. And Bennie would sit down and say 'All right, fellows.' And when he sat down that band became something else."

Jo recalled that Bennie Moten and his Orchestra came to New York City in 1930 and 1932 and upset everybody. But the economic pressures were such that many of his top players were beginning to seek out more gainful employment, and the handwriting was already on the wall for his organization when Bennie died suddenly. Meanwhile, in the heart of the Depression, Jo Jones was playing with a variety of territory bands, and at least one group of musicians in a ten-piece band where "We all changed uniforms, but it's the same people and the same book. Whoever the gangster thought should be the leader, said 'Fellows, we got a place to go.' And you just went and changed your uniform. We worked like that for three years."

Jo found his way to Kansas City by way of Joplin, Missouri, and the Tommy Douglass Band, where he replaced Jesse Price on drums and sang. "Tommy Douglass, you better believe, played saxophone and clarinet, and what Mr. Benny Carter was to the East, Tommy Douglass was to the Midwest. He had a great big open sound.

"I joined them in Joplin. The job went out. I came to Kansas City, played piano and had my vibraphone. I wasn't going to play any drums, and I only played two jobs in six weeks. I was playing a special dance with Tommy Douglass, and Walter Page came up and sat in the band. He said, 'How would you like to join Count Basie's band?' I said, 'Sure.' I played one night and quit.

"I played Topeka, Kansas, and they played 'After You've Gone.' When Hot Lips Page got through playing, Lester Young stood up and took the second chorus, and my heart went in my mouth—I died. I went downstairs and refused to accept my money. I said, 'I'm going back to Omaha to go back to school,' and Basie begged me to stay. But that band had destroyed me. I said, 'I'm not staying; I can't play with your band Mr. Basie.' They had me in the washroom and wouldn't let me



out. I said, 'I'm picking up my drums because I'm going back to school. I won't be playing in no band.' And Hershel Evans said, 'You're crazy. You can play in this band.' So I said, 'All right Mr. Basie, I will play with you for two weeks until you find a drummer.' That lasted 14 years and I'm still with him."

Jo joined Basie on St. Valentine's Day, 1934. He recounted how Basie pawned his bass drum for gasoline so they could make a gig at Sam Baker's in Little Rock, Arkansas. "I had a bass drum, about a 26 x 5, but I couldn't get the pliers to tighten it up. So they stopped the band, held up the whole dance, and I had to haul it off the bandstand. I went over to a great big pot-bellied stove to heat it so it could tighten up and I could finish the dance. I had a cymbal that's like a pot, pan and skillet. Jimmy Rushing used to sit around and say, 'That sounds good.' We were supposed to get \$14 a week and I worked three weeks before Basie gave me \$5. I pulled out my pistol and I was going to shoot everybody. I said, 'What is this?' He said, 'Well, you took Mac's place and he took \$25. You have to pay his debt.' I died! You see, in those days, when you joined the band nobody told you nothing. When you took another man's place, you were him, and if he owed anything, fine."

There were two great Basie bands Jo recalls before the version that came to New York in December, 1936 to thrill dancers at the Savoy Theatre and make records for Willard Alexander at MCA and later for John Hammond. With their improvised "head" arrangements, conversational riffing, and great soloists, the Basie band had all the intimacy and subtlety of a small group, but with a blaring, blues-drenched, house-rocking power and relaxation that has yet to be equalled. With the addition of Mr. Rhythm Guitar, Freddie Greene, early in 1937, and their vocalists Jimmy Rushing and Billie Holiday (as documented on the June 30, 1937 radio broadcast *Count Basie at the Savoy Ballroom* on Everest), Jo Jones and friends achieved legendary stature.

There isn't room here to detail further the history and personnel of the Basie band, or to dwell on the unfortunate treatment Jo and Lester Young received at the hands of Uncle Sam in the Army from '44 through early '46, and the sudden loss Jo suffered with the passing of his first wife later that year. But as an epilogue to these details of Jo's early years, it is well worth noting the underlying values that Jo credits with making the All-American Rhythm Section so special. "It takes a whole lot of living to do what we did. That's why I tell these little kids that came after us not to try to play like us, because that's impossible. We were having a conversation about our lives. You weren't there; you can't know

what we were talking about. *What* I played had to do with *who* I rubbed elbows with—the Lester Youngs, the Hershel Evans, the Billie Holidays, the Buck Claytons. I just did get to know these people. We played who we were at the time. You can't re-create that. You can't copy that. It could only happen once. I didn't have to play a thing. All I was doing was sitting there listening. I always was an audience, and I will be an audience as long as I live.

"It's very difficult to teach people how to play *with* people, not *for* people. The key word is understanding. We never spoke a word to each other on the bandstand, and nobody spoke to us. We functioned as one. We never played with the band; we played with ourselves. Each one of us had a personal life and we incorporated that; the kinds of lives we lived, the people we reached out and touched. It takes a long time to learn how to function as an individual. We brought that on the bandstand and we were strong enough to go through these things. Now I want you to understand that we started first spiritually. What it takes to get this spiritual ingredient: You have to live this spiritual ingredient. We lived spiritually! I don't believe in ghosts, but there is a Supreme Being. He is the force. He's the heart . . ."

**T**he first thing you learn with Jo Jones is not to ask any questions. As with his music, Jo has a habit of

circling back on himself, so that bread cast upon the waters may yet come back on another wave. It's all very indirect and metaphorical. He's always trying to convey attitudes, practical experiences and anecdotes to help you, as an individual, discover the meaning of music; by yourself and for yourself. There are lots of familiar aphorisms like "tune and tempo," a lot of knowledge, but very few facts as such, at least not the kind of nuts-and-bolts shop talk one is used to in *Modern Drummer*.

"I ain't going to talk drums with you," he shrugs. "I don't talk drums with nobody. You gonna have to find out for yourself. I tell my son nothin', I show him nothin'—my own son. I took him out on the road, to Chicago and different places. He watched me and he watched other people. He loved Philly Joe. I said, 'Go with Philly Joe . . .' I have a reason for that, not showin' nobody nothin'. *You can watch me . . .* unnn, uhhh—it's my secret and I'll keep it to myself. I wouldn't give a crippled crab a crutch to crawl across Bridgette Bardot."

Still, despite the crusty words, Jo is a very generous man; and if one had the sense to visit him regularly at the West End Cafe and shut up and watch, he was dealing plenty of lessons off of that bandstand; and if you hung around afterwards (depending on whether or not you were granted an audience), his philosophizing

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on life, music and drumming could often be a revelation. For those requiring even more in-depth information, the obvious solution is to find a copy of *The Drums by Jo Jones* (Jazz Odyssey, French Import), an extraordinary two-record set Papa Jo did around 1970 in Paris for producer Hugues Panassie; a *tour-de-force* solo demonstration of gadgets, effects, instruments, techniques, rudiments and reminiscences on the great drummers that he knew (with his own verbal and musical tributes to Baby Dodds, Alvin Burroughs, A.G. Godley, Gene Krupa, Big Sid Catlett, Walter Johnson, Sonny Greer, Billy Gladstone, Manzie Campbell, Chick Webb, Baby Lovett and a host of unnamed drummers and famous dancers). This is the definitive Jo Jones drum lesson.

"There are three things you can do to jazz," Jo is fond of saying. "Listen to it. Dance to it. Make love to it. If you can't do that, there is something wrong with it." When Jo plays, you can do all three, because at the root of everything he expresses on his instrument is a deep first-hand understanding of the blues. "To play the blues, you must live the blues," he concludes. "People have the wrong interpretation of the blues. They think it's just a sad thing. It can be a happy thing. You must remember how the blues started. The blues started in the 1800s, when they had the slaves. They wanted to outlaw the drums because somebody told them that messages were being sent to different plan-

tations with the drums; they had different signals and the drums carried a long way. Learning the drums was like learning to read and write. They communicated like that, just like the old troubadours used to go around and tell everybody what was happening from one section of the country to the other."

So because the drum was outlawed in 19th century America, that drumming sensitivity had to be transferred to other forms of expression; finding other outlets, as in the Church and the human voice. "That's the reason the minstrels came up. Our people weren't allowed to do anything, so they turned to music. Throughout the history of mankind, it has been musicians who could feel the pulse of the people and set it to music. We became creative artists, and through our creativity, people could see things. There has only been one culture since there has been America—music! And who put the culture in it? It was the Negroes, as they called them. America has never put nothing in the world but music—black music. Nobody has given to the world like the black artist. I don't play European music and I don't play African music because the African don't play like the Negro in America. Do you understand? That ain't his culture. We don't know nothing about no jungles with no lions and tigers and crocodiles and all that. I don't play none of that. But I can play the blues."

Which is the way Jo Jones & Enemies opened and closed every set at the West End, employing one of his favorite tricks—playing the drums with his hands. After lightly salting his skins, one crackling flam on the snare and bass drum calls the children home. Jo accompanies his four-to-the-bar bass drum pattern with off-beat accents on the hi-hat, and a remarkable range of texture and melody from his two lateral floor toms (one to his left, one to the right next to his sock cymbal) and his snare (with the snares off). The fingers on both his hands are working as if he were playing a boogie woogie piano. The drums, though battered and humble compared to most contemporary kits, have a singing quality that is totally unique. "This is the whole idea," he shouts, pulling on the key hanging by a leather braid around his neck. "Tuning! They got these things on there. Tune the damn drum! I tune my drums to my ear. I have perfect pitch. I have a trained ear. I have a very expensive set of drums up there at the West End. It cost me \$125 . . . Stewards, made in Japan." (Although I must add that there was an old WFL insignia on the mounted tom.) "See, Max Roach came up to me years ago and said 'Jo, I just discovered something. It don't make no difference what drums you play because they all sound alike.' I said, 'Yeah, I'm like Art Tatum. No matter what kind of piano it was, he'd make it sound alike. If they ain't

in tune, he'll play 'em in tune.' See, 'cause we was going to do a concert with Mary Lou Williams, James Moody and Dizzy up at the college, and he wanted me to use his new drums. I said, 'Unn uh. I ain't goin' to break in them new drums. I ain't goin' to break in no new shoes. Get me your old drums. I'll play them. Now he's got all that new-fangled electric stuff. Damn. I remember they did a benefit for me one year when I came back from Europe, and I told them about these electric drums they had over in Italy [Hollywood drums]. They wanted to get me a reservation at Bellevue. I remember Max brought back a set one year, and we had them up at Frank's shop. They never did work. Finally we took all that shit out from inside and they sounded alright. Ha."

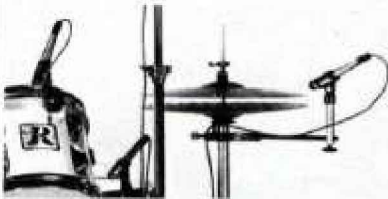
Not just any hobo can sit behind Jo Jones' drums and play them. First of all, the snare is at an odd angle, pitching down towards the bass drum; secondly, his sock cymbals are set up almost completely parallel to the snare with no clearance for cross sticking; thirdly, his right floor tom-tom is set up dangerously close to the socks. You could lose your hand trying to get over and under those cymbals, but Jo doesn't pay it any mind, and takes great pride in how baffled younger drummers are when trying to come to terms with the set. Even more imposing is his bass drum. For years Jo has been using a very thin calfskin timpani head on the batter side, and when I first had a chance to sound it years ago, the thing just barked at me and went BOOM. Yet from out in the audience it was tight, soft, punchy and controlled. I was confused.

"Don't nobody understand it. That's why I don't have no problems. I'll have guys sit down and play that drum, and it just kicks the shit out of them. I was at Sandy's in Boston a few years ago and I invited some little kid to sit down. They had to push it back on the bandstand. Boy, he pushed that whole thing off there. I said 'Damn, boy, what you trying to do?' He went BAM! I laugh at them drummers."

Only years later, watching Papa Jo in his rocking chair keeping time to the music with his right foot did it occur to me what he was doing. He was playing with a rocking heel-to-toe, toe-to-heel motion, and later when I saw him on the bandstand he seemed to be pushing the beater into the head, striking and muting in the same motion, much as a timpani player might use his hands or a marching drummer might damp the head. In this way, he is able to shade, accent and color, getting more melody and pitch from that one drum than most players could get from a set of concert toms. Even when he's not playing the drum, he's pedaling, so that the beat is always felt if not heard. I'm not saying I understand how he does it. That's just what I saw. (Remember what Jo said about Mr. Emil Helmicke and his bass drum?)



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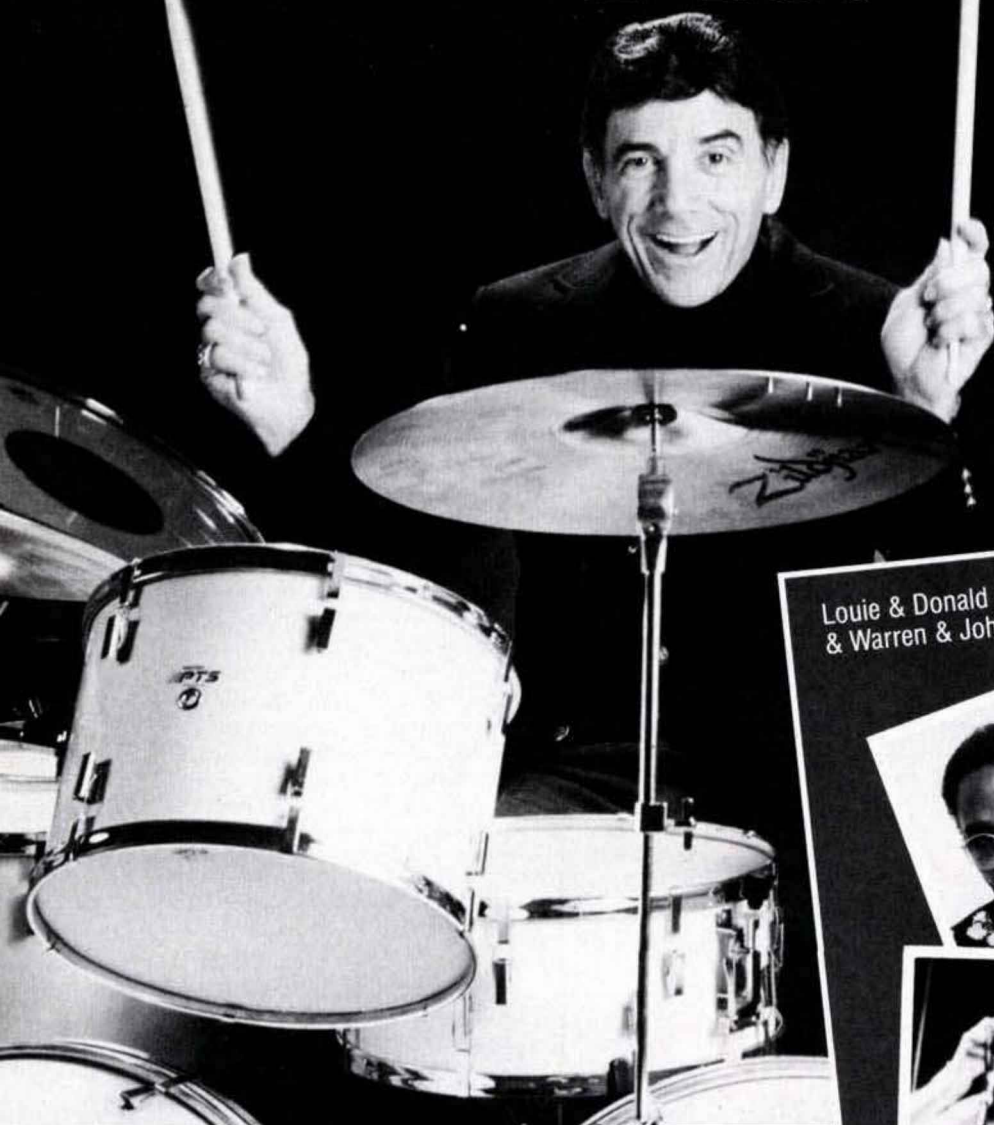
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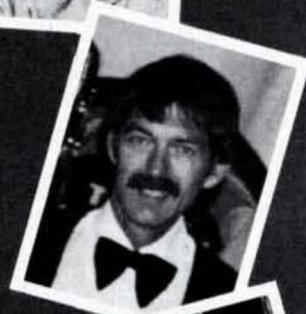
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His cymbal playing is even more remarkable. He approaches his cymbals gingerly, playing them with a broad, sweeping motion, again reminding one of a pianist. That is to say, he never seems to hit a cymbal or play down on it; just as a pianist will quickly lift a finger from the key, Jo's stick seems to be rising as soon as it makes contact, which accounts in part for his crystal-clear articulation and his immaculate control of overtones and build up. *He plays the cymbal; it never plays him.* "That cymbal I got up there I gave away five times to five different drummers. I told 'em, 'I'm going to let you have this for a month. You learn how to play this, you can have it.' They ain't learned how to play it yet. I took that cymbal down to a Tony Bennett recording session and Joe Cocuzzo was there. Tony says, 'You brought the cymbal.' I finally just got mad and gave it to Joe Cocuzzo anyway. He said, 'I'll never play this cymbal.' Just like I got two snare drums. I said, 'Here, learn how to play it. Don't beat it; play it,' and that damn drum bounced up and hit 'em all over the head. I said, 'Can you spell play? P-L-A-Y! What's the difference between playing and beating?'"

For the record, Jo's most recent setup featured what looked like an old (make that *old*) pair of 13" Zildjian sock cymbals of a fairly light weight, a single crotale, and an 18" medium ride. Jo's relationship with the Zildjian family goes back many

years, and he was one of the guiding forces in helping them to perfect modern cymbals for contemporary trap drummers. He recalls meeting Avedis Zildjian through Bill Maither (one of the original New York drum and cymbal retailers). "He was at the Ritz Carlton and the kids was in school. I used to get cymbals from him, from Gretsch and from Manny's. I used to pick cymbals for all the guys. I've shown them a thousand times how to pick a cymbal, and they still don't know. Last time I was up there they had a sign: 'Welcome Max Roach.' And I said, 'You don't welcome me?' And they said, 'Hell, you live here.' I went into the vault, and got this little cat to go up a ladder and get me something. Max asked, 'What's that?' I said, 'It ain't nothin'.' He had to have eight of them. I only took but one—just like I only play but one cymbal. I don't have but one and I'm trying to get rid of that."

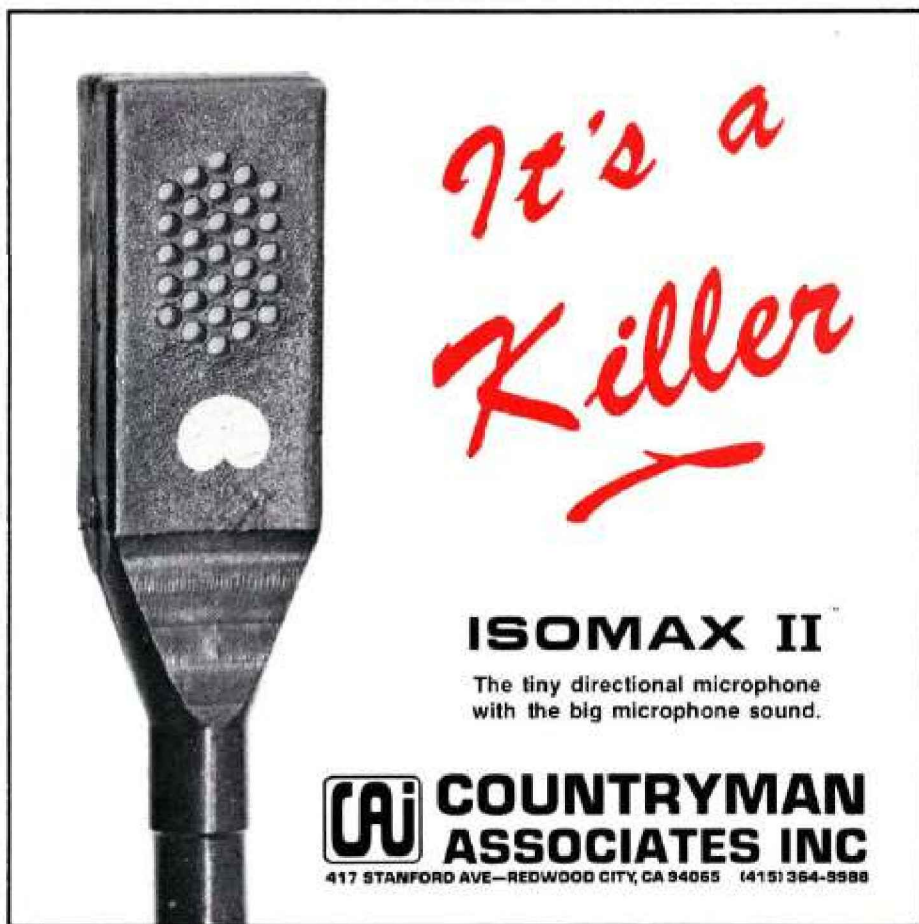
Hopefully, he won't get rid of his sock cymbals too, because his approach to that instrument put it on the map for all time. "Cuba Austin was with McKinney's Cotton Pickers. And I saw him and he had this little sock cymbal that you used to slide your foot in. It was through necessity that I went and got a pipe. I couldn't go down there and play the sock cymbal on the floor. So I had a great big stand-up drum. I had a cymbal holder that was a coat hanger and I put that on there. That's how the sock cymbal came. Before then it was

down on the floor and Cuba Austin had a little overlapping thing where you used to slide your foot in. But they didn't have it up here. As recent as 1934 nobody had a sock cymbal but Alvin Burroughs. George Wettling, Gene Krupa . . . they didn't know nothing about a sock cymbal. They had a sock cymbal, but they put it in the closet. Tubby [Holland Harold], Zutty [Singleton], those guys never played the sock cymbal, but mine was through necessity, because that was all I had."

Despite his mastery of sock cymbals, for Jo, like all the greater drummers of his era, the snare drum is the heart and soul of the performance. "I used to tell all the youngsters, 'I don't care what you do—you start with the snare drum. You go to the bass, the tom-toms and cymbals. Whenever you hear Zutty Singleton, whenever you hear Gene Krupa, whenever you hear George Wettling, whenever you hear Davey Tough—don't listen to nothing but the snare drum. They never got to that touch yet, not in our travels. They don't have that."

Jo Jones is to brushes what Casals is to cello and Segovia to classical guitar—the absolute standard for how the instrument should sound. "Now what the hell do you think you're doing with those?" he said impatiently when I picked up a pair of brushes in his presence. "You don't even know how to *spell* brush. Damn, I've had four cats and each one of them knows more about brushes than you'll ever know." Then, backing off a bit, he tried to give me a sense of what the most important priority was on the instrument. "You have to learn how to control yourself, see. That's why I've always kept cats around me—the cat controls itself. Sid Catlett was a bigger man than you, but he could play so delicately."

"You see, it takes two totally different kinds of control to play fast and to play slow. Each one has its own degree of difficulty. It's the difference between playing loud and soft. It demands control. See, the two words: *play and beat*. When it comes to percussion instruments, *you don't beat the drum; you play the drum*. You have a horn: is he a horn blower or a horn player? You see, there are two words, fast and slow, and you have to dissect them and control them. Nobody played faster than Johnny Hodges. Nobody played faster than Louis Armstrong, and he didn't play but one note; Count Basie played three, and that's enough. That's all he needs, and you know he can play some piano. See, I don't understand something. I don't understand how come nobody improved on us. We improved on 1915, 1920, 1925. We improved on the peoples we learned from. How come they don't improve on a Lester Young or a Coleman Hawkins or a Teddy Wilson or a Sid Catlett or a Chick Webb? They don't do this no more. They could do it, but they don't know how to do it. They



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want to do something new, huh. Why can't the kids do better than this, improve on us? Walter Bolden told me he heard some little kid playing all up against the wall. Walter asked him 'Whatcha doin' son?' he said, 'I'm playin' something new.' Walter said, 'Oh, yeah?' When I asked him what happened Walter said, 'He couldn't keep time.'

"The kids don't understand how Roy Eldridge, Coleman Hawkins and me could play their music, but they couldn't play ours. When I made that *Newport Rebels* album with Max, this little kid was really surprised to see me up there. He said, 'Well, you were really good for your day.' I said 'Thank you, but tell me, what kind of drummer do you think I am?' He thought I was a Dixieland drummer," he says with a smile. "But you know, we tried out anything and everything in the band room until the leader come down and blew that whistle."

In truth, what Jo Jones has put down for close to 60 years is timeless and modern in the best sense of the words—his sense of space and restraint, knowing when to jump in and when to lay out; the endless array of press rolls, rimshots and timbres he elicits from his instrument; the way he drives a band; and the hypnotic power of his soloing. Whether demonstrating his show-stopping cross-sticking technique on his flanking tom-toms (as if he were playing a two-bass-drum bolero) or simply

making quarter notes swing, his music is not dated. It is stylish and classic.

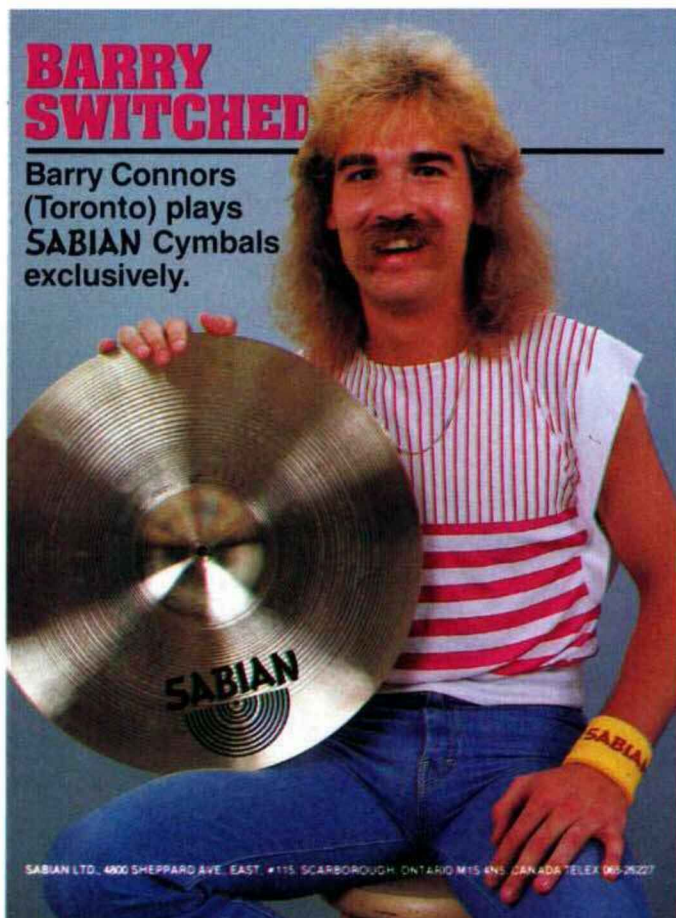
Yet for all his contributions to the drums and popular music, for all his hard-earned pride, there exists a streak of modesty and awe in him because Jo Jones never stopped being a student of the drums. Certain names crop up constantly in conversation: Buddy, Max, Philly Joe, Klook, Billy Gladstone . . . But towering above them all in his hall of memories are two contemporaries from the '30s who rival his greatness, and often exceed it in his estimation: Big Sid Catlett and Chick Webb. When he talks of drumming, Big Sid and Chick seem to hover beside him, standing in judgment, giving him strength, and scolding him when he stumbles. Together they form a trinity of modern drumming, and most of the great players of today owe some aspect of their styles to them. When Jo speaks of them, he is talking about *drumming* mister—the bluesmen who rocked the '30s.

"Big Sid was like my brother. I never go anyplace without a picture of Big Sid Catlett. I've got a little picture of him that I carry with me. That's why I am never afraid. I know I've got Sid with me. See, I was very privileged to play with a Count Basie, to be around so many creative peoples. I remember one time Sidney sat in and he said, 'Man, I ought to knock you down—now I got to go back to the coal mines.' Did you see *Jamming The Blues*?

Remember when Sid threw that one stick at me? We used to do a thing every Thursday night at the Apollo when we closed. The theater's packed, but there are two seats set aside for Sid Catlett and his wife. I used to throw the stick to Sidney, and a man would put the light on him and BOOM—he'd catch it. Then, BOOM, he'd throw the stick back to me and we'd go into 'One O'Clock Jump.' Don't ask me. Ask the people that were there. They done saw it. They saw show business. Yeah, we did some strange things out there.

"Well, you know they always say the first should be the last and the last should be the first. Speaking about Chick Webb, I don't speak of Chick Webb the drummer. I speak of Chick Webb, the epitome. Now, Mr. Chick Webb's sense of timing . . . he didn't settle for nothing but the best. Mr. Webb had something along with his leadership, and he had to be a natural, a great natural, like what he know today as an Errol Garner—it's impossible to write, to study, to do whatever. We developed a friendship, and the man gave me some secrets that I could never divulge because I wouldn't know who to impart them to.

"The man was very musical. In the later years since his death, I have had the pleasure of playing his records and asking some of the young great drummers to try to emulate him. I said, 'Let me hear you play this.' They'd say, 'He did all that?'



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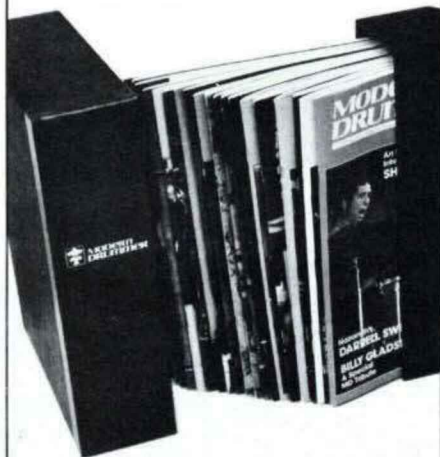
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I'd say, 'Yes, he did it with a pair of sticks that looked like pencils. Now you have to have all these two-pound sticks to go bang, bang, bang. No, no, no, he played the drums and he played them in tune.' Mr. Chick Webb also got things from Mr. Drums, Walter Johnson. He told me. When he found out that I tuned my drums and that I used a timpani head on my bass drum, then he began to talk to me. He gave me some secrets. Chick Webb didn't normally hang out with other drummers, but he wasn't threatened by me because he realized that I would never be as great a drummer as he was.

"This man saw what I was trying to do with the Basie band. He saw the material I had to work with. He would have loved to have had the material that I had to work with. But without this man's encouragement, without this man telling me what I was supposed to do, you wouldn't see me sitting here today. I was ready to go back to Omaha when he said, 'Well, my boy, why don't you stay and stick it out?' He encouraged me and he told me of things to come. There are a lot of things that he told me to do and told me *I must* do, that I have never forgotten.

"He said, 'It isn't a form of humility. It's just a form of don't-lose-your-naturalness—be yourself.' I said, 'Thank you. That's what my grandmother told me.' He said, 'You don't have to do *this* because somebody's doing something like *that*. You just go on and you develop what you develop. Pretty soon you'll have a style of your own, because you have a wealth, and I'm looking at that.'

"He showed it to me. These are the conversations I had with Mr. Webb. When everybody else would be going to the after-hours spots, I would be with Mr. Webb. He would be talking, but I would be listening. He'd show me, and then he'd come out and check me out. The last time was in Detroit. He came around to the Greystone Ballroom and he was falling through town. He heard the band and we went to the Norwood Hotel. We went across the street to get sausages and grits. He turned around and asked me for a cigarette. I said, 'Wait a minute—ain't you got enough money to buy those cigarettes?' He taught me all that, too. He said, 'Don't buy no cigarettes.' I said, 'But you're the great band-leader.' But this man taught me something that I had almost forgotten—he taught me discipline. He taught me the character. He told me *how important* the drum was.

"He must have known he was going to die, and I realized this. There were several

drummers in New York that never took advantage of being around Mr. Chick Webb, and they had been in New York and been around the man longer than I had. But I figured that if I could get any crumbs from the table by having a direct contact with the man...

"When Chick Webb died, we were in Chicago, staying on 39th Street, and they wouldn't tell me for two days. They filed my radio off so I couldn't get nothing on the radio, because they knew good and well I would split to go to Baltimore. Later on something happened that was a phenomenon. I was in Dayton, Ohio... this man appeared to me in a dream, stood right over me and told me something that I have never been able to divulge to nobody. But from that time until now it has given me strength, because this man was remarkable. Nobody that played with him appreciated him till after he died. They didn't know what a great man he was."

This explains why *Modern Drummer* would like to say, 'Thank you, Jo Jones.' In a culture where anything that happened more than six months ago is old news, it seems important to affirm certain values—to acknowledge our roots. Jo Jones is the past, present and future of American rhythm.

"Another thing about rhythm," Jo once told Nat Hentoff, "is that when an artist is performing on his instrument he breathes in his normal fashion. When the artist is breathing improperly, it's like the audience is left with a little case of indigestion. It's like eating a meal in a hurry. *Not swinging* is like that. It leads to tension in the audience. It's a physical reaction which you give off.

"We'll start off playing a very simple beat—the basic beat," Papa Jo concluded in his keynote to *The Drums* album. "Always start basic and you'll never go wrong... after you have control of your instrument, you can do whatever you wish. Regardless of whatever they name it: **YOU PLAY.**"

*We'd like to thank the Institute For Jazz Studies on the Newark campus of Rutgers University for their gracious assistance in researching this piece. A special thanks to Dan Morgenstern, Ron Welburn, and Milt Hinton for allowing us to tap into the Institute's invaluable Oral History Program. Anyone with any curiosity about the roots of American jazz, blues and popular song should avail themselves of the Institute's extensive library of books and records, including countless titles deleted from the current catalog. The Institute's phone number is (201) 648-5800.*

*Special thanks to Joanna Grammon for looking after Mr. Jones, who wishes to extend his heartfelt thanks to all the fans and friends who've seen him through hard times. Anyone who'd like to drop Papa Jo a line can write to him at 401 E. 64th Street/Apt. 4A/NYC, NY 10021.*



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## International Percussion

*One of the strange things about the drum industry is that in some companies, the people who design drums have never actually played drums. With that in mind, it is reassuring to learn that Jay Tuttrup is an excellent drummer, who began playing 21 years ago at age nine. His experience includes club and show bands all over the country, as well as a seven-year hitch with the Marine Corps band.*

*Jay is also a craftsman, design engineer and inventor. Furthermore, he is a man with a plan for his future and for what he hopes might be the future of drum design. Jay has designed and constructed drums of solid wood, including Hawaii's unique koa, which are revolutionary both in sound and appearance. He is now ready to place these drums on the market.*

*Operating out of a small shop in Honolulu, Hawaii, Jay recently outlined the details of his design concept, including his research into the physics and acoustics of his radical new drum shape, which he feels is anything but a gimmick.*

**RVH:** What made you want to start building drums?

**JT:** I've always liked working with wood and making things. The design of the first drum was what got me started; the conical-shaped drum. I wasn't looking for acoustics or a better sounding drum. I just came up with that idea and thought, "I wonder what it sounds like? It's got to have something to it. It's right between a cylinder drum and a conga." This was in May of 1978.

The first one I made out of fiberglass, and it seemed to have a pretty good sound.

It was a 10x14 drum. But fiberglass wasn't the thing to use because of the molds, and it was pretty difficult to work with. So I started working with wood, and just by using a calculator, and a couple of math and drafting books, I fit the puzzle together for all these pieces; the bars for the barrel-type construction. I made one just to find out what it would sound like and it sounded good—the quality was there. I got real close to the acoustics the first time. I wasn't thinking, "I want to make drums to make money." It just came to me and I liked doing it.

**RVH:** Did you start with koa wood?

**JT:** No. The first set I made was oak. I took them on the road for two years without cases. The set has been through a wind chill factor of 80° below, and then into a house that was heated with a fireplace—dry heat—and it didn't crack. So I was pretty pleased with that, and I thought this must be the way to go. I know the durability is there, after treating them the way I did—without cases, in extreme hot and cold temperatures—just to see if they would bust up.

**RVH:** When did you actually think of going into production?

**JT:** Ever since day one. But I've never known too much about business. The whole thing has been almost too much for me. Doing every aspect of it: bookkeeping, designing, production; it pretty much took me this long to get everything together. It took about five years altogether; two years for the patent to go through.

**RVH:** What are you going to call these drums?

**JT:** My company is International Percussion. We're going to be known for solid-wood drums. The conical-shaped drums will be called *Tubs*.

**RVH:** Your barrel-stave design is unique in drumsets. How can people best visualize the manner of construction?

**JT:** It's similar to the way wooden congas are made.

**RVH:** Under normal circumstances, wood drums are made from plywood. What you're promoting is actually a shell made of solid wood. How thick are your shells, and how much resonance can you expect from them?

**JT:** The shells range from 3/8" to 3/4" thick. My largest one is 3/4" right now. That's a bass drum, and I'm still experimenting with that. I have the shell made, but it's not finished so I haven't heard it yet. I'm playing on 1/2" oak on my kit now. I'd like to make thinner shells too, and compare the thin to the 3/4". Then I'll answer that question for you. At home I have three drums. They're all 14", all made of koa, and they all have the same hardware and the same heads. The only difference is that one is a conical-shaped drum, one is a double-headed drum, and one is a drum with just one head on it. When you tune them to the same pitch, you can hear the difference in the timbre and the tone.

**RVH:** The only variable being the shape of the shell.

**JT:** Right. If you play the conical-shaped one and the double-headed one, they sound pretty similar. If you play the conical-shaped one and the single-headed one, they sound pretty similar, too. But if you play the one-headed drum versus the two-headed drum, they sound very different. So the conical-shaped drum is right in between, because it does give resonance and projection at the same time.

**RVH:** Your theory then, with the conical-shaped shell, is to compress the sound through a small opening.

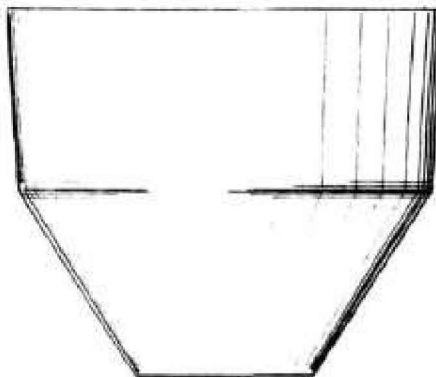
**JT:** Yes. I get my projection with the compressed air coming out and I get the resonance from the conical shape. And also, the higher frequencies from the heads are controlled by the shape of the shell. I don't have to use a muffler that way to take off the high end.

**RVH:** What woods did you experiment with?

**JT:** Spruce is really the best resonating wood, because of the fibers. You have to

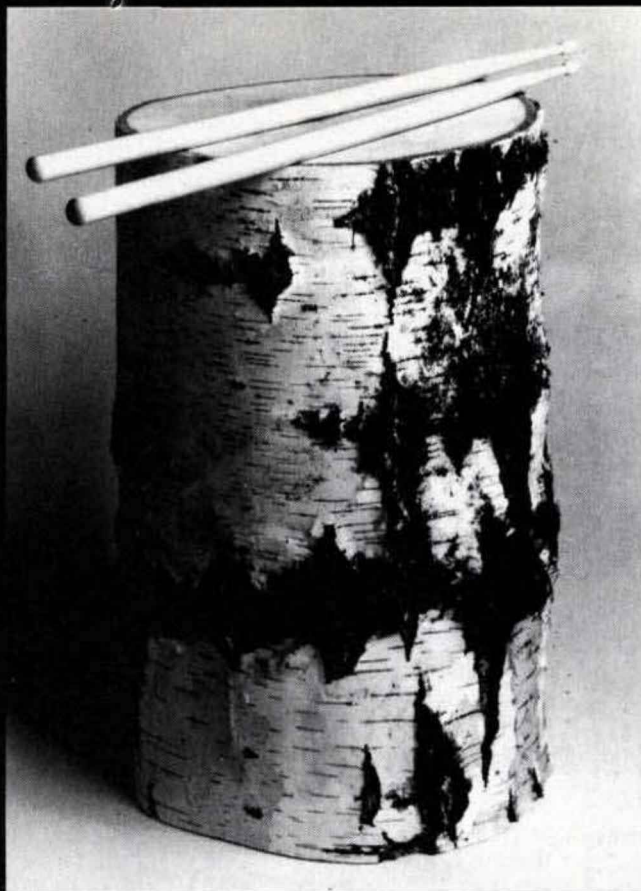


*A finished koa shell showing the appearance of the grain. Seams are barely visible at top of photo, on the inside of the shell.*



*Patent diagram of the conical Tub drum design. Vertical lines indicate the "barrel-stave" construction.*





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think of hardness, and you have to think of the fine fibers in the woods that will be good resonating woods. Also, you have to think about what area you're in and what types of wood are available. I suppose I use my woods for the same reason that conga manufacturers use oak, mahogany or other hardwoods. You just want a wood that doesn't have any knots; a clear hardwood that will have more resonance than a softwood.

**RVH:** Koa is used for high-quality electric guitar and bass bodies.

**JT:** And also acoustic guitars and ukuleles made here in Hawaii.

**RVH:** Will you be offering strictly koa drums?

**JT:** No. I have koa, the exotic wood of the South Pacific, solid oak, and solid rosewood. All three types of woods have their own sound characteristics. The oak and the koa are very similar because of their hardness. The difference is mainly in the looks. The rosewood is so dense, such a fine-fiber wood, and so much harder that you would hear a difference in that way. It also has its own magnificent look to it.

**RVH:** It would also be more expensive.

**JT:** Yeah, the wood is five times more expensive for me to buy.

**RVH:** You say the hardwood enhances the drum's resonance, but I think a conga gives a very contained sound from its solid wood body.

**JT:** Conga drums are very thick. The thin-

ner the wood, the more resonance it produces. That's why I'm going with the 3/8". Congas are more like 3/4" to 7/8" thick.

**RVH:** Why market the conical shape rather than a standard cylinder of solid wood?

**JT:** I think the conical shape just gives the drummer a third choice. It sounds different from one-headed or two-headed drums. The quality of the tone is there, and it gives the other two drums a run for their money. Personally, I like the sound of all three, and later on I'll have all three drumsets. The only thing I have available right now is the standard cylinder shape. The only thing I'm going to have in my advertising will be cylindrical, solid wood shells, and the customer can put either one or two heads on them.

**RVH:** So initially you'll be marketing just bare cylindrical shells, with no hardware at all. When do you plan to market the conical shells?

**JT:** Summer of '84. I'm just getting started from nothing here. The easiest thing I could do to get started is to make the cylindrical shells. Next, I can make the conical shells, and then conga drums. With a new product like this I had to make all my own jigs, and design the tools and machines to make the drums. I want to give the drummer as much choice as possible. I'm going to make only solid wood drums out of three types of wood. I'll make cylindrical and conical, and also offer the short conga drum shape. Then I'll offer two or more types of hardware, not only chrome parts, but brass plating too, with the dark koa.

*Jay, looking ahead to his full-line drum production, has some fairly unique hardware designs, and says that they might be out around 1985. They include a special tuning system for the conical drums: a cross between chain-timpani tuning and RotoTom tuning. This would be available as an alternative to a more familiar key-lug system. Jay intends to maintain strict quality control to ensure that all hardware will*

*be manufactured according to his original specifications.*

**RVH:** When you go into production with the conical shells, will there be a variety of depths as well as diameters?

**JT:** I'll have all the standard sizes, as well as the power-tom sizes, but custom sizes will be available. There are certain laws you have to follow. If you have a long drum on top and a short bottom, then the hole has to be bigger or you're going to get the effect that the whole bottom is covered up. On my short ones, the holes are small. As they get longer, the hole gets larger. There's an acoustic formula for each size. What I'm going after is the quality of sound. The formula and the physics of this dictate where it's at. I plan to offer three choices for the top dimension and three choices for the bottom—for any given diameter—and they will automatically differ. With further experimentation, I might find that some of the models won't work as well, or some may sound alike. So I can narrow it down if necessary. Whatever shape I do make it, it's going to have the best sound that that size and shape can have. If I have to alter the hole on the bottom or some other feature, then so be it.

**RVH:** What about the strength and shape of the shell when installing hardware?

**JT:** The seams are stronger than the wood itself, and with quality construction, there are no gaps on the outside or the inside between any single "barrel stave." The bearing edge will be 45°, slanted to the inside, with the outside being rounded just enough to have no sharp edges. I make my shell diameters for Remo drumheads, within one hundredth of an inch. I have to have that kind of precise tolerance because of the number of pieces that make up the shell. If you're off even one hundredth of an inch on 28 pieces, that's a total of over one quarter of an inch. That's why I'm making them and nobody else is. You've got to be precise. When I go into my woodshop, I have to think precision. If the sucker is a hundredth of an inch too small, we roast weinies with it.

**RVH:** How will your shell compare in price to a plywood shell?

**JT:** Very competitively. My costs include a small shop, a phone, and some things I can't skimp on, like tools and materials. I can't skimp because I'll have a real good guarantee on these drums.

And I'm going to have a wide price range. With the three different types of wood, there are going to be three different prices, the oak being the least expensive with hardware of the simple type. Rosewood and gold plating will also be available. The sky's the limit.

I'm out to serve the needs of drummers. Instead of putting out a collection of items and then saying, "Okay—pick out what comes closest to what you need from what I have," I'm saying, "Tell me what you need, and I'll build it."



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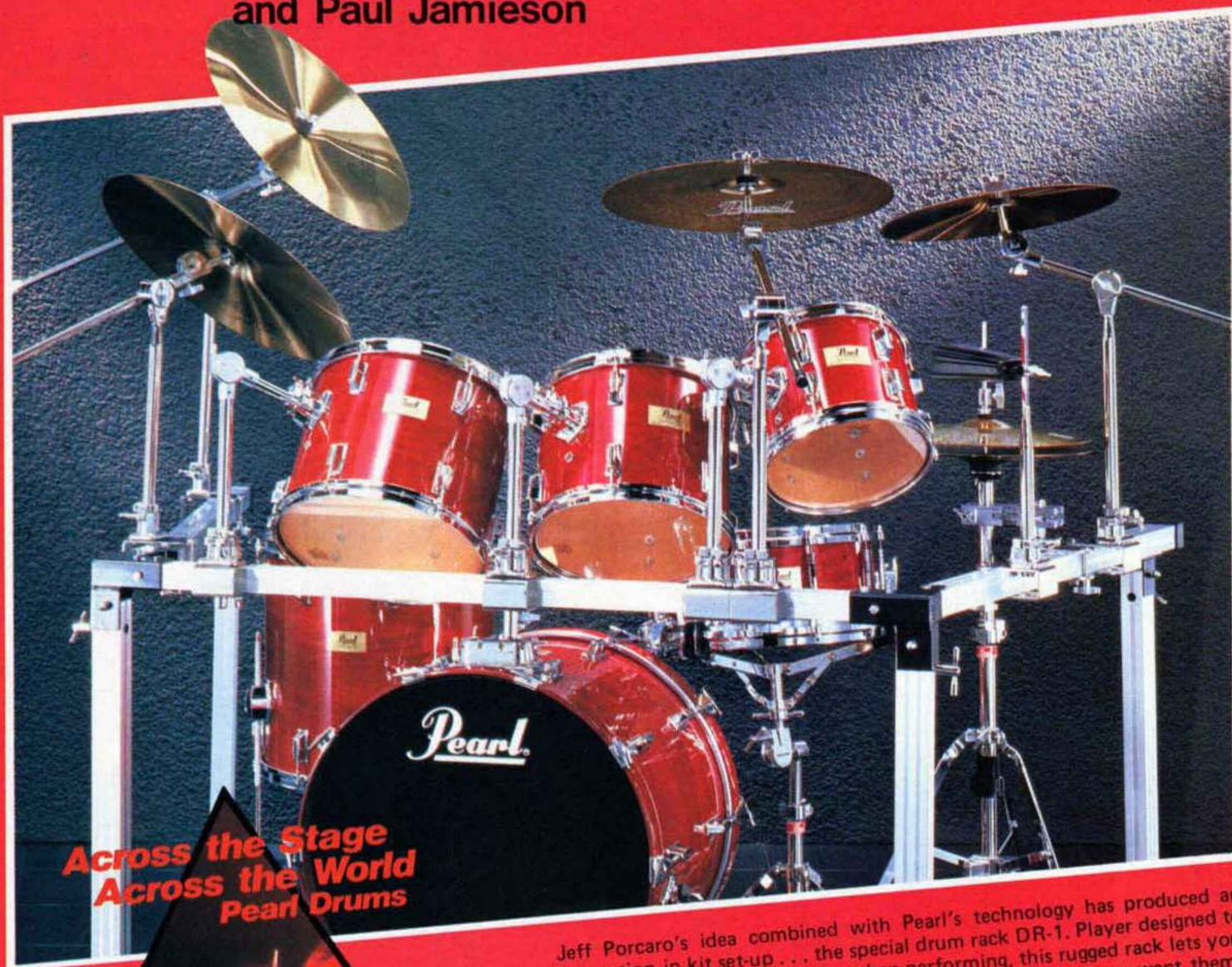
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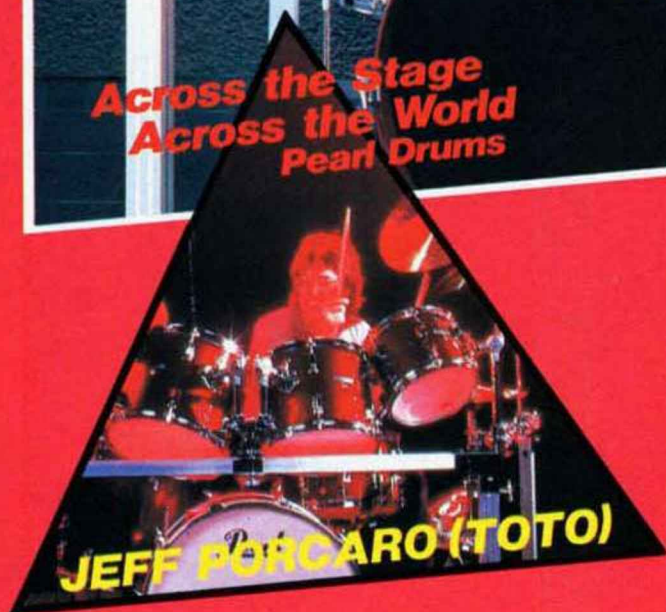
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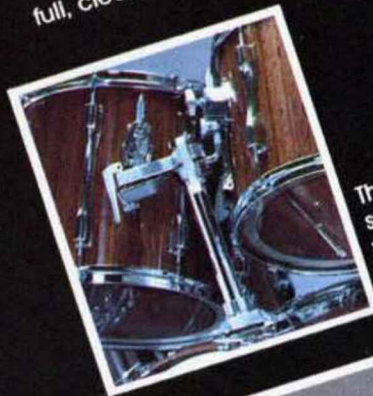




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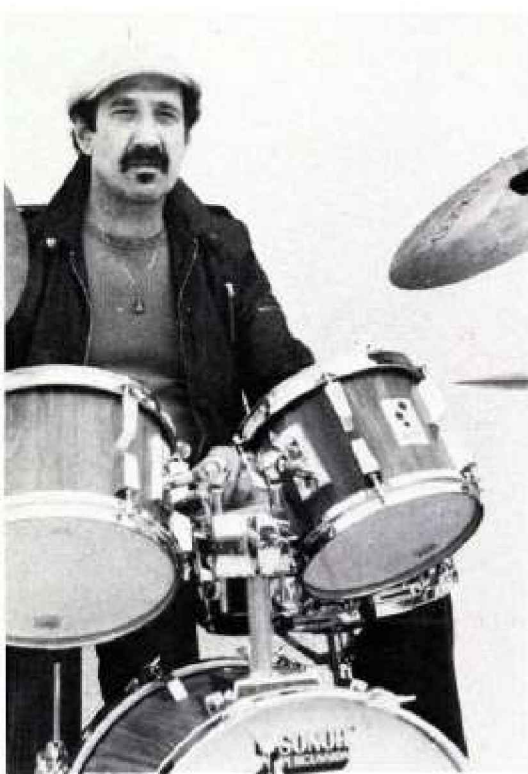


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## Abbey Rader

**SF:** You're a musician who's referred to as an expatriot who started his career in the U.S. and then moved to West Germany. What prompted the move?

**AR:** I moved in about 1978. I'd been living in New York and had a very good group. We were playing—I hate the term "avant-garde" music—we were playing creative music in lofts. In the mid '70s, there was a big loft movement in New York City. We were doing well musically, but financially we were making car fare on these gigs. It was very hard; it's always been hard. It was difficult to live under those conditions.

I always believed in playing and making a living from playing. I never wanted to do anything else to earn my living. I figured that if I could play, get paid and keep going, then my life would be fairly complete. I was doing club dates, dances—whatever possible. The time left for the creative music was very small. The living conditions were getting very rough in New York. The music wasn't in the environment.

I had a saxophonist named Peter Ponzil, who said to me, "I've been in Europe." He said there were some people interested in what we were doing. So I went with him. I had a tape with me that I made in New York which became my first album. During the first stop in Paris, a record company called Atmosphere bought the master. Then in Germany, there was an agent who loved the music. Young, communal people offered to look for work for us and

to show us around. Things just kept building. Activity-wise, I haven't really been able to get out.

**SF:** I've read statements by jazz musicians—oftentimes "avant-garde" players—who love Europe because there's so much more acceptance of their music in Europe. Yet, I've heard other people say it's not as good as it's cracked up to be. Is Europe a bed of roses? Why do you feel the acceptance is greater in Europe for the newer forms of jazz?

**AR:** It's definitely not paradise *anywhere* for creative people. Even the term "avant-garde" is not good. I played straight-ahead jazz for most of my youth. I've played with Ira Sullivan, Laurindo Almeida, and Herman Foster. It was no paradise for any of those forms. There's a lot of other things happening. They have a very big new wave movement in Germany. The majority of young people listen to that music. But, there's a big enough audience to support what we do too. It's not like you work every night or tour year 'round because you're in Europe. But you can go into a club and you can play exactly what you want to. You don't have to hold any punches. They consider our music an art form; American classical music. They have their own traditional classical music which is 500 years old, but they will support our music as an art form. They're not swamped with the media as we are in the U.S.

I'm amazed at the 30 stations on cable TV, radio, advertisements and the constant pump in the U.S. That's part of my heritage and I understand where it's coming from, but it's very, very different in Europe. On European radio, every tune is a different form of music. You can't tune into one station and know it's going to be just classical or just jazz?.. You'll find a mixture.

I believe the people appreciate going out to a club for a live musical experience. I don't see huge, huge concerts, but I do see big festivals that give people two or three days to partake of all kinds of music.

**SF:** Is there much music on TV in Europe?

**AR:** Some of the festivals are taped and shown on TV. So if you didn't attend, you could see almost any good festival later on television. They do have rock concerts too.

**SF:** When did your concept of drumming change from straight-ahead playing to the way you're playing now?

**AR:** I didn't start playing until I was over 18. My father has been playing drums all his life. That's how he supported us. He's still playing at 70. I don't think that he affected my concept, except that he made it possible for me to play in musical situations that I thought were corny at the time, but turned out to be very valuable later on.

I'm fooling with rhythms in my own band; playing things that I played on a club date somewhere, and utilizing them as a rhythm I can spread from. All that training and the opportunity I received from knowing my father and some of his people were very valuable later.

A lot of young people feel that if they're not doing gigs that are "hip," they're wasting their time. But, I've heard Ronald Shannon Jackson's band, with Shannon using rhythms that sounded like polkas or waltzes. I found myself recently composing around a march form and breaking it down later. It's very valuable to have played in many varied styles so you can incorporate them when you want to express yourself.

**SF:** What made you decide to pursue the newer forms of jazz?

**AR:** When I started to play, I was very fortunate to jump into a trio we had in the '60s. We played lounge music which consisted of piano, bass and drum trios, or quartets with saxophones. We started playing standards and listened to people like Ahmad Jamal, or the Oscar Peterson Trio with Ed Thigpen and Ray Brown. We were into that style and I loved it.

I was getting telephone calls for the first 15 years of my life to gig between New York and Florida. I played some shows, some Catskill show bands, and Burlesque houses. But mainly I was listening to jazz and playing in a jazz-oriented style.

I was on the Lower East Side in the '60s and I heard the John Coltrane Quartet at the old Half Note. I would say that night had something to do with awakening my head. When I heard them play, when I heard what they were searching for and the energy that was happening, it changed my entire direction. Before that, I was playing

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by Leslie Gourse

# Ignacio Berroa and Daniel Ponce

Photo by Raymond Floss



In Verna Gillis' apartment in Greenwich Village's west side, the doorbell rings with a special rhythm—the *clave*; the beat that underlies almost all Cuban music. And if Verna's phone could ring to that rhythm, it would because she owns Soundscape, a large club in a loft that serves as headquarters for Latin jazz in New York City. Naturally, it's at Soundscape that some of the best young Cuban musicians, impelled to leave Cuba by politics, find each other and play together. Two of the people you're likely to see there are drummer Ignacio Berroa and conguera Daniel Ponce.

Ignacio Berroa, who has always played the North American drumset, not Cuban percussion, arrived in Key West, Florida on a boat from Cuba on May 25, 1980. He brought one change of underwear, one extra shirt, a toothbrush and comb, leaving everything else, including his practice pad, behind in Cuba. He had never owned a drumset anyway. "It's not like the U.S. You don't have music stores where you can just go in and buy a drumset," he says. In Cuba, he used the drums wherever he worked, most often in a recording studio. From Key West, he finally made his way to his aunt's house in New York City.

At the same time, jazz saxophonist and bass clarinet player Paquito D'Rivera decided to defect to the U.S. He already had a contract with Columbia Records, since he had been discovered by Dizzy Gillespie on a tour of Cuba. By the time Paquito arrived in New York, Ignacio Berroa had already checked out the scene. He had jammed together many times with Paquito in Cuba. Ignacio, who had heard a wonderful conga player at the Village Gate in New York, told Paquito, "Hey, man, if you want to form a group, I've got a great conga player for you, Daniel Ponce. He's playing at Soundscape."

Paquito thought that he had heard every marvelous thing there was to hear from conga players. "After all, I'm Cuban," he reflected. But he went along to Soundscape and heard Ponce. "He's a monster," said Paquito. "I had never heard anyone like him."

"Nobody had ever heard of Daniel Ponce in Cuba," says Berroa, a small, smiling, friendly man, who crams his drumset into a little car to get from gig to

gig, sometimes several in a single day, in New York City. "Now everybody knows him, not only here but in Cuba."

D'Rivera did form his own group, with several Cubans, including Ponce and Berroa, who quickly became known to American pop and jazz musicians on their own. Berroa recorded with Paquito and McCoy Tyner. He played with Eddie Palmieri and most regularly with Dizzy Gillespie. Ponce, making himself known as the most exciting young conguera in town, played conga on three albums with Paquito. He played *bata* with Laurie Anderson, the vocalist and experimental electronics musician, on her album for Warner Brothers. Ponce also played conga on Elektra Musician albums with Bill Laswell and Material, and on his best known work, an album with Herbie Hancock for Columbia entitled *Future Shock*. In addition, Ponce recorded a breathtaking duet, "Nigerian Sunset," with bebop singer Bobby McFerrin during a 1982 Kool Jazz Concert at Carnegie Hall, which starred a half dozen top young jazz "lions," as the festival dubbed them. Ponce formed his own group, Jazz Bata, and made a record, "New York Now," on the Celluloid Label. It features two of his original compositions, "Africana Contemporanea" and "Cojelo Suave," meaning "Take It Easy," for which he received a CAPS (Creative Artists Public Service) grant.

On the surface, Daniel and Ignacio have plenty in common. Daniel was born on July 8 1953, Ponce on July 21, 1953. Both came by boat to Key West in 1980, leaving everything behind in Cuba. They are fast, versatile, super drummers. And when they play together, they make a special connection, with the bond of the *clave* behind them. But Daniel loves jazz, and Ponce is a Cuban-music chauvinist with a special affinity for rock and singing. Berroa always plays as a sideman, while the taller, more muscular Ponce, with a reputation for egocentricity and a dashing but rare smile, likes to lead his own group.

After three years in the U.S., both talked about their work. Ponce was particularly proud of the unique force of Cuban music. Long before jazz had its name, the rhythms of the Caribbean entered the U.S., brought along by slaves from Haiti,

the Spanish-owned islands and South America, most notably to New Orleans, where the French and English cultures dominated. By the turn of the century, the rhythmic accents spread to other cities too. Afro-Cuban rumba and tango rhythms showed up in the music of such early jazz stars as Jelly Roll Morton, W.C. Handy and Cab Calloway.

What makes Cuban music different from all other music? "The difference between Cuban music and all other music is the different rhythms," says Ponce. "From that, everything is different. The instruments—the congas, bongos, timbali, *bata*, and *agogo* [a double cowbell]—are Cuban and different from other countries' instruments. And there's a different feeling. Each country has its different feeling. Cuban music has more force than other Latin countries' music. Brazilian music is basically the samba, which is softer. The Dominican Republic has the merengue. But Cuban music has so many more rhythms and is more complex."

Both Ponce and Berroa believe the main inspiration for Cuban music was the church—the Afro-Cuban religions, just as the blues and jazz came from Gospel music. Ponce drew in his feeling for the religious-inspired Cuban music as naturally as

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many years of straight ahead, I was trying to keep good time, which was definitely necessary, and I was copping a groove. But I wasn't a voice. Somehow, Mr. Coltrane's search and the power of his band really opened my head to other forms.

Elvin Jones, with Coltrane, naturally had a lot to do with exploding my head. I spoke with Elvin and I've written a poem for him published in Germany. It's in my book. The poem's called, "With Love to Elvin Jones." I used to stand in the Professional Percussion Shop with Frank Ippolito and Elvin was there often. I used to chat with him. I was a little afraid of Elvin when I was young. His power and energy are unbelievable. But everytime I've spoken with him, he's been beautiful—a real gentleman.

SF: Can you say technically how your concept has changed to where it is today?

AR: I was, and am, a timekeeper, which is the underlying foundation. But there's a circle that happens in most creative music when the improvisation is happening. When you're locked in the circle, when all players are equal, and when everybody is establishing the time, there's a lot of freedom there for everyone. Naturally, you must be attuned and it must be happening. I've been exposed to "free music" where everybody gets up and plays nothing that relates to anything. I'm not speaking about that. I'm talking about coming from

a form. When it does connect up, you're capable of letting go of the feeling that you have to be locked to a certain time function. The time is established. In that time you are able to express yourself and react spontaneously, which is what jazz is about. When I found myself in playing situations where that happened, I played things and I didn't know where they came from. They seemed to have come *through* me. I also played at very high-energy levels without feeling any physical stress whatsoever. I knew there was a force happening that was not totally controlled by me. I was just a conductor of it. That kind of spiritual connection, the energy, has always been my main search. I've searched in other areas too.

I just learned to react. I learned to stop the thoughts and play the music, because when you're taking time to think, you're not really in the moment of the music. I learned to become a musician, to play the composition and be part of it, and to react spontaneously in the improvisations. It seemed to me to be the most fulfilling form. I enjoy playing gigs of other styles, but this type of playing is the best chance you get to express yourself creatively.

SF: Can you be aware of the moment in other forms of music?

AR: Not as much, personally. If there's a rhythm going on in a certain group and you're behind a singer or in some kind of repeating function—a tune that must lay a certain way—naturally your skill lies in keeping it together, being tasteful and keeping the time right. But you're not getting that much opportunity to stretch out.

SF: I received two albums in the mail the other day—your new album and another artist's album. Both were duets between a drummer and another instrumentalist. The differences in approach were striking. Although at times your music became frenetic, I still heard melody and a relation to form in it. The other album was like the "free music" you mentioned that seems to relate to nothing. It was an interesting contrast.

AR: That's the dangerous part. In Europe they have what they call "free music." I've never called the music "free" because we've never really played without somewhere to start from. We never really

played free. There's nothing free about it. You can't have freedom without a foundation. A building would fall over if it wasn't grounded in something. But in European improvised or "free music," musicians get up and they just play. Sometimes it looks like a clown show. I've seen musicians lighting instruments on fire and throwing saucers into the wall. I've never been a part of that. It has to swing. That other kind of unconnected energy is not what I consider jazz or creative music. Without swinging, you're not connected. If you're not connected, all the energies are not being used for the one force, for the music or for delivering the music. It could be anything. It could be a kid that doesn't know what he or she is doing. It could be a musician on an ego trip. It could be all forms of disconnected energy which do not make a whole for the people.

I know I've played some music that was aggressive or frantic, but it was always tied together. It might have reflected the moods of the players, but it came from players who always had years of musical background and knowledge. They were connected when they played. That's very important.

SF: You've established a nice teaching practice in Germany. What approach to the drumset do you teach?

AR: At the University, I've been teaching people who are mainly going to be music teachers and some who want to be professionals. Most of them are not aware of rudiments. It's not that they're not aware of it; they don't pay attention. A lot of Germans want to get free because they feel they've been noted to be stiff. Everybody wants to be somebody else. The Germans want to get away from strict forms. I stress the rudiments, because without that facility, without the hands and feet being able to move in all different directions, the students are not going to say anything.

I stress independence. We have two drumsets in every place and we play together. It's very important to talk and play together. We'll trade fours and eights, and we'll talk about form and melody. I've had classical musicians who want to play drumset, and they don't know the length of an AABA tune. They don't know anything about blues, and they're going to go out and be music teachers! It's frightening.

So we stress song form and we stress playing melodically, when they're ready. A lot of students come in and they have their rock beats together. They show them to you and then it's over. They don't have the opportunity to play in different forms and there's very limited work there. They don't have club dates or lounge bands. They don't get the exposure. I try to talk with them about what I've been through; introduce them to a sax player or a trumpet player passing through. I've built up a very good relationship with my students. I have 35 dear friends now.

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SF: You said earlier that none of them ever cancel out or miss a lesson?

AR: They never miss, man. It's a treat for them. See, the drumset is an American invention. It wasn't considered an instrument in Europe, and it's still not by the older professors. In their school system, they only had snare drumming or classical percussion. They never had drumset. They have a catalog of what's proper and what's not, and jazz—which would relate to drumset playing—was listed as a viable form, so they allowed me to go ahead and do it. It's been very good for me because it's made me work, and shown me what happens in other parts of the world, how much interest there is in what we're doing, and how much respect there is.

SF: You mentioned how much more patriotic you felt towards America after living in Europe and experiencing things like the Berlin Wall. Maybe you could touch on the tremendous opportunity that young players have in America which they wouldn't have anywhere else. Sometimes we overlook this fact because we're born and raised in the U.S.

AR: America is probably the most free country in the world, and the greatest country in terms of pursuing whatever you'd like to pursue.

I met a trio from Czechoslovakia when I was coming from a gig in Norway. We had to take a ferry boat. These three men were playing on the boat. They were from a Communist country and the drummer played excellently. They spoke about jazz because that's what they loved. They spoke about waiting *seven years* for an instrument of very bad quality. They spoke about waiting *10 years* for an apartment with a bathroom. This man had a family, he was playing drumset in a jazz fashion very well, and the love for the music was in his eyes. But what he had to go through just to have a place for his children to take a shower and to buy an instrument was incredible. Yet with all those odds, these people were going ahead.

He told me he once had a Duke Ellington record which he waited a year to get. He was buying one album a year. With that, with the family pressure, and without the things we take for granted in America, this man was functioning.

SF: Why did he have to wait so long to buy an instrument?

AR: It wasn't available, there were no imports and he had no money. After passing a series of tests, he was allowed to be a drummer because he had qualified. The reason they were playing on the boat was that they were allowed by the government to make a certain amount of money every year. For a certain number of weeks each year they were allowed to work, and the work was set up by their government. Then they had to come back. The availability of instruments is also controlled by the government. A person can't go down to a mu-



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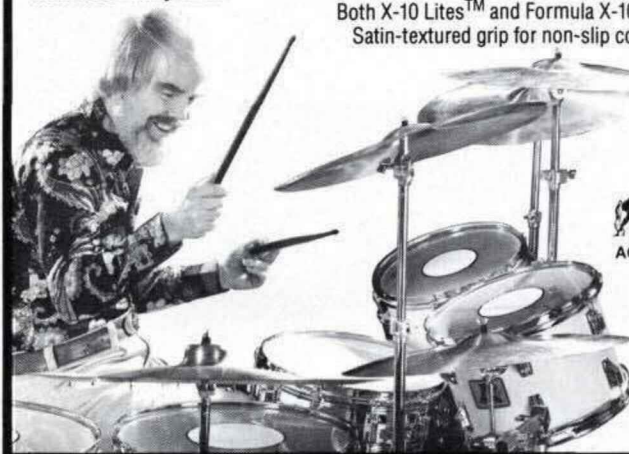
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sic store on 48th Street. Musicians in America are complaining, but I've seen people with equipment here that's incredible.

**SF:** So in Communist countries, it's up to the government to decide if you can be a drummer in the first place?

**AR:** Yes. Europe is free in a sense. But in Europe, young people are raised to know one thing—everybody must be a professional. In Germany, everybody must function in a professional capacity and must prepare with a lot of security for the future. It is very rare for a young person to play an instrument and take a chance on being a musician. The people don't have that kind of freedom. They're afraid they may not make it. I've heard many times, "What happens when I'm 30, if . . . ?"

**SF:** I'm hearing that more and more from young people in America. "I'd like to become a musician, but what's the security?"

**AR:** Security is an illusion. When I started to play, I don't ever remember saying, "How much will I make?" I saw musicians play, I loved what I heard, I loved what I saw, and I loved the magic of it. I didn't start out because of numbers. Maybe today with the media and the commercialism of it, musicians are considering that right off the bat. They're squashing their spirits abit.

I'm 39, I have two new sons, and I'm playing stronger. I think I've just started to play. I put in 20 years. I think if you do 20 years and you're still alive, functioning and still playing your instrument, then you've passed your apprenticeship in this society. I feel like I've really just developed my voice and I'm ready to go. I can't see why a young person should be afraid. Afraid of what?

**SF:** It seems to me that many of the musicians living in free countries have a tendency to embrace Socialist or Communist philosophies when they're in bad financial situations. Have you ever found that to be true?

**AR:** I've seen that. Naturally, when you're down, you're groping for the reason or you're looking to be against something. What happens to you is definitely a Karmic response. Supposedly, you should be respectful of what happens to you regardless of whether it's down or up, and accept that as being what's happening to you in a moment in reality. It's nobody's fault outside of your own.

I've never thought that way. It's destructive. I don't think you can change power structures with violent movements or responses like that. You have to develop your work and you'll get what you deserve. I'm not a very famous man, but I've been allotted a very successful life as far as family, instruments, and a band are concerned. And it's getting better and better. I developed a positive attitude from the practices, or experience, or whatever. The



positive attitude is very important; that positive energy. It's very important to realize exactly who you are, regardless of whether it's good or bad, to stick with it, to develop it, and to try to put out that positive attitude to other people.

*Berroa/Ponce continued from page 57*

he breathed Havana's air and heard the music of the streets—especially in his ghetto neighborhood of Jesus Maria. His grandfather played bata drums, which, before the Revolution, were used only in religious music. Ponce's grandfather played music for the Yoruba religion, which came from the Yoruba tribe in West Africa.

"You're born into that environment," says Ponce, "and you just pick up the music. The bata is as common as the piano or guitar here. As a baby, I just picked up music, beating on tin cans and later played conga, primarily at carnival" (Mardi Gras, which Castro switched to July and called a celebration of the Revolution). "That was my specialty. Actually the instrument is called a tumba, to be correct, and I'm a tumbadora. There is a rhythm called the conga, and that's how the name *conguera* came into being."

He started playing conga at age 12. Immediately it became his first love among instruments, "because you can really play this well; you can make rhythms in a group or solo. And I like the responsibility of this particular instrument within the music."

Once he played for nine hours straight during carnival, with his long, graceful, *cafe au lait* colored hands bleeding a little, building up callouses on his palms. His first influences were Benny More, a singer who is now dead, Tito Gomez, a popular singer, and Chuchu Valdez, a pianist. "So many singers, yes. I like singers so much. If I could have chosen in my mother's womb, I would like to have been a singer of romantic songs." He also liked Munequitas de Matanzas, a singing and instrumental group that played flamenco, guaguanco and rumba—three of the 61 varieties of Cuban rhythms, most of which are unknown outside of Cuba.

He had played only Cuban rhythms before he arrived in the U.S. Now critics say he is managing to bring about "Cuban fusion," blending the Cuban rhythms with rock and funk to produce a more sophisticated or commercially pleasing music for North American audiences. And with so many rhythms going at once, typical of Cuban music, he stirs up tremendous excitement. He plays what two or three drummers are supposed to play—and plays rhythms against each other, with the drums tuned differently, each supposed to have a different beat.

He never dreamed about developing his style or setting up Cuban fusion as a goal before he set eyes on Key West. If he had spoken English, he might have looked for a job in areas other than music in the U.S. But he went into music to earn a living, and

played the music of the street embellished by his ear and taste for rock. He thrilled critics. His explanation is, simply, "I just liked to play." Although he loves jazz, he prefers rock or funk, and pays special attention to his new influences: "Stevie Wonder—*todo*" (everything he does), "Patti Labelle, Michael Jackson, Barry White, Bobby McFerrin" (Daniel kisses his fingertips and blows a kiss into the air like a salute) "and Mel Torme" (which he pronounces "Meltamay"). Ponce's manager, Verna Gillis, is certain that Ponce will be responsible for popularizing Cuban fusion. He agrees.

"And now I want to talk about the salsa," he said through Verna, who acted as his interpreter. "For me it's a sauce for clams and spaghetti. It was a name that was given in about 1960 to draw attention in the Latin community to the music. In reality, this is popular Cuban dance music. In Cuba we call it *son montuna*" (one of the many Cuban rhythms) "the fast and the slow part of the evolution of a piece of dance music."

"When U.S. and Cuban relations fell apart, salsa became strong here. It was the way the people who promoted the music called salsa exploited Cuban music here. They used the concept to build up a recording industry. But *son montuna* is what they call salsa here." Furthermore, "it's time to preserve salsa for the past and change it by incorporating electronic instruments, effects and different dances," he adds.

"Son montuna, or salsa, uses the clave. And so do almost all other types of Cuban music or rhythms—guaracha, rumba, guaguanco, yambu, yoruba, Columbia, macuto, mozambique, which is a dance rhythm primarily for carnival, and chaonda, which is more a spectacle than a popular dance—to name a few of the 61 varieties, all but one using the clave—the 3-2 clave for son or salsa, and the 2-3 clave for guaguanco and rumba, for example. Each music has its own basic rhythms, but you can play the clave within them all. You can play clave with funk or rock, and in chaonda, danzon, everything."

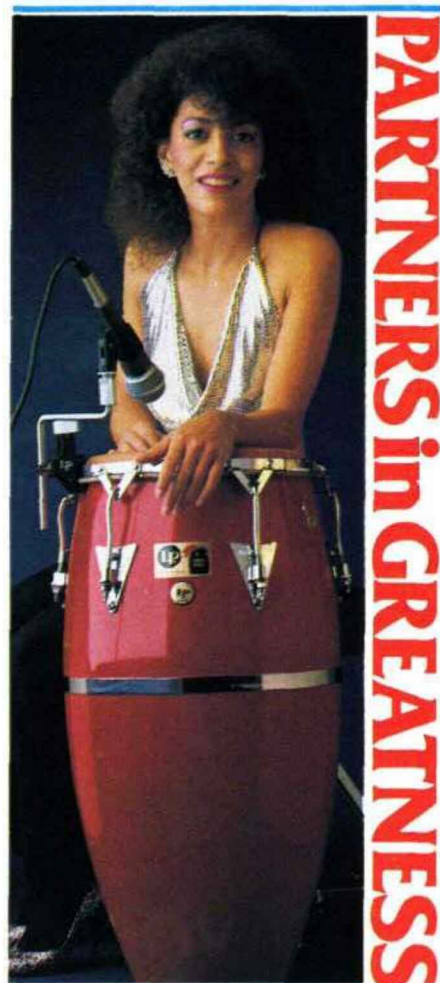
"The Cuban clave is different from the Puerto Rican idea of the clave," says Daniel, talking about an issue that has stirred up a lot of emotion among Latin musicians. "Here they use the 3-2 clave in son for everything, because the other one—2-3—is too difficult and complex for non-Cubans. The music of salsa is plastic music. Anyone can play the clave, but non-Cubans weren't born into it. Even some of the Cuban percussionists who came here a long time ago have lost the sense of the Cuban clave, which is a profound, rhythmic feeling."

"The difficulty is not playing it but maintaining it with the bass line and the piano line. Piano players and bassists should study the clave to play Latin music."

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ing with Ignacio Berroa, Ponce replied, "Ignacio is so complete because he can play Latin jazz, funk, everything. I prefer to play with him than others, because the combination is just natural, without rehearsal. From the Cuban concept of music, there's no one else I can do that with."

Berroa, as an expatriate, finds himself a soul brother in special commune with Daniel Ponce. Berroa always wanted to live in New York, because that's where the jazz was. He plays the polyrhythms of the beboppers and avant-garde musicians, with Cuban rhythms interspersed and integrated, and adds a special excitement to American jazz groups.

Berroa was born into a family of professional musicians. His father, a classical violinist, played in a charanga band with Fajardo, and Berroa's grandfather, a flutist, played in a charanga dance band—a band with two violins, a bass, a piano, a flute, congas and timbales. Berroa's mother, who died in 1963, "was a beautiful dancer," he recalls. "She met my father in a dance hall in Cuba."

His mother always wanted him to play the violin. But he preferred watching drummers. After she died, Ignacio tried the violin for a year but couldn't resist the drums. Finally his father told him, "Okay, man, go ahead."

At the Escuela Nacional de Artes, the National School of the Arts, he scored badly on a drum aptitude test. So his father went to see a trumpeter, Eddie Martinez, a friend, who was also a friend of the drum teacher in school, Fausto Garcia Rivera. Martinez said, "That's a stupid idea that Ignacio has no talent to play the drums." Fausto, who had studied with Henry Adler and been friends with Buddy Rich and Shelly Manne, made room for Ignacio in class.

"When I started listening to music, all the time I wanted to be a jazz musician. I listened to Glenn Miller all day long in the house, since I was 11 years old. The first time I played timbales in Latin music, it was here in New York City. There are not too many drummers in Cuba that play straight ahead. I can't explain why I wanted to be a jazz drummer. But I was all the time in my house like this," and he snapped his fingers in a syncopated jazz rhythm.

"I had Art Blakey, Max Roach, Buddy Rich, and Shelly Manne records. Some people had the records before the Revolution, and later we heard the Willis Conover broadcasts of jazz over the *Voice of America*. If you have a good radio and a good antenna in Cuba, you can go to the roof. It's easy. I was always doing that for the Willis Conover program. I was always concerned about the weather—if it was good or bad—for reception. I knew what was happening in the U.S. when I was in Cuba. I learned to play drums by learning to read music and working with my practice pad. And I listened. Nobody told me



to do this with the bass or that with the snare. Never.

"And I had a lot of trouble because of jazz. First of all, Castro doesn't know anything about the arts—only sports. I think he went to see the ballet one time, never the symphony. It's not difficult to be a musician in Cuba. What's difficult is to be a jazz musician. It's from the U.S. You can't be a jazz musician in Cuba. The government doesn't like it.

"You can play jazz in Cuba once in a while. But if you have a group, you have to play Latin music. That's the music of the country and represents the taste. I played in jam sessions in some places—in Paquito's home or someone's home. I met Paquito when I started to study music at the Havana Conservatory, and Paquito went to another conservatory. We became friends; sometimes we worked together in recording sessions, jam sessions or in clubs. The Rio Club now, which used to be called Johnny's Drinks, I think, used to allow us to play jazz on Mondays in the 1970s.

"I was a famous musician in Cuba. From 1976 to 1980, I worked all the time. There's one recording studio in Cuba. I was in that studio every day making records with everybody. I was in films."

But in 1980, the government restricted his foreign travel for playing. He decided to take his family to the U.S. But his wife wanted to stay behind because her mother was dying of cancer. On October 2, 1981, Berroa played at a festival with Dizzy in Puerto Rico and saw members of the famous Cuban jazz group called Irakere. His wife was supposed to leave Cuba on October 22. "But 12 hours before they were supposed to leave, someone from immigration went to the house and took their passports," says Ignacio. They didn't give any explanation and never let her leave. Ignacio thinks it's because his success in the U.S. made Castro unhappy.

On the bright side: "The first time I had a drumset in my house was in the U.S. The rhythm is the most important thing in music—the rhythm section in jazz is the most important, just as it is in Brazilian and Cuban music. For me, the whole thing that people call Latin music comes from Cuba, except for the samba. And there's a fight about this between the Cubans and Puerto Ricans. But the rhythm that the Puerto Ricans call *bomba* and *plena* is Cuban. Anyway, it's stupid, because there are only two kinds of music, good and bad. But people learned from Cuban music.

"For me, the difference between Brazilian and Cuban music is that Brazilian music is more free. They have a lot of rhythms—something beautiful. You can move inside the rhythms. They have four people doing different things on different percussions—berimbau, cuica, drums and others. It's my dream to go to Brazil for two months and study the music. They change the rhythm two or three times in

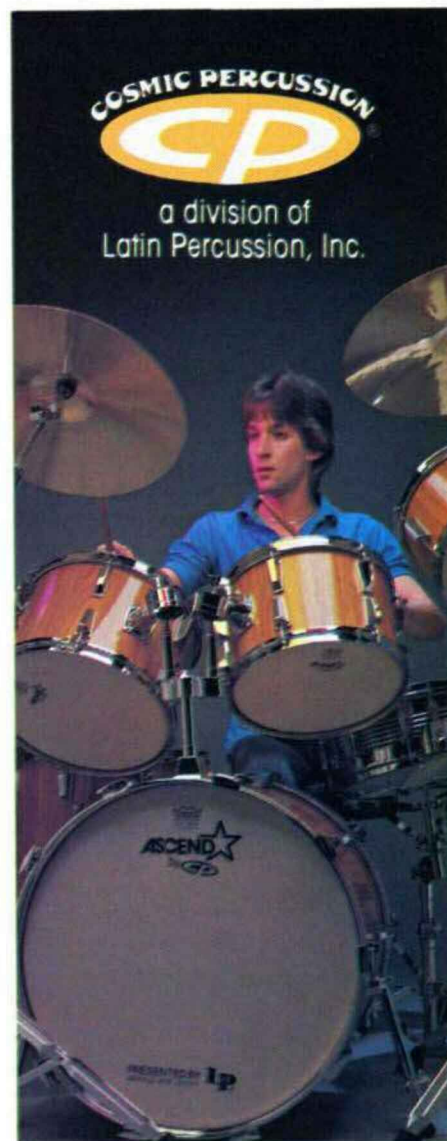
one tune. That doesn't happen in Cuban music. For me, the Cuban music is not as rich in rhythms as Brazilian music, I guess. You have to be *attado* [attached] to the clave in Cuban music. But you can put the Cuban clave into Brazilian music. If you have rhythm inside you, you can do whatever you want to do. In jazz, the rhythm depends upon whom you play with. I play straight ahead, and my influences have been Max Roach, Art Blakey, Elvin Jones, Roy Haynes and Tony Williams—in that order. They have creativity and heart.

"The most important thing in the U.S. is that I can play jazz with the Cuban influence. I play a lot of rhythms. With Dizzy, you have to play straight ahead, Brazilian, Cuban, and funk. And he likes that you play in some way straight ahead, especially on his solos. Maybe I can use the clave in my left hand, but playing jazz I have to keep this up—chang—on the right cymbal with the right hand. Not everybody can do that. For that reason, I made an album with McCoy Tyner. He heard me on Paquito's album and wanted me." Berroa made *Mariel* (named for the Cuban exodus of 1980) and *Paquito Blowing* with D'Rivera. The album with McCoy Tyner is called *La Legenda de la Hora*. And Berroa has made another album with Batacumbele on a label in Puerto Rico.

"When I arrived in this country, I thought you could find a lot of drummers who could do a lot of things. But it's not true. One drummer plays funk, while another plays straight ahead. And then it's impossible to find a drummer who can both read music and play a lot of things. People say, 'My specialization is . . .' For me, Steve Gadd is one of the most beautiful drummers. He's in the studio all the time—with Chick Corea, Paul Simon, and others. He can do it all. That's what I call a drummer. I got the job with Dizzy because I can play a lot of things."

Berroa attributes his special comfort in playing with Daniel Ponce to their common background, shared age and musical expertise. "Ponce knows how to play the new Cuban music with the new rhythms." Having been in the U.S. only three years and getting work, Berroa has caused other people special discomfort. "They get mad," he says. "But I was prepared. I was not in Cuba wasting my time. I wanted to be a jazz drummer. Now Dizzy Gillespie—he's 65, like a father, but a beautiful person and one of my best friends, like Ponce is with me. I never dreamed I would receive a phone call from Dizzy Gillespie and be on the same stage with him. For me, that's a dream."

For Ponce, the shock of deportation from Cuba and separation from his son has, in one way, turned out brilliantly. He could have indulged in self-pity, but instead says firmly, "I'm glad that I'm here, because I feel that I'm spreading the word of Cuba. I'm Cuban. For me it's not a matter of Fidel or anyone else. I love Cuba."



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*Slim Jim Phantom continued from page 17*

**SJP:** Well, the thing is, like anyone else my age, the first bands I was into were the Beatles and the Stones. I'm still a big Beatles fan to this day. I still play *Rubber Soul* a lot. My mother had a Beatles record and I heard it and wanted to be a pop star ever since. So what happens is that you see that the Beatles do a song called "Honey Don't" written by C. Perkins. So you say to yourself, "Who's this guy C. Perkins?" You go down to your record store and ask the guy working there, "You got any records by C. Perkins?" He says, "Carl Perkins. Sure." And you take it from there, kind of working backwards. I found out about the blues by listening to the Stones. You hear them do "Little Red Rooster" by Willie Dixon, and you find out that he was also the bass player with Chuck Berry. So I just kind of pieced things together until I worked my way back to rockabilly. I was into the Stones an awful long time. Charlie Watts is still my favorite drummer; he has great style. And we're quite good friends as well.

**RS:** Didn't the Stray Cats open for the Stones on some dates during their last tour?

**SJP:** Yeah, we opened up for them in America at a few concerts. I said to Charlie, "I love your drumming." He said, "You like me?" And I answered, "Of course!" He was very flattered by the fact that I liked his playing.

**RS:** You recorded with Bill Wyman of the Rolling Stones. How did that come about and what was it like?

**SJP:** It was the "B" side of the record that he had a hit with in England, "Rio De Janeiro." I was in the studio for about 18 hours and I couldn't get the little hook to it for the life of me. So we went out to eat, and I came back and fell asleep in the studio. Bill woke me up and said, "Jim, it's time to go home. We'll try tomorrow to get it." I said to him, "No. I'm going to do it now or I'm going to stay here forever." So I went in and got it the first time after I had slept and eaten something. But Bill was real patient.

**RS:** Were you awed by the fact that you were cutting a record with a Rolling Stone?

**SJP:** I guess I would have been awed if I didn't know him. But we had known each other for quite some time before he asked me to play with him. Besides, he's so easy to work with. If somebody was playing on my record and he messed it up four hundred times in a row, I wouldn't have the patience to have him try to get it right. But Bill sat with me and said, "Jim don't worry about it. Take it again. Relax." It was weird though; he did everything backwards. He had everything on the track except the drums. And the bass was a little out of time. But it was fun.

**RS:** You mentioned that your mother had Beatle records around the house. What other artists were you exposed to as a young kid?

**SJP:** My father had some Hank Williams records and some Elvis records too. I listened to them at the same time I began listening to other, newer groups like Led Zeppelin. John Bonham was a great drummer. And so was D.J. Fontana, Elvis's drummer. He had a sound that was ten feet wide in a big gymnasium. That's the kind of sound I'd ultimately want to get out of my drums.

**RS:** Did you take drum or music lessons when you were young?

**SJP:** Oh sure. I used to study jazz with Mousey Alexander for quite some time. I did the Jim Chapin book and the Ted Reed *Syncopation* book 18 ways—backwards, forward, with one hand, double stroking it, single stroking it, the whole bit. And it helped me a lot. When I listen to a lot of people play drums today, I really think they can play only four or five beats.

**RS:** How long did you take lessons?

**SJP:** For five years or maybe a little bit more. When I started to play I was ten years old. I went into it head first; I didn't want to play baseball or any other sports anymore. It was just the drums and music. That's all I wanted to deal with.

**RS:** You studied jazz, you played in a blues band and now you're extremely successful playing rockabilly. Did you ever envision yourself playing a particular kind of music and going all the way to the top with it?

**SJP:** No, not really. I just wanted to earn my living as a drummer.



Hey, I played at weddings too. I didn't want to work in a grocery store or mow lawns as a kid. I always wanted to be a successful drummer, and somehow I knew that I would accomplish that.

**RS:** You played a lot with Lee before you two became Stray Cats.

**SJP:** Yeah, that's right. As a rhythm section we used to hire ourselves out. Like we'd put an ad in the *Village Voice*: "Rhythm section available." I know what Lee is going to play. I could be in California, he could be in New York, and I'd still know what lick he's going to play. We've known each other from our days in grammar school.

**RS:** So much has been written and said about the relationship between bass players and drummers. What do you think is the perfect relationship the two should have?

**SJP:** I think the bass player and the drummer have to be almost like the same person. When I see a group play live, it's either the first thing I'm impressed with, or else it bugs me. If I see a bass player going all over the place and the drummer trying to follow him, I get all uptight. I also get uptight when a drummer is speeding up and slowing down, and the bass player is trying his best to hold the drummer back. I enjoy nothing about the group if I hear that. It just really annoys me.

Take Mick Fleetwood and John McVie from Fleetwood Mac. Now they've been together for how many years as a rhythm section and they play very simple. But they're like a rock. You could put a symphony over them and it would be perfectly in time. Bill Wyman and Charlie Watts are the same way. They might not be great technical players, as technical players go, but they're incredibly solid and it shows in the Stones' music. It's the same with Paul and Ringo. Paul McCartney is probably still the best bass player in rock today as far as I'm concerned. So what I'm trying to say is if the drummer-bass player relationship is like a rock, then a saxophone player or the guitarist won't have to be concerned with counting. What they're able to do then is take advantage of the confidence they have in the rhythm section and take off doing their own thing. It makes the band sound that much better.

**RS:** How do you come up with your snare drum sound?

**SJP:** Dave Edmunds. He really knows what to do. I think the Stray Cats would be lost without him. He puts all sorts of crazy stuff in our sound. See, we want the sound from the '50s, but in this day and age you have the technology available to make that sound—once you've got it—even better. We use a lot of different things to achieve that. But if I was in the studio and someone asked me to show them how I got my snare drum sound, I don't honestly know if I actually could. I'd probably shrug my shoulders and say, "See Dave Edmunds." He's really into drum sounds, despite being a guitar player.

**RS:** When working with Edmunds, does he suggest that you play a particular drum part, or does he merely concentrate on sound?

**SJP:** He suggests things because a lot of times I'll say, "Dave, what do you think about this?" We all have a good working relationship with him because we're in on all of the decisions every step of the way. With me and my drums, Dave has gotten to the point where he knows what I want and how to achieve that. Dave Edmunds knows as much about rockabilly and rockabilly sounds as anyone I've ever met.

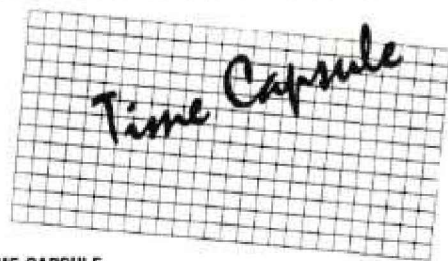
We met Dave a couple of years ago in London after one of our gigs. We walked into our dressing room and there's this guy drinking all our vodka. So we said, "Who is that guy?" And someone whispered, "Dave Edmunds." Well, I had known his music, but not his face. He just came up to us and said, "Let me be your producer before someone who knows nothing about your music spoils it for you." We were in the studio within the week.

**RS:** It seems as if the Stray Cats are always either on the road or in the studio. How much do you play your drums when you're not touring and not in the studio?

**SJP:** Hardly ever. I didn't have a kit for a long time, and like you said, most of the time we're on the road anyway. And if we're not on the road we're in the studio. But I'll tell you, ever since I got this kit from Gretsch with two tom-toms and two floor toms—the big-

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gest kit I've ever had—I've been spending a lot of time playing along with records and things out of books. It's good fun and good practice.

**RS:** Do you think you'd ever use that kit or a couple of pieces from it on stage with the Cats?

**SJP:** If it's necessary I will. We have a song on the new album called "Rebels Rule," which is kind of like a "Bo Diddley"/"Not Fade Away" beat. I used timbales on that tune, and it sounded fabulous. So on stage we've rigged up a thing so I can play them live.

**RS:** I noticed the way your kit is set up on stage is quite efficient considering the fact that you're standing and moving around so much. Can you explain to me exactly how they're set up?

**SJP:** My roadie, Oliver, is a genius. He invented the concept I use. We just take out the ride and stick in the timbales. So all he has to do is unscrew one thing, take away the cymbal, put in the timbales and it's done. I have a platform, and at the bottom of the snare and cymbal stands, he made holes that go into the platform. The stands are attached to the platform by some kind of nylon and lugs. So if you turned the platform upside down the drums wouldn't fall off.

**RS:** I guess you never have a problem with your bass drum sliding.

**SJP:** No way. But before he built the platform, my bass drum always slid around on stage. What we'd really like to do is build a big flight case for the drums and platform, and then we'd never have to take anything apart.

**RS:** How about when it comes to miking the drums?

**SJP:** We use real tiny microphones. The mic' on the bass is inside the drum with a silk-screen front that allows the sound to get out. All the wires, which are very thin, lead to one box, so it looks like there's nothing up there but the drum and cymbal, which is what we want. If there are all these microphones hanging in front of the drum, they take away from what I'm trying to do in the first place, which is making it look like it's only me up there.

**RS:** Is the studio setup any different than the one you use on stage?

**SJP:** Nope, it's the same thing. I just use an extra 16" crash cymbal and maybe a hi-hat which I keep closed. But I still stand up, and just use the snare and bass drum.

**RS:** What would you say are the two most important elements of your drum style?

**SJP:** Time is one element. No matter what band you play with—Rush or the Stray Cats—you've got to be able to keep good time. The easiest way for a drummer to get sacked out of a group is to speed up and slow down, speed up and slow down. My meter is really my most important thing because that's what I'm there for. The other thing is chops. We go out on the road for four months at a clip, and I have to be able to play an hour and a half a night, every single night, without being tired or without having my licks affected in any way. You know, you're on the road for a long time, and the chops just have to be there. I play with metal sticks a lot on my practice pad just playing rudiments so I can keep myself strong. I'm a skinny person, but I have strong wrists. Playing rock 'n' roll drums, as any other rock 'n' roll drummer knows, is strenuous business.

**RS:** When you're on the road and playing every night for an hour and a half, how do you keep yourself from losing your edge or getting bored?

**SJP:** Well, for us right now, most of the kids who come to see the Stray Cats have never seen the band perform live, so you naturally want to play good for them to make a positive and lasting impression. Just the fact that these kids are getting turned on to us for the very first time is enough to keep me very interested and very concerned with how I play. If I play good that particular night, the next time the band is in town, these same people are going to bring their friends with them to the show.

I also play different licks every night. I try and play a new one—whether it's incorporating a rudiment into a lick or whatever. What I've been doing lately is something I finally found out I can do, and that's playing between the snare drum and the bass drum

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more. I can't get too carried away though. I can't play things that are going to take away from the tightness that the Cats have. But I never get bored on stage. The road gets boring, but that hour and a half on stage each night is mine. Don't talk to me about lawsuits, accountants, record charts, or this, that or the other thing. All I want to do is play.

**RS:** In addition to drumming, you've also done some writing. It seems as if more and more drummers are beginning to contribute to songs.

**SJP:** That's really true. As for me, I'm a lyricist; I just write words. And I really like doing it too. It gives me a pretty good feeling when I hear them sung on a record.

**RS:** Do you and Brian Setzer work together on Stray Cats songs?

**SJP:** Well, when Brian has written a song that he can't think of any lyrics for, he gives it to me. And every now and again, I'll come up with a catchy phrase or something and work with that. Me and Lee have always written together; whether we will use what we write with the Cats remains to be seen. With the Cats I guess I've written maybe a half dozen songs, a couple of which were hits. "Runaway Boys" is one of them; that was our first hit over in England and Europe. Brian and I wrote it.

**RS:** Have you ever written any melodies?

**SJP:** No, I really don't know that much about that part of song writing. I know chords on the piano and stuff, but that's about it. Someday I would like to be able to play another instrument well. But right now I'm still trying to improve my drumming.

What you just said about more and more drummers writing is something I've been noticing too. Take Phil Collins. He orchestrates things. Don Henley from the Eagles writes. Levon Helm from the Band used to write. This would make a great question in a rock 'n' roll quiz book: Name all the drummers who are songwriters too. Writing songs, to me, is a real talent. Listen to Phil Collins. He's a great songwriter and still one of the best drummers around. He's left-handed too. He even writes symphonies in his spare time.

**RS:** Can you describe for me a particularly crazy Stray Cats moment, either on stage or in the studio, that reflects the rapport the three of you have with each other?

**SJP:** Well, we're loose with each other. Like one time this crazy thing happened to me. Brian is always hopping on my bass drum. I stand on it and Lee tries to knock me off it. Well, one time he did and I got knocked out.

**RS:** You were actually unconscious on stage?

**SJP:** Yeah. He knocked me off the drum and I hit my head on the floor. That was in London a couple of years ago. So like the next day, I was walking down King's Road where all the punks hang out and a guy comes up to me and says, "That was the best gig you ever done!" I said, "What do you mean? I only did half the gig. I got knocked out!" So he says, "Yeah, yeah I know. That was what made it really great!"

**RS:** How much rockabilly do you listen to today for say, drum styles and riffs?

**SJP:** I listen to a lot of rockabilly for that reason and for entertainment too. I still love listening to Gene Vincent, Eddie Cochran and Buddy Holly. Holly had a great drummer playing behind him, Jerry Allison. Out of all the rockabilly drummers, he's probably the best one I ever heard.

**RS:** Is Allison one of your bigger influences?

**SJP:** Yeah, and D.J. Fontana, Dickie Harrell, Charlie Watts and Ringo. Others would be John Bonham and Bernard Purdie. I like Simon Phillips too. He's a very good friend of mine. When I'm in London, we go drinking together. Simon's completely ambidextrous; he never has to cross over. On the hi-hat, he just moves his hands over. I think Billy Cobham can do that too.

**RS:** Do you ever see yourself using a drum machine?

**SJP:** I don't think I'd use one on record, but I'd maybe like to fool around with one at home. I don't know. I think drums should be made out of wood. What drum machines do is take people who



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really can't play that well and actually make them sound like good drummers. Drum machines don't have that human touch, which is very important in music—any kind of music. I must admit, though, that the Linn drum does get some very decent tom-tom sounds.

**RS:** Well, rockabilly has a very human and emotional quality to it, something that a lot of the techno-rock that's currently heard on the radio is lacking.


**SJP:** Drumming itself is very emotional. And you have to feel good about what you play if it's going to come across with feeling. As long as the song swings or rocks, then I know I've done my job. With the Stray Cats, I'm after a simplistic emotional quality. Too much drums would definitely clutter things up. I can play some licks if I want, but I don't want to turn what I do into a circus.

**RS:** Since the band is a trio, you and Lee have a pretty big responsibility in terms of filling out the bottom of the Stray Cats songs.

**SJP:** Lee plays that double bass, so he gets that click. That helps an awful lot to fill out the bottom. If he played an electric bass, things would sound hollow, I think. The fact that Lee is a very good player doesn't hurt either. Few people can play those stand-up basses. Lucky for the Cats, Lee is one of them.

**RS:** A lot of people believe rockabilly and the Stray Cats in particular are basically fads. Does that bother you?

**SJP:** No, because I don't think rock 'n' roll is a fad, whether it be rockabilly or acid rock. I mean the Rolling Stones are still playing "Twenty Flight Rock" in front of a hundred thousand people, and that's an old Eddie Cochran song.

But it's weird, you know, because now they're selling bowling shirts in Macy's and other big department stores. And we were wearing these things for a long time before they became stylish. But I don't think what people say about fads and things affects us, because beneath all that stuff, we're just a good rock 'n' roll band. And there'll always be a place for a band that can really rock. 



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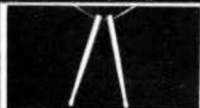
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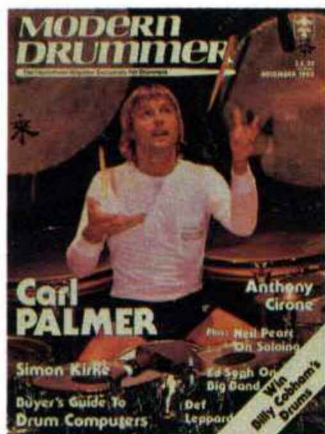
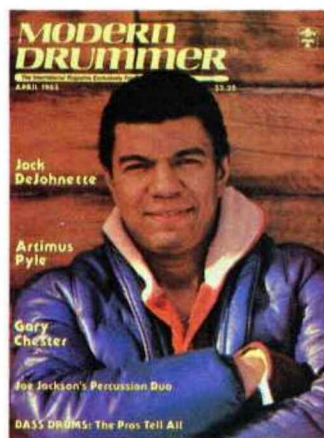
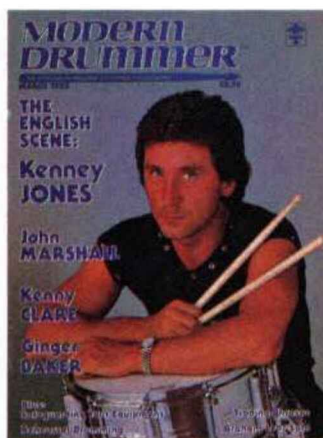
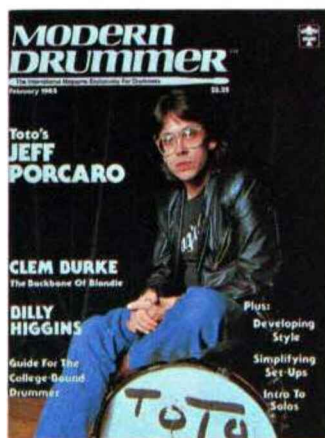
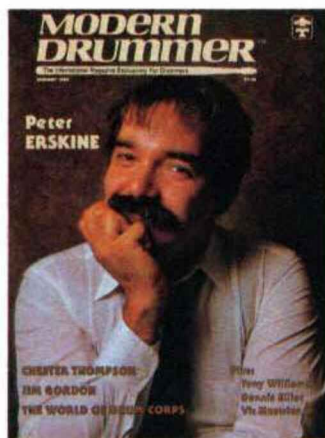
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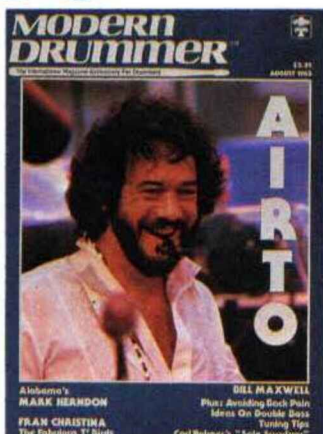
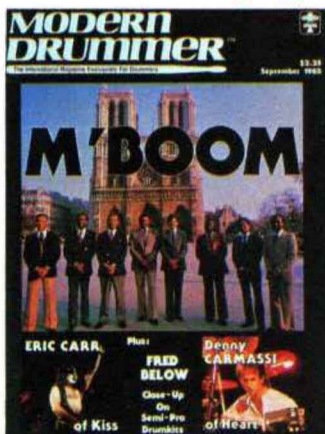
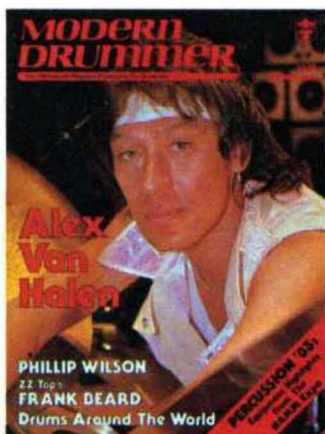
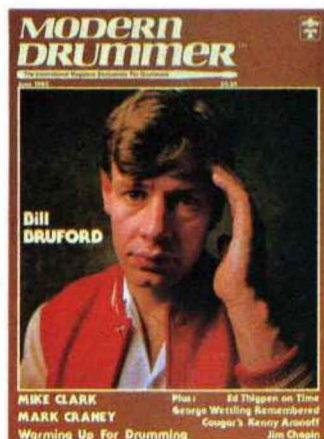
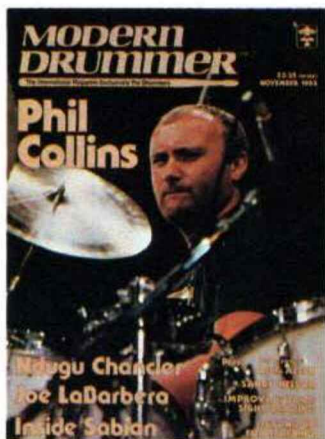
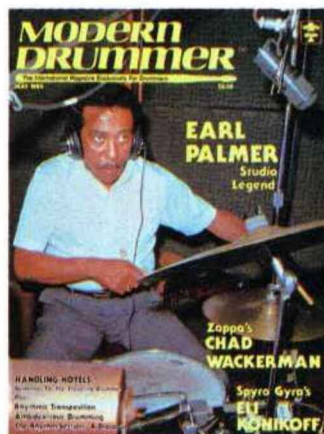
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*L.A. Studio Roundtable continued from page 23*

**RF:** Does a mechanical device like a click track interfere with that magic?

**Rick:** It depends on who can play with a click and who can't. A lot of musicians can't play with a click track; it's not only drummers. There's more to it than the drummer. It's a weird thing. When you put headphones on, an acoustic guitar is as strong an influence to the music as the loudest, strongest thing you can play on the drums. If you play to a click track really well and the bass player or guitar player can't play anything to the click, it's terrible.

**Vinnie:** If you get a guitar player who's real on top of it, and you're trying to lay back, it inhibits you when you try to go for something.

**Rick:** You can't slow him down. He's as loud as you are.

**RF:** How imperative is it to have that skill in the studios today?

**Jim:** You have to do it.

**Rick:** I don't think you have to use it, but they've learned over the years that rather than everybody being influenced by the one player who might rush or drag, if you put the click down, it's going to start somewhere and finish in the same place. You don't have to worry about losing an entire song because it's twice as fast at the end from the way it started out. What happens in between is how the band agrees on the time. So I think if you have people whose time doesn't rush or slow down, you don't need a click.

**Jim:** With the click being like that, where someone rushes a little bit and somebody else drags a little bit, when you put it together later on and you don't hear the click anymore, all that can sound real nice and human.

**Jeff:** One thing in today's music, though, is that there is a lot of music where people are using time-based stuff to write songs and that's how they're cutting them—with synths and sequencers and whatnot. Sometimes you have to get into that. And that gets harder because it's not a matter of cutting a track to a click. After they take the click out, it feels good. If some of those instruments are going to be digital, real-time instruments, there are electronic hassles with them. If you use a Linn drum as your click, you're playing a figure that's in real time. If they add any more synths to what you heard audibly in your 'phones, there's a milli-second delay, and they have to use all sorts of stuff to chase that click and make things lock in.

**Jim:** The Linn is not compatible with digital click.

**Jeff:** Sometimes you go to dates, and the producers or the artists have the tempo that they want the tune to be cut at, and they have a little click machine. They take

the time to set the tempo and they listen to four bars, or a demo, and say, "Yeah, that's the tempo." It is *not* the tempo and you know as a drummer, feel-wise or groove-wise, what the tempo should be. You are playing along and you know the chorus has got to be way up here, you know the bridge has got to breathe more, you know that the fills sound stiff, and it's wrong. That's a fine line.

**RF:** Do you say something at that point?

**Jeff:** You try to. But even if you ask anybody who writes songs, there are some songs, I don't care what tempo you pick, that just don't make it with real time all the way through. I remember Seals and Crofts—before any of these things like the Linn came out—used to record with the Roland *Maestro*. They used to edit, take tape and record pieces of the *Maestro* at four different tempos. They would make all the verse sections one tempo, and all the choruses were at a tempo slightly above. You knew that when the chorus came, you could go up a little bit, because they knew vocally and lyrically you could, and then you'd come back down and you'd have the old tempo there. Sometimes that was easier.

**Craig:** I think what Rick said—that it's not just drummers—is important. For the longest time, we were the only ones who were responsible for time. Now it's the

whole group.

**Jeff:** But one of the bad pressures, man, is the fact that some artists and producers have a whole rhythm section there. They're all good players, but getting five people with clicks and the right balance is hard, and a couple of them maybe aren't making it with the click. They're demanding that they get a good drum track that's right on with the click, so you're trying to concentrate on playing with the click, but you want to move with the piano player and you're going, "No, I can't." It's so hard and you start flipping out. And you know they're in the booth just listening to you and the click, but they want everybody else to play so you get the feel. [laughs]

**Rick:** It's stuff like that that makes you crazy. People say, "This guy has got an attitude; this guy is crazy." Shit, you listen to some jerk tell you, "We have to fire the drummer—the time is bad." Meanwhile, in the 'phones, you're listening to this folk-guitar player who's playing with no time. It sounds like two giant speakers going "WHONG, WHONG," and they expect you to hold the band back.

**Vinnie:** On top of that, you might be running down the tune a couple of times without a click and it's grooving. Then they turn the click on and it's a whole other scene.

**Jeff:** And that psyches you out. Then you

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work for an artist who says, "Why are you known for keeping such good time? You should be listening to my lyrics, rushing when I'm rushing and slowing down when I'm slowing down." [laughter]

**Rick:** There are no answers to some of these questions. If you're going to do this kind of stuff, every day you've got to get up and be prepared to use your resources. "Today I'm working for so and so," and you've got to go check your file on that person. "I've got to go in with this snare drum, and with this thing happening here, and this thing happening there." It's more than what you think about a click track.

**RF:** You were talking about the computers before. How essential is it to be on top of that in the studios today?

**Jeff:** It's everybody's personal preference. **RF:** Is it really personal preference? Or is it expected of you today?

**Craig:** I think it's getting to be now.

**Rick:** Not if you're a drummer. They expect a computer specialist to work on the computers. I know synthesizer players who go in and play, and there are programmers sitting right next to them. One person is hired to put his hands on the keys and someone else is hired to get the sound. They do the same thing with us. If they want to hire any of us to go in and program a Linn machine, that's fine, but why hire someone who is known as this kind of a craftsman, who is a physical person, to come in and do the brain work?

**Jeff:** But, by the same token, all of us might have an extra metal snare drum, and a wood snare drum; you have the tools of your trade that you're called upon to use. Sometimes it's nice to know a Linn machine real well—to know how to set it up yourself, to know to write down on a piece of paper what the tempo is that you're at and whatnot. Sometimes, some of these people don't know how to record it on tape properly. It's great for a drummer to know the Simmons. And it's good to help somebody and say, "How about if we do half and half?" It's nice to have the option. They may say, "We want all Simmons here," and I may say, "I hate playing an all-Simmons kit. How about if we use a real bass drum, a real snare drum and some Simmons toms?" It's good just to have those options.

**Craig:** I still feel that we can program drum machines better than keyboard players. I think we can put on more legitimate parts.

**Jim:** Sometimes, Craig, I have found the opposite, like on one particular track I recently played on, where I just played the snare drum. I played two different snare drum sounds on top of the Linn snare drum, which made it a total of three snare drum sounds on this track. The rest of it was Linn. When I first started doing it, I was thinking that I wasn't crazy about the

JANUARY 1984



idea. At one point, I tried to tell them, but I'm not one of those people who says, "It sucks man, change it!" I hem and haw, so I tried to make it a positive statement, "Maybe I could do a little something else ..." "No, that's okay, leave it like that. That's good." So I said "Okay," and kept listening and thinking, "This is stupid. It's not what a real drummer would play." You know who programmed the machine before I got there? The second engineer! So later on in the evening, after I had done my stuff, a synth went on and some other things, and I said, "Listen to that thing man! It's a great track." [laughter] I loved the way the drums were moving. They were moving dumb as a post, man. It was something I wouldn't have done, but it really worked good. Stuff like that happens and I start wondering if maybe I'm to much of a drummer for the Linn machine sometimes. For a long time, I maintained that you couldn't do a shuffle on the Linn machine—the kind of shuffle I like to do—but I just did one the other day that was very convincing.

**Rick:** How's the new Simmons sequencer? Does anyone know?

**Vinnie:** I messed with it at this guy's house. It's just like a regular sequencer and it's got a four-bar thing with little dots. Some producer said it wasn't a real reliable unit, but I've never used it.

**Jeff:** The Simmons themselves aren't reliable units. The best thing about the Simmons is the touch-sensitive pad. Steve [Porcaro] took the pad and hooked it up to a Prophet. It was the Simmons sound but 80 times better than you can get out of the Simmons.

**Craig:** A couple of times, in the early days, I wish I would have had computer drums. If somebody wants to do a sequence track now with synthesizers—if you're working for a producer who you know is going to want everything Nazi-like and 100% perfect—I'll be the first guy to recommend cutting at least part of it with a drum machine.

**Rick:** I actually like those kinds of mechanical tracks. I remember in the very beginning when they first came out, I walked in and Steve Porcaro was sitting there working with the prototype of the Linn machine. I said, "This is an interesting little thing here," and he said, "Yeah? Jeff won't even walk into the same room with me when I have this machine."

**Jeff:** We all hated those things when they first came out.

**Rick:** But it's good for what you use it for. When I hear someone make a part up, put in all the drum fills and do all that stuff on a Linn machine, it's good for certain mechanical things. When you want any kind of human touch, all the machines play almost the same. Whenever they say you can

do a whole song and you can link up the songs, they're really right and it's not bad at all. I'm not critical of it. It serves the purpose, but there's nothing that is going to replace that little bit of movement in two open bars of a fill that Craig or Vinnie is going to play.

**Craig:** Speaking of the Simmons, this could be bullshit, but I went to the drum store and the guy said, "Krampf, you haven't bought any tom heads." I said, "Well, it's been all Simmons," and he said, "Oh, have you heard about the injuries?" I don't know if this is true, but the Simmons don't give—it's like a brick wall—and all of a sudden there is a rash of injuries. I wonder if the problem with my arm is related.

**Jeff:** Dig this: When I first got the Simmons, we did a track one day. When you have the 'phones on and the sounds are happening, you can't tell how hard you're hitting. I had half my regular set and all the toms were Simmons. We did about four or five takes, and that night, man, I wondered if I had sprained my hand or something. For the next four days in a row, I could just tell from where my hands hurt that using the Simmons was exactly what caused it. It's like hitting cement. There's nothing giving.

**Craig:** The doctor I saw said this isn't tennis elbow, but it was the first case he had

ever seen of what he had to call "drummer's elbow." I will get the results Tuesday, but I just had the electro tests and all that stuff. The doctor thought the ulna nerve was being pushed by this elbow and causing the lack of feeling. It was very depressing. Using the Simmons is the only thing that I can think of that I'm doing different.

**Jim:** I've been having a lot of fun with my Simmons. There are so many ways to use them. But you've got to be careful not to lay into them the same way you do a drum. You don't really have to, which is one of the main reasons I like them so much. I don't have to work so hard.

**RF:** With all of the things they can do to your drum sound in the studio, does the drum itself really matter that much?

**Jim:** Well, sometimes I hate tom-toms. At one session, my tom-toms will sound wonderful, and I'll go to the trouble of putting them in a box. But at the next gig, forget it! Then I always think, "What's the use?"

**Rick:** It's not the drum I hate. I hate the rooms. If I could do sessions in one room for the rest of my life, the room of my choice, it would be great.

**Jim:** You know who has it great? Roger Hawkins and those people down in Muscle Shoals. His drums always sound magnificent. They're always in that same room.

**Rick:** Over at Paramount, they put your

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**Jeff:** That's always a drag because you do one session where there's a nice power amp on the headphone system, everything is hi-fi, your toms sound great and the room sounds great. You get enough bottom out of it, you're not having trouble with your floor tom, you're not having trouble with the snare drum or the bass drum, and that night you go somewhere else and the set sounds like shit.

**Jim:** I get demoralized. I hardly feel like playing anymore. I love that feeling when I

go in, and I can just sit down and play, man. But if I have to go through this . . .

**Jeff:** The rooms I've played in New York all sound good.

**Rick:** I don't like the sounds in New York.

**RF:** But don't you get to use your own drums most of the time there?

**Jeff:** I could if I wanted to, but a lot of the studios in New York have a couple of sets there, or you can call people like Marotta, Gadd or Ferrone who have extra sets. You can call their people and rent their sets.

**Rick:** I wouldn't rent shoelaces from those people in New York. They sent rental kits to sessions and that's half the reason I left. I couldn't find anybody to set up my

drums in New York. I would hire someone to set up my drums and that person would pawn them. There's no real business there. I must have gone through ten people. Maybe it's getting better now, but you had to rent drums there unless you wanted to carry them yourself. I used to call this one place for maybe two years for every session, and they sent drums that had no business being in anybody's case. They expected you to fix their drums. I would get a call from them and they would say, "What do you do? How do you make a snare drum sound good? What should we do to the toms?" The tom heads would be black. Every drummer in the world had tuned and detuned them for the last five years, and they put them on the snare drum. I remember hitting a snare drum and the whole drum ended up in my lap.

**Jim:** That's what you get for being an animal.

**Rick:** That's what you get for being in New York.

**RF:** There is a special set of politics inherent in the music business. Would you be willing, without mentioning names and jeopardizing your gigs, to talk about that?

**Jim:** People used to call me on the phone asking questions like, "How's everything? What have you been doing?" Then they would proceed to tell me that they knew they could play, but they were so frustrated that they didn't get calls to go into the studio. It blew me away. They'll be talking about the politics, and saying that it's who you know. I got to the point where I would really preach against that, so now it's hard for me to even talk about politics. I know it exists, but I think for years, I just denied it.

**Jeff:** Politics is only involved in a certain clique of studio work where there are contractors. I can tell you right now, the time I did sessions, half of the sessions would be for independent artists or producers, and half the work would be from contractors who asked if I could make this session or that session on such and such a date. The contractors make what the highest paid musician makes, and all they do is call up the musicians and make sure they're there to fill out the contracts. Some contractors contract every kind of date, from one vein of music to the next. One time I recommended Vinnie. This guy is the kind of contractor who calls up all the time, and when you can't make it, he asks, "Who should I get?" Okay, I said, "Try Vinnie," and the guy says, "Well, what has he done?" I told him what I knew Vinnie had done, and the guy says, "Well, I've got to hear him first. I can't take a chance." So what the hell did he ask me for? If you call me up and ask me, I'm doing you a favor by saying, "Try this cat out." This one particular contractor blew at least five weeks of work for Vinnie by not going down to at least give a listen, when he

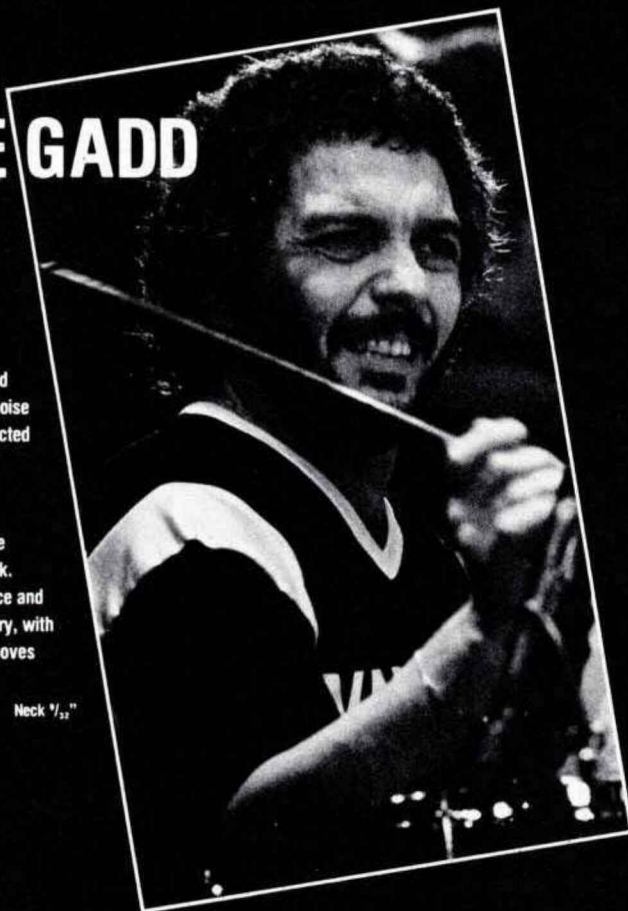
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could have seen him in any number of clubs.

**RF:** When was that?

**Jeff:** Here's the big joke. Everybody knows how hip Vinnie plays, and it wasn't that long ago that these idiots were pulling this. That's the jive that everybody runs into at one time or another.

There are so many different kinds of music that you know a lot more people could be working. If I wanted to be a contractor and be successful and well liked, I would really get into the album I was hired to contract. I would get with the producer and listen to all the tunes they planned on doing, because producers are, in fact, the ones who say, "Yeah, I would like to have so-and-so on my album." Nobody's going to doubt the fact that some artists dig having name players. "Gee, I always wanted to have so-and-so play on my album. Can I have this rhythm section; can this guy arrange?" If I were a contractor, I would listen to the tunes—if I were a real musician who knew music and had a feeling—and I would say, "See, this is a Chicago blues shuffle, so I'm going to get this drummer, and these two guitar players should be on this because they have the finger-picking thing down." I would do that kind of thing, and still think about continuity for the artist, if it's the kind of thing where it's supposed to sound like a band.

**RF:** When the phone starts ringing off the hook, is there really a fear that you can't say no to a job, or you won't be called again?

**Jeff:** It depends on how much you are into the gig and doing what you're doing. I remember when Toto started, my old man said, "There go your sessions," and people were saying, "Why do you want to start a group? So-and-so and so-and-so aren't going to be calling you. If you're on the road for four months straight and then you're doing an album, you can't make all these sessions. Everytime this certain artist or producer who used to use you asks the contractor to get you, and you aren't available, they go to the new kid. They become used to that person and establish a relationship with that person." That person may also be the type who takes the contractors out to lunch and buys them Christmas gifts. Movie and TV people do that all the time; that's a whole other scene. So people said, "There go all those gigs." The thing is, there went all the gigs with the jive contractors, but not those with the friends and people who are just making records. They're the ones you enjoyed doing anyway—the ones who still call you at home and say, "What are you doing tomorrow?" There are some people who, for whatever reasons, choose doing the whole realm of studio work, so they have to put up with a lot of bullshit. They have to put up with somebody saying, "Well, you've got to play Saturday; you've got to do me a favor," and these players feel obligated to

do it or they'll get on the bad side of the contractor.

**RF:** The TV and film contracting politics are different?

**Jeff:** From what I hear.

**Rick:** I would hear things that used to get me when I was younger. I guess I've melowed with age, but now, nothing really bothers me that much. You hear about some people working and you know it's purely a political thing. There are a lot of musicians who work and who do their gig okay, and they're very political. I think a lot of talented players don't know how to do that. I'm sure all of us get these calls from people, "How do I break into the business?"

**Jim:** Right away that tells me something about them. When I was young, I called Shelly Manne and asked what size his hi-hats were and things, but I never would have thought of calling him and asking, "How do you get into the studio?"

**Jeff:** Some people call and ask, "How many sessions did you do this week?" What is that?

**Jim:** What does that have to do with music?

**Rick:** I don't even think about those kinds of things. I always figured it's like being a gun slinger, and there's always a new kid who comes into town and says, "I'm a faster, quicker draw than you; I'm this and that." When it really comes down to it and you play, some things you're going to play

great on and some things you're not going to play great on. You have good days and bad days—we're human beings. Politics is politics. It's hard for me—not having any idea how to handle politics—to figure out the social situation of recording. Sometimes you work with people you don't like and you don't even want to know them—you have nothing in common with them. I'm not talking about producers. I'm talking about everybody. People don't always like me.

**Jim:** To even consider politics in whatever line of work you're in, you're already jumping into a game that you have to be prepared to play. For me, I don't want to know about it.

**RF:** But it's real.

**Rick:** But he's saying that it's not real to him, and I understand what he's saying. You don't want to have to think that it happens.

**Jeff:** The thing is to realize that it's there, even though it hasn't affected a lot of us. Certain contractors say, "You have to work this date because if you don't, you'll never work for me again." That happens and some people make those choices because they have to out of necessity.

**Jim:** Yeah, it's not that you're being blind, or closing your eyes to the realities around you.

**Jeff:** But believe me, without politics you can be happy and work.

**Craig:** They say that the ultimate of that

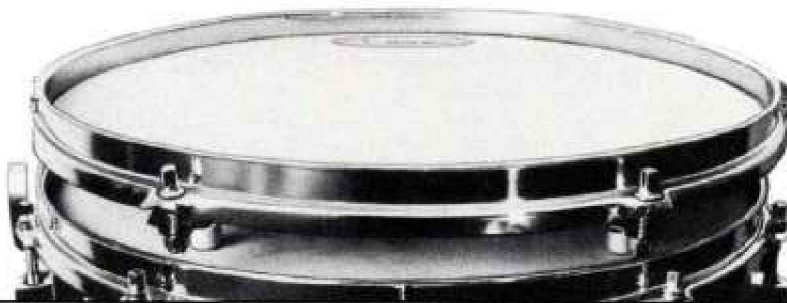
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**Rick:** From my experience, because of the people I worked with in commercials in New York, I can't see it there. But, it's true everywhere.

**Jeff:** It's really in the Los Angeles movie industry.

**Jim:** I heard it was in Nashville. *[Everyone agrees]*

**Rick:** the very first session I did in L.A. was when Spinoza brought me into town in 1971 to do a Paul Williams album. A guy in the next room at A&M came out to Spinoza and said, "Hey, how you doing man? What's your name?" "David Spinoza." "Who's that drummer?" "A friend of mine from New York." "Yeah? Ya know, we have a lot of great drummers here in Los Angeles." That's politics. It rears its head in every aspect of every business.

**Jim:** The best thing is to dance above it and do your best. If people call you for sessions, fine, and if they don't, let your music come out. It doesn't matter if it's in the studios. You'll end up in studios if you play on records. You'd be amazed how many people call me, not just kids, but adults, asking how to get into the studios. Asking questions about getting into the studios is not the way to get into studios. That has nothing to do with it.

**Rick:** You're working in some sleezy dump, some producer who may be in the

audience hears you and knows he can get you for nothing, and that's your first session.

**Jeff:** I don't care who you know. You have to be able to play.

**Rick:** It's a difficult thing. It was real hard for me moving from New York to Los Angeles. People said to me, "Call this producer; call this person," and I never could do it, ever. There are some people who can do that, but I never could. It took me years to call Spinoza, and I grew up with the guy. There are two or three people in New York I can do that with. Those are the only phone calls I make, and they're more social calls—they're really my friends. I worked with them for ten years. That would be like Jeff calling David Paich—that's friendship.

**Jim:** You see? Here in this room, everybody was unanimous when Rick said he wasn't the kind of person who could call people for work. Nobody in this room could do that if they had to.

**Rick:** I do know musicians who call all the time, and that is how they work.

**Jim:** There's nothing wrong, necessarily, with somebody having a different personality than the guys in this room. *[laughter]* There are aggressive people in the world and there's nothing wrong with that as long as they can back it up.

**RF:** Everyone in this room has gone through super, super busy times when the

phone is ringing off the hook. Again, just as in any job, there's something called burn out. You keep saying yes because you're never really sure when the next gig is, but you are doing more than you can handle.

**Jeff:** It's just like anybody in life doing anything. You know your limits and that's it, period. It's no different for drummers to burn out than for you to burn out.

**Rick:** When you get there, I think you learn from your mistakes. I know I did it in New York and I stopped doing it. I realized that I can't do this. I was one of those real lucky guys who everybody was calling to do their sessions, so I took everything for a while.

**Jeff:** And it was fun to play.

**Rick:** Then it gets not to be fun after a while and you stop. What do you think we're doing *here*? If we were working all the time, we wouldn't be able to come over here on a Sunday afternoon.

**Jeff:** It's not like it was seven or eight years ago either. When the disco scene was happening, everybody was working. You worked four sessions a day, grooved and you stayed up.

**Craig:** For me, the first thing that happens is that the attitude will start to go. When someone would ask me to do something, where normally I would say, "Sure, fine, we'll try this," all of a sudden, I wasn't so agreeable to try things. Then I realized that I would be hurt more that way than thinning out some things and taking a little of the burden off my mind.

**Jim:** I hardly ever work. There was a period from about '71 to '73 where I did what you're saying, almost every day, at least one session, and sometimes three a day. I almost killed myself.

Thank God I didn't get the ultimate house with the tennis court and all that. You can really be misled into doing something like that. In this business, there's more money being made by the work that we do than a lot of the highest paying jobs anywhere. There were years where I made way more money than I thought was really right. I was always thinking, "What am I doing? I'm just beating on things." *[laughter]*

**Rick:** You're a magician.

**RF:** Your statement, Jim, leads me to the next question. Has any one of you in this room given any consideration to the fact that you may not be doing this forever?

**Vinnie:** I freak out about that all the time. I just wonder what I'm going to do when I grow up.

**Rick:** Every once in a while I say to myself, "How long can I do this?" Every month you get to where you're saying, "I'm reaching a certain age and maybe people are going to think I'm burnt. What should I do next? Should I go on to another business?" And then two days later, I say, "I love to play. I could play in clubs again like

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when I started and enjoy myself."

**Jeff:** What we do takes a lot of our health and youth—a lot of energy. We're all artistic, sensitive-type people and, I think, just like with anybody else, we've got a certain amount of time where the physical body can let us do what we're enjoying right now at the limit that we take it to.

**Rick:** You said the key—to the limit to where we take it now.

**Jeff:** Obviously, the thing we do happens to be something we love. We're lucky and fortunate enough to be doing something artistic. We all learn things besides drums that are involved in our work. Hopefully, there are other things you can do that pertain to music.

**Vinnie:** I go on some dates and see some people my age and younger who can write tunes and can go on to be conductors or anything. If I don't start doing something else, like trying to write tunes or something, what the hell am I going to do? What do you do, take some night classes?

**Jim:** I consider you as being young and fresh in the business, isn't that right?

**Vinnie:** That's because I've only been doing it for a couple of years, but I'm 27 now.

**Jim:** You started before I did then. I didn't start until I was 29, basically. To me, a person your age, with your talent, has all this before you. You know what you ought to do right now? This is my favorite thing to tell people who are still in their 20's. If you started right now, with all your spare time, learning to play something like the keyboards, or guitar, or whatever strikes your fancy, can you imagine how good you'll be playing that instrument in five years and what a new awareness you'll have of music?

**Rick:** It's a hard thing to start over.

**Jim:** It's not starting over; it's beginning. You have got to want to do it, obviously.

**Vinnie:** Mike Baird says we'll never be out of a gig.

**Rick:** That's a great attitude.

**Jeff:** We'll never be out of a gig.

**Rick:** I always feel like every time I work, it's my last gig. I have been such a loner the whole time I've played. I'm always off alone, just a drummer, never really connected to any group, so I don't have that kind of a social thing where I have a lot of friends in the business coming up to me and saying, "Don't worry about it." Where were they those six awful months when I moved to Los Angeles?

**Craig:** I think it's what Jeff said—it's as long as we can perform at that level. For me, it didn't really get going until I was 33 or 34, but I consider now that my fast ball is still good, as long as I can pitch . . .

**Jim:** A lot of the stuff I'm doing nowadays is, to me, stuff that almost anybody on the scene could handle. So I've been finding out more and more the last few years that, in order for me to really satisfy a lot of my musical feels, I have to create my own

thing. And that also helps bring a new quality to each new session.

**RF:** Is the ultimate goal doing your own thing? For you, Jeff, it was, wasn't it?

**Jeff:** It's fun regardless of what it is.

**Rick:** It's fun if it's successful.


**Jim:** But see, dig this, look what Jeff had going for him. He grew up with those guys in Toto.

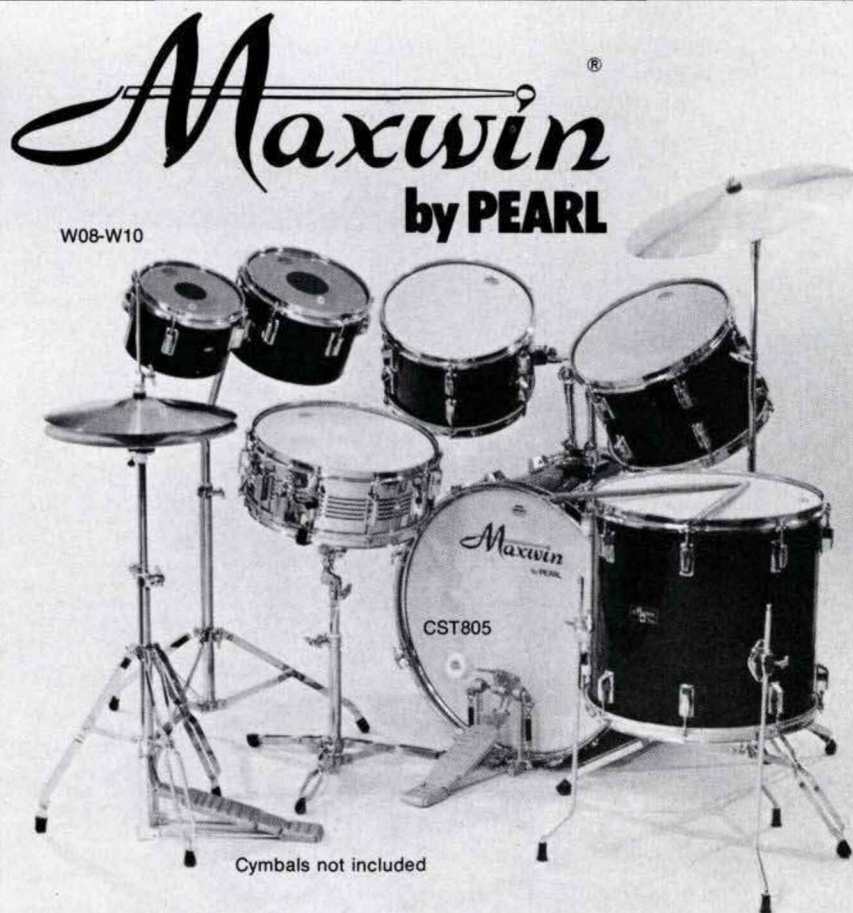
**Jeff:** It's real funny, because it was fun in high school, and it was the same group of guys with that chemistry. Everybody has been together since we were 10, 11, 12 years old, except for [lead singer Bobby] Kimball. That makes it easy.

**Jim:** All good things come to you when

you're in a band. You get the best. You get much more than just being a studio drummer. What is that? But let's face it, being in a band was how we all started, wasn't it?

**Jeff:** And it's not whether the band has a record deal or is successful or whatever. Because of the innocence of childhood, you always remember the group who played in the garage. How long did you play in a back garage of an alley, man, seven days a week? Forever, man, five years straight and that's the kind of stuff you grooved on. You didn't make any money! Some people get in bands out of necessity instead of out of love.

**Jim:** That's the key right there—love. 



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by Rod Morgenstein

## An Approach For Playing in Odd Time

### Part 1

It wasn't until recent years (with the rise of fusion, jazz rock and progressive rock) that the practice of playing in odd time signatures became commonplace. We all feel comfortable with even time because we've grown up with it. Most of the music we've heard has been even-metered music. And beyond music, we walk, swim, run, etc., in even time, so it seems only natural that learning to play odd time can initially be awkward and frustrating. Perhaps if we take one step backward and work from a position of comfort and familiarity (that is 4/4 time), we can build a foundation from which we can leap three steps forward.

For now let's concentrate on feeling 7/8 time. Since four quarter notes equal one measure of 4/4, then eight 8th notes also equal one measure of 4/4. If we take away one 8th note from a 4/4 measure, we have seven 8th notes left, or 7/8.

Play the following beat:

**(A)**

H.H. OR Cym. 

S.D. 

B.D. 

By dropping the last 8th note of the measure, we now have the following beat:

**(B)**



Play this figure until it feels comfortable. Count each beat out loud at first and then try playing without counting aloud. *Relax.* Make it feel good. Speed is of no concern.

When you feel somewhat comfortable, try combining the two beats. This will help you understand the difference between the even and odd measures.

**(C)**



The following exercises are combinations of quarter notes and 8th notes for the bass drum. When played in 4/4, some of the figures will sound like drum beats we've all played before. Play each 7/8 beat separately over and over. Then combine it with its corresponding 4/4 beat just like we did in C.



Photo by Lissa Wales

**(D)**





Now play these rhythms which concentrate on the snare drum:

(E) 

1)  2)  3)  4) 

5)  6)  7)  8) 

The following exercise combines some of the figures from D and E:

(F) 

















Bear in mind that the preceding exercises are samples of just a few different note combinations. Each exercise was designed to emphasize changing rhythms in either the snare drum or bass drum, but not both. It should be apparent that the potential combinations are endless. Try experimenting on your own.

In Part 2 of this series, we'll expand our understanding and facility in odd time signatures by utilizing more complicated 16th-note patterns.





## Miking For Mallet Instruments

In the initial stages of learning to play mallet instruments, it's very important to use a wide variety of dynamic levels while practicing in order to develop a big round sound. When played properly, mallet instruments can project a lot of sound. However, when playing in a group with drums and one or more amplified instruments, projecting *enough* sound gets to be a real problem. Without using some sort of amplification, mallet players end up at a real disadvantage.

There are a number of alternatives available that can help amplify and project your sound. These alternatives fall into two categories: *microphones* and *pickups*. Both systems require amplification—either a P.A. system or an amplifier-speaker combination.

One of the first pickups was designed by Musser Industries and is called the ampli-pickup. This system consists of two long bars filled with magnetic pickups that attach to the outside frame of a vibraphone. The magnetic pickups are designed to amplify the sound of the metal bars of a vibraphone. This pickup will *not* work for a marimba or xylophone since neither has bars that contain metal. The ampli-pickup is run through a P.A. or an amplifier to boost the sound. This system is rather inexpensive, but there are some inherent problems with the sound. The magnetic pickups are not *that* sensitive, and the metal content of the vibre bars is inconsistent, so the pickup doesn't get an even sound. Also, the pickup is placed right under the bar and there is usually a very noticeable popping sound each time you hit the bar. This popping sound can be altered by using a limiter to clip the sound of the initial attack. The sound will be more even, but the dynamic range of your playing will be more limited.

Another pickup system is offered by both the Deagan Company and the Barcus-Berry Company. Deagan offers a line of vibes that have a pickup imbedded in each bar at the nodal point. Barcus-Berry will install a similar system onto any vibraphone or marimba that you send them. Both systems are of much the same quality. The pickup placed in each bar is not magnetic. It's pressure sensitive so that you can amplify either a metal bar or wood bar instrument. The advantage of this kind of pickup is that you get a lot of signal bar sound that can be amplified. You also have

the option of adding preamplifier electronic effects, like a phase shifter, chorus, fuzz tone, wah wah, digital delay, etc. There are, however, other factors to consider with this system.

Because of the placement of the pickup in each bar, you get a popping sound similar to the ampli-pickup. The first sound that the pickup hears is the attack of the mallet on the bar followed by the sustain of the note. Another factor concerns the quality of the sound. With vibes and marimba, the sound generated acoustically is a combination of the bar vibrating and the air column moving up and down the resonator shaft. With this system, the pickup mostly hears the bar sound (since that's where the pickup is placed), rather than a combination of bar and resonator. For this reason, instruments with this pickup system can project a lot of sound, but they have a distinctly different timbre than acoustic mallet instruments.

Microphones are probably the most common way of amplifying mallet instruments. The standard way of miking a vibe is to place two overhead mic's in front of the instrument pointing down towards the keyboard. This only works well if you're situated on a bandstand with no one behind you. Otherwise, the other instruments will leak into the vibe mic's. Another alternative is to place a couple of mic's underneath the vibes or marimba so that the resonators act as a shield from other sounds leaking into the mic's. This definitely gives you more volume, but the quality of sound is a little thin, because the mic' is mostly picking up the bar sound, rather than a combination of bar and resonator sound. You can alleviate this problem somewhat by using a good equalizer to help round out the sound.


Another microphone is PZM (pressure zone microphone), which is made by Crown. It is an unusual mic' not only in its quality, but also in its design. It looks like a flat plate or disc. This mic' is available in a number of different sizes. The most practical one to use is the 2LV model. The PZM is not placed on a stand. It is worn on your shirt! One advantage of this mic' is that it picks up the same sound you hear while playing. The other advantage is that your body acts as a shield between you and the other instruments. You can set up right in front of the drums or bass, and there will

be no leakage into your mic' from the other instruments. You do, however, have to be careful not to have any other instrument facing *towards* you, otherwise its sound *will* leak into your mic'. You can move from vibes to marimba wearing this one microphone and it will pick up from wherever you move your body. This is a real advantage because you only have to carry one small mic' rather than a number of mic's, mic' stands and cables. This system of miking gives the most natural acoustic sound of any I've tried so far.

In general, it's best to experiment with different equipment before you buy anything. Remember that choosing a pickup system is very much like buying a stereo system. All the components must be compatible. A high-quality mic' played through a low-quality amplifier is just not going to sound good. Let your ear be the judge of what sounds best. Make sure you purchase a system that is practical for *your* situation.



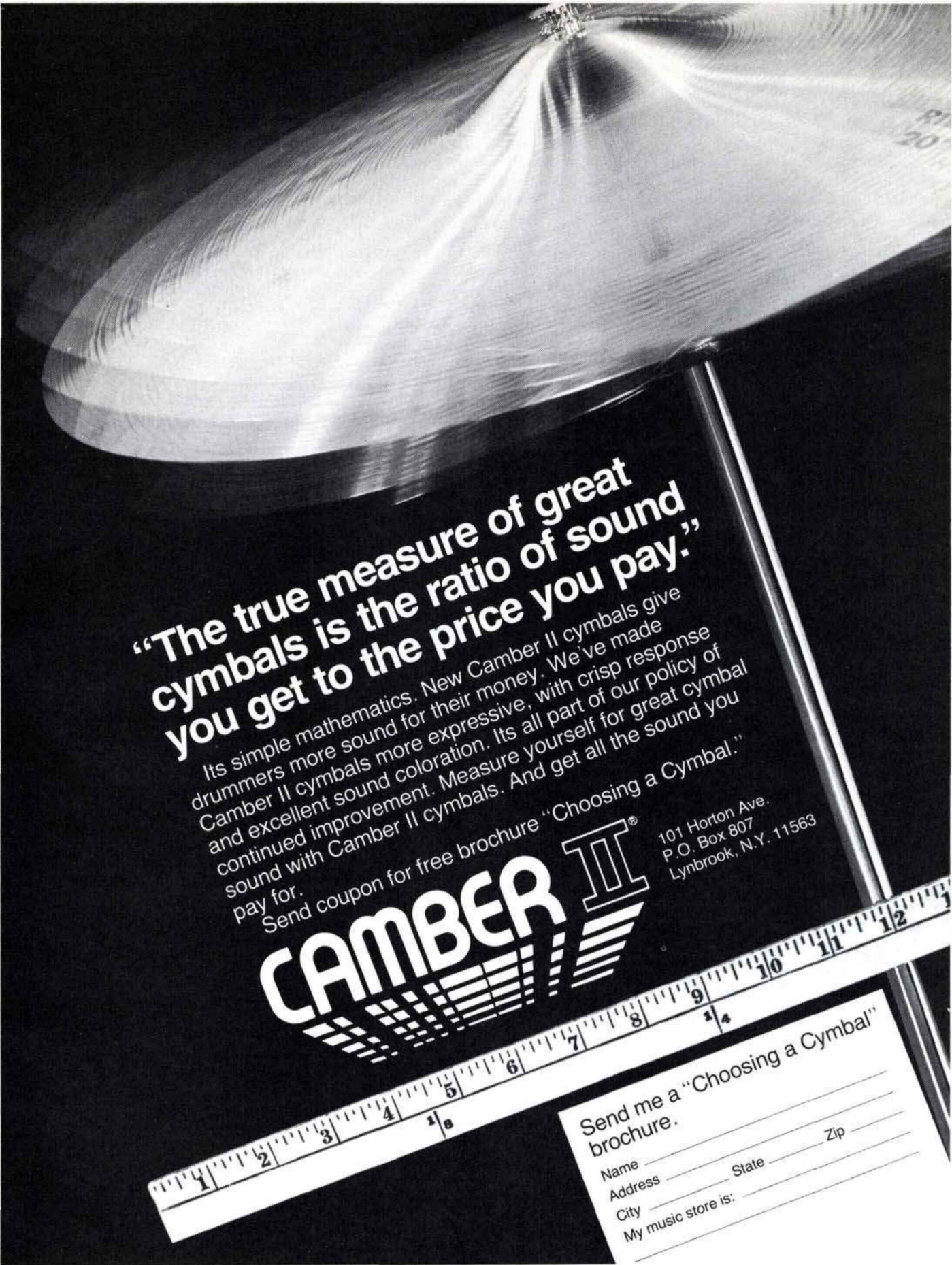
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gets used up, becomes obsolete, or loses value from natural causes. Depreciation is figured on the basis of a recovery period of a certain number of years, and a certain percentage of the value of the item per year. If this sounds complicated, it is, and you should definitely get help to figure this out. Each item is to be listed individually and figured individually. Since depreciation of items can go on over several years and be added to each year, a depreciation schedule can become quite an accounting effort. Depreciation information is available in various IRS publications, especially #534—"Depreciation."

The question does come up as to the dollar value of a depreciable item, and whether the item should be shown as depreciable equipment or rather listed under the heading of supplies, which includes expendable items like sticks and heads, and in which the entire cost of the item is taken in the year purchased. For example, obviously a new drumset should be depreciated. But what about the purchase of a \$25.00 piece of hardware? It meets all three requirements listed above, but is it *reasonable* to depreciate it over the minimum three-year period? Probably not. IRS considers the key word to be "reasonable." Although not spelled out in the regulations, the general thinking among IRS examiners is that small-cost items should be grouped into the "Supplies" category and taken in one year, leaving only the

items of larger value and unquestionable depreciability to go into the depreciation schedule. What you should do is come to some arrangement with your tax preparer as to how you wish to handle this category, and then be consistent from year to year.

Also, with regard to equipment, do not overlook the Investment Credit. Sixty percent of the cost of equipment with a three-year life or one-hundred percent of the cost of equipment with a life of over three years is considered "qualified investment credit property." Ten percent of such costs can be deducted from your income tax liability. This credit is claimed on Form 3468.

**16. Freight.** If you have to pay to have your equipment shipped to a job site, you can list the freight charges.

**17. Fuel.** This might include gas for your business vehicle. Also, in cold areas where fuel is purchased for heat, you might be able to list fuel used to heat a business location, such as a rehearsal studio, teaching space, or storage space.

**18. Gifts.** This could include gifts to prospective employers, as a promotional item for the sake of obtaining work. Additionally, if you are an employer, you can deduct up to \$25.00 per employee for gifts to them—such as Christmas hams or other traditional employee-appreciation-type gifts.

**19. Insurance.** If you insure your business equipment (drums, amps, etc.), the cost of that insurance should be listed. If you are an employer, the cost of insurance

covering your employees (medical, dental, etc.) should also be listed.

**20. Interest Expense.** If you are paying interest on the purchase of business equipment or on a mortgage for a business location, that should be listed. The interest you pay on your home mortgage is deductible to the percentage that the home is used for business purposes. This is explained further under "Office in Home."

**21. Janitorial.** If you maintain a business location and require janitorial service (perhaps in a rehearsal, recording or teaching studio outside your home), that should be shown.

**22. Laundry and Cleaning.** This refers to the cost of laundering and cleaning the clothing specifically designated for business use. In this case, your band outfit might qualify. There is a matter of interpretation relative to how band clothing fits the regulations pertaining to deductible "Uniforms and Work Clothes." See the heading for that.


**23. Legal and Professional Fees.** If you require the services of a lawyer or other professional relating to your business, or perhaps a CPA (if not shown under "Accounting") the cost would be shown here.

**24. Licenses and Permits.** If you require an Excise License to be a self-employed person or partnership, this would qualify. If you stage your own performance or concert and require any kind of municipal permit, that expense would also be listed here.

**25. Miscellaneous.** This is a catch-all

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category, but don't plan to dump a lot of expenses here. A large figure here will demand explanation and increase the likelihood of an audit. Legitimate expenses that just don't fit any pre-determined category do go here, but keep them minimal, and be able to explain or document them if asked.

**26. Office Expenses.** If you maintain an office operation outside your home, pertinent office expenses such as rent and overhead go here. There is a separate category for "Office in Home."

**27. Office in Home.** This can be a large category if you operate your business in your home as a self-employed contractor or partner. It isn't likely that as an employee you would be running an office operation (relative to drumming work), but perhaps you give drum lessons in your home. You may deduct a percentage of your home mortgage interest or rent based on that percentage of the house that is used for your business. Also, you may deduct the percentage of utilities that go toward the business operation. There are very specific regulations on this, and you should seek advice. Certain office expenses are categorized separately.

**28. Office Supplies.** This includes paper, pencils, envelopes, contract blanks, staples, typewriter ribbons and any of the expendable office materials you might use to conduct your office operation. If you do a lot of arranging or transcribing, don't forget staff sheets, pens, ink, etc.

**29. Parking.** If you must pay to park while at work or rehearsal, you might be able to show that as an expense. If you are traveling, be sure to show airport and other terminal parking.

**30. Pension.** This refers to personal retirement plans. If you are an employee, you may contribute a portion of your income to an Individual Retirement Account (IRA); if you are self-employed or a partner, you would make deposits to either an IRA or a Keough Plan.

**31. Postage.** Postage for mailers, promo materials, photos, etc., would be listed here.

**32. Printing.** The cost of printing up your mailers, table tents, business cards, etc., could be shown here, if not grouped under "Advertising/Promotion."

**33. Rent on Business Property.** This would refer to the amount of rent you might spend on a business location other than your own home. For a musician, this might be a rehearsal or teaching studio; some place that actually generates income for you. If you pay rent on a storage space, there is a category for that expense.

**34. Repairs—Auto or Truck.** This would be the cost of maintaining your business vehicle, or that percentage of the total cost that you declare your vehicle to be used for business.

**35. Repairs—Building.** If you own or rent a business space or must repair that portion of your home specifically designed

as your "Office in Home," such repairs should be listed.

**36. Repairs—Equipment.** Repairs to drums, amps, or any business-related equipment go here. If you operate an office, you might be able to list repairs to your typewriter, adding machine, etc.

**37. Salaries and Wages.** If you are an employer and you do pay salaries, then those are shown here. Also shown in this category are certain types of cash bonuses and gifts, which are interpreted by the IRS as income for the employee.

**38. Storage.** This is a category for the expense of storing business items. Store-yourself rental spaces are a good example. If you go on the road and are therefore required to store personal items, that *might* be deductible, but that is open to question, so get advice.

**39. Subscriptions.** Subscriptions to professional association and trade journals and other music publications should also be listed. Examples would be *Modern Drummer*, *Mix*, *Billboard*, *down beat*, *Record*, etc. If you pay for a union newsletter, over and above your dues, that should be shown.

**40. Supplies.** This is another large category for drummers, because it includes the expendable supplies such as sticks, heads, cables, nuts, bolts, felt washers, plastic tubes, and other items that we use up quickly. If you run an office, keep this category separate from "Office Supplies" for



the sake of clarity.

41. *Tax—Auto or Truck.* Taxes and road-use fees pertinent to your business vehicle may be listed. Basic registration and license fees are questionable, although commercial registration might be listable depending on how the vehicle tax is figured by the state. If you purchased the vehicle this year, the sales tax is deductible, and there's a separate category for that too.

42. *Tax—Business.* If you must pay Excise Tax or other permission or use tax to operate your business, that tax should be listed as a business operating expense.

43. *Tax—City/County.* If you must pay some sort of municipal taxes relative to your business operation, they should be listed.

44. *Tax—Payroll.* This refers to taxes you would pay as an employer on behalf of your employees, such as matching Social Security payments.

45. *Tax—Personal Property.* Explained above, for your vehicle.

46. *Tax—Property.* If you own property relative to a business operation and pay property tax, it should be listed. You might be able to list property tax on your home in the percentage that you declare it for business use. The rest of your property tax would then be set against your gross personal income as a personal expense.

47. *Tax—Sales.* This would include sales tax on items purchased for use in your

business. If the purchase is very large, sales tax may be shown separately here, but it is more common to just take the total outlay for the purchase and show it under "Supplies" or "Equipment," rather than to break it down to both purchase price and sales tax.

48. *Tax—Other.* Any other tax you might have to pay that pertains to your business operation and doesn't fall into any of the above categories would go here.

49. *Telephone.* This refers to the expense of your telephone pertinent to the business operation. Your basic monthly phone rate is not deductible. However, if you use an extension phone in your home office, that extension phone charge is deductible. Also deductible is the cost of long-distance calls made for business purposes. If you maintain an outside office, then the entire phone bill would be deductible (except any personal long-distance calls made on the office phone).

50. *Tools.* If you purchase tools specifically for use in your business (such as hand tools to carry in a trap case for drum repair, or workbench tools for maintaining your equipment at home), you should show them as expenses. However, be reasonable. It would be hard to justify a table saw or an auto-timing light as a drum-related tool.

51. *Travel and Moving Expenses.* This is a very important category. When you are

on the road, it may be possible to deduct virtually every expense. The cost of your travel (be it mileage and fuel in your own car or commercial carrier expense), the cost of food (either restaurant or groceries) while away from home, phone calls pertaining to business and just about everything can be listed. The cardinal rule here is to keep everything—every sales slip and receipt—and then go over them with your tax advisor.

You can list the cost of travel relating to looking for a job, such as going to auditions or interviews. You can also list moving expenses when relocating to take a new job. But be careful here—this has a time regulation attached. As an employee, you must be able to show that you have worked in the new location for 39 out of the 52 weeks after arrival at the new job location in order to deduct the move. For a self-employed person or partner, the stipulation is 39 weeks during the first 12 months after arrival, and a total of 78 weeks for the 24 months following arrival. There are other regulations specifically regarding self-employed people moving for business purposes, too numerous to go into here. This is an important area for musicians, since we do tend to travel and/or relocate fairly often for our work. You should definitely get all the information you can from the IRS or your tax preparer before you make your final determination of expenses in this

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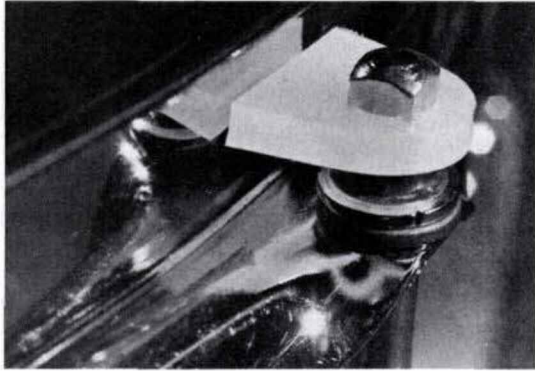
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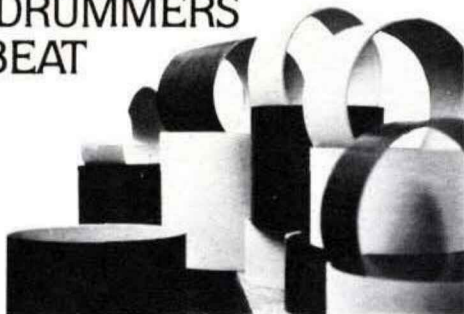
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52. *Uniforms.* IRS Publication #529—"Miscellaneous Deductions," dated November '82 states: "Generally, you may not deduct the cost and upkeep of work clothing. You may deduct the cost and upkeep of special equipment or work clothes if they are required as a condition of your employment and are not suitable for everyday use. To qualify for the deduction, both conditions must be met." The regulation goes on specifically about musicians and entertainers, saying that they "... may deduct the cost of theatrical clothing and accessories if they are not suitable for everyday use." This is another category open to interpretation. Obviously a spangled jumpsuit in dayglo orange would not be suitable for everyday use. But what about a tuxedo? Part of the interpretation depends on what the item is, and part on how it is used. The use of a totally uniform outfit among all the members, such as a fancy tuxedo worn by a show group, could add validity to your expense claim. Tux and tails outfits for symphony players are generally allowed, since they are required by the employer and not optional for the player. But even if your outfits are uniform in nature, if they could be purchased "off the rack" by anyone, the likelihood of an allowable expense is reduced.

53. *Utilities.* If you operate a business

location or an office at home, the utilities pertinent to the office can be listed. Use the same percentage of your office-in-home utilities as you did for the rental or house payment interest figure. Your phone has already been listed, so keep this limited to power, water, sewer, trash pickup, etc.

There are other categories or expenses you could list, and certainly those above are not applicable to everybody. Often a single expense could be listed under two or more categories. It's considered best by tax preparers to list many small expenses in many different categories, rather than a few large expenses in only a few categories. This enables you to be more specific about the expenses, keep them more easily verifiable and understandable, and thus possibly avoid the likelihood of an audit. Use a little organized thought and start now. Reduce your business operation to its smallest parts. Then sort out the expenses that apply to each of these parts. You should be able to set up a file of income, receipts and expenses now, so that when it comes time to figure out your taxes, you have your information well-documented and easily arranged to lay out for your tax preparer. If you are your tax preparer, then be sure to get all the pertinent data from IRS and local tax offices before you go to work. The key is to be well-documented, well-informed and well-organized.

### Where To Go For Help

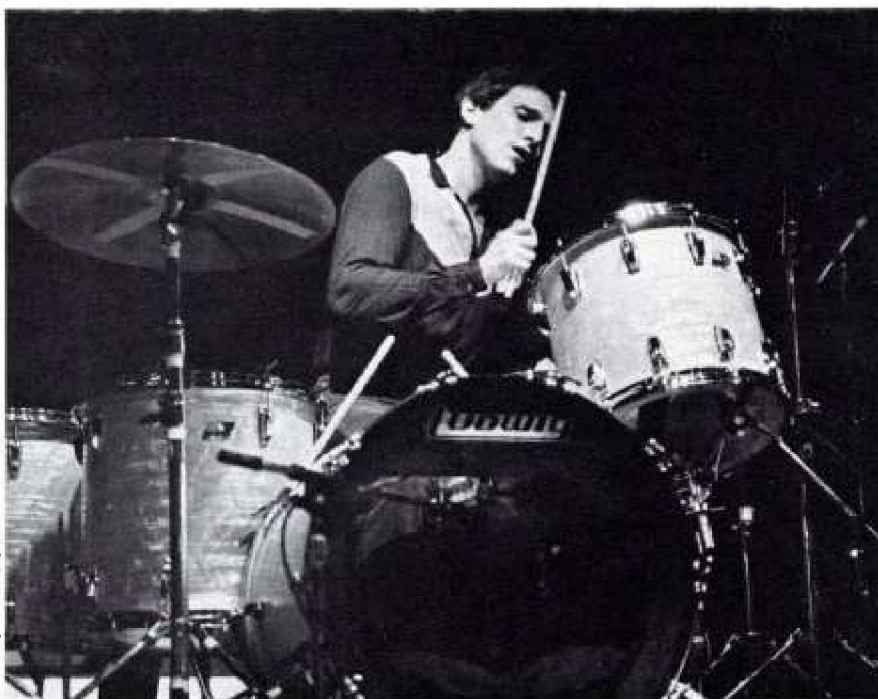
The IRS provides several methods of obtaining information regarding your taxes and tax preparation. You can get any publication you need free for the asking by contacting your local IRS office. They have lists of their publications arranged by subject, so you'll know what to ask for. Local IRS offices have tax-help "hot lines," which you may call with specific questions to get specific answers. These are listed under the "U.S. Government" heading in your local phone directory. Also, IRS has a nationwide service called "Tele-Tax and Tax Dial" directory, which allows you to call in to get pre-recorded information arranged on brief cassettes by subject matter. With a dial phone, you get an operator who will set you up with the cassette you want. With a push-button phone, you can code in your request directly, according to the number listed in the "Tele-Tax and Tax Dial" directory, which you can get at the IRS office or through the mail. The publications I used in preparing this article were IRS Pub. No. 334, "Tax Guide for Small Business," IRS Pub. No. 529, "Miscellaneous Deductions," and IRS Pub. No. 534, "Depreciation." I'd also like to gratefully acknowledge the personal assistance of Mrs. Shirley Nakagawa, Public Affairs Officer for the IRS in Honolulu, Hawaii.





# UP AND COMING

Photo by Ron Akiyama



## Lee

If there's one thing that can be said about Joan Jett and her Blackhearts, it's that those kids have feel. The raw, primitive, rebellious spirit that inspired Bill Haley to rock till broad daylight, Chuck Berry to command Beethoven to roll over, and the Rolling Stones to order trespassers off of their cloud, is the same spirit that's behind Jett's defiance of those who would criticize her bad rep. And what is it that fuels rock 'n' roll's aggressive rebellion? Sophisticated chord changes? Metric complexity? Profound lyricism? Hell no. It's that BEAT. Frank Zappa called it "lewd and pulsating" in a '60s article for *Life* magazine. Musicians try to define it as being characterized by "a fat snare drum on '2' and '4.'" That's probably as close as you're going to get to putting it into words, but then, the BEAT wasn't meant to inspire words anyway. It's meant to inspire rockin' and rollin' and singin' and dancin'. And that's the kind of beat that Lee Crystal plays so well.

"Basically, I play rock 'n' roll from an R&B standpoint," Crystal explained recently, while waiting for a soundcheck to begin. "I studied with Bernard Purdie for six months or so, and he influenced me a great deal in really keeping a backbeat. He taught me that it's not necessarily how many drums you can play in a certain amount of measures that matters, but what feel you can put into it. That's been my guideline all along—what feels good and what sounds right for the particular music I'm playing. On our records, I just play simple beats with feel, and I play the

*songs.* It's not like you hear the drums separately from the songs; you hear everything together. The drums round the song out. It's the same thing that Elvis Presley's drummer and Chuck Berry's drummer did in the early days. They played a basic feel that would go with the song. That's what I like to put into our music."

One factor which helps Lee play to the songs is the fact that the Blackhearts record as a unit, unlike some bands who record the drum track by itself and then overdub the other instruments one at a time. "We record as if we were doing a live session," he asserts proudly. "Occasionally we'll overdub a guitar or a vocal or something. But very often it's complete right off the bat. We've had hit records with maybe a mistake on them, but if it had a good feel, then a little flub didn't affect it that much. I think that a lot of the studio stuff that comes out is very dry sounding, even though it might be in perfect time with no mistakes or anything. I know of certain things where they just hired individual musicians at separate times, and they never even saw each other. Something like that can come out very dry sounding, with little actual feeling.

"I don't really want to knock anybody else's way of recording. Some people are probably very successful and achieve great results in finding different ways to record. I know it's best for the Blackhearts to get in there and cut it as if we were playing it live, because we're a live band. When we record, all of the tunes have been played on the road for maybe a few months, so

they're broken in and we have a lot of energy when we go in the studio. I love to get in there and do a track in two or three takes. You can capture a real spontaneous energy when you play as a band, and you usually pick the first take anyway because it has the best feel."

Is it safe to say, then, that we won't be hearing any drum computers on Joan Jett albums? "Yeah. If you listen to Elvis Presley, or Chuck Berry, or Jerry Lee Lewis, or the Stones, or any of the classic rock 'n' roll people, and try to imagine a drum machine on any of those tunes, I mean, it would sound like an arcade game! It would be sacrilegious; it just wouldn't be right. A lot of groups use synthesized drums or programmed drums in addition to live drums, and that can give a nice effect if it's used right. But in general, it's hard to get that feel out of a machine. I think a drummer is the answer, no matter what.

"Technology will always try to improve something, and you do notice differences and things can be easier. With better monitors, you can hear yourself better and that might help you play better. You can put tinsel on everything around you, but it still comes down to basic feel. You can play on trash cans as long as you put feel into it, and you play the tune with the right dynamics and everything else. I think you could still achieve a good deal of excitement."

Listening to Lee at the soundcheck, I was glad that he was not, in fact, playing on trash cans, because his drums sounded great behind the rest of the group. The snare drum sounded especially good—a lot of snare sound—and I asked Lee about it. "I've listened to Al Jackson a lot, and I've tried to get his snare drum sound. I've got an 8" deep snare drum with a Duraline head on it, and that gives me a really big, crisp, cracking tone. I've really worked on tuning that drum to get it that certain way. When you gig as much as we do, you get a rounded viewpoint on how your drums sound. You really get to know each drum individually. That snare drum is amazing. It's a wood shell with chrome on the outside. Having wood on the inside really makes a difference in the tone. Also, that



by Rick Mattingly

Photo by Ron Akiyama

# Crystal

drum can travel a thousand miles in a truck and it will sound the same. It's a pretty consistent drum. Actually, all of the drums are consistent. It's all Ludwig stuff. I use a 24 x 16 bass drum because I find that I get a more rounded sound. With a 14" bass drum, you lose a little sustain."

For tom-toms, Lee uses one rack tom—a 14" power tom—and two floor toms—a 16" and an 18". Those floor toms really get a workout. Listening to Crystal riding on a floor tom in such songs as "A Hundred Feet Away," "You're Too Possessive," "The French Song" or "Bits and Pieces," one wonders why drummers got away from doing that—it was common enough in the '60s. But anyway, Lee Crystal does it quite a bit, and it really reinforces the power and drive of the Blackhearts' sound. "I like riding on the floor tom," Crystal said enthusiastically. "A lot of Joan's guitar playing is that real crunchy rock 'n' roll guitar sound, and the bass is real simple and straight, so riding on the floor tom creates an amazing bottom sound, sort of like a rumble. I love it on a record, live, and everywhere else! I feel that for our style and music, being bottom heavy sometimes is the only way to go.

"Another thing I like to do is keep the hi-hat slightly open so I get a 'slosh' sound instead of a real tight sound. I think I started doing that in the early days when I was a boy listening to Ginger Baker with Cream. He used to really keep that hi-hat sloshing. You can overdo it, though. You have to reach a happy medium because you do need to have those 8th notes. You have your kick and your snare for the main beats, but you need those 8th notes to really move it along. I use big hi-hat cymbals—15" Zildjians—because I like them and they're loud. When they're open, I get a good sound. Right now my cymbal collection is a combination of Zildjian and Paiste. I have a 22" Zildjian ride, an 18" Zildjian crash, an 18" Paiste *Rude* cymbal—which is pretty good for sustain—and another 18" Paiste crash cymbal. It's a pretty basic cymbal setup, but it gives me different crash sounds for different songs."

Crystal came by his Ludwig endorse-

ment honestly—he has always used Ludwigs. His first drumset was pieced together from various old Ludwig drums. The first couple were white pearl, so as he added more drums, Lee painted them white in an attempt to have a matched set. But then he "accidentally" got a new set of Ludwigs. "I was riding a bicycle and I had some kid on the handlebars," he remembers. "I couldn't see this car that was coming; the kid jumped off and I ran into the car. I hurt my leg—not seriously—but there was a minor lawsuit and the judge awarded me about three hundred dollars. I was so happy. I went to the Sam Ash store in Brooklyn, and they'd just had a Carmine Appice clinic. They had a set that had been used for the clinic, and they were selling it at a discount because it was slightly used. Those drums served me faithfully. I actually used that set all the way up through 'I Love Rock 'n' Roll.' That drumset stayed with me from my younger days and I made a Number One record with them. Maybe that says something about sticking to your guns and keeping your determination until you achieve the success you're looking for."

In Lee Crystal's case, determination has been carrying him towards success since he was in the seventh grade. He actually started out on violin, but quickly switched to drums. Lee learned basic reading and technique from a classical percussionist who played with the New York City Center Ballet, and then the lessons with Bernard Purdie followed. On his own, Lee was listening to groups like the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, and playing drums along with the radio and records. "To me, that was a good way to practice," he recalls. "I'd put headphones on so that I could hear the records, and play along with them. Playing along with records that were already made taught me quite a bit about how to make records."

As Lee was learning to play in the early '70s, rock was beginning to be influenced more and more by jazz (and vice versa), and "fusion" was attracting a lot of young musicians. Not Lee Crystal, though. "First, I'm a rock 'n' roll drummer," he asserts, "and I would say second I can play



other styles. Back during my teens, just after I started playing, a lot of my friends were going off and playing fusion music or something. That's when Chick Corea and the Mahavishnu Orchestra were coming out, and they were all doing that stuff. I could listen to it now and then. I appreciated it for what it was, but I knew it wasn't for me. I definitely stuck to my guns and did not go off in that direction. I didn't even toy with it. I liked the straight stuff; I liked to play regular rock 'n' roll."

Lee did go on to spend a year in college majoring in jazz history, but it wasn't out of any particular desire to study jazz. "I couldn't major in rock history," he laughed. "I just wanted to pursue music, and the only majors they offered were Theory and Jazz History. I learned a lot. We listened to records all day and I loved it—especially the early stuff. To me, listening to early Dizzy Gillespie is like listening to Chuck Berry—it's the wildness of it. I'm not too fond of a lot of the synthesized jazz these days. Give me a bunch of these old jazz guys having a good time. I dig that a lot."

Lee left school after a year and started working the "downtown" New York club circuit. "I had a band called The Boyfriends that played the CBGB's/Max's circuit. We used to open for bands like the Ramones. Then we started headlining the



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clubs. We did a lot of traveling for a local band. We played in L.A. at the Whiskey, and we played in Toronto. We had a little 45 out on an independent label. We worked pretty hard for a few years.

"But then it was time for me to go on to other things. I started working with Sylvain Sylvain from the New York Dolls. We did an album on RCA that was real New York oriented. The Dolls have influenced me a lot in the wildness and raggedness of rock 'n' roll. They had a real flair; to me, that's the true New York sound."

Crystal also worked with ex-Doll Johnny Thunders, both live and in the studio. "If anything, Johnny Thunders will certainly teach you to be a professional drummer," Lee said. "He never lets anybody know what song is coming up next. He plays the first couple of chords and you just have to feel when to come in. He kind of keeps you on your toes."

"It was good experience for me to play the New York clubs and learn from people like the New York Dolls at the time that Blondie and a lot of the new music was coming up. I learned from it and I grew with it. The New York sound was your growling guitars, and your bass and drums had to be simple but tight. And then you've got your guitar solos that don't necessarily have to sound good—just guitar solos for the guitar soloist's sake. Thunders would always play these notes that didn't sound quite in key, but then he would bend them up a little bit and they sounded right. And then there are those growling vocals. The New York sound is an aggressive sound. I know that's what we usually try to accommodate in our music—aggression. The audiences like it and it gives us a feeling that makes us happy about it."

Lee then joined with Sylvain's guitarist to form a band called the Jaguars. They did a few gigs, but then Lee got a call from Joan Jett's manager, Kenny Laguna, asking him to audition for the Blackhearts. Crystal already knew of the group, and jumped at the chance to become a member. "I knew that playing with Joan was what I really wanted. Joan is a great front person in the true rock 'n' roll tradition."

The band emerged as a meeting of East and West—Crystal and guitarist Ricky Byrd from New York, and Jett and bassist Gary Ryan from L.A. To Lee, that dual-coast alliance is a bright point of the group. "It was a swapping kind of scene," he explained. "The playing was very similar though; there was not that much adjusting to be done. There was a real compatibility right from the beginning, and that's probably why the band functions so successfully. Nobody had to change to be in this group; it was all natural."

The band started touring to support Joan's album, *Bad Reputation*, which, although only available as an import, was doing well on the charts. Despite that suc-

cess, the band was unable to get a U.S. record deal. After being turned down by virtually every record company in America (documented on the group's "Bad Reputation" video), Jett and manager Laguna took matters into their own hands and started their own company—Blackheart Records. "At the time, it was difficult for us," Crystal recalls. "That video is quite realistic. Kenny Laguna had made hits back in the bubblegum days with Tommy James, so you'd think that somebody in the business would have taken a chance with him. But we didn't get any breaks until after we started Blackheart Records. Then Neal Bogart gave us a chance and put us on a real label here in the States. Now we're on a new label—MCA—because Boardwalk was changing their policy. But what they did for us while Neil Bogart was alive really gave us a break."

It's easy now to accuse the record companies of being short sighted—not signing a promising group who went on to have hit records. For a while, in fact, it seemed as if the record companies were completely oblivious to new groups. But having now seen the record business from both sides, Crystal does not place all of the blame on the companies. "It's up to the acts too," he contends. "If the company is willing to spend X amount of dollars, the band should figure out the best possible way to use that money. If they think they can just spend that money, and then see what the record company is going to do, they're wrong. I know that we've taken a lot of money that the band could have had, and put it back into making the record move. I think it's up to the bands these days to take it in their own hands and work with the record companies. Then you've got to get out there and tour, and play the songs. As far as I can remember, that's what a rock 'n' roll band is supposed to do."

And playing in a real rock 'n' roll band is what Lee Crystal has always wanted to do. After nearly three years with Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, he is still excited about being in the group. "I like to think of us as just a traditional rock 'n' roll band—maybe one of the few left of its kind. Sometimes the new wavers get confused with the hard rockers, and hard rockers get confused with new wavers. That's something we've been coming across a lot in our travels. Generally speaking, the reception from our audiences has been great, although sometimes there is some confusion."

"You know, music is funny," he continued. "New music can be old music all of a sudden. On our new album [called *Album*] we cover an old Bobby Lewis song, 'Tossin' and Turnin'.' I listened to the original maybe once, and Joan listened to it just to learn the words. We basically put our thing on it. I applied sort of a twist beat to it—the old double on the snare drum. Then we've got the 'Everyday People' cut, a



song by Sly. That's where I incorporate my true R&B feel; straight '2' and '4' just as fat as I can make it. Then we had the Dave Clark 5 song 'Bits and Pieces' on the *I Love Rock 'N' Roll* album, and 'Crimson and Clover.'

"I try to put my own ideas into those songs, but I also try to give it the original flair. If it's an R&B tune, I'll give it an R&B flair; if it's a '60s tune, I'll give it a '60s flair. You learn different styles as you go along by listening to records, and you develop a sense of how you would do it. Our music gives me a chance to play a few different styles; some are this style, some are that style, but they are all basically rock 'n' roll. I don't feel limited in this band. I feel that I'm able to cover the areas and the styles that mean the most to me as a drummer.

"I think we're following in the footsteps of people like Elvis, the Beatles, the Stones, and I could name others. We're keeping the tradition. When we do older songs, we're adding our own flair to it and our own personality—we're not just re-treading what's already been done. And then of course we have original songs which are nothing like, say, Elvis Presley songs. So I think it's a feeling and a spirit; it's not just a reproduction of their sound.

"I love playing with the Blackhearts and working with Joan," Lee concluded. "It's an experience where, like I said before, I'm not limited. From here on in, it's just a matter of keeping up the good work. As long as you keep working hard, nobody can tell you you're wrong. I've had friends

who I worked with off and on who would get lazy at the wrong time. They have settled for certain situations but I know that if they'd had a little bit more determination—or a little less laziness—they would have gotten a lot further than they did. So never say die, because then it's all over.

"It's not an easy game. There's only one way to do it, and that's by the old 'paying dues.' You'll play with your first band, and you'll learn a couple of the ropes. Then you'll go on to something a little more advanced. Then maybe you join the union, and start doing union dates. Then you do an album with somebody. You start getting recommended. It's a long process, but if you've got your sights set straight and you're committed to what you do, you should get there. And if somebody gives you an opportunity where you could learn something, you should take advantage of it. Lord knows I've worked in situations that were not profit-making. But from your first band on, you have to have the highest hopes in the world and you really have to put everything into it. You'll find obstacles piling up in front of you, but determination and desire will break through that. That might be easy to say, but if you don't say it, you won't have the determination. If the runner doesn't think he can jump over the hurdle, he won't. But if he thinks he can, he might. Like anything, there's an element of chance, but you can fight those odds with enough determination.



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*Santos continued from page 29*

but then get away from it and develop your feet.

SF: Did you ever practice along with records?

JS: I used to do that a lot with Buddy Rich records, and I've done that with a lot of funk records just to get the feel happening—a solid "2" and "4." The first time I worked with a click track was in Florida. We did a thing for Chubby Tavares. I'd worked with a metronome but I'd left it for a while. It didn't take me long to adjust to the click track, because I was in the studio and it was either do or die! After a while, the click track settled in and I didn't even hear it. It took me 10 to 15 minutes to work with the click track and then I had it down.

SF: Why is a click track hard to adjust to?

JS: Because it seems like it takes your natural feel away. You're *worrying* about time. You're trying to make it happen with the click track, so you start sounding mechanical. You've just got to adjust and groove.

SF: Gary Chester told me he thinks of the click track as a good bass player. And Mel Lewis told me that his secret was playing *around* the click track.

JS: That's what I try to do—play *around* the click track. I'd rather go on natural feel because my timing is good. You groove better that way. But, the producer is the boss. I've used click tracks on all the jingles I've done.

SF: I've heard that John Robinson always uses a click track.

JS: Harvey Mason does also. But Harvey has great timing anyway. A lot of records I hear today sound sterile to me. That *could* be because of the click track. If they're not playing around the click track, they start sounding mechanical and the records sound sterile.

SF: Are you teaching?

JS: I've got five or six students. I don't want any more than that. They're doing very well. If you have students who don't do their lessons, it bugs you.

SF: Did you go to college for music?

JS: No. My first teacher was Chic Boucher of House of Drums. He's a good teacher and friend. Then I studied with Kevin Goodman at Berklee, and then privately with Alan Dawson. The five years I studied in his basement were just *like* going to college!

SF: How does your approach change from backing five singers in Tavares to backing a solo vocalist like Armstead Christian?

JS: Armstead is a musician. He graduated from Berklee.

SF: The Tavares brothers are going to love that answer!

JS: Well, Armstead plays alto sax, flute, piano and drums. The five Tavares brothers are great singers but the schooling isn't there. They sing. Armstead is demanding musically. He writes all his charts and likes to hear the instruments played a certain

way. That's what you have to give him. It takes a different type of player coming off a Tavares gig, grooving, and then going and doing Armstead's gig and grooving, yet playing. You have to play.

SF: Do you have more of a free reign?

JS: Definitely. Freedom of expression, man. Just go for it. Armstead has some groove tunes and that's what I have to play—"2" and "4." Then again, he's got Latin things and jazz things where you just play. You do everything on his gig.

I've been in the business a long time. Some people are blessed to make it early and some people just have to wait their turn. I'm 29. There are a lot of people out there making *beaucoup* money, but everything that they wanted to have happen, happened at an early age.

SF: When did you realize that you were going to play drums for a living?

JS: I started at age 12. I was into music; I wanted to be a drummer. But then again, I was into martial arts—Tae Kwan Do. I really loved them both. My father suggested that I pick one, put my all into it, and set my sights on something to go for. I chose music. The martial arts is still there, but music is my first priority. Whenever I have a chance to work out, I still do. I was heavily into Tae Kwan Do at one time.

SF: What's the philosophical difference between Tae Kwan Do and Karate?

JS: Tae Kwan Do is mostly feet. I liked using my feet.

SF: Does martial arts help your drumming?

JS: Definitely. Stamina-wise, you don't get tired. It helps you keep in shape. I was into working out a lot and I haven't done that in the last six months. It's my music and my son now. But every chance I get, I work out. I'm in shape. In the summertime, I'm heavy into basketball. I do my exercise in the morning. I do some stretching. I'll go through some kicking exercises, and some hand techniques. Then in the afternoon, if I'm not gigging and my afternoons are free, I play ball all afternoon to keep that wind up. It takes a certain amount of stamina to play concerts. It's pretty hard to be up there bashing. You've got to be in shape.

SF: You have a six-month-old son now.

JS: Yeah. He's the greatest thing that's happened in my life.

SF: How do you balance that with touring?

JS: It's hard. But I wanted a boy so bad. When the nurse came in and said, "Mr. Santos, it's a baby boy," I started crying. It just seems like now I can get myself on another level. I was really pushing to make it. But now I'm going to push doubly hard for my son. I'm going to do everything that I've set out to do.

If I don't do it for myself, then I'll do it for my boy. Having a little boy is such a



joy. It's a type of high you can't explain. It's like you're on top of the world. It's a great feeling. It would be rough for guys who are on the road for eight months at a clip. I'm nowhere near that. Most of the gigs I'm doing with Tavares now are weekend things. I want to be able to balance out my life with studio gigs, then get away from the studio to be on the road and then come back to be with my family.

SF: Do you think the band business is changing from the days of the '30s when musicians were always on the road?

JS: Yeah, now you've got all the videos. I think the videos are hurting the business. People don't want to come out and hear bands live. Five years ago, you could go to a concert for five dollars. To go to a concert now it costs \$15 or \$20. To bring your lady with you, you're talking \$40 just to get in the door. People haven't got that type of money anymore. The economy's bad. They're not going to spend that money. They'd rather sit home and watch a video or listen to an album.

SF: Does Tavares have a mixed audience?

JS: Yeah.

SF: A black audience is a whole different ballgame, isn't it?

JS: It's rough, man, because a black audience will let you know if you ain't playing! They'll say it in a minute. But Tavares is a crossover band.

SF: Does Tavares play a different show for an all black audience?

JS: We change it a little bit. We keep more of the rhythm & blues tunes in there that they used to do before, like "Check It Out," "Remember What I Told You To Forget," "She's Gone," and "It Only Takes A Minute"—tunes like that. When we're playing for a white audience, we play "More Than A Woman," and "Heaven." They're the ones that went gold.

SF: The marketing for black and white audiences is interesting. I remember when I interviewed Larry Blackmon from Cameo. I'd never heard of Cameo. Their publicist said they'd had five gold records. I thought, "Where the heck have I been?"

JS: Tavares can cross over. "Penny For Your Thoughts" appeals to both masses. They both love the song. That's where you make your strong money, when you cross over. If you just stay on the soul charts, you *don't* make the money. You've got to cross over, like Lionel Richie, The Commodores, Earth, Wind & Fire, Diana Ross and Michael Jackson.

SF: Do you do clinics?

JS: I've done a few. My first one was in South America. In Argentina you learn different ways that musicians approach music. Hopefully, I'll be doing clinics for Yamaha.

I'm using Yamaha's *Recording Custom Series* drums. They're great. The projection is awesome and I use them for all my

recording dates. I use Remo clear heads on all the tom-toms, a clear *Diplomat* on the 7 x 14 snare and a CS head on the bass drum. The bass drum is 14 x 22. The small toms are 9 x 13, 10 x 16 and 16 x 16. I'm also experimenting with Remo's pitch pedal. You can come up with some interesting rhythms for solos.

My cymbals are a combination of A. and K. Zildjians—a 20" K. ride, 15" A. paper-thin crash, 17" thin crash, 18" medium crash, 20" medium-low *China Boy*, and 14" A. or K. hi-hat cymbals. I use Vic Firth sticks. Jim Coffin, Lennie DiMuzio, Vic Firth and Lloyd McCausland have really given me a lot of support. I'm thankful for that.

I work on time and feel with my students but also a lot of head stuff. I teach them the importance of having your attitude in the right place when you're dealing with people. The main thing is the attitude. I tell them of experiences that I went through, to prepare them. I tell them that if they're going to go into this business, there are certain things that they're going to have to face.

SF: I sense that many of the black jazz musicians feel that they've been, and *are* being, neglected by the younger black generations.

JS: My students are all listening to rock: Rush, Journey, and Jethro Tull. I'm trying to get them into swing. I'm going to teach my students rock, jazz, and Latin, so they can be versatile. I like to have them listen to Max Roach, Tony Williams and all the other drummers who are really happening. That's what drumming is all about. You can go out there and play all the rock licks, but when it comes down to playing bebop, it takes a certain technique and talent to be able to play it. I want my students to be jazz players as well as rock players or funk players. If you can cover all the aspects of music, you will become more valuable as a musician and you will get more gigs that way.

SF: I was amazed to discover that all of the early pioneers of rock drumming were jazz drummers first.

JS: That's right. When you saw the drummers with Elvis you said to yourself, "I wonder if that guy could cover any other kind of music." And they all could. They just went with the money-maker.

SF: It seems strange that so many young drummers are becoming specialized.

JS: Exactly.

SF: How do you motivate your students to want to learn different things?

JS: It's hard. I've got this one student who's 15 years old. He has the potential to be unbelievable. He can play. He never does his lessons! One day I told his mother that he was either going to do his lessons, or I just couldn't keep going there and taking her money. I'd give this student all of

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these things and he'd say, "I've been listening to this Billy Cobham record. Can you show me how to do that?"

I've got three or four students who are into what I'm showing them. There are others who just want to learn Neil Peart licks and whatever. That's not where it's at.

SF: What motivated you to become such a versatile player?

JS: I guess because my *very first* influence was Buddy Rich. Then my *greatest* influence was Alan Dawson. That did it for me right there.

SF: When did you first hear Alan Dawson?

JS: It was at Gretsch Drum Night at Lenny's On The Turnpike in West Peabody, Massachusetts. I said, "That is what it's all about. That's what I want to do. I want to play *everything*." I was into jazz first, and Buddy Rich was my idol at that time. I guess if your influence is rock, for a lot of years it's hard to get into other stuff. But you have to learn. It's a must.

SF: Did the Beatles influence you?

JS: Oh yeah. They were my favorite rock band. They had it all. I liked the Rascals too. They were smoking. But they weren't just rocking out, man; they *were playing*. They were good players.

There are about five or six drummers that I really listen to. But I never cop licks—I listen to conception to hear how they approach the music, and then I mold it to my own style. Therefore, I sound like everybody, but still it's Jackie Santos playing. If someone wanted Steve Gadd on a date, they'd hire Steve Gadd, not a clone. I tell my students, "Listen to everybody and mold it into your own style. Never copy licks because you don't learn to improvise that way. You're just copying somebody else's ideas. It's not *you* coming out on the instrument." I like to see my students show their own style. Don't cop licks. Be *you*!

It's hard for young kids today because they'll put on their Neil Peart or Billy Cobham records and say, "I want to learn that roll and this lick." All of my students have big drumsets. That 15-year-old I was telling you about has double bass drums now, and one time I heard him playing 16th-note single-stroke rolls on them. I put Ted Reed's *Syncopation* book in front of him and said, "Go through the whole

book using just your feet."

SF: What are you planning to do when you're 50 or 60?

JS: I'd like to get more into teaching someday and help out young kids who have the talent. I won't exploit it, but I will bring it out in the open. I definitely want to work with kids that way. It's the whole thing about karma, man. Extend your arm to somebody and you'll be doubly rewarded later. I had some well-known drummers say to me a few years ago, "Jackie, we're really going to help you out." They never did. You've got to go out and do it yourself. Opportunity will come to you when you go looking for it. A lot of people out there now are not going to help you. I found that out *quick*. I've helped out a lot of people, and maybe now God is starting to pay me back. Things are starting to happen. I've got my son, Joaquim Robert Santos. I think God's going to be good to me.

SF: Did you have a religious upbringing?

JS: My whole family is pretty religious. When I'm downtown, I stop in the chapel three days a week. I drop money in the box and I pray for success. Every time I pass a chapel, man, I've got to stop and go in. You've got to have faith to make it. I feel God's going to be right there with you, and you've got to show God that you want it. I've worked hard. And, God willing, for my son, I'm going to do it. I told my mother when I first started, "Ma, I may not be rich but I'm going to make it in the business. And I promise that you'll get a home."

My father and mother were always behind me 100%. I'll never forget that time my father came to see me. I haven't seen him in years. He left one day. And he'd be proud of me right now. I don't know where he is. Not a clue. And I'm trying to find him. One time my father came to see me playing in a club. I played a drum solo and got a standing ovation. My father jumped onto the stage, grabbed me and kissed me. The love was always there. So I've got to do it for my mother and my son. I've got a lot of responsibilities, but I want to do it. Perseverance continues to be a most important factor in attaining success.

*Reader's Platform continued from page 4*

beauty that comes from anything you work hard at. I have never felt that anybody has a responsibility to play the way I or anyone else does.

Rudimental drumming as it exists today is a completely different animal than it was in 1936. Also if Louie Bellson's analogy of rudiments doesn't please Sam, he should write his own, or better yet, forget it altogether. Louie obviously believes in what he does. That's clearly apparent by his virtuosity on the instrument. It has been my experience that musical players play music. If that music should include rudimental technique, we would hope it would be for the sake of the music or it would really detract from the music.

Greg Dilley  
San Jose, CA

#### MARK HERNDON

I would like to express my thanks for the great Mark Herndon article. This is just what I've been waiting for, for a long time. Mark has shown the *real* meaning of talent, without having to do flashy fills or intricate solos. He has let the music flow from his heart, which is the only place real music can come from.

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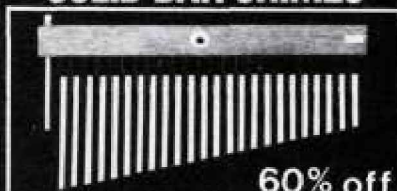
#### TURNING JAPANESE?

Have you noticed how many Japanese products are appearing on the market these days? Yamaha. Pearl. Tama. I see many top drummers using these products. What ever happened to Ludwig, Gretsch and Rogers? Many drum companies today are more concerned with how sturdy their drums are instead of focusing on details like rigid tolerance. A lot of today's drums deviate from perfection, which makes it very difficult to tune the heads properly. I stated in an earlier letter that the main problem is the lack of knowledge in tuning heads properly. This is incorrect. The main problem is with the drums themselves. My personal concept of the ideal drum is one with a thinner shell and a reinforcing ring at the top and bottom. The shell is perfectly round and true on both ends. I believe that older Ludwig and Rogers shells fit this description and were ideal. And the rim must be manufactured with the same rigid tolerance as the shells: perfectly round and perfectly flat. Maybe these top drummers are finding this perfection in Japanese products. If it can't be found there, then where do we turn?

Charlie Lynch  
Greenwood, DE

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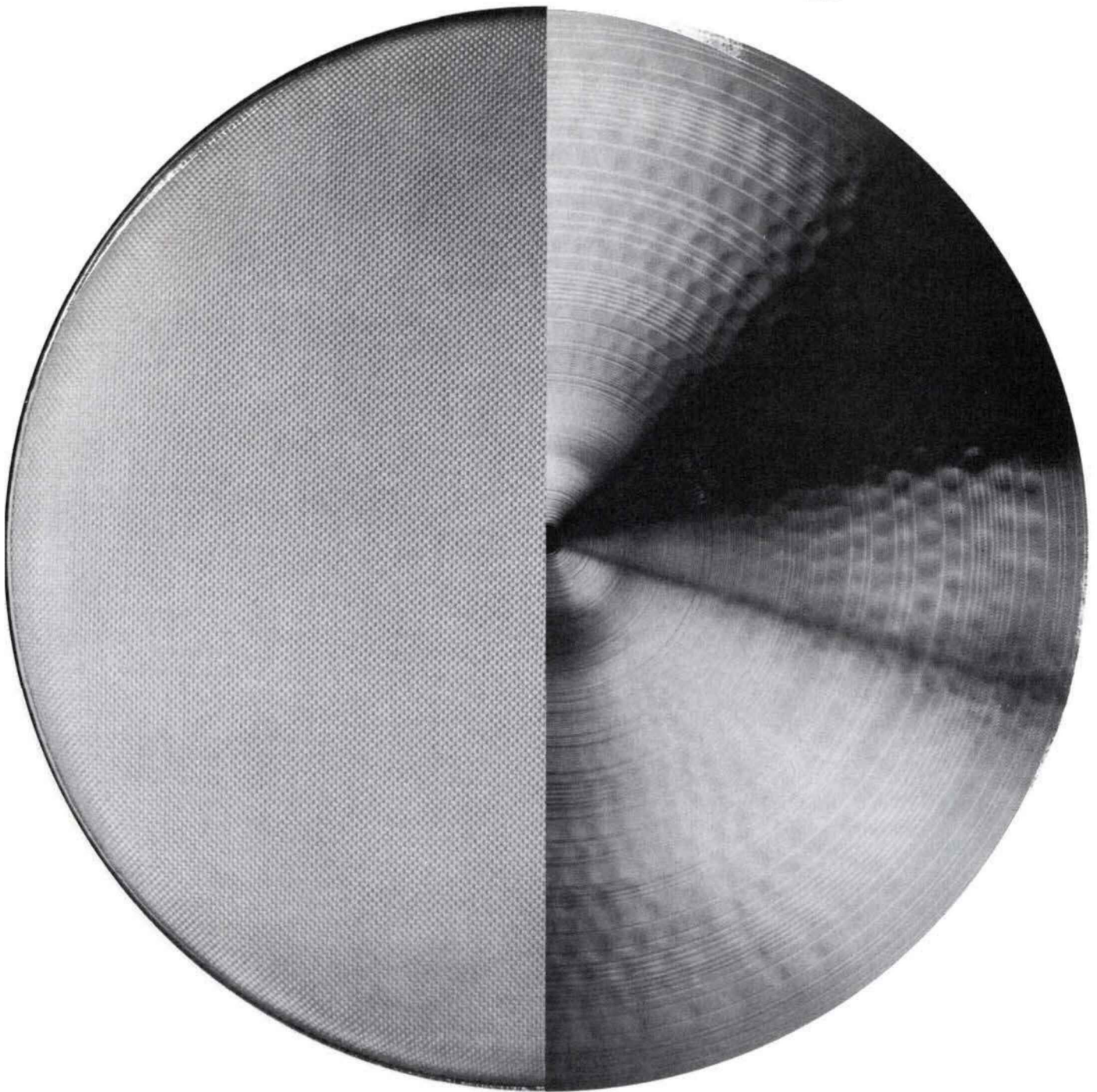
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## Creativity vs. Business

There exists an ongoing split between creativity and business in the life of a performing musician. The number of musicians who've become outstanding performers, only to let success slip away because of a lack of business knowledge, is enormous. So, what is this mysterious thing called "business"? How does it work and why is it necessary to understand?

In order to be *in* business, we need a product, a service, an idea, or some combination of the three. Without these three factors, we don't have a business.

Usually a performing musician will start with an *idea*. The idea might be a new concept for playing an instrument or a new way of writing songs. When you have mastered your idea to the extent that you feel other people will appreciate it and want it, you have a *product*.

The next step, if you want to earn a living, is to sell the product. A solo performer can start out alone, but if you need a band to complete your idea, then you need other people. By necessity, you become a salesperson. You must first sell prospective band members on your idea. You need people who believe as strongly in your idea as you do. But if you don't have enough confidence in your idea at this stage, then you're never going to be able to sell the idea to prospective band members, and it will probably die at this point.

Each band member presents a new challenge. The fewer band members, the fewer personalities to be dealt with. I've been in bands where the leaders hired completely disinterested trumpet players just because they wanted trumpets. When you have a majority of dedicated musicians and one who couldn't care less if the band succeeds or fails, you end up with the "one bad apple spoils the whole bunch" syndrome.

Once the band is ready for work, the next step is to find work. Most bands start out playing local dances, schools, YMCAs, or they may get on the local-bar circuit. Some bands travel the "show-band" circuit, and some of the less commercial outfits play libraries, schools, art fairs and places like that. At this point, when the band's ready for work, they are ready to provide a *service* with their *product*.

I want to sidestep for a moment. In order for any business to be successful, it needs to make a profit. One gets into business to *make* money, not *lose* it. One trap that I've seen scores of bands fall into at this level is the "star trap."

Back in the late '70s, we were one of several bands performing on the bar circuit in our local area. We managed ourselves, we transported our own equipment, and we set it up and broke it down ourselves. We controlled our own soundboard. Our equipment was modest, but it was perfect for the size clubs we played.

There were two bands that used to play the same bars we did. They had anywhere from five to seven pieces. Both had managers, light people, sound people, roadies and a tremendous investment in equipment and trucks to haul the equipment. We always used our cars to haul equipment. These bands played small bars, but they used gigantic P.A. systems, elaborate lighting systems, and close miked all the instruments. They commanded at least twice the amount of money that we did, but because they had so much overhead, the band members were only taking home as much money as we were.

The lesson to be learned from the "star trap" is this: Keep costs down. There's nothing wrong with extras, but why bother with them if you don't need them? Those musicians would've been bringing home two or three times the amount of money we were making had they been less concerned with appearing to be famous rock stars. And more money paid to the band members—those in the creative area of your business—will create the incentive for them to stick with you and perform at 100% of their capacity.

Now let's get back to the service you're rendering. We've all heard horror stories about rip-off club owners and managers, so let's analyze the situation. A musician with a band has a saleable product. The musician is interested in finding an opportunity to sell a product. In this case, the club represents the opportunity.

A bar owner, just like the musician, is in business to make money. The bar owner makes money by selling drinks. Drinks are sold by attracting people into the club, and

creating an atmosphere where the people will want to stay and drink. The questions an owner asks when considering which band to hire are: Will this band attract paying customers? Will this band create enough interest for the customers to stay? After I pay this band, will I make a profit from the night's earnings?

Both the musician and the club owner want to make as much money as they can. That's *why* they're both in business. And the inherent sales ability between the two is going to determine who makes how much. So the two sides negotiate a price.

Musicians must set their own standards, but it's equally important to be flexible. A new band on the scene may feel that they're worth quite a bit of money. But, if they've never had any exposure, they'll probably have to make some concessions in order to prove that they're worth what they think they are.

When you're good enough to have a following of paying customers, you won't have trouble finding work, and you won't have too much trouble being paid what you're worth. But don't expect to work if you're alienating customers by being too loud or by not catering to them. If you're a rock band, don't be surprised if you don't go over with a country/western crowd in a country/western bar. I've seen that happen many times. A product is only worth something if people *want* it or *need* it. That's how business works. Product/Service/Idea + Opportunity = Success or Failure.

In order to have the chance to succeed, we must have the option to fail. All true success is based on failures. We can decide to learn and grow from our mistakes, or we can decide to throw in the towel. The price of success is different for everybody. The question is: Are you willing to do whatever it takes? A lot of players are concerned with security. They'd like to see the risk factors of building a successful band taken out. But where there's *total* security, freedom and opportunity do not exist.

It's now more important than ever for performing musicians to bridge the chasm between creativity and business. Remember the formula. *Study it, memorize it and practice it.*





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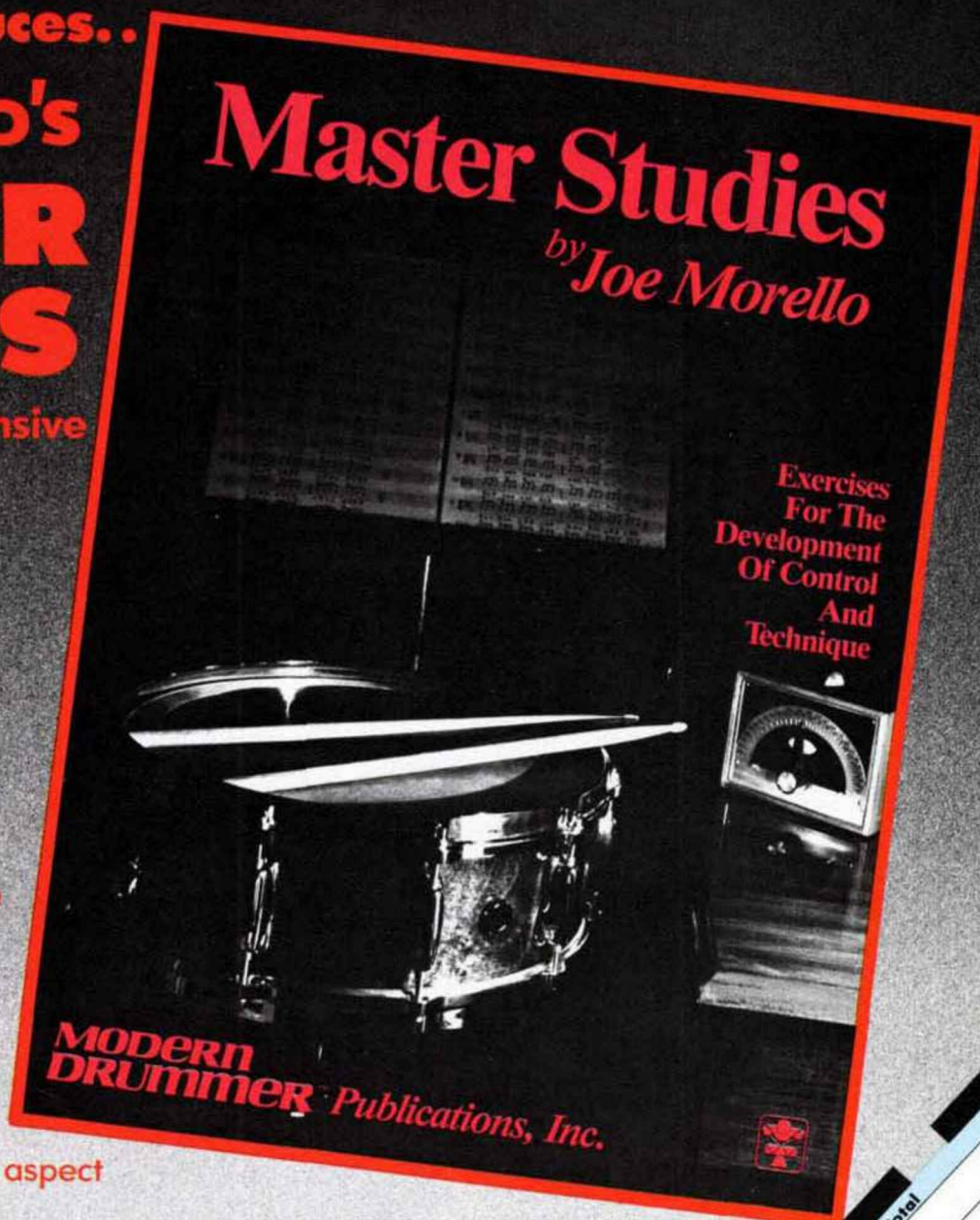
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Q. I have a new Ludwig drumset with a 6 1/2 x 14 snare, four power toms sized 11 x 12, 12 x 13, 13 x 14 and 14 x 15, a 16 x 18 floor tom and a 16 x 26 bass drum. I'm looking for an original sound somewhere in between the punch of a concert tom and the fullness of double-headed toms. My idea is to keep the Ludwig clear *Silver Dot* heads on the bottom of the drums and cut a 2"-2 1/2" hole in the center of the bottom heads. If needed, I'd put a Deadringer about the size of the hole around the cut edge of the hole. Then I'd use Duraline heads on the batter side of the drums. What do you think?

D.V.

Gerrardstown, W. VA

A. An "original sound" can be talked about all day, but you're never really going to know until you try it. The Duraline heads are as good as any on the market. For specifics on the heads you can write to Duraline, 11300 Rush St., S. El Monte, CA 91733. Why not experiment with one drum first? If it sounds good, then you can rework the rest of your drums.

Q. I have a problem getting my drumkit to sound the way I want. I have top heads on my toms but I don't have bottom heads. Will adding bottom heads really change the sound?

M.A.

Miami, FL

A. Yes. Single-headed tom-toms have less sustain and more projection than double-headed drums. With double-headed toms, you should tune the top head for sound and for optimum response. The bottom head can then be tuned tightly or loosely, depending on the sound you want. This will give you a rounder tone and a fuller, more resonant tom-tom sound. Two other factors in determining how tom-toms will sound are the type of heads you use and the amount of muffling you use.

Q. Recently I noticed several small cracks on the inside of my bass drum shell. I believe they are from holes I drilled for my new spurs and mount. I recently heard that I could put fiberglass inside the shell to stop the cracks from getting bigger without changing the great sound I have now. I hope you can tell me if this is true or not. If not, what can I do to stop the cracks?

J.M.

N. Weymouth, MA

A. Fiberglass would probably work, but it will change the sound of the drum slightly, assuming you have a wood-shell drum. The fiberglass will make the drum a little brighter. Fiberglass is also expensive, so you might want to try an easier solution that was suggested by Joe MacSweeney of the Eames Drum Company. First of all, Joe assumes that your drum is made of several plies of wood, and therefore, it is likely that the crack is only in the top layer. You merely need to fill the crack and seal it against air and moisture. This can be done with carpenter's glue, such as the one made by Elmer's. Afterwards, if your shell is not sealed in some way, you can coat the inside with polyurethane, which will further protect the wood from air and moisture.

Q. Does Pro-Mark still make hi-hat stands?

M.M.

Placentia, CA

A. The hi-hat pedal that was distributed in America under the Pro-Mark name was actually a French pedal, made by the Jacques Capelle company. The pedal also appeared under the name Orange. Pro-Mark is no longer making this pedal available, but Capelle pedals are being imported and distributed in America by Paul Real. Paul will be happy to let you know where your nearest dealer is located if you write to him at 745 Oak Knoll Circle, Pasadena, CA 91106. Paul assures us that he has a good inventory of pedals and parts.

Q. Most of the bottom tension rods on my snare drum become loose after a short period of playing. Please tell me what I can do.

J.M.

Junction City, KS

A. We know of one case where lugs were slipping because they had an excess amount of oil on them, so you might check that. Otherwise, we recommend that you try a product, such as Lug Lock or Drumtite, which is designed to prevent lugs from getting loose.

Q. I'm in a professional Dixieland band, and many of our jobs are outside in the sun. The past few jobs have been in 95 degree weather, and it has been so hot that after we've finished playing, the cymbals have been so hot that I can hardly touch them. Can this heat make the cymbals crack, or cause any other extensive damage?

R.F.

Elk Grove, IL

A. According to Bill Zildjian at Sabian, the amount of heat needed to damage a cymbal cannot be obtained by simply putting the cymbal out in the sun. You would need an oven which could generate five- or six-hundred degrees. Therefore, you don't need to worry about playing outside.

Q. I recently saw a drummer using what appeared to be RotoToms with shells mounted underneath. Where can I purchase these?

K.D.

Midwood, NY

A. There are a couple of different things you might have seen. Pearl used to manufacture a product called a Vari-Pitch drum, which was indeed a RotoTom with a fiberglass shell attached to it. These drums have been out of production for a couple of years, but you might be able to find some used ones. The other possibility is an accessory made by Remo called a Trimline Reflector. These are made of clear acrylic, and are available in half-shell and full-shell models. They should be available at any store that carries Remo products.

Q. I see that many manufacturers offer die-cast hoops. Could you discuss the advantages of die-cast hoops? Do they stand up to rimshots?

R.L.

Sacramento, CA

A. We spoke to the people at Gretsch, who have been making die-cast hoops for many years, and they explained that the advantage of this type of hoop is that the metal is thicker. A non-die-cast hoop is rolled and then brazed, which can only be done on thinner metal. The thicker die-cast hoop is less likely to go out of round, and because it flexes less, it tends to help the head seat more evenly, thus giving you more consistency in tuning. They will certainly stand up to rimshots, and in fact, the thicker metal will often cause less stick damage, as it will not cut into the stick the way a thinner rim will.

Q. I just bought a Brilliant medium-thin Zildjian cymbal, and noticed that the stamp is different than my other Zildjian cymbals. Instead of saying "Genuine Turkish Cymbals," this one says "Constantinople Cymbals," and has a sword and a star at the top. Why is this?

S.H.

Linwood, NE

A. We spoke to Rab Zildjian who informed us that the trademark on the Brilliant series cymbals is one of the family's oldest trademarks, and dates back to Turkey. Constantinople was the name given to Istanbul. You'll also notice that, after the name "Zildjian," it reads "& Cie." That simply stands for "and company." This trademark is used on the Brilliant series simply to distinguish them from A. Zildjians, K. Zildjians, and Amirs, each of which has its own trademark.





# SONORLITE

## A hard act to follow.

SONORLITE is a completely new concept in making drums. They have been developed and refined for the discerning drummer who seeks a full percussive sound with a distinctive sustain. This concept demanded new alternatives in both design and finish and resulted in the unique SONORLITE shell.

### The unique SONORLITE shell

Our shell is unique in several respects. We are using scandinavian birch, which is also used in the production of aircraft, as base material. It reaches the highest demands of quality while remaining very "LITE". Its durability has passed the test of flight. The utmost care is taken by our technicians to produce a full 9-ply SONORLITE shell condensed to an incredibly thin 6 mms. Snare drums and bass drums come in a 12-ply shell which is only 7 mms. thin. The unique shell sizes have been specifically designed to give each drum a perfect balance of tone and volume.

### Scandinavian birch – a whole new outlook on drums

Anybody who looks at a SONORLITE drum set for the first time is immediately drawn to the extraordinary wood finish, scandinavian birch. It is a rarity which we discovered for the production of drums. Every SONORLITE shell is

veneered with a layer of scandinavian birch not only on the outside, but on the inside as well. The surface is then coated with a special varnish to protect SONOR's natural finish, thus preserving the beautiful character of the wood for years to come. This also helps to avoid even the slightest interference to the vibration of the SONORLITE shell.

### Choice and set-up

SONORLITE is a drum set for the individualist. As there are no fixed combinations, each drummer may select from our large variety of sizes, creating a custom drum set. All SONORLITE instruments are integrated into the SONOR hardware set-up system. They can be mounted on all PHONIC PLUS and SIGNATURE stands, with the complete SONOR tom holder system available.

SONORLITE is our answer to the wishes of many drummers who have asked for a sound alternative in a light, compact design while maintaining the stability and reliability that have made SONOR the drummer's drum.

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It will be a year this month since **Paul Wertico** joined Pat Metheny. The inevitable first question was: Was it difficult coming into a group where there had been a drummer for so long with an identifiable sound? "Actually no. I love Danny Gottlieb's playing; he's a great drummer. In any band that already has a certain style established—even if I would eventually want to play differently—I would learn that style first to find where the music is coming from. That's what we did and I think it's worked out. Now I have as much freedom as I want. There were certain tunes like 'Phase Dance,' 'San Lorenzo,' 'Are You Going With Me,' or 'Heartland,' where Danny's style is a part of the music. It's almost as if it were written in stone or something. I've always played that way anyway, as far as the ECM style. Danny is

a great cymbal player and I've learned a lot just from listening to that, but in the tunes we've learned since, I've been able to do whatever I want to do.

"I've learned so much with Pat. The thing about playing with him that is such a groove, is that his music is based on dynamics within a phrase, so everything you play, every little phrase, has to have a shape. A lot of modern drumming and studio drumming is like you're playing rigid on purpose, whereas with Pat, everything has to breathe. It has to be alive. Rhythmically it has to be precise, but it has to have a kind of feeling that it's moving forward. He's incredibly aware of that in his guitar playing and that's why he sounds so great. He's able to pull out things and have little things that you can't really hear, so your mind picks them up but they're not out

by Robyn Flans

front to see. There's a lot of mystery. Learning from him has been incredible because all of a sudden you can take the simplest rhythm and play it in time, play it stiff, and then play it with all these different shapes. All of a sudden, the same rhythm has so many different values. He also likes everyone to play his own kind of shape, so he might be going up at a certain point and I might drop down against him so that everybody has his own dynamic shape. It gives the music this three-dimensional quality which I think is missing in a lot of music. His music is so unique in that it is structured and yet not structured. It's really a combination of being a symphonic drummer, a jazz drummer and a rock drummer because it has to groove."

A New Bangles album, started last September, is due out this month, and finally **Debbi Peterson** is off tour after a very hectic, although exciting, several months. "The new stuff we're doing isn't as '60s anymore. We want to get a new sound together, kind of take the feeling and real sincerity of the '60s and project it in the '80s in a real modern way. We've been experimenting and doing tougher things and not being so loose, but still not sterile. We want to find the happy medium between the two."

It's obvious by watching Debbi, though, that Ringo was a prime influence even though she was, as she described, "a late Beatle bloomer. I liked the way he would sit there and play, and it didn't even look

like it was work to him. He was having a great time doing it. The whole Beatles thing was great because they just looked like they were having a great time. It was real sincere music and during the first part of it, they seemed really happy on stage to be performing it. Ringo wasn't a technical drummer, but it was very real."

As for being a woman drummer, Debbi says, "I haven't really found it too difficult. A lot of people say, 'Oh God, a woman drummer. Chicks can't play drums.' I seem to rise above that. I just go up there and have a good time. People believe that and they don't put any pressure on me about it or anything. I just don't come across like, 'Hi, I'm a girl drummer.' I feel like it doesn't matter if I'm a woman

or a guy or a munchkin. I still have a good time and I still like playing drums. I don't think it matters to anybody else. Sure I've had my share of 'Look, a girl band,' kind of thing, but it really hasn't been that bad. I feel that women have it in them just as much as guys. If they're talented musically, I don't think the fact that they're female should stop them. I think they should keep on playing. I don't think it should make a difference in the music business whether you're a woman or a guy as long as you're playing good music. My goal is just to make as many people happy with our music as possible and just to keep on playing in the music business because I like it so much. I just have such a good time doing this."

The news from **Rod Morgenstein** is that the Dregs did, in fact, break up. Rod, however, is working with Dregs guitarist Steve Morse in a trio known as the Steve Morse Band. **Richie Hayward** was on tour with Robert Plant in Europe and Asia. ELO drummer **Bev Bevan** was recently on tour with Black Sabbath temporarily replacing **Bill Ward**, who was unable to tour due to illness. **Simon Wright** has replaced **Phil Rudd** in AC/DC. The band has been touring. **Mark Edwards** recently toured Japan with Steeler and can be heard on their recent album, as well as LP's by T.K.O. and Tony Smith's Lonestar. **Jim Keltner** can be heard on Yoko Ono's LP. The album is a selection of her tunes performed by other artists, and Jim is on songs performed by Harry Nilsson. **Keith Jones**, drummer from Barnstaple Devon Great Britain, is on one track of the latest Hawkind LP, *Twice Upon a Time*. **Ralph Cooper** in the studio with Air Supply. King Crimson album due out this month with **Bill Bruford**

on drums. **Michael Botts'** new group has signed a management and co-production deal with Ken Scott. The group finally has a name—The Yanks. Botts can also be heard on Eddie Money's newest album. **Fred Satterfield** has been in the studio with the Oaks Band, as well as with Dan D. & the Lions, and Jimbeau Hinson. **Denny Carmassi** was on recent albums with Kim Carnes and Al Stewart. **Derek Hess** has been on the road with the Allen Collins Band. **Joe Chambers** has a new group called New York, New York, with Gary Bartz, Rufus Reid, Ted Dunbar and Jimmy Owens. **Paul Motian's** new album on Soul Note, *The Story of Maryam*, due out this month. **Gerry Brown** has been touring with Lionel Ritchie. **Wilby Fletcher** is McCoy Tyner's drummer these days. **Mike Shrieve** has a solo percussion album out on the Swedish label Amigo, called *In Suspect Terrain*. Mike has also been recording with Roger Hodgson, as well as an album with Sammy Hagar and Neil Schon.

**Bruce Gary** has been very busy these past several months. During the summer, he was back and forth to Europe touring and recording (*Automatic* out in the fall) with Jack Bruce. Bruce also did Al Kooper's *Championship Wrestling*, which was released during the summer, Johnny Koontz's album, as well as Robbie Krieger's fall release. He also served as musical director for a TV show called *The Pop 'n' Rocker Show*, a rock 'n' roll trivia game show with a concert element to it. The Bruce Gary All-Stars performed the music live and Bruce also co-wrote the show's theme song. If that isn't enough, Bruce is also working on a film project as associate producer to a documentary on John Lennon's life.





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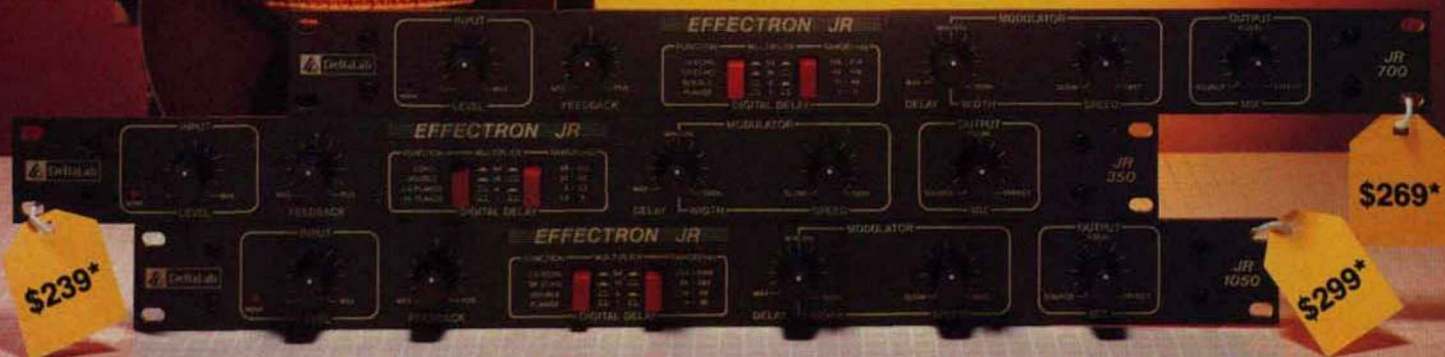
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# INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

## DICK CULLY NAMED SLINGERLAND CLINICIAN



Bryan Morhardt, Director of Artist Relations for Slingerland/Deagan, recently announced the addition of Dick Cully to Slingerland's endorser/clinician staff. Cully, a well-known drummer and band leader in the southwestern United States, will be starting a series of school-related clinics. "Mr. Cully's excellent reputation as a performer and his knowledge of the drumset

make him a valuable addition to our clinician staff," stated Morhardt. Dick's playing experience includes television and studio work, feature concerts, and club dates. He has studied with James Rago, Alan Dawson, and Ed Shaughnessy. He attended the Berklee College of Music in Boston. As the leader of a fifteen-piece big band, Cully performs in and around the Florida area extensively.

## AMERICAN COLLEGIATE TALENT SHOWCASE

From rock to classical, R&B to Gospel, country to comedy, drama to dance and variety, the American Collegiate Talent Showcase (ACTS, formerly known as the All-American Collegiate Talent Search) offers opportunities to talented college students in every area of the performing arts. Participating students become eligible for cash and scholarship prizes, live performances, television appearances, showcases, overseas tours and auditions. Among the auditioning companies are: The American Theatre Company, The Entertainment Connection, The Gospel Music Association, Hershey Park, Las Cruces Symphony, The Oakland Ballet Company, Plays in Progress (directed by Tony Award Winning Playwright, Mark Medoff), The Santa Fe Opera and Warner Brothers Records.

In addition to the annual showcase offered by Rick Newman's world-famous showcase club *Catch a Rising Star*, this year's rock bands will have a special opportunity to be selected for showcases at *The Ritz*

in New York and *The Palace* in Los Angeles. ACTS judges represent the industry's most noted talent agencies, management companies, record companies, trade magazines, publishing companies, public relations firms and entertainment-oriented organizations. For students wishing to enter any field of the performing arts, ACTS offers the most efficient method of reaching the professional people in the business. Among the names on the 1984 Honorary Advisory Board are such notables as Bob Hope, Chuck Mangione, Esther Williams Lamas, Burl Ives, Ray Anthony, Ronnie Milsap, Byron Allen, and actress Ally Sheedy. Entries are being accepted through February 24, 1984. The National Finals will take place on April 7, 1984. Campus organizations and faculty/staff members also have the opportunity to obtain scholarship money for their departments by becoming involved. For more information contact: ACTS, Box 3ACT, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003, (505) 646-4413.

## ALFRED DISTRIBUTES STUDIO 4

Alfred Publishing Co., Inc. has become the sole selling agent and exclusive distributor of Studio 4 Productions, the highly respected publisher of percussion performance music. In making the announcement, Alfred Executive Vice-President, Sandy Feldstein, said, "Studio 4's strong catalog forms a perfect blend with Alfred's method books and other educational publications. By combining the two, we will have sufficient quality products to make a major promotional effort in this area worthwhile and feasible." Studio 4 President, Joel Leach, will continue to supervise product development for his line. He adds: "This agreement will now make Studio 4 publications more widely available to teachers and dealers, and assure fast and efficient service to them."

## DENNARD JOINS LP



Kenwood "Woody" Denard—multi-instrumentalist, singer and world-class drummer—has joined LP's endorsement program. Woody has added LP *Timbalitos* to his drumset to provide a Latin "coloring" he has long sought. His choice was the brass shell version. Woody is currently the drummer with Jaco Pastorius, and he has worked with George Benson, Manhattan Transfer and Dizzy Gillespie, among others. Kenwood's future plans include the publishing of drum teaching material, including material expounding on his unique one-drumstick roll, which he labels the "Wood-stroke." A video is also shortly forthcoming.

## NEW COMPUTER SYSTEM HELPS MUSICIANS

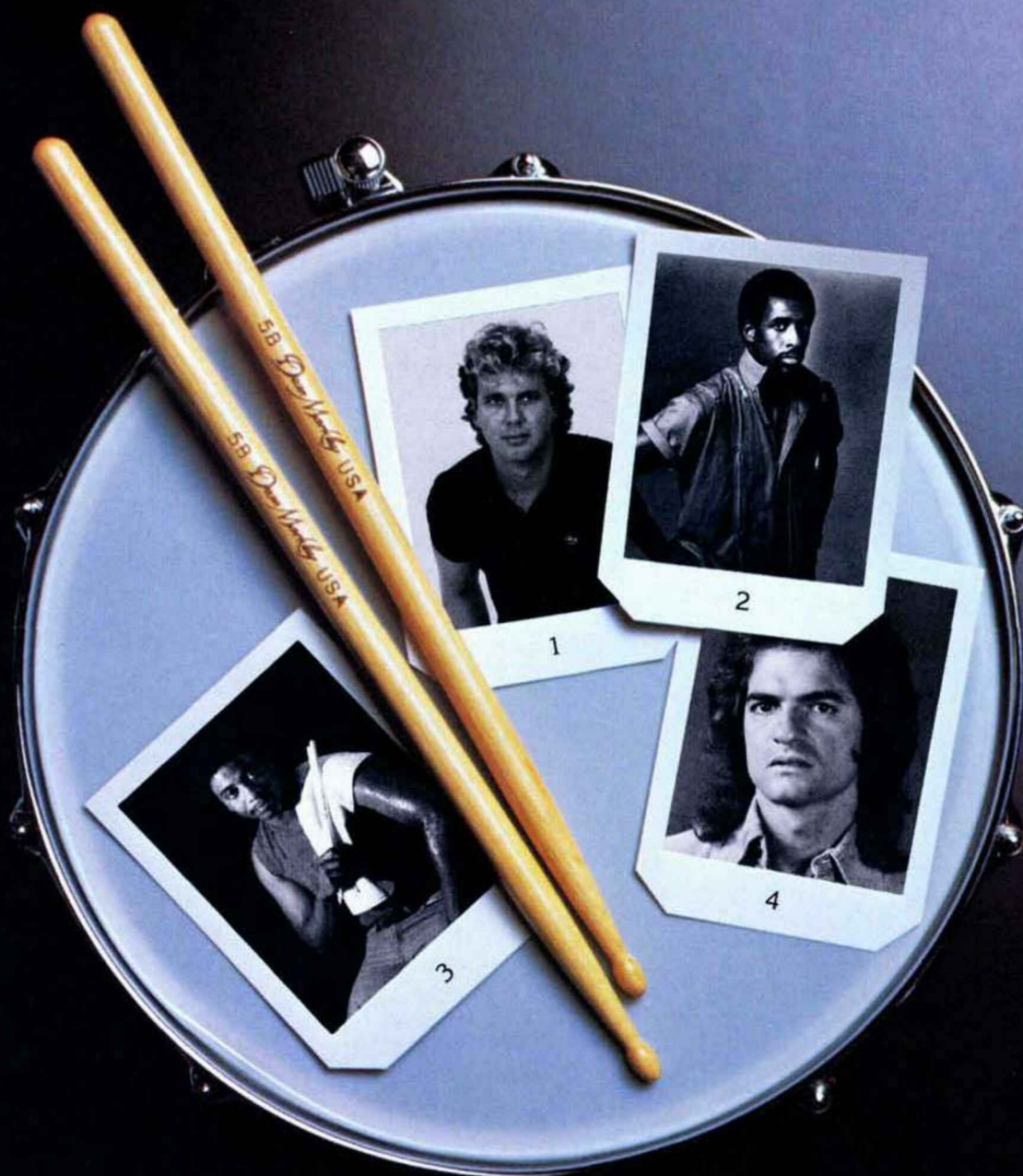
The Musicians National Hot Line Association has installed a new computer system which will enable it to process additional information to help musicians find bands and help bands find musicians and gigs. A musician who wants to join a band provides information by filling out an application that lists information such as name, address, phone number, how far he or she will travel, personal music preference (rock, country, Gospel, top forty, etc.), and what he or she does as a musician (plays drums, plays guitar, sings, etc.). All information is entered into the Association's computer, which stores and sorts data. Then when a band wants a musician, a computer read-out of the musicians that are available in a

particular area can be provided.

According to Marvin C. Zitting, the Hot Line's Executive Director, "We have been doing this same type of thing since we were first organized. However, with our new computer system, we will be able to do more to help musicians now than we did in the past by making more information available." The Musicians National Hot Line Association is a three-year-old organization with members throughout the United States and Canada. Musicians who want more information about the Association's services can write to the Musicians National Hot Line Association, Box 7345, Salt Lake City, Utah 84107; or phone (801) 268-2000.







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2. TREVOR GALE, drummer with Angela Bofil, Kashif, Phyllis Hyman, Mongo Santamaria, Marlena Shaw, Bobbie Humphrey and others. Trevor uses our 7R wood tip. (photo credit: Duane Davis)

3. RICKY LAWSON, drummer with The Yellowjackets, George Benson, Al Jarreau and many more. Ricky uses our 5B wood tip. (photo credit: Rick Gould)

4. JOE VITALE, presently drummer with Genesis, Joe has worked with The Eagles, Joe Walsh and many other top artists. Joe uses our new model AB wood tip.

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# JUST DRUMS

## JUNIOR-SIZED PRE-TUNED REMO DRUMS



A new line of pre-tuned drums and drumsets sized for youngsters 10 and under has been introduced by Remo, Inc.

The *Junior Pro* line includes three- and four-piece drumsets, beginner and intermediate snare drum kits, and a small-sized marching drum—furnished with all necessary hardware, adjustable stands or carrying straps, and drumsticks—ready to play after simple assembly with no tools required.

All the drums feature genuine Remo *PTS* pre-tuned drumheads and *Accousticon* wood-fiber shells. The drums are finished in blue, red, yellow or white with no charge for available color options.

The *Junior Pro* line is designed to offer youngsters an opportunity to begin playing on affordable, real drums with excellent sound and performance qualities. Suggested list prices range from \$26.95 for a 4" x 12" beginner model snare drum with drumsticks, to \$199.95 for the 4-piece drumset, which is complete except for cymbal and throne.

Full details and catalogs are available from Remo, Inc., 12804 Raymer Street, North Hollywood, CA 91605.

## NEW PRO-MARK CATALOG

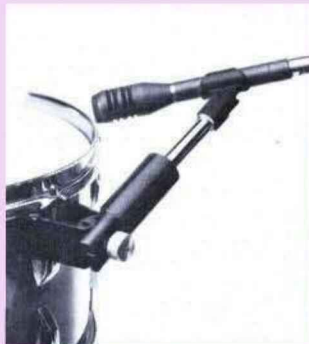


## CHOPS DRUM PAD BY SAMSON



Samson Music Products has introduced *Chops*, a professional drummer's practice pad featuring a carefully selected gum rubber surface. Its aluminum frame produces a crisp, even sound. Although light in weight, the chops pad stays put because of a special rubber covering on the bottom. The retail price of the chops pad is \$18.00. An optional stand with mounting flange is available at \$30.00 list. For further information, contact Scott Goodman, National Sales Manager, 124 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead, New York 11550.

## HARDY STAND-OFF II



Hardy Technologies introduces the *Stand-off II* adjustable drum microphone holder. Features include a two-piece *Lexan* body that pivots left or right, a three-inch neoprene foam shock isolator and a 5/8" 27-thread chrome pipe. The *Stand-off II* fastens to any tension rod and can be installed or removed by tightening or loosening the knurled knob. *Stand-off II* is available from selected dealers. Contact: Hardy Technologies Incorporated, P.O. Box 4124, Elkhart, Indiana 46515.

## PRO-MARK WIRE BRUSH



The *SB-2* "Shake-out" Brush has been introduced by Pro-Mark. It is the first wire brush ever offered by the drumstick manufacturer, and comes with a soft, rubber handle for a comfortable, easy grip with good response. The suggested list price is \$6.00/pair.

## IMPROVED LUDWIG MODULAR STANDS



These rugged, heavy duty modular stands incorporate all of the features demanded by professional drummers today. All have been designed to accept Ludwig's expanded line of additions.

Each of the four basic models in the modular line has an extra wide, double-braced base with extra large serrated rubber feet for the rigidity and stability necessary for large power drums, cymbals and add-on accessories. New enlarged castings are fitted with specially designed white nylon inserts for improved grip, yet can be quickly and easily adjusted. All metal thumb screws and wing nuts are triple chrome plated. The #3050 drum stand has extra long basket arms to accommodate the large assortment of Ludwig *Coliseum* and *H-V* snare drums with die-cast hoops. The modular double tom-tom stand #3055 has cluster casting to accommodate two or three tom-toms or other modular add-on accessories. The modular boom cymbal stand #3052 can be adjusted for all varieties of cymbals.

## NEW GON BOPS MODELS



Gon Bops of California has introduced a new model of conga drums which features the sound characteristics of wood (mahogany) and the tough durability of Gel Coat Fiberglass exterior. Similar in appearance to their transparent fiberglass natural wood finishes, the new

model features chip resistant Gel Coat Fiberglass, which is available in all the most popular solid colors, including sparkle. For more information, contact: Gon Bops of California, 2302 E. 38th Street, Los Angeles, California 90058. For their new catalog, please send \$1.00 for postage and handling.

A 12-page consumer catalog and product selector is now available from Pro-Mark. Designed to equip consumers with information needed to select a pair of high-quality drumsticks, the catalog includes an in-depth description of the entire drumstick manufacturing process, methods of grading sticks and the playing characteristics of various woods. A

four-page foldout contains actual-size photos of the firm's 26 drumstick models, along with a selector chart and how-to-order information. Pro-Mark's full line of beaters, accessories and promotional items are also illustrated. Copies are available from Pro-Mark dealers or directly from Pro-Mark Division of Remo, Inc., 10706 Craighead Drive, Houston, Texas 77025.

continued on page 106



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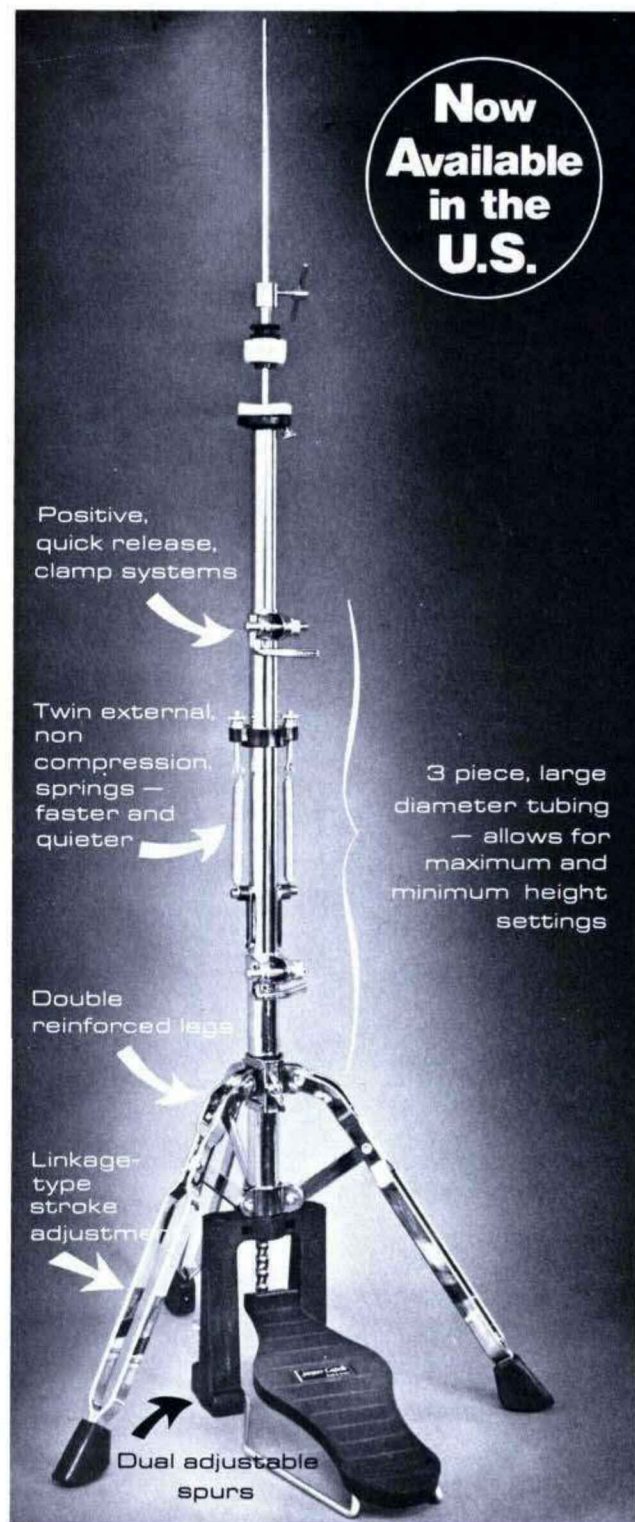
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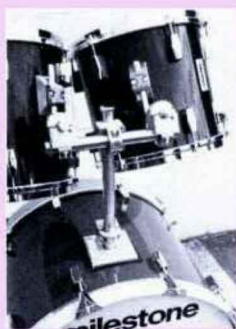
## TAMA OMNILOCK AND X-HAT

Tama has unveiled two new pieces of hardware. The first is the *Omnilock* tom holder. Based on the same principle as the *Omnisphere* holder, the new holder employs a "one touch" cam lever mechanism to control the tom setting. In addition, the variable locking system in the top of the holder enables the drummer to vary the width of the "V" setting, providing more flexibility in tom-

tom settings.

The other piece of hardware is the *X-Hat*, a short upper tube and clutch of a hi-hat that attaches to any cymbal or tom stand via a modified multi-clamp. Angle and cymbal tension are adjustable, allowing for a closed, open or partly open sound. *X-Hat* lets drummers play double bass patterns and hi-hat rhythms simultaneously.

## MILESTONE HARDWARE



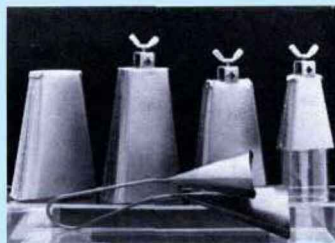
Milestone Percussion announces a new selection of *Strongarm* support fittings, including bass drum spurs, floor tom legs, and rack tom support brackets. These findings are combined with Creative Percussion bar support systems, and are made of steel, aluminum, and stainless steel. For further information, contact Milestone Percussion, 9771 Pinewell Cres., Richmond British Columbia, Canada V7A 2C7.

## LP RAINMAKER



The LP *Rainmaker* is a percussion sound-effect device that is well suited for sensitive music. When inverted, the *Rainmaker* imitates the sound of falling rain. The amount of incline determines the intensity of sound. This device also doubles as a unique-sounding shaker.

## ESOTERIC COWBELLS



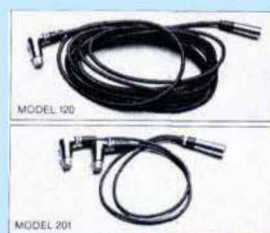
LP introduces a new generation of cowbells that captures the new, brighter, and livelier percussion sound. These cowbells were field tested in New York City Salsa arenas before design finalization. Bells are unfinished so as not to alter the much sought-after sound. The new series includes the ES-1 Agogo, ES-2 Cha Cha Cowbell, ES-3 Bongo (hand) Cowbell, ES-4 Timbale Cowbell (heavy gauge), and ES-5 Timbale Cowbell (light gauge).

## DRUMTITE DRUM LUG LOCKS

*Drumtite* Drum Lug Locks solve lug loosening problems. A specially designed locking system placed between the lug and the rim keeps the lug in place and your drum in tune. This is done by the use of interacting angled cam washers that wedge against each other when

vibrated, locking the lug with upward pressure. Unlike other lug locks, *Drumtite* provides instant tuning without removal or adjustment of the locking device. For further information, contact: Drumtite, 165 Walnut, Costa Mesa, California 92627 (714-631-8438).

## MAYEA MICROPHONE CABLES AND SUBSNAKE



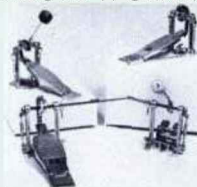
New from R.M.I., are microphone cables and subsnakes especially suited for the *May EA* Drum Miking System. Each drum outfitted with an internal microphone is equipped with a standard three-pin audio connector. The cables and subsnakes come with space-saving right angle connectors on one end and straight connectors on the other. The subsnakes are offered in three configurations to fit the needs of most drumkits: Six-pair cable, nine-pair cable and eleven-pair cable. All subsnakes are twenty-five feet long and are designed to connect the drums directly to a mixing board or main-stage snake. Also available are twenty foot long subsnake extensions for overhead miking or connection of individual drums to mixer or main snake. A handy Y-cable is offered for assigning two drums to one channel. Another special Y-cable is designed to assign one drum to both a channel on the mixer and a supplement effect (such as delay or phase-shifting, etc.). For more information, contact: R.M.I., 8312 Seaport Drive, Huntington Beach, California 92646 (714-536-2505).

## REMO IMPROVED COVERING FOR DRUM SHELLS

The development of an improved drum shell covering material that won't bubble or wrinkle even in extreme heat or cold has been revealed by Remo, Inc. The new proprietary *Quadura* covering, now furnished on the firm's pre-tuned drums, is a four-layer plastic laminate which has been tested to withstand 160°F and below-freezing temperatures for 12 hours without deforming or delaminating, far exceeding the capability of conventional covering materials. Improved resistance to scratching, abrasion and impact is provided by a hard-gloss protective coating. The new material was developed by Remo engineers "out of desperation," according to president Remo Belli, after failure to find existing coverings to meet the company's criteria.

"Our first *PTS* drums were covered in a plastic laminate which proved to be too thin and subject to wrinkling in hot weather," Belli stated. "We've replaced every one of those early drums we could find with new *Quadura-covered* drums." Subjecting drums to extreme heat or cold, as when stored in car trunks, has long been a cause of cover wrinkling on all types of drums, according to Belli. "We believe this new material, now being manufactured in-house, has ended that problem for us once and for all," he stated. All *PTS* drumsets currently being manufactured by Remo incorporate the new covering material.

## DRUM WORKSHOP 2000 SERIES PEDALS



To help satisfy the growing demand for high-quality, value-priced, bass drum pedals, Drum Workshop is proud to introduce its *2000 Series*. Now available are the *2000-CX* Chain and Sprocket, *2000-N* Nylon Strap, and *2002* Chain-Drive Double Bass Drum pedals. The *2000 Series* pedals fea-

ture imported parts which are machined, assembled and inspected to DW's own specifications at their Southern California plant. "With our new line, we can offer drummers outstanding value along with our experience and reputation in making top-quality bass drum pedals," said DW president, Don Lombardi. Twin-action springs, dual adjustable spurs, heavy-duty castings and an oversized chain and sprocket are standard components of both the *2002* Double and *2000-CX* pedals.



# Pearl's Free Floating System A Revolution in Snare Drum Design

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Pure natural sounds of the individual shells' resonating properties  
produce outstanding snare effects.

Pearl's constant research and development of snare drum sound has created a new design that pushes snare drum manufacturing techniques into a new dimension. The "Free Floating System" is considered a "Drum Revolution". By adopting this innovative system, without any lugs attached to the shell, your sound is enriched by 100% of the shell sound. By eliminating the negative factors that reduce the resonance of the shell, projection and snare response are exceptionally advanced, and the individual tone color peculiar to the shell is allowed to contribute to the sound. Shell materials are selected to permit a higher quality of sound. Shells of Copper, Brass, Steel, and Maple give an endless variety of sounds. The "Free Floating System" enables easy exchange of identical size shells. The Free Floating System snare drum is equipped with the newly developed "Bridge type single-side action strainer" to maximize the snare effects with excellent adjustment and control.

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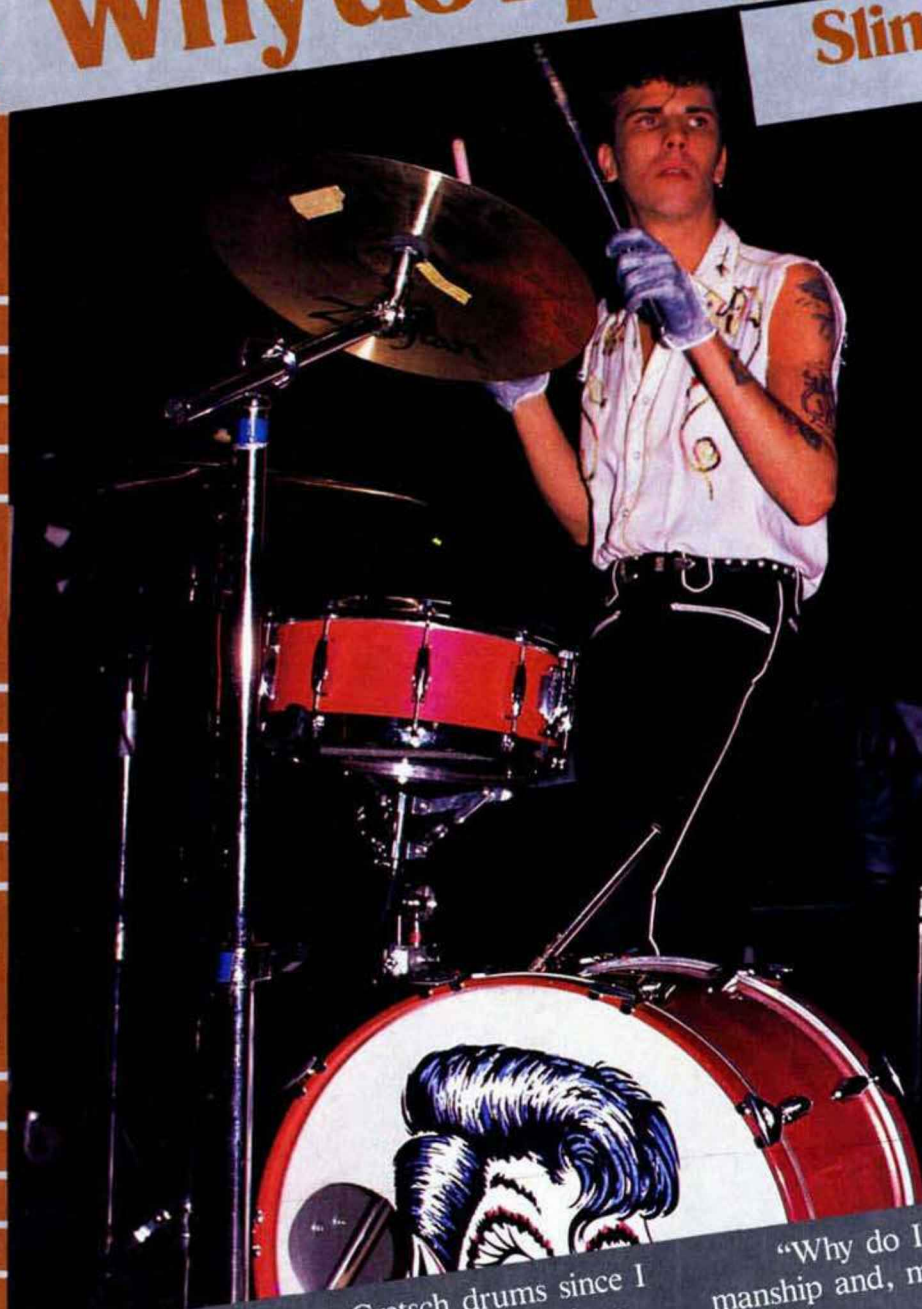
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# STEVE GADD. HOT ON ZILDJIAN.

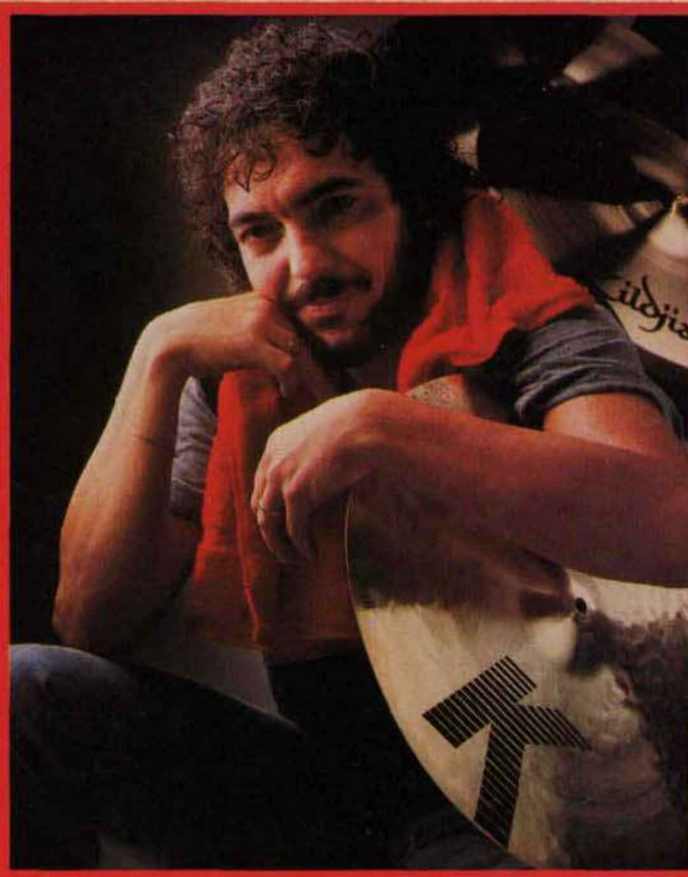
The man is hot! And he should be. No less than Chick Corea put it this way: "Every drummer wants to play like Steve Gadd because he plays great. He plays everything well. He could very well go on to become one of the greatest drummers the world has ever seen." As you can imagine, between his touring and recording, Steve's not the easiest guy in the world to pin down. But he did stop for a breather the other day and we got a chance to talk with him.

**On Practice.** "I've been playing since I was a kid. As long as I keep my muscles loose, I don't have to practice a lot every day. When I do practice, I just sort of let things happen naturally and then later on try to work it into my playing. Like on '50 Ways to Leave Your Lover... I used my left hand on the high hat for the whole section—it was a little thing I'd been practicing and it just worked out."

**On Control.** "Sometimes I use light, medium and heavy sticks to do the same drills because the sticks affect my muscles in different ways. You have to use your hand and arm muscles differently

to control your playing. It's a subtle thing but it helps me tremendously."

**On Effects.** "After I graduated from Eastman, I played in a rock 'n roll band. It was keyboard, bass, drums and a lot of homemade stuff. I bought 6 big artillery shells, sawed them into different lengths and hung them on



*Steve Gadd, one of the world's most innovative musicians, has paved the way toward new playing techniques for today's drummers.*

a rack that I built. I'd use them for the free sections in the music."

**On K's.** "Art Blakey gave me my first set of K. Zildjian's a long time ago. I love the feel of them. There's something about the way the stick reacts to the surface... it almost becomes part of the cymbal. They're not cold or edgy. They have a very warm and deep feeling. They've got real character. I use a 20" Ride and an 18" Crash Ride with 14" Hi Hats for recording and live sessions."

**On A's.** "I love to use A. Zildjian's when I play rock 'n roll. When I want to play louder, I add a 16" Thin Crash and an 18" Crash Ride for a full crash sound. The bells on the A's really project the sound in a clear natural tone."

**On Zildjian.** "Zildjian to me is the foundation. I play Zildjians because that's what's in my heart. I love the sound, the feel, the history... I love the quality and the status of a Zildjian."

If you're a serious drummer, chances are that you, like Steve, are already playing Zildjians. For 360 years, they have been the overwhelming favorite of drummers worldwide.

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