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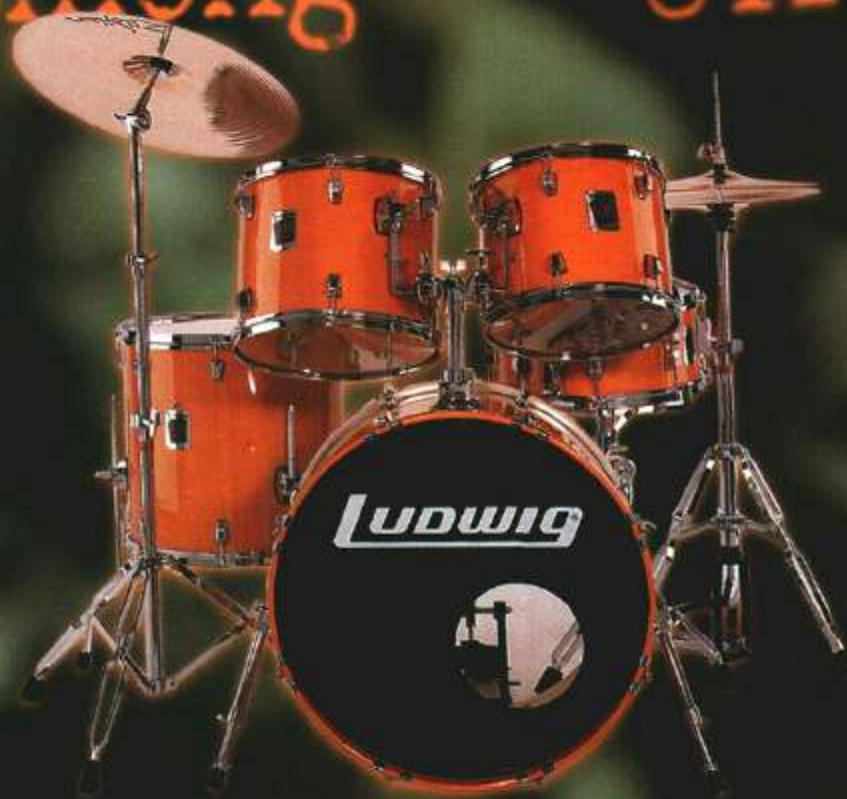
THE DEFTONES'
Abe Cunningham

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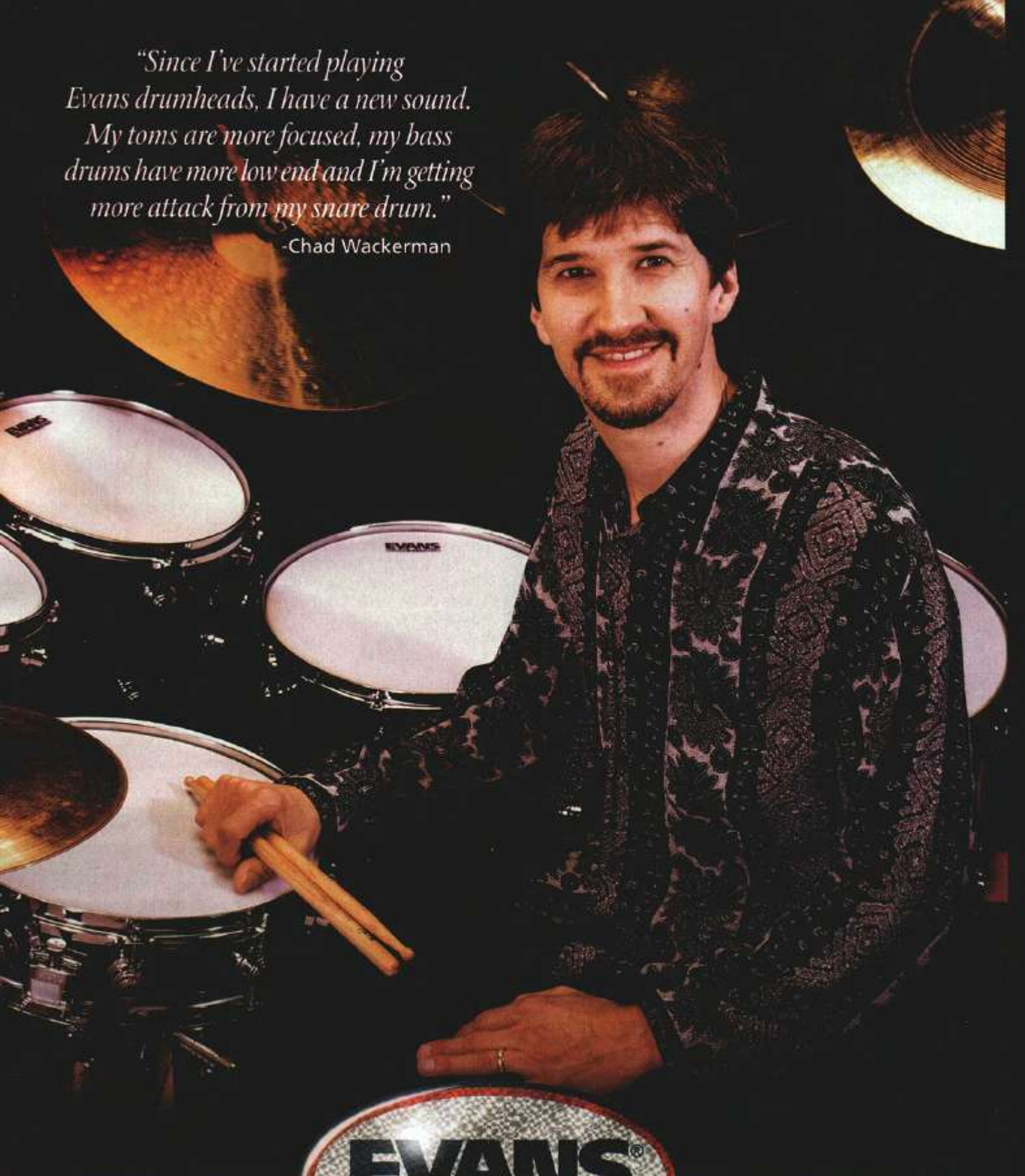
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photo by Alex Solca

RICKY LAWSON

Rare is the drummer who wins—and nails—gigs like the Yellowjackets, Lionel Richie, Whitney Houston, Phil Collins, Michael Jackson, Steely Dan, Babyface, and Eric Clapton. Rarer still is one who fosters a solo project, assembles a super-high-tech electronic setup, and chooses gigs in accordance with a strong moral code. Meet Ricky Lawson.

by Robyn Flans

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JIM BLACK & SUSIE IBARRA

New York's Lower East Side has been a laboratory of musical experimentation for years. Today, two drummers in particular, Jim Black and Susie Ibarra, are giving the neighborhood a new coat of percussive paint, mixing in equal parts traditional technique, unique physicality, broad influences, and free expression.

by Ken Micallef

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ENDORSEMENTS: THE REAL DEAL

Big pros' actual endorsement salaries! The highest-paying manufacturers! How to get a killer deal! Well, you can stop right here if that's the kind of thing you're looking for. What we're talking about here is the *real* world of artist endorsements. Find out whether you've got what it takes—and if you do, what kind of deal you can expect.

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MD 1998 READERS POLL RESULTS

In a tiny, windowless office, representatives of the firm Diddle, Drag & Ruff have been slavishly counting thousands of rumped ballots for months. Finally, their work is done. The envelope, please....

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A Delicate Balancing Act

Though the overwhelming majority of *Modern Drummer* readers questioned in our last readership survey approved of the balance of artists covered in the magazine, that doesn't necessarily mean we were able to completely please everyone! A small sampling of the comments we received read as follows: "Too much heavy metal," "Not enough rock," "Not enough jazz," "Too much jazz," "More on lesser-known players," "Not enough country, Latin, and drum corps coverage." As editors, whenever we read through such mixed comments, we're reminded that there's no way we're ever going to please *everyone* with each issue of *MD*.

As I stated in an editorial many years ago, a good balance is a key objective when we plan out issues of the magazine. And though balance revolves primarily around the choice of feature interviews and articles, it also involves the selection of column material. It's our job to weave it all into a well-balanced, cohesive product you'll learn from and *enjoy* reading each month. A delicate balancing act, indeed.

Most of our decisions are based on information we gather from *MD's* core readership through surveys and reader mail. The majority of the *MD* audience is made up of drumset players involved in mainstream rock, alternative rock, blues, R&B, funk, and jazz drumming. A smaller percentage is focused on Top-40, country, Latin, show drumming, drum corps, teaching, and world music.

And though we hesitate to completely ignore the peripheral segments of our audience, space limitations often force us to deal with them accordingly. That's not to say we've totally ignored these areas. Features on percussion, as well as supplements on hand drumming and marching percussion, have recently been included in *MD* in an effort to reach out to these segments of the audience. However, since the bulk of our feature material tends to focus on the leading rock and jazz players, we've found the best way to provide valid material on the areas that are somewhat less popular among *MD* readers is through departments like *Around The World*, *Drum Country*, *In The Studio*, *Latin Symposium*, *Teachers' Forum*, *Show Drummers' Seminar*, *Rudimental Symposium*, and *Percussion Today*.

Though we've accepted the fact that it's virtually impossible to please *everyone* with each issue of *Modern Drummer*, we're hopeful that our balance has, for the most part, been on target for the majority of readers. Still, I encourage you to write me with your feelings and suggestions on this matter at any time. After all, creating the perfect balance is an ongoing process.

Ronald Spagnardi

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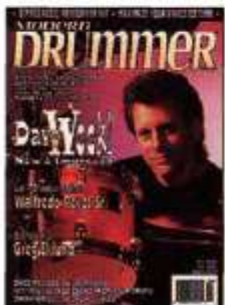
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DAVE WECKL



I've never been one to idolize people; I try to appreciate them for what they have to offer and let it go at that. As such, I've never deified Dave Weckl, nor have I subscribed to the backlash of "Weckl bashing" that's taken place over the past few years. I believe I've come to respect Dave as a terrific player with a very defined and identifiable style.

And now we're told of a "new and improved" Dave Weckl. [April '98 *MD*] Well, I don't know about "improved," but I'm looking forward to experiencing the "new" Dave. I, too, was raised on—and inspired by—funk and R&B music in the late '60s and early '70s, so to hear Dave apply his abundant skills to that style sounds like a treat, and I can't wait to hear his new band's album.

I do wonder, however, about this guru-like power that Freddy Gruber seems to have on the greats of the drum world. First Neil Peart, then Steve Smith, and now Dave Weckl have all come under the Gruber spell. Neil and Dave were even inspired to alter their setups and grips. That's pretty heavy change for pros of their level. Dave says he was actually angry at having had something "kept from him for all these years." I know that Freddy is from an older generation of players who espoused a certain way of playing. But was that way the *right* way? Has an entire generation of drummers—many of whom are brilliant players—been doing things the *wrong* (or at least the *hard*) way all these years?

I was taught to believe that there is *no* right or wrong way to play the drums. There is only the outcome, which may be

good or bad, depending on the player. But when figures like Weckl, Smith, and Peart begin to doubt their enviable skills in favor of a totally different approach, one can't help but wonder where lesser mortals like the rest of us stand.

Kudos to Dave Weckl for the determination and willingness to "improve" himself. But how about sharing some more of this "other way...easy way..." to play the drums? Perhaps a feature article, not on Freddy Gruber the person, but on what this method he espouses is all about.

Arthur Williamson
New York, NY

MORE GRUBER EFFECT

I'm a Rush fanatic. I went to their concert in Boston last year, and Neil was playing a small kit. I read in the program that he had taken lessons with Freddy Gruber. After getting Neil's *A Work In Progress* video I tore apart my kit (which had been fourteen pieces strong) and re-constructed it based on comfort and pure ergonomics. Lo and behold, it looked exactly like Neil's!

Your April story on Dave Weckl states that Dave has also taken lessons from Freddy, and now *his* kit looks a lot like Neil's, as well. Is this a coincidence? I think not. I believe we are seeing the beginning stages of what I call the "Gruber Effect," and it's a beautiful thing.

Dan Bassett
via Internet

GREG EKLUND

Fellow drummers, rejoice! We can finally dispense with all our method books and hours of practice. David Garibaldi can take his books—which took years to develop and have proven helpful to old geezers like me—off the market. Jim Chapin can finally retire. And we need no longer spend time listening to the great drummers of today and of the past, who have influenced so many. Good-bye, *Stick Control*. So long, triple ratamacue. We no longer need you because we now know the secret of success in the drumming world: "Hit hard...and

learn a Paradiddle." If you do those two things, there is nothing to stop you from achieving the great success of Greg Eklund [April '98 *MD*].

Please forgive my sarcasm, but how long must we endure ignorance in the drumming world? The reason drummers often do not have the respect of other musicians is because we have so little respect for our instrument. I agree with Dave Weckl when he says, "I think some people use the whole 'I don't need technique' thing as an excuse to not work at their craft." We don't learn a triple ratamacue so that we can dazzle our next-door neighbor with blinding speed. It should be learned because it gives another fundamental to work from. Every instrument has fundamentals that must be learned in order to execute a musical passage properly. Technical practice always has as its end the ability to produce music.

In his *Future Sounds* method book, David Garibaldi says, "I'd first like to stress the importance of having well-developed basic skills—reading, hand technique, rudiments, etc. In other words, the goal is just good overall musicianship. If the foundation of your playing is solid, then you can build whatever you like upon that and it will endure." There is a difference between being a "rock drummer" and being an enduring drummer who can walk into almost any situation and feel comfortable.

In his seminal work, *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer*, Jim Chapin stresses, "Techniques must be used tastefully, and one should never feel that mastery of a beat means it must be shown off on all possible occasions. Such a note of warning is unnecessary for the average professional; it is intended for those over-enthusiastic students who might temporarily forget that musicianship comes first and technique second." Chapin teaches technique, but he seeks a balanced approach that will enhance the musical environment that we find ourselves in. He does not tell us to throw away technique because it is abused at times, but seeks to show us what its true end is.

These are the type of people that young drummers should listen to if they truly care about the art of drumming—people who can give substantive answers that will

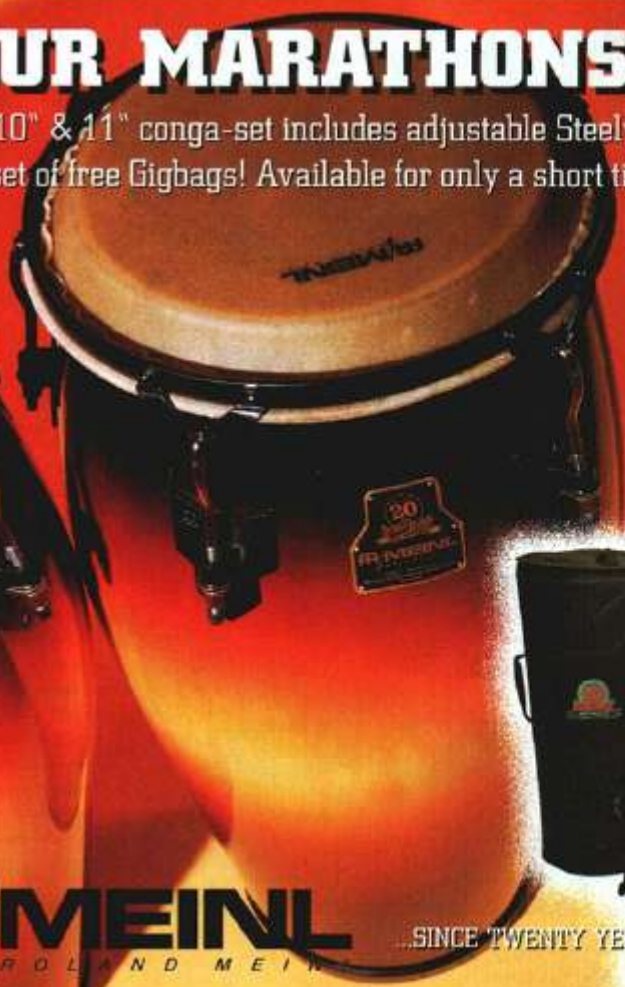
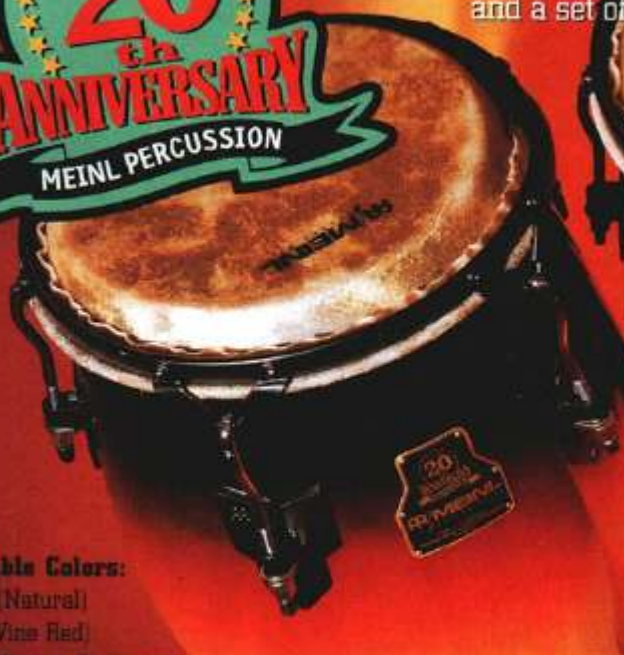


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inspire young drummers to excel at their instrument, rather than quick answers that lower the overall standards and inspire no one. The Steve Gadd, David Garibaldi, and Dave Weckls of the drumming world will endure far longer than those who take a simplistic approach to the art of drumming. They (the technophobes) may have their music re-released as "oldies" some day, but their actual contribution will be short-lived. The ones who have treated their instrument with the greatest respect are the ones who will be respected the greatest.

Jay D. Webler
via Internet



MAXIMIZING YOUR PRACTICE TIME

Thanks Zoro! Your article "Maximizing Your Practice Time" reminded me why I began drumming in the first place. Not just to focus on time feel, ghost notes, and chops—but to entertain! Sure, watching drummers on MTV displaying their patented licks and wild kits got me started. But it was playing in front of people and being the focus of attention that has kept me playing.

Of course I also enjoy playing alone just to release stress and to let loose. I just wanted to say that Zoro's words hit this novice square in the face. Thanks again.

Ron Alsept
Cincinnati, OH



PUT BIG BAND BACK



It was with sadness that we read of *Modern Drummer's* decision to drop the big band category from the 1998 Readers Poll, as a "reflection of current musical trends." Among the international fraternity of drummers, *MD* is considered the "bible." What a shame you have decided that a whole genre of playing is now defunct.

It seems to us that as the circulation of a specialist publication increases, so should the coverage of all the various aspects relating to the favored topic. Otherwise,

you may alienate some sections of the readership. Yes, we know that the average age of your readers is around twenty, and that most wouldn't know their Dave Toughs from their Ray McKinleys. But there must be several of us out here who would vote for somebody under that heading. Surely it doesn't cost that much more to print that extra section on your ballot form.

By doing away with the big band category, you deny recognition to the specialized talents of some of our greatest performers: Jack Sperling, Jake Hanna, Harold Jones, Butch Miles, Shannon Powell, Jeff Hamilton, and their like. Big band drumming is probably the pinnacle of our art. It combines all the skills that we hold in high esteem—musicality, technique, power, dynamics, interpretation, and improvisation—all in one neat package.

To lump big band players in with the "mainstream jazz" section seems to demean our legends. We all know good jazz drummers who wouldn't cut it with a big band; likewise a good big band drummer doesn't always make a good small-group player. So you really need to have both options covered.

It seems to us that as the circulation of a specialist publication increases, so should the coverage of all the various aspects relating to the favored topic. Otherwise,



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In England we have the BBC Big Band. They used to be on staff at the BBC until somebody at the top (in their infinite wisdom) decided that it was an old-fashioned form of music, not suited to the modern-day BBC, and had them sacked. Fortunately they live on as a private organization, still active in concert (and still performing with the BBC!). In fact, they were on TV a few weeks back playing with Phil Collins as his big band. (Now, *there's* an anomaly: Phil Collins now has his own big band, but your decision means that he can never be honored under that category.)

Please think again about this decision. Remember, "dedicated followers of fashion" can end up looking rather dated in retrospect.

Jimmy and Sandra Tagford
Folkestone, Kent, England

STARCLASSIC PERFORMER REVIEW

As the proud owner of a new Tama *Starclassic Performer* series kit, I read Rick Van Horn's recent review with great interest. Let it be known that one can achieve that boomy, low-end bass drum

sound through the use of an Evans *EQ3* batter head, and if you mike your drums on a regular basis, the use of an *AKG D-112* will also help. My purpose in writing is to alleviate any misgivings that drummers might have about buying one of these excellent drumsets. Now, my *Starclassic Performer* bass drum has the "Boom In Every Room."

Bob Cianci
Highland Lakes, NJ

KUDOS TO JOE SMYTH

Thanks for the recent words on Joe Smyth of Sawyer Brown ["On The Road, The Life Of A Touring Drummer" March '98 *MD*]. I've long held that Joe is one of the most underrated drummers in the business. I had the pleasure of having Joe as a guest on my morning radio show during the last tour. Joe had committed to twenty minutes, but ended up taking almost that long *after* the interview to answer my many questions about "big time" drumming. In answering those questions he often credited his soundman and techs in response to compliments on his sound, and he credited every-

one from God to his parents for his success. He even gave his show sticks to my stepson, an aspiring drummer. Unfortunately, like many other prize possessions they were lost in the "Flood of '97." So Joe, the next time you have a show in Aberdeen....

Mike Johnson
via Internet

THE PERCEPTION THING

In regards to D.C. Beemon's *First Person* article "The Perception Thing" in your March '98 issue: I feel for you, D.C. I too have been through that sort of thing. But let's also be honest and say that you could've nipped the whole thing in the bud—and had a good time—just by saying, "Wait a minute. How do *you* want me to play this?" The bandleader said, "Kind of a march"? I would've been thinking maybe a zydeco or train-ride kinda thing. That doesn't sound like a straight-8th kind of beat to me.


Next time just take a second to ask the leader how he wants it to go. Also, talk to the bass player and see what he says. You said you had heard "Born In Chicago" many

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times. Well, sing it in your head before you play it. Just ask for a second to review the tune. If Mr. Russell is worth his salt as a leader, he would allow this so you would be a little more at ease. If not, the band isn't worth playing with in the first place.

Don't worry about what happened. In drumming, you only learn by doing, and having a bad audition is just part of the growing process you have to go through—whether you're fourteen or forty-eight. We all have. Just remember, even at an audition you can ask questions.

Gary Binge
via Internet

would offer a better service to their customers. Now those customers are beginners and own an entry-level kit, but in the future they might buy a top-of-the-line drumset. You mentioned the word "service" in that article. That's a word all the companies should have in mind. I'm glad you had the courage to say all that. Thanks, and keep up the good work!

Rivadavia Drummond Neto
Brazil, via Internet

ENTRY-LEVEL DRUMKIT FEATURE



Regarding your entry-level drumset feature, you got right to the point! Those companies have to think wise. It's marketing! If they spent a little more on heads and hardware, they

CRUISE SHIP DRUMMING

Thanks for such an in-depth, informative article on a drummer's life on cruise ships in your February 1998 issue. I had no idea that such a job required so much responsibility and organization. People who make a living this way deserve great respect. I hope to see more on interesting jobs like these in future *Show Drummers' Seminar* pieces.

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Gov't Mule's

Matt

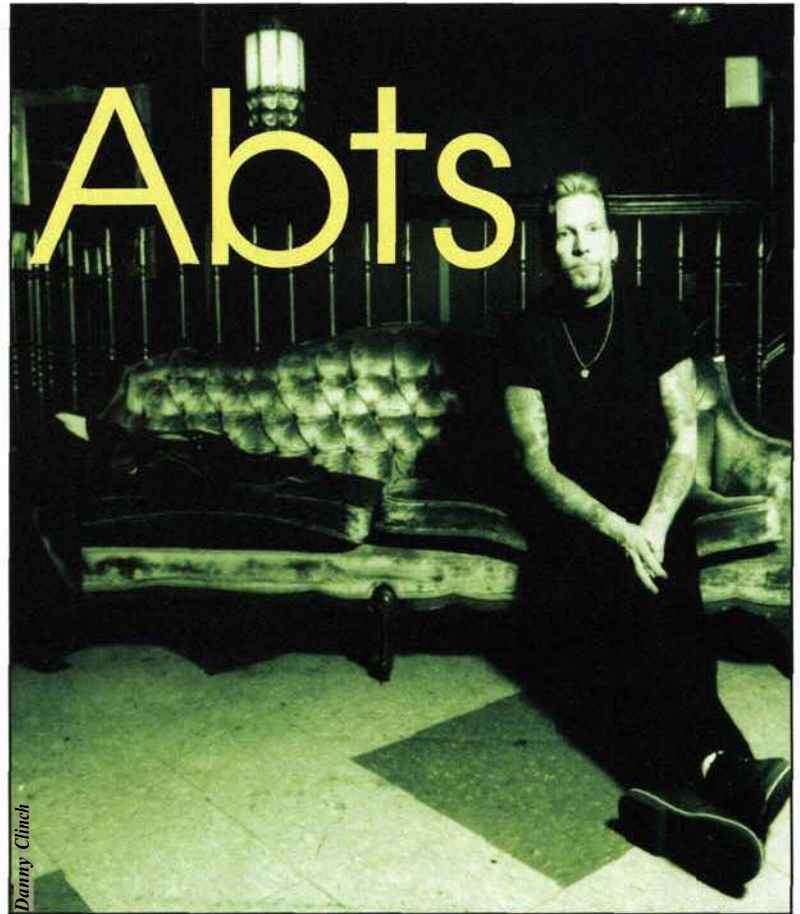
Abts

Hard Ridin'

Gov't Mule's new album, *Dose*, opens with a mighty 16th-note roll from the *Studio King* snare of Matt Abts. The resonating force of his brief drum intro to "Blind Man In The Dark" serves as an unmistakable harbinger for the muscle-flexing rock 'n' roll that follows in songs like "Game Face" and "Larger Than Life." Abts insists, however, that there's more than one way to skin the Mule. "There's a whole world of music out there," he enthuses. "We don't limit ourselves to any one thing. Blues, rock, soul, jazz—we love to meld them all together."

The key to Gov't Mule's genre-bridging music lies in the near-telepathic rapport of its three musicians and a shared willingness to let each other stretch out. "There's a lot of room in the trio [format]," he says. "I'm free to do almost whatever I want. It's easy to get the two other guys to go off in my direction just by nodding my head. We like to take it places; we *don't* like to stay in the same area or play it safe all the time. It's an improvisational thing."

Singer/guitarist Warren Haynes and bassist Allen Woody know a thing or two about improvisation, having spent eight years (1989-1997) in the re-formed Allman Brothers Band, a group legendary for its masterful jamathons and rafter-rattling live shows. The seed of Gov't Mule was planted when Allman Brother Dickey Betts recruited both Abts and Haynes for his 1988 solo album, *Pattern Disruptive*. After a few years of informal



get-togethers—"Every time the Allmans came to play LA," Abts recalls, I would grab Warren and Allen on their day off and we'd go jam"—Gov't Mule released their self-titled debut in 1995. That was followed by a concert album, *Live At Roseland Ballroom*, in 1996.

For Abts, *Dose*, unlike its predecessors, was born of an ideal combination of studio and stage, thanks to the recording process itself. "I did a whole record without headphones," Abts says proudly. "I hate when you're trying to communicate with somebody else in the band and you're worried about the headphones staying on your head. We basically record everything live in the studio, so communication is really important. Even the other guys didn't wear headphones this time; we used monitors instead. At first we were worried that they'd bleed into the mic's and turn into a nightmare, but it worked out perfectly. It was a religious experience."

Greg Siegel

"It's an improvisational thing.
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Randy Castillo Back To See The Wizard

It feels like new again, that's for sure," smiles drummer Randy Castillo of his re-joining Ozzy Osbourne's world touring band, with bandmates Zakk Wylde and Mike Inez. "This lineup hasn't played together since 1992. It's a musical reunion of sorts. It's a creative lineup and we're doing a mix of old and new Ozzy, and some Sabbath standards that everybody loves to hear. So it's a lot of fun—real physical. We've been getting in gig shape for the last month, and it's a well-oiled machine now."

Castillo was recruited from Lita Ford's band to play with Ozzy first in 1985, and stayed with the band until 1995, when he quit because of what was reported in some places as "tennis elbow." "I did have that problem back then when we were in Europe, but that wasn't the reason I left the band," contests the drummer. "It was internal turmoil, to put it lightly. But now we're back with Zakk, with the lineup that played the *No More Tears* album, so we have a real good chemistry."

During his time out of Osbourne's group, Randy wrote music for a chain of restaurants called Cartoonsville, composed music for film and animation, played percussion in a flamenco group, and helped form a band called Juice 13. "I love rock 'n' roll," explains Castillo, "but it's good to know I can do other things as well, and that it's fun."

Sharon Osbourne, Ozzy's wife and manager, called Castillo in early 1998 to say she wanted to come hear Juice 13. "I said 'Great.' She came, and then Zakk and Mike showed up and I thought, 'Something's up here.' And she goes, 'Yeah, we're

thinking about putting the band back together with you guys. Would you be interested?' I said 'Of course.'"

Castillo is taking DW drums out for Ozzfest this year. "The 5" *Edge* snare drum is pretty mind-blowing. It hurts. I have to wear earplugs." Randy also plays Zildjian cymbals, including two 19" crashes and two *ZBells*, a 10" and 6". And he uses *Ahead* drumsticks with Easton gloves. "One set of sticks will last me a whole gig," he jokes. "They last forever, and I love the feel of them. It took me about three or four days to get used to them, and now I just love them."

Robin Tolleson



Andy Stochansky

Rule Breaking With Ani DiFranco

My favorite part is hitting the sides of the drums. The rale is Anything Goes. For me to turn snares upside down or play cymbal stands is fine—if it works for the song." Flipping drums and hitting the stands is simply unconventional wisdom from a guy with an unconventional gig. For seven years, Andy Stochansky, thirty-two, has been the primary drummer and the only constant bandmate to Ani DiFranco, popular music's most fiercely independent artist.

Along with playing drum sides and cymbal stands, Stochansky says he digs trash. "Right now my kit has pieces of garbage attached to it and hand percussion in stands," he explains, "so I can play hand percussion and kit at the same time. A lot of it has to do with the colors that I want, and the composition. I have part of a washing machine, and I've got one of those metal plates that they cover your food with in hotels. They're really good; I would advise anyone to pick one

up," he adds, laughing. "Steal this tin."

Stochansky found his calling at age five when his uncle, a music teacher, handed him a pair of drumsticks. Throughout his childhood, Andy played around on a toy drumkit, and finally got serious about the pursuit in high school. Upon graduation, the Toronto native toured with a local band and then did session work in the city. He first worked with DiFranco in 1992, playing on her third album, *Imperfectly*. The following year, he played on *Puddle Drive*, and then she asked him to join her on tour.

Currently, Stochansky is getting ready to tour with DiFranco in support of her latest release, *Little Plastic Castle*. Pleased with his work on the album, the drummer is most enthusiastic about "Pulse," the last track on the disk. "There's a twelve-minute jam," says the ever-organic Stochansky. "What I like about it is it's a real hip-hop feel, but it's not a loop, it's live."

Harriet Schwartz

Chad Wackerman

Life Down Under

It's a long way from LA to Sydney, Australia, but Chad Wackerman has made the adjustment. The one-time Zappa sideman has found a home and new opportunities Down Under, "I have my own band," he says, "Sydney is much more into the concept of a band than LA is. It's hard to ask someone there like bass player Jimmy Johnson to be in a band, because he has to go on the road with James Taylor. But I've got some great players here, and they are committed to the band. We play around Sydney and at the major jazz festivals. We will be touring Europe in April, and then I hope to get the band to the States."

Chad does all the writing for the quartet, which features vibes, bass, and guitar, and they've got a new



Lissa Wales

recording that Chad hopes to get released soon. "It's hard to get a record deal in the States," the drummer laments. "They're very conservative when it comes to music without vocals. Europe and Australia are more open to this type of music. They want to hear something new."

Wackerman finds himself on the road a good part of the time, commuting to Europe and the States regularly. He recently completed a month-long European tour with guitarist Allan Holdsworth and then swung across North America on a clinic tour for Paiste and DW. He also had featured clinics at both the Montreal Drum Fest and PASIC in Anaheim, California.

Michael Bettine

News

- **Jonathan Mover** has been very busy of late, recording with Fuel (on Sony), Dr. Sin (from Brazil), guitarists Dave Atherton and Bobby Bell, and the band Wine Field. Jonathan can also be seen playing on bassist Percy Jones' instructional video.

- **Tony Harper** is on the road with Slobberbone in support of their new record, *Barrel Chested*.

- Drummer/vocalist **David Hallyday** is on the debut Mercury release by Novacaine.

- **Jon Mattox** is on a recently released live album by the Young Dubliners called *Alive, Alive 'O*. They are currently on the road.

- **Jeremy Taggart** is on tour with Our Lady Peace, promoting their recent album, *Clumsy*.

- **Roy "Rata" Mayorga** is in Max Cavalera's new group, Soulfly, who just released their self-titled debut.

- **Dan Lancelot** is on *Cup*

Runneth Over, Gloritone's debut project.

- **Al Harewood** is on David Amram's *Triple Concerto For Woodwind, Brass, Jazz Quintets And Orchestra*.

- Percussionist/vocalist **John Mahon** is currently touring the world with Elton John.

- **Tony Fagenson** is on Eve6's self-titled debut album.

- **Larry Mitchell** is on new releases by Wylie & the Wild West and Heather Myles. He is currently touring with Jann Browne.

- **Sebastian Thomson** is on Trans Am's new release, *Surveillance*.

- **Joel Weedy** is on Foam's new one, *Big Windshield Little Mirror*.

- **Nathaniel Morton** is currently on the road with Billy Myers. The tour included a recent *Tonight Show* appearance.

- **Glen Sobel** is on Gary Hoey's latest, *Hocus Focus Live*.

You can also hear him with Hoey on the soundtrack to the new Disney film *Meet The Deetles*. Glen is currently on tour with Jennifer Batten.

Jazz Shaker

Jeff Hirshfield

Club-goers drew their breaths. Two minutes remained 'til show time, and the cover was still on the nine-foot Steinway. There was no guitar amp in sight—no hint of a chordal instrument. Instead, saxophonists Dave Binney and Donny McCaslin emerged and flanked drummer Jeff Hirshfield. Bassist Scott Colley poised his upright. It could have been a night of linear madness, but sixteen bars into the fray, all fears rested. A sigh of relief—and then pleasure—became audible as Lan Xang, a young New York jazz quartet, powered into the first set. It was as harmonically complete as one could have wished, and, yes, it swung.

Jeff Hirshfield gets around the drums with assurance, but his firm but flexible approach is best exemplified by his cymbal work, full of clanging push-crashes: "I

adapt. It depends on what's happening and the size of the group. I try to play things that fit the dynamic that's happening. Sometimes when the head starts I get a sense that I need to fill it out on the ride. Other times I try to be simple and transparent. Dynamically, I'm always trying to match the situation. It really helps that Zildjian has accommodated all my cymbal experimentation."

Jeff's recording bio reads like a jazz Who's Who—names like Charlie Mariano, John Abercrombie, Tim Berne, Harold Danko, Pat Martino, Jack Wilkins, and Jerome Harris. Recently he finished a trio date with moody bandleader Paul Bley, covering the music of Ornette Coleman: "We had an amazing rapport—as if we had been playing together for years."

Jeff advises drummers to shake them-



T. Bruce Wittet

selves once in a while: "You could get more out of practicing if you challenged yourself, instead of practicing the same familiar licks at the same tempo. To turn that idea into music, practice it at all tempos, dynamics, and textures, with brushes and sticks. There's a whole lot of ways of making music; you have to learn how to listen and make what you play relevant."

T. Bruce Wittet

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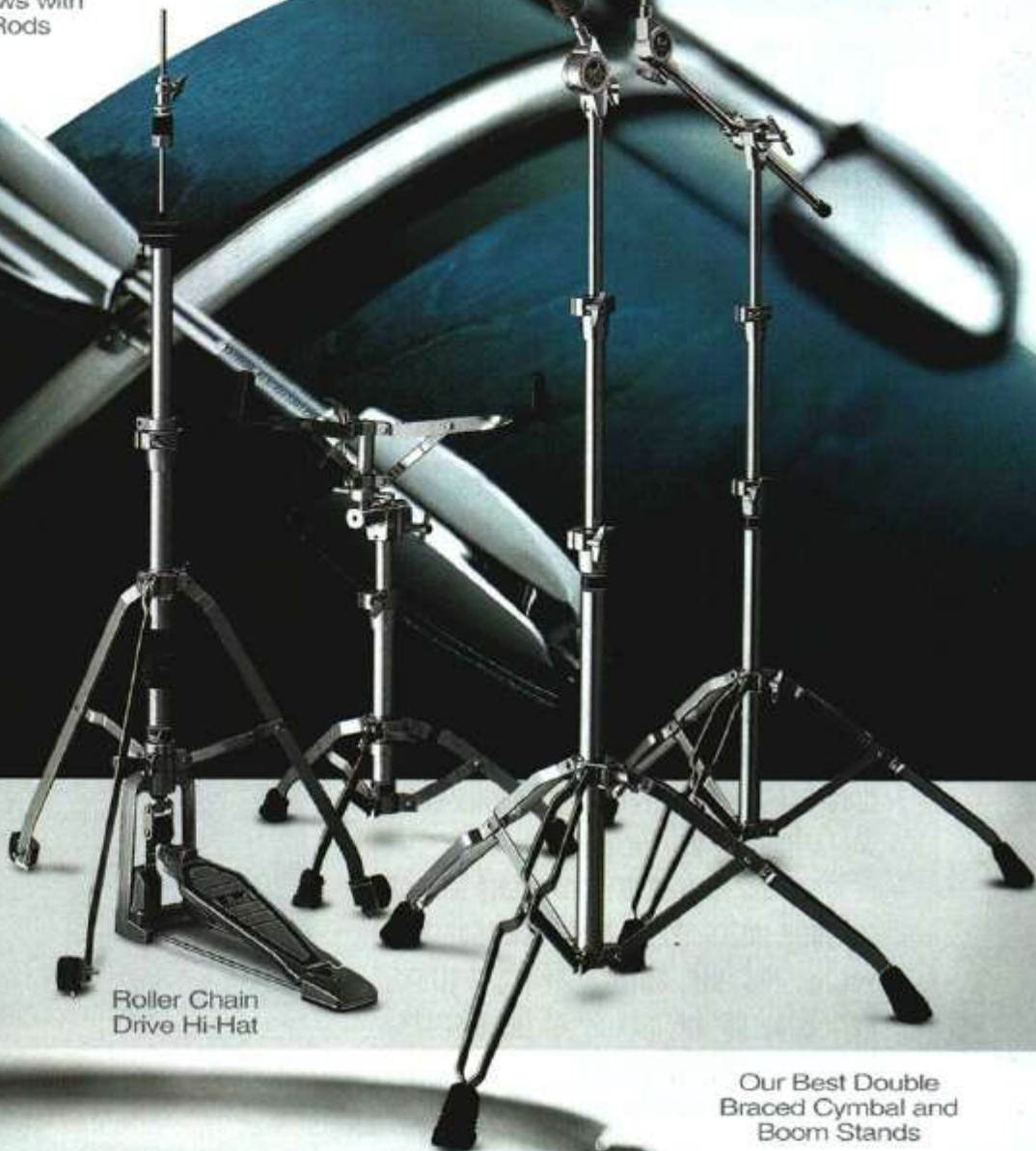


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Abe Cunningham

If heavy music were like fine wine, 1997 would go down as a sweet vintage. Let's take an inventory: Metallica Re-Loaded, Pantera kicked out live brutality, Korn and Tool headlined Lollapalooza, and the Ozzfest tour pushed up & comers like Coal Chamber, Powerman 5000, and Machine Head into the mainstream. On the down side, however, all this activity overshadowed the best thing to happen all year to hard music: *Around The Fur* from the Deftones.

Around The Fur is an amazing record built on crushing instrumental lines, schizophrenic vocals, and lush, bottom-heavy rhythms. Reflecting on the making of the disc (the band's second), drummer Abe Cunningham says he contributed as much with notes he *didn't* play as with those he did. But before you banish him to the less-is-more department, consider his upbringing: drum corps, school jazz band, and a lineage of musicians. While most touring drummers have written off home practice, Cunningham still relishes the woodshed. And at twenty-four, he's already learned that strong musicianship has nothing to do with showing off to the masses.

As the Deftones continued their international sonic assault, Cunningham broke away to talk about his love of drumming, his passion for learning, and what you can and can't hear on *Around The Fur*.



Of The Deftones



by Matt Peiken

MP: Sacramento, California has had its success stories here and there, but it's not like there are a lot of places there to play and grow as an artist. Did you guys set out to break away from Sacramento as quickly as possible, or did you have more humble goals?

AC: People think we're this new band, but we've been around almost ten years now. I went to school with our singer, Chino, and he grew up in the same neighborhood as our guitarist, Stefan. Skateboarding was kind of our common bond, but after a while we all started jamming in Stefan's garage. It was just the basic garage band thing, just friends having fun. We started playing around Sacramento, which has its ups and downs, I guess. It's true, there aren't a whole lot of places to play. But there aren't a whole lot of bands either.

We used to play cover tunes in the garage just because it was fun. But way early on we started writing our own music. You used to be able to see the same bands playing the same places, so any band that really wanted to branch out had to go to the Bay Area. So that's what we did—Berkeley Square, the Omni, the Stone. The whole Bay Area thrash metal scene was very big then. We were heavily influenced and inspired by that.

MP: Were you a metal-head, yourself?

AC: I don't know if I'd say that. I've always liked heavy music, but I have a real different background than that. My dad was a bass player and my step-dad was a drummer. My first memories of being around music are from watching my dad play at blues gigs. When I started to play at around seven or eight, I dug out my parents' music, like Beatles records and Hendrix albums—Mitch Mitchell is a big influence of mine—and I'd play along to those. My mom was into things like the Police. All of that probably influenced me as a drummer more than the metal drummers.

Around the time I started playing, my dad sort of

photos by Jen Lowery

got away from the drums, so I just sort of took over his kit. I was so fascinated with it that I'd just take it apart and put it back together again. Then in high school, I was in marching band and jazz band. I tried taking lessons for about a month, but the teacher was a real jerk, and that kind of gave me a bad taste for formal lessons. But I used to come home from school and just jam for hours. And that's still something I crave a lot: just playing on my own. I miss it when we're on the road.

MP: I've interviewed some drummers who say they hate playing on their own, that they get all the practice they need playing night after night on the road.

AC: Well, that *is* a form of practice. What you're doing is getting really good at playing those same songs, and there's a lot to be said for that.

I'm sure my playing is tighter and more fluid on our songs now than when I first recorded them, mainly because I've had more time with them and had time to experiment with other ways of doing things. But that doesn't necessarily make me a better drummer.

When you're out on the road, you really don't have time to sit down and work out some things you'd like to try. You basically have soundcheck and the show. So when I'm home and have some time, one of the things I crave most is woodshedding by



myself and trying to keep up my chops.

MP: Do you try to work out specific patterns or develop a specific part of your playing—or do you just like playing what comes to mind?

AC: It's really all of that. I go a lot on inspiration. Even if it's another drummer's licks—something I heard on a record or saw another drummer do—I might go home and pick it apart to see if I can figure it out. Maybe it's something I'm frustrated with and I just want to work on until I nail it. But now I pretty much go in and play what's on the top of my head. It's just nice sometimes to be in a room by myself and play.

MP: Are there any drum parts on *Around The Fur* that came directly from your woodshedding?

AC: You know, this really sounds cliché, because you always read interviews like this where drummers say they were just playing for the song, that they're more mature now or whatever. But that really has a lot to do with where I'm coming from now, and definitely where I was coming from with this record.

At the time we did the first record—which I really like and think is good—you can tell the band was really young. We'd been playing most of those songs for quite a while, and we were just so happy to be making a record that we didn't really think a

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A black and white photograph of Chad Smith, the drummer of the Red Hot Chili Peppers. He is wearing a black fedora and a dark jacket with white stripes on the sleeves. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. He is holding a wooden drumstick over a Sabian cymbal. In the background, other Sabian cymbals are visible, including a large crash cymbal with his signature and the words "Signature Series Explosion Crash" on it. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting his face and the metallic surfaces of the drums.

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whole lot about making the songs better. I think maturity is the biggest difference between the two records. We'd been on the road constantly for two years before we started the second record, so we were a lot more at ease in the studio. I think that allowed us to look a little deeper into what we wanted to do. What came out of that is that we simplified things.

For me, I think it was just playing with more confidence, and not feeling like I had to fill up all the empty spaces. As a drummer, I wanted the songs to come through. There's a difference between playing what's right for the song and the song dictating what's right for itself, and I think we let the songs have their way a lot more this time. The difference has really started to come out now that we're on the road, because I'm already playing some things differently than I did on the record. Not that it's better or worse—it's just different now that I've lived with the songs for a while.

MP: What were some of the main challenges in simplifying your playing in the studio? Did you consciously hold yourself back from embellishing certain parts, or was it very natural for you to lay low?

AC: Any drummer would just love to open up when he can, so it was a conscious thing to pull back. But it's just something that needed to happen. And it's not that difficult when you're thinking of the song first and foremost.

With the kind of music we play, the guitars are really heavy and powerful, so it didn't make a lot of sense for me to try to compete with that. It also doesn't leave room for me to put in all the ghost notes and grace notes I usually like to play. I did a lot

"When I'm home and have some time, one of the things I crave most is woodshedding by myself and trying to keep up my chops."

more ghosting on the first record. But you can't hear them, anyway, so I really just had to play solid and heavy. I wanted the notes I *do* play to matter and to help create a feel.

MP: You can definitely hear the difference in production between your first and second records. The drum sound and the whole band now sounds a lot more thick and lush.

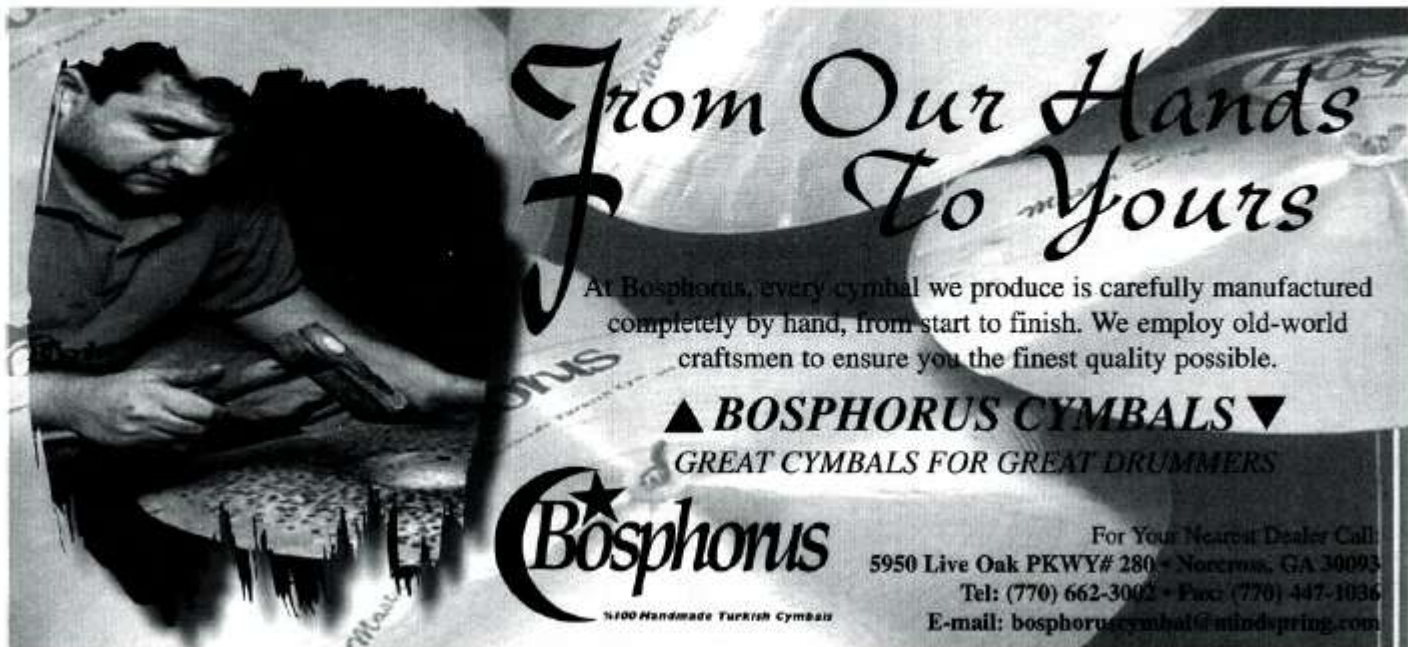
AC: Yeah, we spent a lot more time thinking about those things and talking with producer Terry Date about different things we wanted to hear. Terry has just so much experience to offer us, too.

When he did our first record, he had just come from doing a White Zombie album for the previous six months, and he was a bit burned out. This time, he took almost a year off before he went to work with us. It was so nice because everyone was ready to do it, and Terry knew exactly what would be right for what we wanted. He really put it all together for us.

MP: Did you use a lot of different drums to get the sounds you wanted, or was it more a combination of mic's and the room?

AC: We used the same kit throughout the whole record, but I swapped different snares around for practically every song. I think I've sort of refined what I want in a snare sound now. I've always liked getting a nice crack, but the older I'm getting, the more I'm getting into that fatter sound. Sometimes I like really loose snares. I'm always adjusting my snare tension, just to try to blend that crack with the fat sound.

I used to like piccolo snares a lot, but now I mainly use a 6x14 snare that's 20-ply maple with die-cast rims and four 1" holes




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Right: photo by NYC - Member

drilled into the shell. It's become my main snare now because it's sort of the best of both worlds for me. But I'm really happy with my whole kit. My drums come from Orange County Drums & Percussion. They're really well made, and they've got great tone.

We did a cool experiment with one song that didn't make it on the album. We set two kits up, one of them upstairs in the balcony of the studio and one down below. I played the main track on the kit downstairs, then went upstairs and played that kit, but still recording it with the room mic's from downstairs. I used two 19" crashes for a hi-hat. It was just a really bizarre experiment, but it was toward the end of our time in the studio and we didn't have a lot of time to play with it. It came out okay, though, and the song might make it onto a B-side or something.

MP: Did you play to a click? I'm asking because your timing seems really tight.

AC: No, I don't use a click. I *can*; I don't have a problem with it. We tried once, I think, but we really didn't need it. I don't know if good timing comes naturally to me or not, but I think I trained myself for that without even realizing it. It starts by playing to records with these bad-ass studio drummers on them, like Steely Dan records with guys like Jeff Porcaro. I don't know if they used clicks or not, but their timing is right on, and I guess playing along to them sort of taught me to be a stronger time-keeper.

MP: Like training wheels on a bicycle.

AC: Totally. After you ride with training wheels, you take 'em off and you can ride on your own.

MP: Do you read music at all?

AC: A little, yeah. I used to be more into it during high school, with marching band and reading jazz charts. I have to admit I've pretty much slacked on that, but I'd love to get back into it. I really want to, because it would be great to be able to work on some drum books when I'm woodshedding at home. I think getting more into reading would really open up a lot of worlds for me.

MP: You played in a few different musical settings before the Deftones. Did you particularly want to play in a heavy band, or were you just happy to be in *any* band?

AC: At the time, it was cool to go out and play our instruments hard, but I was mainly

happy to be playing with my friends. There was about a year and a half where I left the Deftones to play in another local band, Fallacy. They were like *the* really big band in Sacramento. And they were a lot older than me—I was maybe only sixteen at the time—so it was really cool.

But I was still really good friends with the guys in the Deftones. They tried all these different drummers, and every time someone wouldn't work out, I'd always go back and play with them. And we'd just have so much fun together. It was something we'd all created together, and it was always a blast going back. They finally said, "Hey, we're great together, you have to come back." So I did, and it's been that way ever since. Our focus back then was on the energy and having a good time. That's what it is even now. And we're collectively into many different styles of music—we really don't even listen to much heavy music—so who knows what our next record will be like.

MP: Did you ever play double bass?

AC: I tried to, but I just can't do it. I use a double bass pedal, but it's more for emphasis—like a flam or a ruff—not to hammer out 16th notes. I used to have a big double bass kit, but I used to hate lugging it around, and it became sort of silly. So I got the double pedal, which has actually been part of my setup for a long time now. In a way, I almost regret it, because I grew up playing on a single pedal and I used to have a really fast foot. Now I rely a lot more on the double pedal. I just always know it's there, so it's a peace-of-mind thing.

MP: What are some things you'd like to do musically that have nothing to do with the Deftones?

AC: I haven't really thought that far ahead. I'd love to jam with different people. I play a little guitar, too, and I'd like to explore that some more. But more than anything, I'd love to take drum lessons from somebody. Not out of a music store like I tried last time, but maybe from a friend who's a bad-ass player—like a tutor-and-mentor situation—who I could just sit down with sometimes and pick things up from. No matter what, I never want to stop learning.



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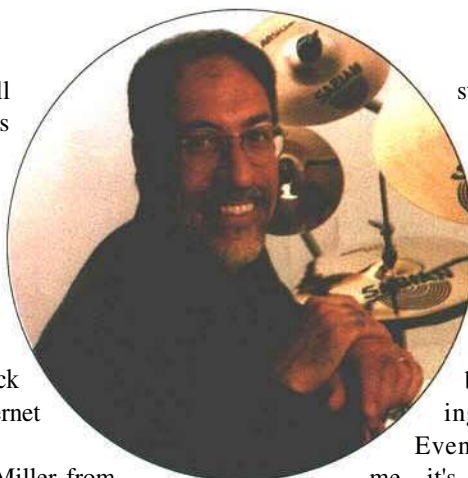
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Dom Famularo

Q I saw you during a jazz clinic at Marshall University in West Virginia a few years ago. I was totally blown away by your jazzy grooves and your eloquent cymbal gliss (which I now use, thanks). Since then I've been interested in becoming a studio drummer and/or a clinician. What can I do to get my foot in the door, and what type of exercises do you suggest I do to prepare myself?

Ian Helmick
via Internet



studio sessions—are recommended by other players, who help you get that first "break."

In terms of being a clinician, I began my career as an educator in the schools on Long Island. I constantly worked on improving four levels of my talent: my playing itself, my educational knowledge, my communication abilities, and my business skills. I'm still working on improving my effectiveness in these areas.

Eventually the percussion industry heard of me—it's a small business, really—and now I travel around the globe for Sabian, Vic Firth, and Premier.

A Thanks for your interest and praise. Ben Miller from Marshall University invited me to perform with their Jazz Ensemble, and the band was *inspiring* to work with. (Enjoy the cymbal gliss, by the way!)

To be a studio drummer, learn from the legends: Steve Gadd, David Garibaldi, Jim Keltner, Jeff Porcaro, Bernard Purdie, and so on. Listen to their unique originality, then take chances yourself. Here are some other tips:

1. Versatility: Learn all styles authentically, including jazz, rock, Latin, funk, fusion, R&B, and classical.
2. Read: Time is money, and "first takes" are often needed. Keep your reading level high.
3. Interpretation: It's more than just the notes; it's putting *expression* into them.
4. Feeling/Technique: You need good technique in order to have a large vocabulary with which to create—without barriers—what you hear in your head.

To "get your foot in the door" as a studio player, go to clubs, meet other musicians, and sit in with bands. Most gigs—including

What to work on to prepare yourself? I work on everything: independence, grooving, soloing, and keeping good time. You're lucky: You have *much* more material to learn from than was available when I was young. To help improve your foot-pedal control, play the exercises in Stone's *Stick Control* with your feet. (Just think of them as extensions of your hands.) Other material I recommend includes Colin Bailey's *Bass Drum Control*, Gary Chester's *The New Breed*, Jim Chapin's *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer (Volume 1)*, and any of Al Miller's and Charlie Perry's books. There are also many videos to choose from, along with all of the educational material in each issue of *Modern Drummer*.

Finally, take lessons from the best teachers available, and of course, practice, practice, *practice*. I hope my answers help you on your journey to drumming fun and self-expression, combining art and business!

Aaron Comess

Q You're an amazing drummer. "Two Princes" has such a cool beat, and it makes me wonder what exercises you do to achieve those Jeff Porcaro-style shuffle-feel rock beats. I also commend you on your drum sound—especially the snare. Most snares are too tight or have too much white noise, but yours has a sweet tone to it. What brand and size is it, and what heads do you use on it? Thanks for some of the most inspirational drumming in rock!

A.T. Berman
via Internet



A To answer your first question, I get my "shuffle-feel rock beats" using a technique called "ghost strokes," which Bernard Purdie and Jeff Porcaro wrote the book on.

Ghost strokes are notes played in between the backbeats, and that are more felt than actually heard. One of my drum teachers, Henry Okstel, pointed out to me that I was doing this naturally during my early lessons. At that time it was really sort of a bad habit—being lazy with my left hand. But it turned out to be a real asset when it came to creating interesting beats.

To work on this technique, softly play notes in between the backbeats of a given rhythm that you're playing. You should experiment with different combinations of rhythms with your left hand. Remember to use this to create more of an "undercurrent" effect, rather than playing these notes so literally.

To answer your second question, I primarily use Brady snares, in a variety of sizes. I fit them with Remo coated *Ambassadors*, which I crank up fairly tightly.

Thanks very much for writing, and for all your kind words.



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high-volume, high-power playing. However, due to UFIP's unique hammering, lathing and buffing processes, in addition to their increased projection and clarity every Bionic also has an incredible tonal warmth and personality.

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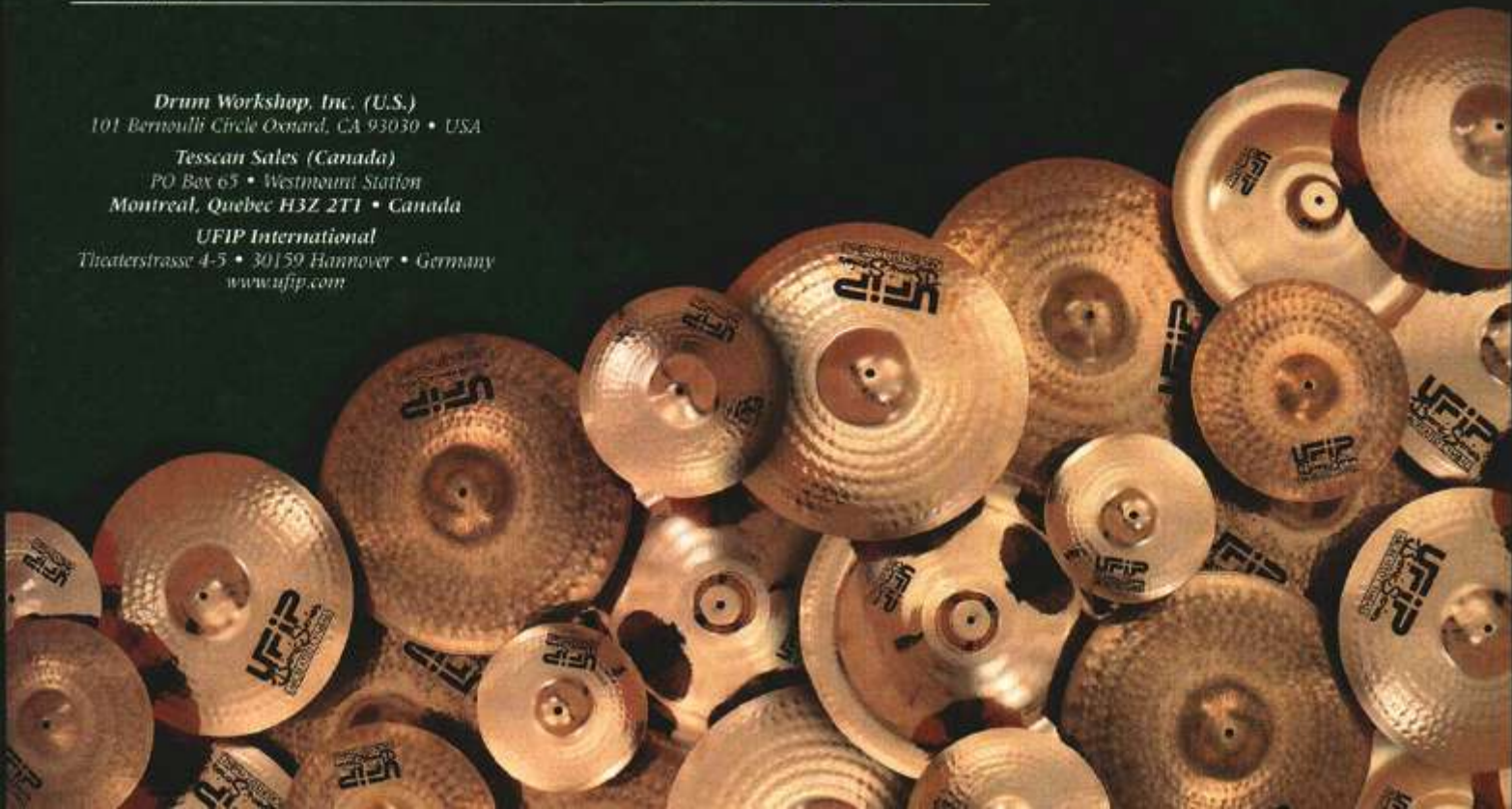
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	10"	11"	12"	13"	14"	16"	17"	18"	19"	20"	21"	22"
Splash	•	•	•									
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Pondering About Paistes

Q I recently bought a Paiste *Colorsound* 5 16" crash for \$20. Looks new, sounds great...not bad for what I paid for it. But unattractive! Is there anything I can use to remove the red color without damaging the cymbal in the process? Also, how much did this cymbal cost when it first came out?

Craig Flowers
Weirton, WV

Q Alex Van Halen now uses Paiste 2002 20", 19", and 16" crashes, where he used to use *Paiste* ("Signature") series *Full* (medium) and *Power* (heavy) 20" crashes. What is the difference between the two types of cymbals? Are they manufactured differently, or different in their pitch...sustain...weight? Any clarification would be appreciated.

Michael Grillo
Somerset, MA

A Paiste's Rich Mangicaro responds: "Craig, the *Colorsound* coating that we apply to our cymbals is designed not to come off and to withstand years of all types of usage. Unfortunately, there is no way to remove the coating without permanently damaging the cymbal's sound. By the way, the retail price for that cymbal when it was on the market was \$138, so you did get a deal.

"Michael, the cymbals that Alex uses are actually a combination of the *Paiste* ("Signature") and the 2002 lines. These lines are made from two different alloys. The 2002 is made from the CuSn8 bronze alloy (known as B8), while the *Paiste* line is made from the Paiste Sound Alloy, which we designed ourselves specifically for cymbal sounds.

"The main difference is how these alloys resonate. Without getting too technical, the *Paiste* line can be very rich, sensitive, colorful, and expressive. This line has a very wide range of possibilities for many types of music. Alex decided to make the change in the crash department because of the projection and power of the 2002 alloy. That alloy's sound is bright, powerful, and explosive...very good for loud, aggressive playing situations. (And we all know Alex's need

for that type of instrument!) Also, it's wise to note that one of Alex's main drumming influences was the great John Bonham, and John used the 2002 line."

Black Tama Superstars

Q Did Tama ever manufacture its *Superstar* series in jet black finish? Roger Taylor (Duran Duran) played a black, single-headed *Superstar* kit in 1981/82, but I can't find any reference to such a kit in any Tama catalogs of that period. Only natural finishes are listed.

I'd like to know what years black *Superstars* were made, the composition of the shells, and if the exact same specification of drum later became the *Imperialstar* range. Any other information would also be appreciated.

Fraser Bird
Dronefield, Sheffield, England

A Tama's product specialist, Paul Specht, replies: "*Superstar* drums were available in piano black—at least here in the States. And you're right, the catalogs of the time only show the natural mahogany, maple, and cherry wine finishes. *Superstars* became available in solid candy apple, piano white, and piano black finishes (along with the natural finishes) in 1985. As a matter of fact, quite a number of piano black *Superstars* were sold here in the US. (Black was easily the most popular drum color of the '80s.) The candy apple finish did well also, having been made famous by the mammoth *Superstar* kit that Neil Peart used until about 1986.

"Actually, *Imperialstars* predated *Superstars* (1974 versus 1977), and they were very different drums, shell-wise. (They did share the same hardware.) *Superstars* were 6-ply birch drums, while *Imperialstars* were covered-finish drums made of nine plies of straight-grained select hardwoods, finished on the inner ply with *Zola Cote*, a protective moisture barrier.

"*Superstar* drums were replaced in 1987 with the *Granstar* series, which also featured birch shells."

Parts From Pearl

Q Are the Pearl professional-level *DX* series drums still available? If so, where can I find them?

Steven Lamb
via Internet

Q I recently came across a box of Pearl bass drum lugs and a 28" shell. I'm guessing that the lugs are from the late 1980s. They utilize a hinged, "flip-top" design to flip away from the shell without actually being removed from it. I'm also guessing that they used some sort of horizontal fitting for the tension rod to screw into within the lug. So far I have not been able to find any information on this system. I'd like to somehow locate these inserts and the rods so I could put this bass drum together. Can you help?

Steve Davidson
via Internet

A Steven: According to Pearl's product specialist, Gene Okamoto, the professional-level *DX* series was discontinued in 1987. It was replaced by the *World* series, which itself became the *Session* series a year or two thereafter. There is a current *DX* series, but it is an entirely different kit that falls considerably lower in Pearl's hierarchy. The only source of the original *DX* drums would be private individuals, and your best method of reaching them would be a "wanted" ad in MD's *Drum Market* classifieds.

Steve: The lugs you refer to were called *Super Gripper* lugs, and they did indeed appear on Pearl drums in the late '80s. As you guessed, a cylindrical insert fitted into a notch within the hinged lug and received the tension rod. A couple twists of the tension rod loosened things up to where the lug could hinge open and the entire assembly of drum rim, tension rods, and receiver inserts could be lifted off the drum together (for quick drumhead changes). Once the new head was on, everything could be snapped back into position, and the tension rods could be turned again to secure it all and to tune the new head.

The convenience factor apparently did not outweigh the added cost of tooling and

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the mechanical complication of the system, because the *Super Gripper* lugs did not catch on with the public and were discontinued by Pearl within a fairly short time. Another problem with the system was how easy it seemed to be to lose the very inserts that you're looking for. (In fact, one of MD's editors owned a Pearl kit with *Super Gripper* lugs for years with two of the bass drum lugs missing their inserts.) Owing to that fact, it may be extremely difficult to locate replacement inserts and tension rods for your bass drum. You may wish to consider converting to more traditional lugs and rods.

Equivalent Cymbals

QI am in search of a new ride cymbal, and I'm curious to know if there is a Zildjian equivalent to the Paiste 22" *Paiste* ("Signature") *Dry Heavy* ride or 2002 *Rude Power* ride.

Rob M.
Bedford, TX

A"Equivalents" between various brand lines would be difficult to find under any circumstances, because it is the *differences* between them that helps to make them competitive in the marketplace—by virtue of appealing to different drummers' preferences. However, since we figured that the folks at Zildjian would best know which of their models might *approximate* the sounds of other cymbals, we put your inquiry to product specialist John King. Here is his response.

"First of all, let me say that we at Zildjian employ very different manufacturing techniques and philosophies from our friends in Switzerland. We believe that the Zildjian alloy used in all our 'cast' instruments intrinsically creates a more natural and organic sound, with a broader spectrum of overtones. Thus we feel that Zildjian ride cymbals will be different from the Paiste counterparts, by virtue of having more body and dynamic expression. They will simply feel different under the stick, due to the unique properties of the Zildjian alloy.

"As you can tell, we might be a little

biased. In the final analysis, we want you and your ears to be the ultimate judge. To that end, here's my best answer to your specific equivalency questions. The *Paiste* line 22" *Dry Heavy* ride is a cymbal that possesses good stick definition and projection quality with a minimum of midrange overtones, so that it will decay quickly. The 2002 *Rude Power* ride is now only available in a 20" size, but also contains the ability to cut through loud music with its heavy weight and large bell. It would also be considered a 'dry' cymbal.

"Zildjian equivalents could be any of the following models: The *Z Custom* ride or *Z Custom Power* ride each have excellent projection potential—due to their heavy weight and high bow—while having a unique hammering design that helps to contain the mid to high-end overtones. Keep in mind that a heavier ride cymbal will produce overtones that would be considered 'tight' in comparison to a lighter version, which would have more of a 'spread' or 'wash' of overtones. The *A Zildjian Earth* ride in either regular or *Brilliant* finish is another heavy cymbal that will cut through high volume situations. It also has more of an 'open' quality than that found in the *Z Custom* models.


"Another consideration might be the *K Heavy* ride, which has a 'darker' blend of overtones and is also available in regular or *Brilliant* finish. While this model might not be considered 'dry,' heavier cymbals with lower profiles (such as the *KS*) tend to decay faster than do cymbals with a higher bow. Finally, the 20" *Edge Solid Rock* ride has a weight, shape, and alloy very similar to that of the *Paiste 2002 Rude* cymbal, and would contain much of the same high-end stick attack found in that particular ride cymbal. Except for the *Edge* ride, all of the Zildjian cymbals mentioned above are available both in 20" and 22" sizes.

"I hope that this information will help you in your search for the 'perfect' ride cymbal."



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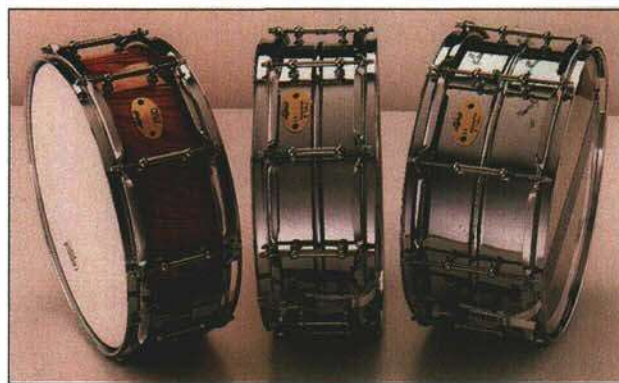
Brand New And Classic At The Same Time

Ludwig Rocker Elite Series Drums And Tube-Lug Snare Models

Ludwig has revamped their affordable *Rocker* drumkit series with a bevy of professional-level features, creating the totally new *Rocker Elite* series. List-priced between \$1,325 and \$1,425, the drums feature natural-finished 6-ply shells (with maple plies inside and out) in color choices of black, crimson red, amber, emerald green, and azure blue.

A newly designed L-arm and omni-ball double tom mount highlights the *Elite* holder system, while toms and floor toms include clamp-style mounting brackets with secure memory locks. Low-mass mini-lugs designed in the Ludwig tradition are included in order to provide superior shell resonance. Oilier hardware features include new *Elite* bass drum spurs, 10.5 mm floor tom legs, and key rolls replacing T-rods on the bass drum. Various outfit configurations are available with either 700 series double-braced stands or 600 series single-braced stands. Component drums are also available as add-ons.

For those who like a "classic" look on their instruments, Ludwig now offers brass tube lug options on most of their snare drum models. The lugs are now available on *Brass*, *Bronze*, *Black Beauty*, *Metal*, *Satinwood*, and *Classic Maple* drums, tube lugs have less contact with the shell than traditional lugs, which Ludwig believes promotes a more resonant shell. Additionally, the finely machined threads of the lugs are said to provide more precise tuning. Ludwig drums feature ten lugs per shell.



A Plethora Of Paistes

New 502 And 802 Models, Crotales, And Hand Cymbals

Well-known as a manufacturer of esoteric and high-end cymbals, Paiste has also been hard at work expanding their lines of affordable cymbals for beginning and intermediate players. With that in mind, they've added an 18" thin crash, a 14" crash, and a 20" heavy ride to their 802 series (introduced just last year), and a 12"

splash, a 16" China, a 14" crash, and a 16" *Power* crash to their 502 series. These additional models provide new musical options to help inspire younger players.

In a step "to provide percussionists with the ultimate in sound," Paiste has added the notes C6 through E6 to their set of crotales. A full 2½ octaves are now available, from C6 through F8. Each crotale is electronically tuned in relation to A=442Hz (or any custom frequency for special orders).

And not to forget the marching drummers of the world, Paiste now offers *Alpha Marching* cymbals, as well as *Band* models in the 502, 402, and 302 entry-level lines. The *Alpha* cymbals (available in 14", 15", and 16" sizes) were developed in response to requests from European marching bands desiring cymbals with higher pitches and more volume and projection. *Alpha* cymbals are made of the same CuSn8 bronze used for the 2002 professional line.

Band models in the 502 series include 14", 16", and 18" sizes; 12", 14", and 16" models are available in the 402 series; and 14" and 16" sizes are offered in the 302 series.



The Wood Stock Generation

Wood Stock Custom Drums



This snare drum features alternating staves of cherry and hickory, along with a "suspended" snare throw-off.

From the wilds of Minnesota come Wood Stock drums, hand-crafted of solid wood in the stave-construction style by drum-maker J.J. Tuttrup. Shells are ½" thick, and are available in five woods: hickory, cherry, maple, black walnut, and butternut (and combinations thereof). The shells are combined with the company's patent-pending free-floating hardware system for maximum resonance. According to Tuttrup, his drums provide a "rich, resonant, earthy tone, deeper and darker than that created by either metal or plywood shells."

Drums can be created in any standard diameter from 6" to 40", in unlimited depths. They are finished with a clear alkyd-amino high-solid-type synthetic top coat for "excellent water and mar resistance and color retention, and to provide a highly durable polished gloss finish."



This 14x18 maple bass drum features Wood Stock's unique free-floating leg system.

Yamaha Goes Legit

Hand-Hammered Copper Timpani, 3½-Octave Vibe, Multi-Application Keyboards, And Accessories

Drumkits are only part of Yamaha's percussion focus; they're into "legit" percussion in a big way. New developments in that area include timpani featuring copper bowls hand-hammered by craftsmen, "so that the 'soul' of each instrument is unique." A heavy zinc rim is used to enhance the fundamental projection, tuning, and tone clarity. These timpani are offered on a special-order basis in 20", 23", 26", 29", and 32" sizes.

Yamaha's new 3½-octave vibraphone uses an additional low C to E set of bars, allowing low tones and voicings not available on a 3-octave instrument. Other features include gold bars and resonators, a variable-speed motor with silent on/off, folding rails, resonators, and crossbar, height adjustment, 4" casters, and a large swivel pedal.

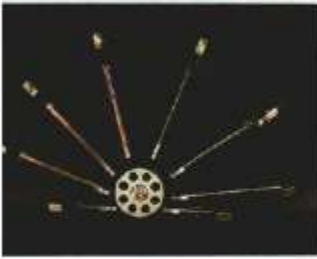
This model is available on a special-order basis with gloss or matte finish gold bars, at a suggested retail price of \$7,500.

Changes to Yamaha's *Multi-Application Keyboard* line include a reduction in weight on the table-top xylophone (*MXL-32AF*), which is now 5 lbs. lighter and 15% more compact than the previous model. It also features a new resonator design, and is applicable for marching use, pit percussion, or the concert hall. List price is \$1,290.

New percussion accessories include *David Gross Signature* timpani mallets, and black, water-resistant marching drum covers for snares, quad/quint sets, and bass drums.



Do Sliding Drums Bug You? The Killam Spider



If you play hard enough to literally pound your drums away from you, you just might benefit from Canadian drummer/inventor Luke Killam's *Spider*. It's a mechanical device that allows you to anchor your bass drum, hi-hat,

and other parts of the kit to your drum stool, effectively turning the kit into one connected assembly. The eight flexible arms of the *Spider* can each extend from 12" to 24", and each arm has a clamping mechanism at its end to connect to the various components of the kit. Owing to the retractability of the arms, the unit is compact and portable. It weighs only 4 lbs., and comes with a one-year warranty. It retails for \$170 (Canadian) plus shipping and handling.



Take Your Kit To The Mat Appolo Drumat

Designed for the working drummer, the *Drumat* provides several advantages over carpet remnants typically used by drummers to hold their kits in place while playing. It weighs only 4 lbs. and rolls compactly to a 2'-long by 6"-diameter bundle, making it easily portable. A permanent securing and shoulder strap frees up the drummer's hands to carry other gear.

Unrolled, the *Drumat* opens to a 4'x6' area, which can easily accommodate a variety of drumsets. The contoured shape outlines the footprint of the drumset and is designed to allow the use of the *Drumat* in corners without riding up adjacent walls. Additionally, the *Drumat's* two-piece, hinged design permits quick and wrinkle-free rolling every time.

Latin percussionists—who are increasingly using bass drums and kick bells—will also find the *Drumat* useful. And parents of practicing students will appreciate the protection it affords to their carpets (from grease stains left behind by bass-drum and hi-hat pedals).



And What's More



PREMIER has introduced a new cost-effective, single-braced 2000 series line of hardware. The line includes snare, hi-hat, and both straight and boom cymbal stands, along with a bass drum pedal.

EVANS now offers three new coated models in their EQ line of bass drum heads. EQ3 coated batter, and EQ1 and EQ3 coated resonant (front) heads are all available in 18", 20", and 22" sizes. The heads are said to provide "a more focused attack and more

punch than regular EQ heads." Also new from Evans is a *Genera* Concert snare drum head: a thin, single-ply head designed for symphonic playing requiring a wide dynamic range.

The latest edition of **SABIAN'S NewsBeat** catalog is now available. With Dream Theater's Mike Portnoy on the cover, the catalog includes cymbal-related information, selection tips, Web site updates, performance examples, artist setups, and more.



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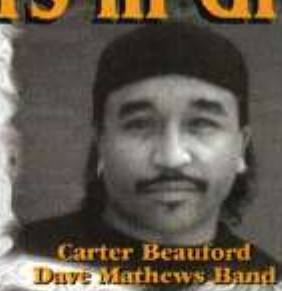
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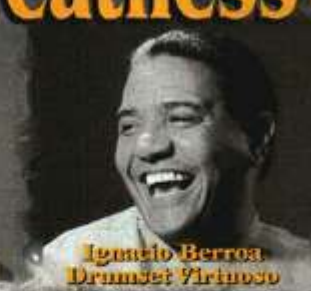
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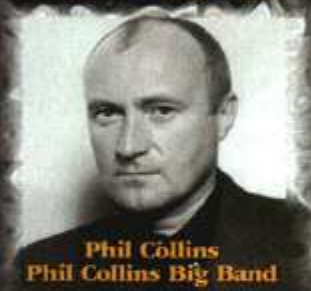
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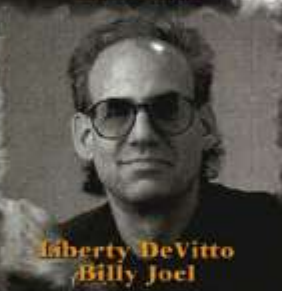
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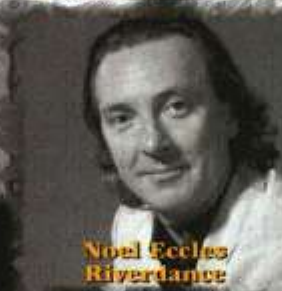
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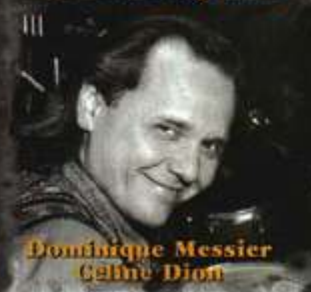
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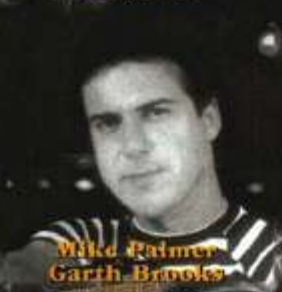
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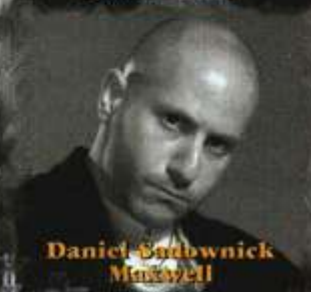
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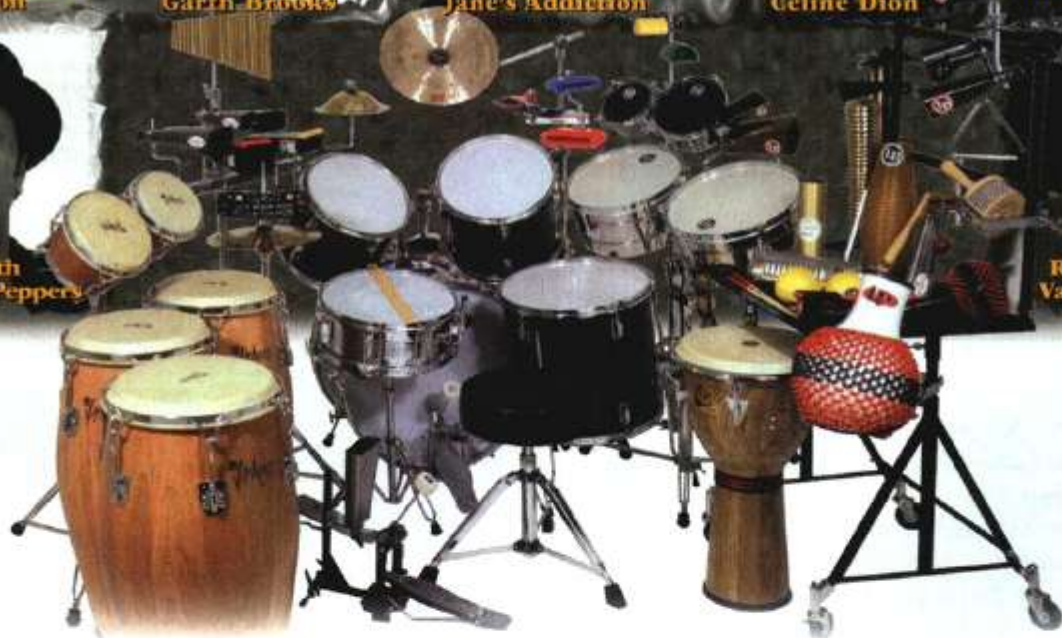
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17/957

New Tools From Vater

by William F. Miller

The "good wood" manufacturer is branching out with stick innovations, new brushes, and specialty models—and keeping their high standards intact.

Anyone who has picked up a pair of Vater sticks knows about the high level of quality and craftsmanship the manufacturer maintains. You have to roll a bunch of their sticks to find one that isn't true. It will take you even longer to find one that has an imperfection in either the wood or the finish. And believe me, as a drumshop addict, I've checked a *lot* of their sticks—and other brands'—over the years!

Over the course of the company's history, Vater has spent most of its time producing a reasonable number of models, presumably choosing to keep their focus on quality. They've also avoided the strong industry drive towards artist "signature" models, even though the company can boast of a deep and talented endorser roster. It seems Vater wanted to establish a solid reputation first before offering a slew of different models.

A couple of years ago, with their reputation firmly placed, Vater decided to investigate a few stick innovations—some simple, some more advanced. They've also moved beyond their wood roots and introduced a line of brushes. Let's take a look at what they've come up with.

Sweet Sounds

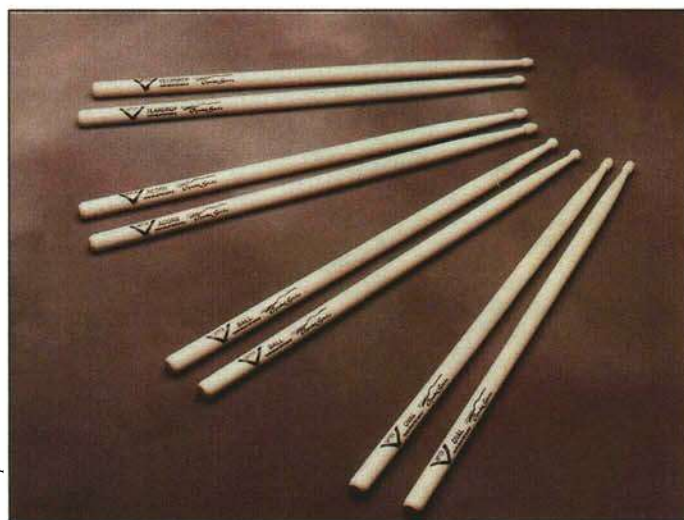
Most drummers, especially jazzers, like to travel light, preferring to bring only the equipment that is absolutely necessary to make the gig. Normally that means using one ride cymbal—two tops. One way of varying the sound of a cymbal is to use different stick types. Of course, the hassle with that is the lack of a consistent feel from stick to stick. Wouldn't it be nice to have a selection of a few sticks that had the same feel and weight distribution, but each with a unique tip shape to draw different sounds out of a cymbal? That's the idea behind Vater's *Cymbal Sticks* line.

The four models in the line—*Acorn*, *Oval*, *Teardrop*, and *Ball*—are made of hard rock sugar maple and are roughly the size of a normal 5A. The balance and feel of these models are surprisingly similar. Also, since they're made of maple, the sticks are lighter than a regular hickory type. It gives the stick a very quick response off of the cymbal. Also, the impact sound of these maple sticks on a ride cymbal is sweet, which isn't the case with most maple sticks I've played. One other point about all of the *Cymbal Sticks*: The Vater

finish, which is a very thin coating to begin with, feels particularly light on these models. It all boils down to a very well-balanced and natural-feeling stick.

To measure how these sticks' tip shapes affect the sound of a ride cymbal, I tested them using three cymbals: a very dark-sounding 20" *K Zildjian* flat ride, one of Sabian's new 22" *Hand Hammered Manhattan* rides (with a more open, traditional sound), and a 20" *Paiste Sound Formula* ride, which had an open, ringy quality to it. What I found was that the *Cymbal Sticks* had a similar effect on each cymbal. However, the washier the cymbal—in this case the *Paiste*—the less noticeable the effect.

Exactly what was the effect? The *Acorn* model has the largest tip of the four, and it produced the brightest and fullest sound from the cymbals. The *Oval*, with its long, narrow bead, brought out more of



Cymbal Sticks (from top): *Teardrop*, *Acorn*, *Ball*, and *Oval* models

the midrange of the cymbals—a big sound, but a bit more controlled than the *Acorn*. What was also nice about the *Oval* was that, by changing the angle of attack—playing with more of the top edge of the tip on the cymbal—you could really "tighten up" the sound. The *Teardrop* model had a smaller acorn shape, and it brought out the warmer tones of the cymbal. This stick made all three of the test rides sound placid and beautiful. Finally, the *Ball* model, which featured a small round tip, accentuated the low frequencies and brought out the tip-on-cymbal impact sound—very delicate.

How to apply these sticks? At first I was thinking I'd want to keep a pair of both the *Acorn* and *Ball* models in my bag, which would give me the "sonic extremes." But then I realized that the *Teardrop* pulled the prettiest sound from the cymbals, and that the

Oval was the most flexible in terms of the number of sounds you can get with it. What to do? Put all four in the bag! One thing's for sure, I'd highly recommend experimenting with these before buying a new ride cymbal! They'll make your old ride sound sweet. The list price for a pair of any model *Cymbal Sticks* is \$10.35.

Power Behind The Throne

On the other end of the spectrum, Vater has beefed-up their hickory sticks by adding "power" sizes to their traditional *5A* and *5B* models. These *Power 5As* and *5Bs* are a half inch longer than normal, and they feature a thicker shoulder area. Both models have the same size oval wood tip, which gets a lot of sound out of drums and cymbals. (The nylon-tip versions have an even bigger tip, producing a big sound from drums and a bright attack from cymbals.)

The *Power 5A*, with its increased length (16½"), certainly allows you to reach anything positioned around your kit. The increased shoulder area gives the stick a bit of a "forward feel," which does feel good when you're digging into the toms. If you're used to the diameter of a *5A* but are looking for something a bit stronger and that will give you more reach, this would be a good choice. The stick does seem long to me considering its diameter, but the balance isn't bad.

The *Power 5B*, while being the same length as the *Power 5A*, has a larger diameter, which makes the stick feel more balanced in the hand. It has very similar characteristics to the *Power 5A*: It produces



Big wood (from top): *Power House*, *Shedder*, *Power 5A* (wood and nylon), and *Power 5B* (wood and nylon) models

a big sound both on drums and cymbals, gives you better reach, and will hold up under heavy playing conditions. The *Power 5A* and the *Power 5B* each list for \$10.35 a pair.

Australian drumming phenom Virgil Donati's sticks of choice are two recent additions to the Vater line, the *Power House* and the *Shedder*. These hickory sticks are obviously designed to supply a drummer with all of the power necessary to cover loud gigs. However, in the case of the *Power House*, you also have one of the most nicely balanced sticks you're likely to play. Yes, it's 16¼" long with a 5/8" diameter, which might normally mean a clunky, unwieldy stick. Not here. The *Power House* gives a quick response. Plus, you can get a lot of sound out of the drums with it. And the

WHAT'S HOT

- *Cymbal Sticks* allow drummers to change their cymbal sounds without changing their cymbals
- *Power* models are strong, yet still feature good balance
- several brush models offer many sound and feel options

WHAT'S NOT

- prototype retractable brush came apart
- *Poly Brush* had a rattle in the handle

Power House's acorn tip actually sounds quite musical on a ride cymbal. It's a sturdy stick, to be sure, but it's not your average "bashing" stick.

Now *here's* the basher: Vater's *Shedder* model is a heavy-feeling monster with loads of forward weight. You've got a lot of wood in your hands with this one. The tip is sizable as well. I can't imagine using this stick on a kit unless you're playing *really* heavy music and using thick heads. (Don't play these anywhere near a single-ply head!) As its name implies, the *Shedder* would make a good practice pad workout stick. (Apparently Virgil uses it to warm up with.) If you can get a pair of *Shedders* moving, you've got some strong hands! Both the *Power House* and the *Shedder* list for \$10.35 a pair.

One quick note about all of the sticks Vater sent for review: They



New brushes (from left): *Wood Brush*, *Standard*, *Stick Brush*, and *Retractable* models

were absolutely pristine in condition, without so much as a blemish on the wood or a rough spot on the finish. Regarding the finish, it's very thin and gives you a sense of the wood underneath. In addition, the light wood color of the sticks was the same from stick to stick, no matter what model. And, of course, they were perfectly straight. When it comes to sticks, Vater knows what they're doing.

Down To The Wire

Vater recently introduced a line of brushes called *Wire Tap*, which features four models: *Standard*, *Retractable*, *Wood Brush*, and *Stick Brush*. *Tonight Show* drummer Marvin "Smitty" Smith, who is known for his mastery of styles as well as his brush tech-

nique, worked closely with Vater in designing this new line. You can tell that a player was involved, because these brushes have several drummer-friendly features.

The first thing you'll notice upon picking up either the *Standard* or *Retractable* models is the feel of the grip area—it's a soft rubber surface, making them very comfortable to play. Also adding to the

pulled it shut. Speaking with Alan Vater, he informed me that these brushes are so new that I had one of their earliest prototypes. They have since beefed up the way the brush is assembled, stating this will not be a problem. I would recommend trying a pair before you buy, tugging firmly on the rod to make sure it doesn't pull through.

The other two models in the new brush line—the *Wood Brush* and



Jim Esposito

Specialty sticks (from left): *Poly Brush*, *AcouStick*, *AcouStick Solid*, and *Whip* models

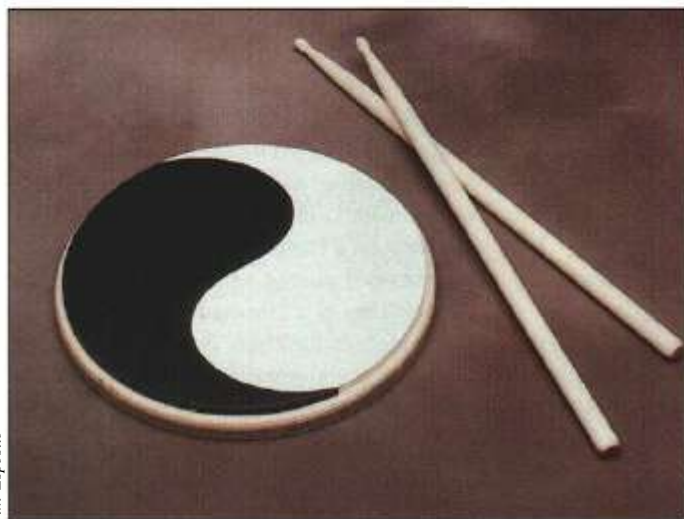
excellent feel of these two models is the weight: While Vater's literature describes them as being lightweight, I actually felt that they're just slightly heavier than most brushes I've played, as well as having shafts that aren't too long. The wires, or bristles, of the brush are very thin, too. All of these factors combined gave me a sense of control with the brushes.

One other feature that all four models share is a hard plastic "bridge," which is positioned between the handle and the brush wires. This 1¼" of hard plastic is particularly handy for getting louder strokes on the drumhead and rim.

As for the specific models, I was particularly impressed by the *Standard*. I've used retractable brushes forever, and never really considered a non-retractable brush, until I played the *Standard*. I realized that I don't like the feel of the pull rod's tail at the back of my hand. Also, Vater smartly placed a metal rivet on the butt end of the *Standard* to be used for scrape effects. Sure, you don't have control over the spread of the brushes, and the wires may get bent from pulling the brushes in and out of your bag if you're not careful. But the balance (the *Standard's* handle is slightly longer than the *Retractable*) and the feel of these brushes is terrific. The *Standard* lists for \$25.95 a pair. Try them.

Of course, most drummers will opt for the *Retractable*, for the reasons stated above, which is understandable. The wires actually played a bit further when fully extended than was the set position on the *Standard*, which some drummers might prefer. Also, the action of the pull rod was smooth and firm: the *Retractable's* will hold their setting. And while I preferred the balance of the *Standard*, it certainly was not bad here. A pair of Vater *Retractable's* lists for \$25.95.

One problem I did encounter with the first pair of *Retractable's* Vater sent was that one of the brushes actually came apart when I



Jim Esposito

Two-surface learning: the *Mind, Body & Soul* practice pad

the *Stick Brush*—feature wood handles with a 5A stick diameter. The *Wood Brush* has a normal butt end with a metal rivet for scrape effects, and the *Stick Brush* is slightly longer with a stick tip on the butt end for quick transitions from brush to stick sounds.

Some drummers may prefer the feel of a wood shaft with their brushes, which obviously will give a consistent feel when switching from sticks to brushes. You may find that to be the case. However, I really preferred the rubber-grip handles of the *Standard* and *Retractable*. Not only was the grip surface cool, the diameter was slightly bigger—again, adding to that sense of control. Try them all and see what works best for you.

One positive feature about the wooden handle models is that they're less expensive. Both the *Wood Brush* and the *Stick Brush* list for \$19.95 a pair.

Whip It Good

The MTV *Unplugged* series has inspired a few changes in the music industry. It certainly influenced volume levels, with musicians exploring the acoustic side of things. And now every major concert seems to feature an "acoustic set." This move to gentler tones certainly motivated drummers to look for ways to create softer, more interesting sounds on the drumkit.

And so Vater has weighed in with four interesting specialty sticks that create different effects. First, they've put their own spin on the bundled dowel stick with the *AcouStick*, which features seven wood dowels surrounded by protective plastic strips. These strips are held in place by a hard rubber handle, along with adjustable O rings that wrap around the strips. These rings, besides holding the strips in place, allow you to adjust the impact sound of the stick.

The claim is that the *AcouStick* will last longer than regular unwrapped, bundled dowels. I wailed on some drums and cymbals with these for a while, and yes, they do hold up better. You don't get

quite the same impact sound, though—less of the "crack" of unwrapped dowel. However, the *AcouStick* has a bit more weight for digging into the drums, and the protective strips get a nice sound on cymbals and especially cymbal bells.

The musical cousin of the *AcouStick*, Vater's *AcouStick Solid*, has the same handle design and protective strips, but here the strips cover a split stick (a cross-cut dowel). This gives the *AcouStick Solid* a more stick-like feel than the *AcouStick*, and it's a bit louder to boot. The *AcouStick Solid* will last a lot longer as well. In fact, I noticed with both models that the wood inside the protective strips was not damaged after severe beating. However, the strips got a little tattered. One thing's for sure, they're both fun to play and offer another sound on your kit. Both the *AcouStick* and the *AcouStick Solid* list for \$25.95 per pair.

Another specialty "stick" from Vater is the *Whip*, an all-black model that features a soft vinyl handle and non-adjustable, flexible polypropylene bristles. The *Whip* is aptly named, since it is so flexible (including the handle) that you get a bit of a whipping motion going as you play them. The sound produced by the *Whip* is *soft*. You do get a clear articulation on cymbals, but even so it's a gentle sound in the brush volume range. A pair of these would be perfect for a quiet gig where the brittle sound of a multi-dowel stick or the sheer volume of a regular stick would be too much. The *Whip* lists for \$19.95.

And finally there's the *Poly Brush*, a specialty *brush*, not a stick. You can play the *Poly Brush* with normal brush techniques, yet its thin plastic bristles produce a less cutting and metallic "sweep"

sound than regular brushes. The attack sound is also very nice, giving just a bit more oomph to the toms in particular. And the bristles of the *Poly Brush* are adjustable, in that you can slide them in and out of the handle.

One minor annoyance I had with one of the *Poly Brushes* was that, with the brushes fully extended, there was a rattle in the handle. It sounded like the ends of the back edge of the bristles were striking the inside of the plastic handle. If you're interested in the *Poly Brushes*, you can check for this by test driving a pair on a counter top or a drum. A pair of *Poly Brushes* lists for \$18.95.

Matter Over Mind

Now that you have all of these different sticks, it must be time to practice. And wouldn't you know it, Vater has just introduced the *Mind, Body & Soul* practice pad. It's an interesting-looking pad, with the yin & yang symbol appearing on the surface. In fact, the main feature of the *MBS* pad is that it has two different playing surfaces; the black side of the symbol being "normal" rubber, the white being very hard, with a feel roughly similar to a marching drum or ride cymbal.

It is nice to have a pad with two playing surfaces, and the *MBS* pad layout promotes practicing hand-to-hand sticking patterns; you can simulate the action of playing one hand on the ride with the other on the snare. Also, the *MBS* pad has a 10"-diameter wood base with a threaded hole underneath for mounting on a cymbal stand. It lists for \$34. Now get to work.

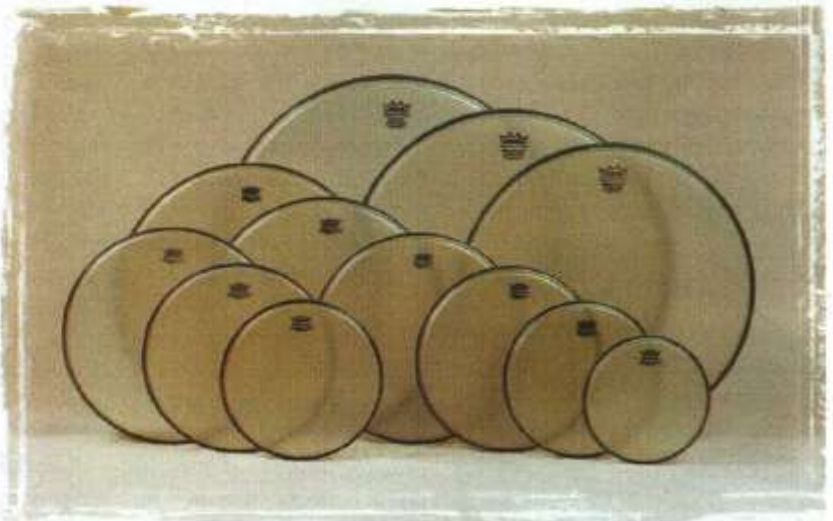
Remo Renaissance Drumheads

by Rick Mattingly

Like mama always said:
Keep your head warm.

It's tempting to declare that Remo's new *Renaissance* drumheads are the closest anyone has come to combining the sound of calfskin heads with the advantages of plastic heads. As true as that statement may be, I find myself wondering how many drummers in 1998 have ever played on a calfskin head or even heard one in a live setting. In other words, do that many people really care anymore if a plastic head sounds like calfskin?

Like "old K" cymbals, calfskin drumheads have acquired a certain mystique, largely because they are hard to come by. True, a good calfskin head could bring a wonderfully warm sound to a drum, but even the best ones were a pain to deal with on humid days. Plastic heads were accepted by a majority of drummers far



quicker than many other percussion innovations because 1) they were so practical and 2) they didn't sound *that* much different from calf heads.

Nevertheless, they didn't sound *exactly* the same, and attempts have been made over the years to develop a plastic head that better

simulates the sound and feel of calf, without the problems and inconsistencies. The Remo *Renaissance* heads represent a major victory in achieving that goal.

I find it difficult to suggest that drummers playing a certain style of music will be more prone to like *Renaissance* heads than drummers playing a different style, or to imply that these heads are only going to appeal to those who remember the "good ol' days" of calfskin. In simplest terms, *Renaissance* heads make drums sound warmer without a major sacrifice of resonance or projection. It's a matter of taste rather than of genre or nostalgia.

Tom-Tom Heads

Most drummers tend to use the same type of batter head on all of their tom-toms, which is a logical approach. I would certainly never put, say, a white-coated *Ambassador* on one tom, a *Black Dot* head on another, and a *Pinstripe* on a third and expect the three toms to sound as if they belonged to the same drumset. But, like several other drummers I know, I have always considered Remo *Diplomat*, *Ambassador*, and *Emperor* batters to be three different weights of the same head. (But I still wouldn't mix coated, clear, and *Ebony* versions of the same weight across the toms.)

Like guitar players, who use thin strings for the high notes and thick strings for the low notes, I've often mixed the three head weights, using thin *Diplomats* for small toms, medium *Ambassadors* for medium toms, and heavy *Emperors* for the large toms. But it's not a hard and fast rule. For a "generic" kit that I would use in a variety of situations, I might indeed match all three weights. For a jazz kit, in which I favor higher pitches, I might use *Diplomats* on the rack toms and an *Ambassador* on the floor tom, while on a kit devoted to rock, I might go with *Ambassadors* on all the rack toms and *Emperors* on the floor toms.

The point of all this is that the *Renaissance* heads come in *Diplomat*, *Ambassador*, and *Emperor* weights, and while they are identical in terms of timbre, or sound color, each weight favors a different pitch range. For starters, I tested the different weights as batter heads only, using clear *Ambassadors* on the bottoms of all the drums in order to highlight the differences between the *Renaissance* heads. Predictably, the *Renaissance Diplomat* batters work best when tightened up to high pitches, the *Renaissance Ambassadors* favor medium tensioning and pitch, and the *Renaissance Emperors* sound great with low pitches, having a bit more resonance than standard *Emperors*. Like its *non-Renaissance* counterpart, the *Ambassador* is the most versatile, and if one wanted to use the same head on all the toms, that would be the best choice in most situations.

Compared to white-coated heads, *Renaissance* heads are a bit drier and a lot warmer, bringing out more of the mid-range overtones. There is also a touch of what used to be called the "wet" sound in their attack. One could consider the *Renaissance* heads to fall in between white-coated heads and *Pinstripes* (leaning a lot closer to the white-coated ones).



WHAT'S HOT

- simulates the sound and feel of calf, without the problems and inconsistencies
- tonalities fall in between coated and *Pinstripe* heads, offering the pitch range of the former with some of the "meatier" sound of the latter
- good surface for brush work

When I tried putting *Renaissance* heads on *both* sides of the toms, I got the best results when I used the same weight top and bottom. (I like tuning both heads to the same pitch for maximum resonance.) With *Renaissance* heads on both sides of the tom-toms, the drums sounded a bit too muffled to me, but in extremely low-volume, acoustic settings that might be ideal (as opposed to putting duct tape on the drumheads, which I've seen on more than one occasion).

But for general use, I suspect most drummers would be happiest using *Renaissance* heads only as batters, while using regular clear *Diplomats*, *Ambassadors* and/or *Emperors* on the bottoms.

Snare Drum Batter

Again, the main difference between *Renaissance Diplomat*, *Renaissance Ambassador*, and *Renaissance Emperor* heads when used as snare drum batters is in the pitches they favor. The *Renaissance Diplomat* favors the highest pitches, the *Renaissance Ambassador* works well for slightly lower pitches, and the *Renaissance Emperor* works best for a really gutsy sound. On a 5x14 metal-shell drum, both the *Diplomat* and *Ambassador* versions of the *Renaissance* batter sounded fine, but the *Emperor* sounded a bit muddy. On a 6½x14 wood-shell snare drum, the *Ambassador* and *Emperor* were preferred.

Of course, matching the right head to the right drum is not just a matter of dimensions and shell material. I've used *Diplomat* heads to brighten up the sound of a muddy wood-shell snare, and I've used *Ambassadors* to give some body to a metal-shell snare. And someone who hits hard but likes high pitches might need to crank up an *Ambassador* rather than use a *Diplomat*. But each of the weights of *Renaissance* heads has a reasonably wide range, so one shouldn't need a slide rule to figure out which head to use.

For drummers who wish for heads that are in between standard models, the *Renaissance* heads might be the answer. For example, the *Renaissance Diplomat* favors higher pitches, like a standard *Diplomat*, but also has a meatier sound, more like a traditional white-coated *Ambassador*. Likewise, the *Renaissance Ambassador* sounds a bit meatier than a traditional *Ambassador*.

Brush players will be delighted by the texture of *Renaissance* heads. They emit a nice swish sound when the brush slides over their surface, and they produce bright, crisp slaps when smacked.

Bass Drum Heads

Renaissance bass drum heads come in *Ambassador* and *Emperor* weights, and there is also a *Renaissance PowerStroke 3* head, which is like an *Ambassador* with an internal muffling ring. I tested all the bass drum heads wide open, as it doesn't seem to matter what type of head you use if the drum is going to be heavily stuffed with pillows or blankets.

I tried every combination of the three heads, front and back. To cut to the chase, the *Renaissance PowerStroke 3* is the ideal batter head,

producing very little tone but plenty of punch. Match that with a *Renaissance Ambassador* or *Renaissance Emperor* on the front and you'll have a bass drum with a lot of warmth and tone, but one that is dry enough that many situations will not require any additional muffling. Those needing a slightly brighter sound could use a *Renaissance PowerStroke 3* as a batter with a traditional *Ambassador* or *Emperor* front head and get excellent results. For those wanting a muffled sound, but one with a bit more tone and resonance than that produced by stuffing the drum with pillows, *Renaissance PowerStroke 3* heads could be used front and back.

Prices

Remo *Renaissance Diplomat*, *Renaissance Ambassador* and *Renaissance Emperor* drumheads are the same list price within the same size. Representative list prices are: 10"—\$20.75; 12"—\$23; 13"—\$23.50; 14"—\$24.50; 16"—\$27.50; 22" *Renaissance Ambassador* and *Renaissance Emperor*—\$51.75; 22" *Renaissance PowerStroke 3*—\$55.

SKB Cases

by Rick Van Horn

These newcomers are both attractive and rugged.

SKB Cases are a recent entry in the field of hard-shell, roto-molded plastic drum cases. Roto-molding means that each case is formed as a single piece in a rotating mold, rather than having sections that are attached together with rivets or other fasteners. The lid of each case is actually just part of the original single molded shape, which is later separated to create the two-piece case.

Offered in basic glossy black, the cases are available in 8", 10", 12", 13", 14", 16", and 22" sizes (so far). Rather than offer a huge inventory of diameters and depths, SKB has designed each case to "telescope," in order to accommodate drums of virtually any available depth. Each case is fitted with special foam inserts to hold the drum inside securely, along with a heavy-duty (and strikingly attractive) red web strap with a side-release buckle to ensure secure closing.

One nice design touch with these cases is their contoured shape. They feature a recessed "cross" design that allows them to be stacked without slipping. This is convenient when you need to keep the *loaded* cases in a compact storage configuration. (When *unloaded*, the cases are designed to "nest" within each other for even more compact storage.) The securing strap of each case also fits into this recessed section, which prevents the strap from interfering with the "flatness" of the top of the case. The contour of each case also includes a flat, "pedestal"-like area on the side opposite the carrying handle.

Convenience and attractiveness are nice, but the main criterion for evaluating a drum case is durability. Can it take the punishment of

WHAT'S HOT

- creatively designed case contour allows for easy stacking and secure strapping
- cases proved durable under commercial-carrier "stress test"



"the road"? Well, we had a unique opportunity to test the SKB cases: We used them to ship several display drums from our offices in New Jersey to the Percussive Arts Society Convention in Anaheim, California, from there to the NAMM show in Los Angeles, and then back to New Jersey. For each move we employed

commercial carriers, who are not exactly known for their gingerly approach to baggage handling. The SKB cases came through all this heavy-duty transit with little more than a scuff or two, and the drums they contained came through in absolutely pristine condition. I don't think we could have put as much "wear and tear" on the cases in a month of steady gigs, so I have to say that the SKBs more than did their job.

The cases we were sent for review constitute a "package" called the *SKB-800*, consisting of 12", 14", 16", and 22" sizes. That package retails at \$389.95, which is a very respectable price for roto-molded cases. The SKBs aren't the heaviest such cases around, and I wouldn't necessarily recommend them for drummers on major tours involving a lot of air travel. But for virtually any other type of transport—from your personal vehicle to a bus-and-truck tour—they should serve with distinction. If they're not in your local dealer's shop, contact the manufacturer, Freed International, at 13501 SW 128th St., Suite 204, Miami, FL 33186, tel: (305) 378-1818, fax: (305) 378-6669, or check their Web site at www.skbcases.com.



DW 5000 Series Pedals

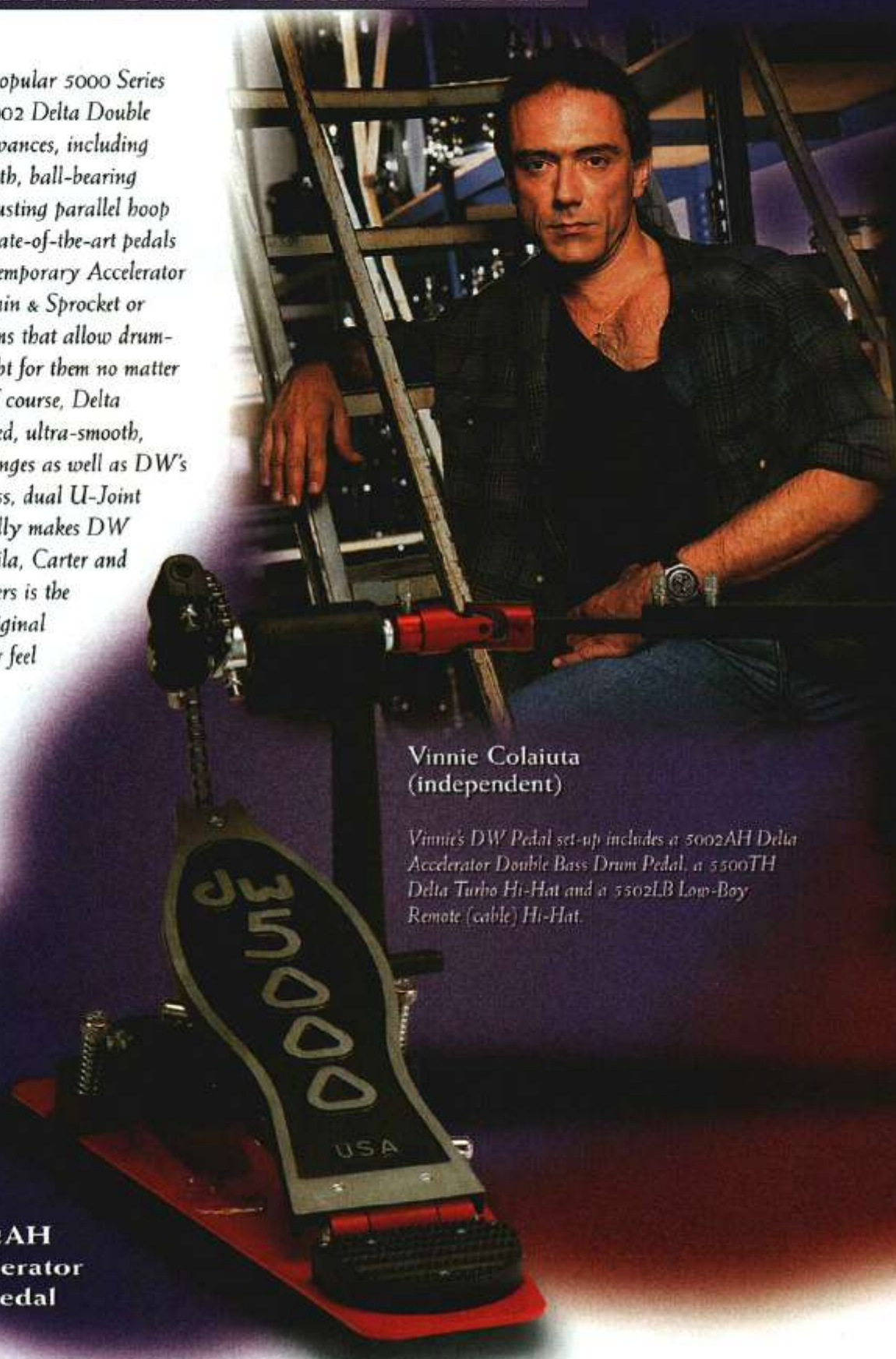
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Vinnie Colaiuta
(independent)

Vinnie's DW Pedal set-up includes a 5002AH Delta Accelerator Double Bass Drum Pedal, a 5500TH Delta Turbo Hi-Hat and a 5502LB Low-Boy Remote (cable) Hi-Hat.



Carter Beauford
(Dave Matthews Band)

*Carter plays a DW 5002AH Delta
Accelerator Double Bass Drum Pedal.*

Sheila E.
(independent)

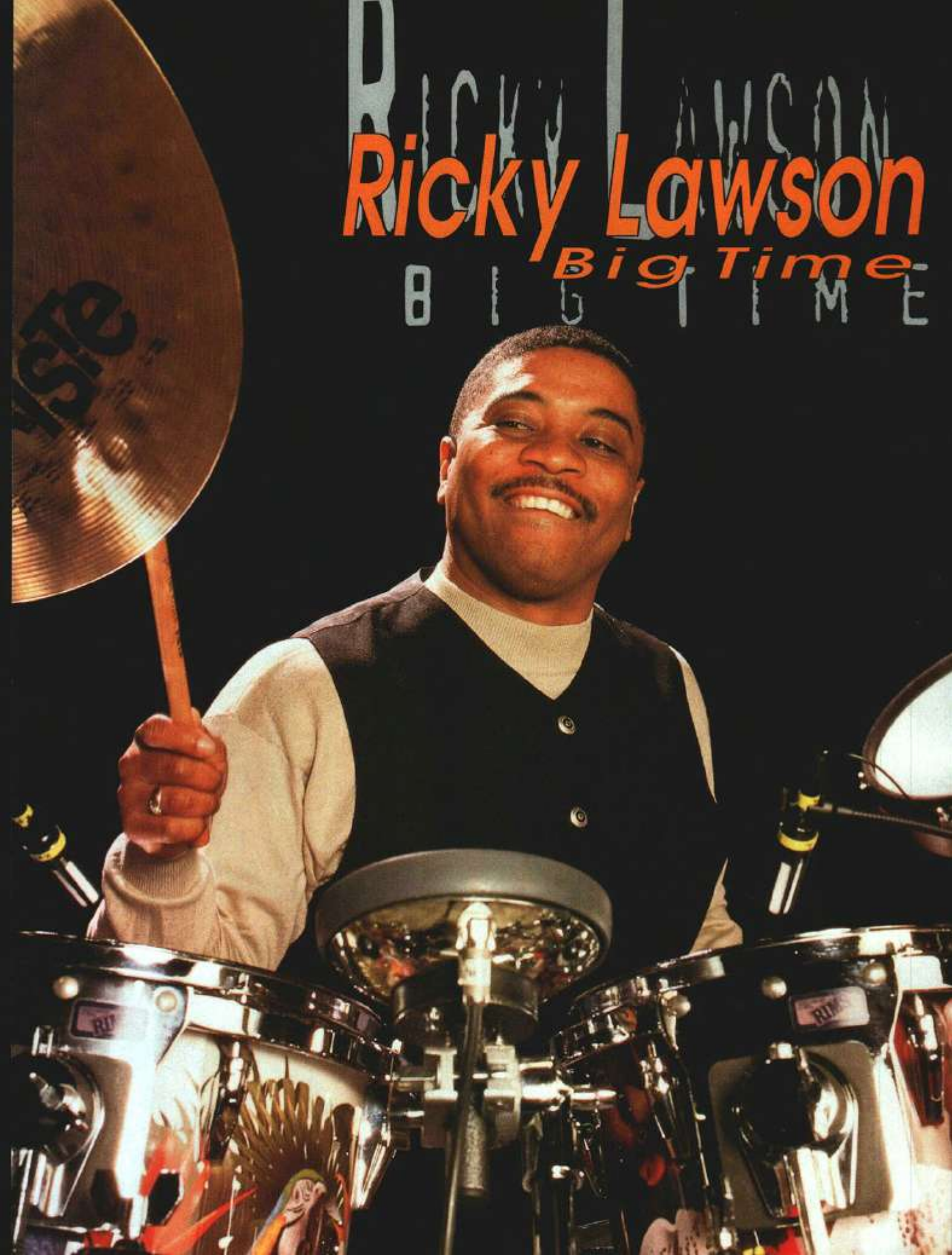
*Sheila plays a DW 5002AH Delta
Accelerator Double Bass Drum Pedal and
a 5500TH Delta Turbo Hi-Hat.*

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RICKY LAWSON
Ricky Lawson
Big Time

B I G T I M E



One thing never changes with Ricky Lawson—he *always* has more going on than there are hours in the day. As he prepares to tour with Eric Clapton, Ricky is putting the finishing touches on his first solo album, *First Things First* (Samsung records), which he has co-written, produced, and played on. While doing this he's producing the infamous "I Love You" theme song for the purple dinosaur's first feature film, *Barney's Great Adventure*. Lawson has only two weeks to coordinate the schedules of the song's vocalists—Sheena Easton, Jeffrey Osborne, and Take 6—record them, and deliver a finished product. Yet while all of that is going on, he's upgrading his recording studio, Awesome Lawson Studios, as well as repairing flood damage from recent torrential LA rains.

While I was trying to set up an interview with Lawson, he called

(while driving his kids home from swimming practice) to say that he'd be rehearsing with Babyface the following day for an upcoming *Grammy Awards* performance. A couple of weeks later, when Lawson was holed up at New York's Waldorf Astoria Hotel, he called again to let me know that while in the city he would be doing his first acting role, in a new movie called *Family Web*. Plus he would be involved in meetings regarding a publishing deal for a book he's writing.

In the thirteen years I've known him, Ricky Lawson's pace has not changed. What *has* changed, though, is his position in the music industry. Ricky taught himself to play drums while growing up in Detroit, and with the help of his uncle Harold, whose drumset he borrowed, and his uncle Paul, a Motown arranger, Lawson began to cultivate the knowledge and the attitude he would need

to carry on a successful career.

After moving to LA in 1975, Ricky worked with Roy Ayers, the Brothers Johnson, and finally Airto and Flora Purim, where he met Jimmy Haslip, the bassist who later brought Ricky into the Yellowjackets. When Ricky and I met in 1985, he had attained some notoriety as the drummer in that band, though the group was proving more popular among musicians' circles than with the record buying public. This made Lionel Richie's offer for Ricky to join his band in 1986 very appealing. Lawson's profile immediately escalated on Richie's *Dancing On The Ceiling* [our, for which his equipment needed to be state-of-the-art—well, as state-of-the-art as was possible in 1986. Lawson took the ever-growing computer age very seriously and expanded his electronics knowledge and equipment regularly as his career

steadily climbed upward.

Next for Lawson was Michael Jackson, whose *Bad* tour became particularly funky by the benefit of the drummer's deep-felt grooves. After that Ricky was asked to join Whitney Houston's band, which he accepted. In fact, Ricky was still on retainer to Houston when Jackson's camp called again to ask him to do the follow-up Dangerous tour. Ricky opted to go to work over continuing to collect Houston's retainer.

The next big tour came in 1994, when Phil Collins asked Lawson to drive his band. While in the middle of a grueling eighteen-month world tour with Collins, Ricky was approached by Steely Dan to do their first tour in over twenty years. Lawson couldn't, and wouldn't, leave Collins. So Steely Dan booked Peter Erskine for their first tour and Dennis Chambers for the sec-

ond. But when the Phil Collins road show finally took a break, Ricky was able to join the Dan for a shorter tour before going back on the road with Collins.

After being home for only a couple of weeks from the last Collins tour, Ricky got the call from Eric Clapton's people. A few days

after the business details had been worked out with management, Ricky was driving down the freeway when his cell phone rang. It was Clapton himself, just calling to tell Ricky how excited he was that he would be working with him.

According to Ricky, "I

nearly had an accident! I couldn't believe that Eric tracked me down in my car to say that."

But just as those considerations mean something to Ricky, so is *his* kindness and thoughtfulness appreciated by the people he touches. Someone recently told me that

they had been looking for Ricky at a recent music trade show, and when they asked someone in the booth where Ricky had been, their reply was, "I'm sure he's out there spreading love throughout the convention." Anybody acquainted with Ricky Lawson knows that to be true.



RF: Take a sharp analytical examination of your life and tell us what events have taken place that have prepared you for the place you've reached now. What lessons have made an impact?

RL: One good lesson I can think of off the top of my head was going to the school of songwriting and drum playing of Lionel Richie, which is where I learned about patience and how to be a team player.

RF: How did you learn those things?

RL: In playing Lionel's music, it's not what you play that counts, it's what you *don't* play. His music is so simple, yet so meaningful at the same time. Coming from the Yellowjackets, whose music was doodly doo doo doo doo dee dee dee—all that craziness—Lionel was a lesson in discipline. You have to be disciplined to hold back and play good time.

One of the other schools was playing with the Yellowjackets. That was a big lesson in never throwing away your ideas. There you have four guys who are all a piece of the pie. Everybody has wonderful ideas and everybody wants to interject the best idea for the project or the song. We found out if something didn't work in one song, it might work in another.

RF: What prepared you for that gig?

RL: I was always a hard worker, and I know I always wanted to be a good team player. I never really wanted to be a leader; I always tried to be a good follower. I came to find out later on that the way you become a good leader *is* to be a good follower. I was always trying to be



a guy everybody got along with. If I had something that would help somebody else, I was there. I remember borrowing my mother's car when we were kids playing in a local band. I stuffed all of our equipment in there so

we could go to the gig. My mom really helped to instill an awareness in me that, if there's something you want to do, you can do it, as long as you don't hurt anybody. That's what I try to do: I try to be a blessing to everyone I

come in contact with and whoever I talk to. I've learned that that is the reason we're here on earth, to help those who are with us and those who are coming behind us.

RF: You are the most "up"



person I know, but everything isn't perfect all the time in the real world. Can you dig into your bag and share with us any of the bad times?

RL: What I call the "bad

times" are the down times—when the calls are few and far between. I have had my gaps, even recently with Phil Collins. I didn't work on the road with him for about four months, but I used that time

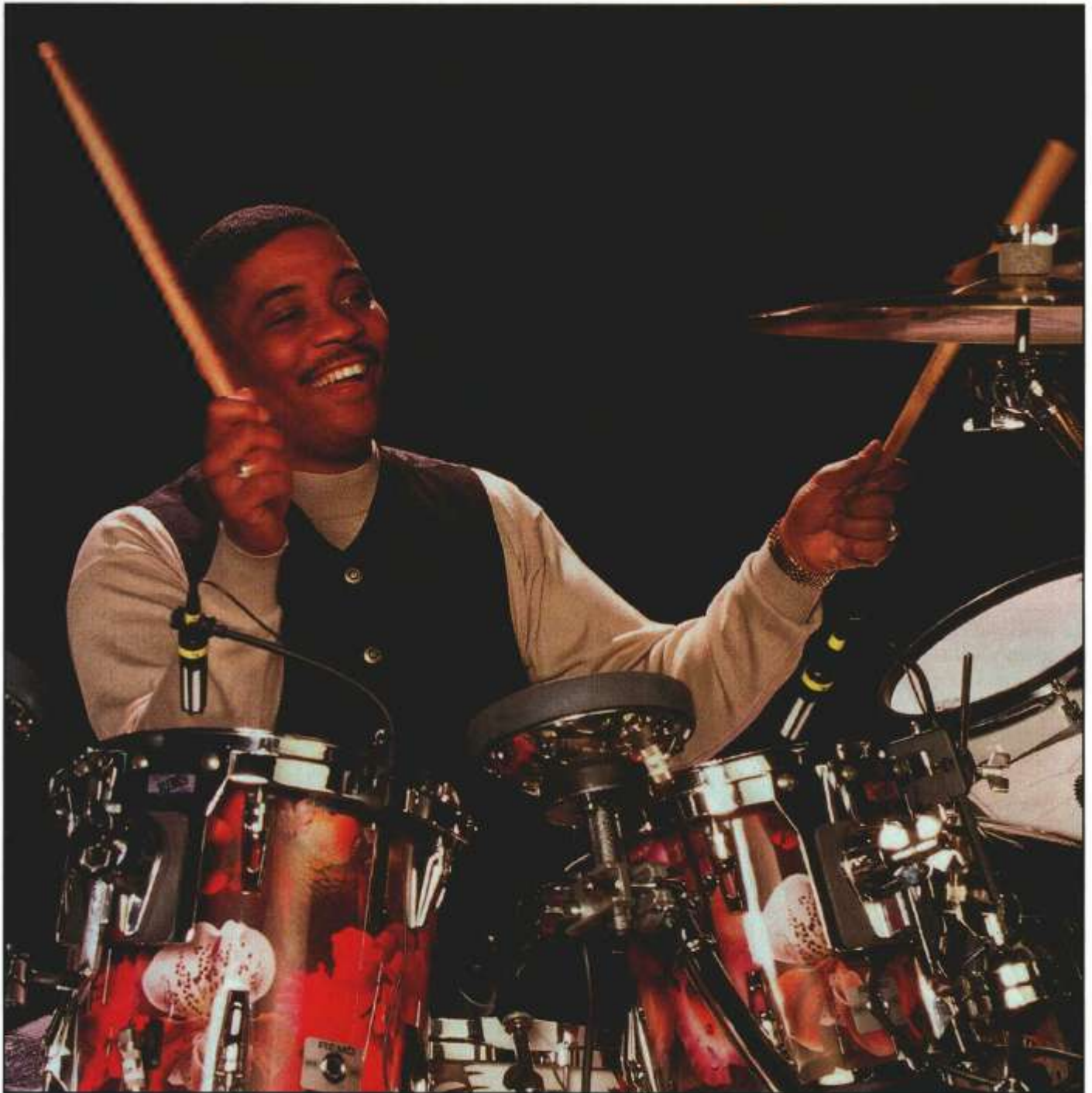
to finish my project and do a couple of other things. I'm not one for sitting around.

RF: Have you ever had a bad gig?

RL: Norman Connors was a bad gig. The business was

not together at all. This was probably about 1983. I was invited to do about a week of gigs with his existing band. I got a chance to play with Phyllis Hyman and Gene Carne, fantastic singers, and

"I was saying to someone recently, 'From Collins to Clapton, from Houston to Jackson—and still moving.' Thank God!"





RL: The gig is not really that hard if you have discipline. The tough part is playing a better show than you played the night before.

RF: Does that mean playing the same thing with the same fire or does it mean not playing the same thing at all?

RL: It's playing the best-feeling grooves you can, having as much fun as you can, and making the band sound good. If the band sounds good, you've done your job. Phil Collins wants every gig to sound better than the one before. To a cer-

when it came time to get paid for the gig, the man was nowhere to be seen. We were in New York, trying to get back to LA. We didn't even have the money to pay the cab to get out to the airport.

RF: How do you prevent something like that from happening?

RL: You have to be more business-oriented and get things in writing. But even if you get it in writing, that doesn't always assure you of getting your money. Then you have to get a lawyer to help you get your money—it ends up costing you money to get your money, and that can wear you out.

RF: So with all the normal junk that goes on, how did you become such a positive individual?

RL: It's just from being out there and seeing how guys like George Duke treat their musicians. This particular cat is incredible—he has the talent, the ability, the background, he's got it all—but he is one of the kindest guys you'll ever meet. He always has time for you on the phone or at the house.

I went by his house recent-

ly and he was there with Burt Bacharach. Here I am, this little egghead from Detroit, sitting up there with George Duke and Burt Bacharach!

Those are two of my heroes. Another hero is Phil Collins. Working with him has been an incredible learning experience.

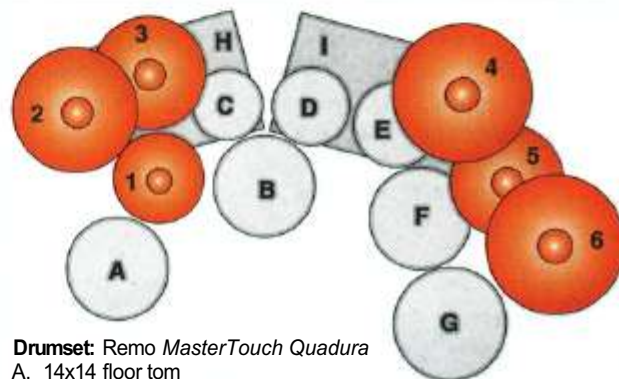
RF: What have you learned?

RL: I've learned that if you want to be on top, you've got to be dedicated and you have to know what's going on from the top to the bottom, in terms of your staff and your business. Watching him deal with musicians, the way he treats everybody, and his emphasis, is enlightening.

RF: What specifically is he looking for?

RL: For you to do your job first. Be on time and give him what he needs. He calls you because he's looking for somebody with integrity, he's looking for people who get along, and that takes a while to find. Hanging out with Phil, you also learn the Phil Collins school of drumming, which is incredible.

RF: What were the tough parts about the Phil Collins situation?



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- C. 8x8 tom
- D. 10x10 tom
- E. 12x12 tom
- F. 14x14 floor tom
- G. 16x16 floor tom
- H. 16x20 bass drum
- I. 16x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Paiste

- 1. 13" *Paiste Heavy* hi-hats
- 2. 18" *Paiste Full* crash
- 3. 17" *Paiste Full* crash
- 4. 20" *Paiste Dry* ride
- 5. 16" *Paiste Full* crash
- 6. 20" *Paiste China*

Hardware: All Gibraltar, including their rack system

Heads: Remo *Falams K-Super* on snare batter, *Ambassador* on bottom, clear *Emperors* on tops of toms with clear *Ambassadors* on bottoms, clear *Powerstroke 3* on bass drums with foam inlay used for muffling.

Sticks: Vic Firth *Timekeeper* (Ricky Lawson signature) model, *Rute* (bundled birch dowels)

Electronics: Roland *V-Drums*, Roland *FD0* pads, Alternate Mode bass pedal trigger and pads, Shure Microphones, Juice Goose *PD2* power switch, Alesis *Data Disk*, Digital *MX-8*, Aphex Systems *Impulse* trigger interface, Akai *S3000XL* sampler, Shure *PSM600* transmitter (ear monitors), Akai *MB76* mix bay, Tascam *MM-1* keyboard mixer, Yamaha *MV802* mixer, Peavey *DECA 528* conversion amp

tain degree, you are playing the same songs with the same licks every night, but some nights they just sound better.

RF: How did the gig with Phil come about?

RL: I was recommended by [bassist] Nathan East. I had met Phil while I was on the Michael Jackson *Bad* tour, when he came backstage at Wembley Arena. I introduced myself and told him I was a big fan, saying, "If I can ever help you do anything, here's my card." I do a lot of praying anyway, for my head, my heart, my spirit, and my family, and after I met him, I was driving down the freeway with my wife and I was talking about what was going to be the next situation, maybe a rock 'n' roll gig. I didn't know who that could possibly be, because I have kids and I want them to be able to come to the show. A lot of guys smoke and have big bottles of whiskey on stage, but I want to maintain a certain image. Oddly enough, I had spoken to some people about Phil Collins and had forgotten I had spoken to them when he called me. It couldn't have been better. His music is great, and he's a wholesome guy.

He called and had me come over to England, where he and I and the piano player played together for about a week without the band.

RF: Was that nerve-racking?

RL: Big time.

RF: Do you still get nervous?

RL: Oh yeah. It's not *scared* nervous, just anxious—wanting to make it all happen. There's so much that goes on behind the scenes that you never really hear about, like the lights, or the stage might have to go up and down—hopefully it will go up and down *correctly*—and making sure the electronics are working. Lionel's stage used to open up, Michael's stage used to do a little trick, and Phil Collins plays in the round, so the center of the stage goes up and down. On one side of the stage I was playing percussion and on the other side I was playing my drums. You have to always be thinking.

RF: What were important early lessons for you?

RL: My uncle was a man named Paul Riser, and he was an arranger for Motown. I used to do sessions for him when I was

coming up. He was a big stickler on reading. He said, "Hey man, if I take the time to write all this stuff, you'd better be able to read it," and because I was his nephew, he wanted me to be smokin'. He was on me a lot heavier than he was with other guys. I wanted to do good for him as well as for myself, but mainly for him because he was the one who pulled me into the situation. And I taught myself to read.

RF: How did you do that?

RL: A lot of it came from the experience of being around guys who already read. One of the first real bands I played with in Detroit was a group called the Ebony Set. The leader was Victor Hall, a music major at Eastern Michigan University. He could read and write. He and my uncle really helped me get a handle on the concept of reading.

RF: How long did it take you to learn?

RL: I'm still learning today. Everybody writes stuff differently and they come at you in different ways. Like Steely Dan—reading their stuff was a challenge, with a 2/4 bar here, then a 5/4 bar, a 4/4 bar, a 6/4 bar, then 4/4 again. Donald [Fagen] and

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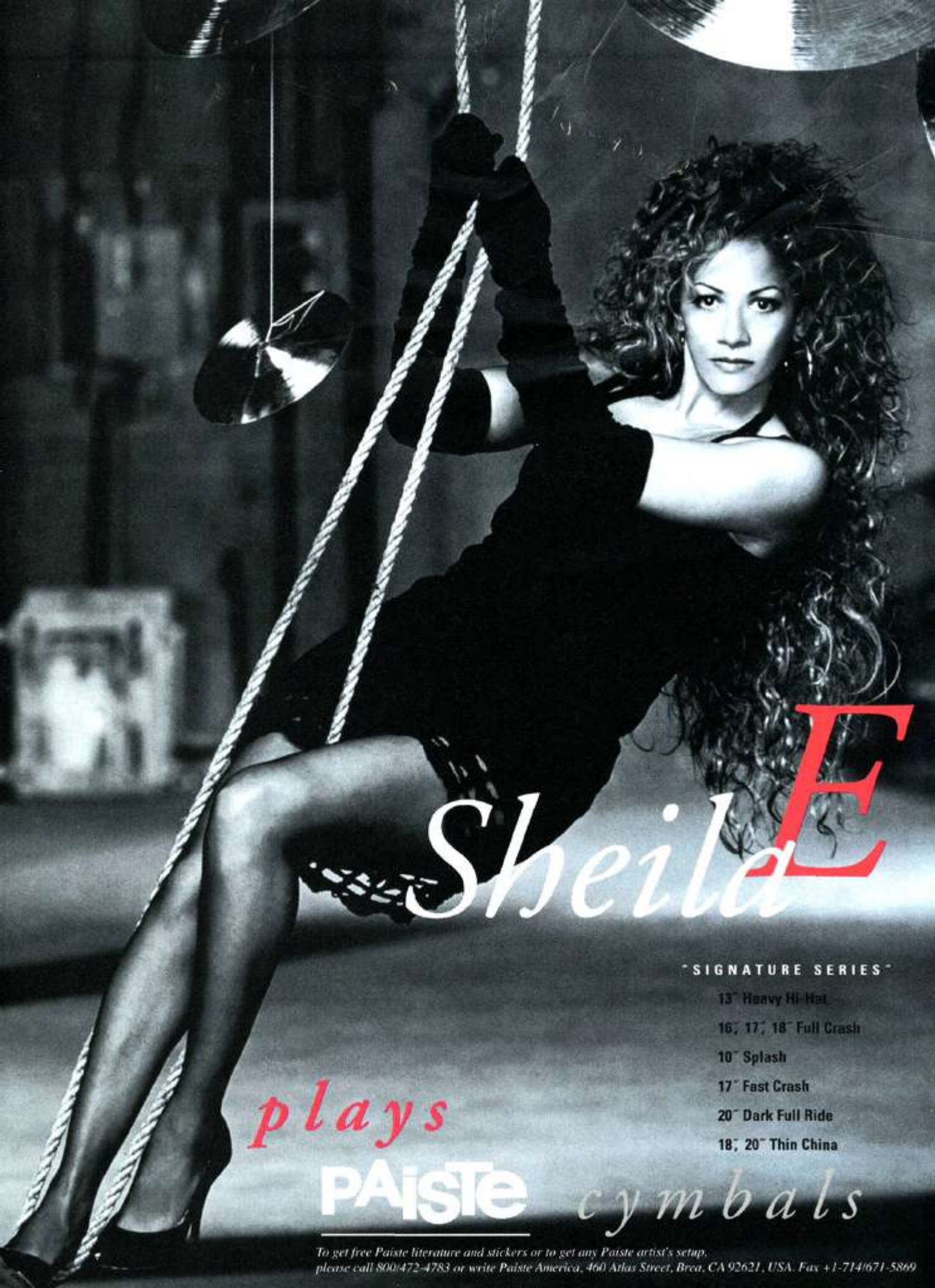
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Ricky's Licks

Ricky says these albums are the most representative of his drumming...

Artist	Album
Yellowjackets	Yellowjackets
Anita Baker	Rapture
George Duke	Brazilian Love Affair
Robben Ford	Inside Story
Ricky Lawson	First Things First
Babyface	Unplugged '97

...and offers these as the ones he listens to most for inspiration.

Artist	Album	Drummer
Herbie Hancock	Headhunters	Harvey Mason
Tony Williams	all	Tony Williams
George Duke	The Aura Will Prevail	Harvey Mason
Ndugu Chancier	Chocolate Jam Co.	Ndugu Chancier
Harvey Mason	Funk In The Mason Jar	Harvey Mason
Dave Weckl	Master Plan	Dave Weckl
Earth, Wind & Fire	all	Maurice & Freddie White
George Duke & Billy Cobham	The George Duke & Billy Cobham Band	Billy Cobham

Walter [Becker] are ingenious at figuring out how to sing across those types of rhyth-

mic changes and make it feel natural. But when you write it out, it looks like some-

body's been going crazy.

RF: You mentioned you recently recorded with Steely Dan, too.

RL: We recorded six songs that they said they were really happy with. I did those tracks during a seven-day break from the Phil Collins tour; they said the last time they recorded six songs, it took them eighteen months! That made me feel good.

RF: They didn't want any electronics?

RL: It wasn't necessary. Their music is what it is. All you need is to have your kit sounding good and make sure you have those tempos together. If you don't they'll be on you like a bum on a bologna sandwich. You want to make it fun for them, so I've set up different ways to combat that stuff, maybe using metronomes, delays, echos, or things like that in certain tempos to make the groove work.

RF: Did you read charts when you toured with them?

RL: Their records come out every seven to ten years, and they forget the songs, so they have a guy who writes them out. It helps them to remember the songs and it helps everyone else learn them quickly. I

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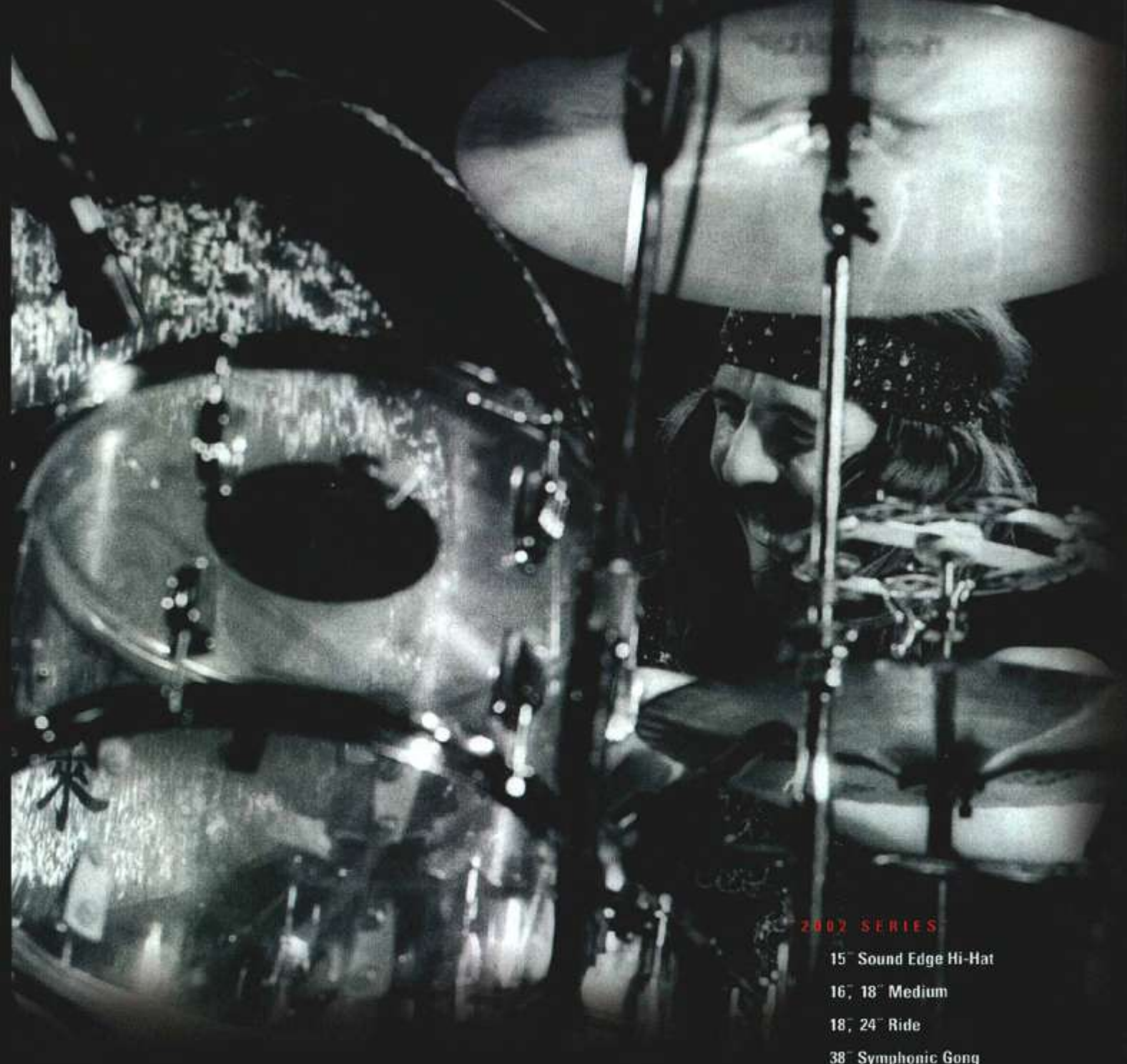
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would get off that gig and my head would be hurting just from having to read so much. But then you get with cats like Michael Jackson or Phil Collins, who don't read at all. In fact, Phil creates his own language.

RF: With Steely Dan, was there room for improvisation?

RL: Oh yes, but you have to know, via your experience, when to jump out and when not to. They have ingeniously written this music so that if you don't play the drum part, you're literally not playing the song.

RF: How do you know when you can step out a little?

RL: They'll let you know. In all the situations I've been in, job one is to play the song. Then the other stuff is like dessert. It's extra.

RF: When you were with Lionel you got into electronics. How did you know exactly what you would need that first time out?

RL: I had a little experience with the Yellowjackets, but Lionel's thing was the big kick-off. Basically I listened to the songs and heard where they were using

drum machines. Samplers were coming in, so I would sample some of the sounds and trigger them via pads, and it worked.

RF: When you look back to how antiquated that was in the mid-'80s, does that almost make you laugh?

RL: It's ridiculous. I've been in LA twenty-seven years now, and it has evolved so much. But I have had good technical people around me that knew the technology. Plus I was willing to put in the time to get a handle on it.

One of the biggest keys to my electronic success is having an excellent technician around. David Wills was an excellent technician. We did Whitney Houston and Michael Jackson together. Joe Wolfe and I have done Steely Dan and Phil Collins. The Akai *S1000* and *S3000* samplers are very dependable and road-worthy. The *drumKAT* as well, which changes a regular drum hit to MIDI and sends a signal in milliseconds. Between those two pieces of gear, I've been able to do some incredible stuff.

RF: Give us some examples of how you apply electronics live.

RL: Sometimes you'll have a ballad, where you won't need any electronics. And then sometimes you'll have an R&B song and you'll put a little bit of electronics in the kick drum just to give it a point. Live, it sounds so incredible, but you've got to have a good tech and a good engineer.

Robert Colby, who was the engineer with Phil Collins, and Eric Zohler, a recording engineer who works with George Duke, are incredible. Eric helped me get some of the drum sounds on Everett Harp's and George Duke's records, and I sound like a million bucks on those. Of course, playing a good drumset doesn't hurt either. I've been playing Remo for the last twelve years.

RF: How do you cope with the large concert arenas? That must be pretty exciting, but they can sound like big garbage cans.

RL: I put myself in rehearsal mode and don't get too excited. I'm excited doing it, but I'm driving the bus and setting the pace for the show, so I have to keep everybody focused.

RF: Can you give us some tips for dealing with the sound in some of those places?

RL: Clapton's band is a good-sized group,

RICKY LAWSON

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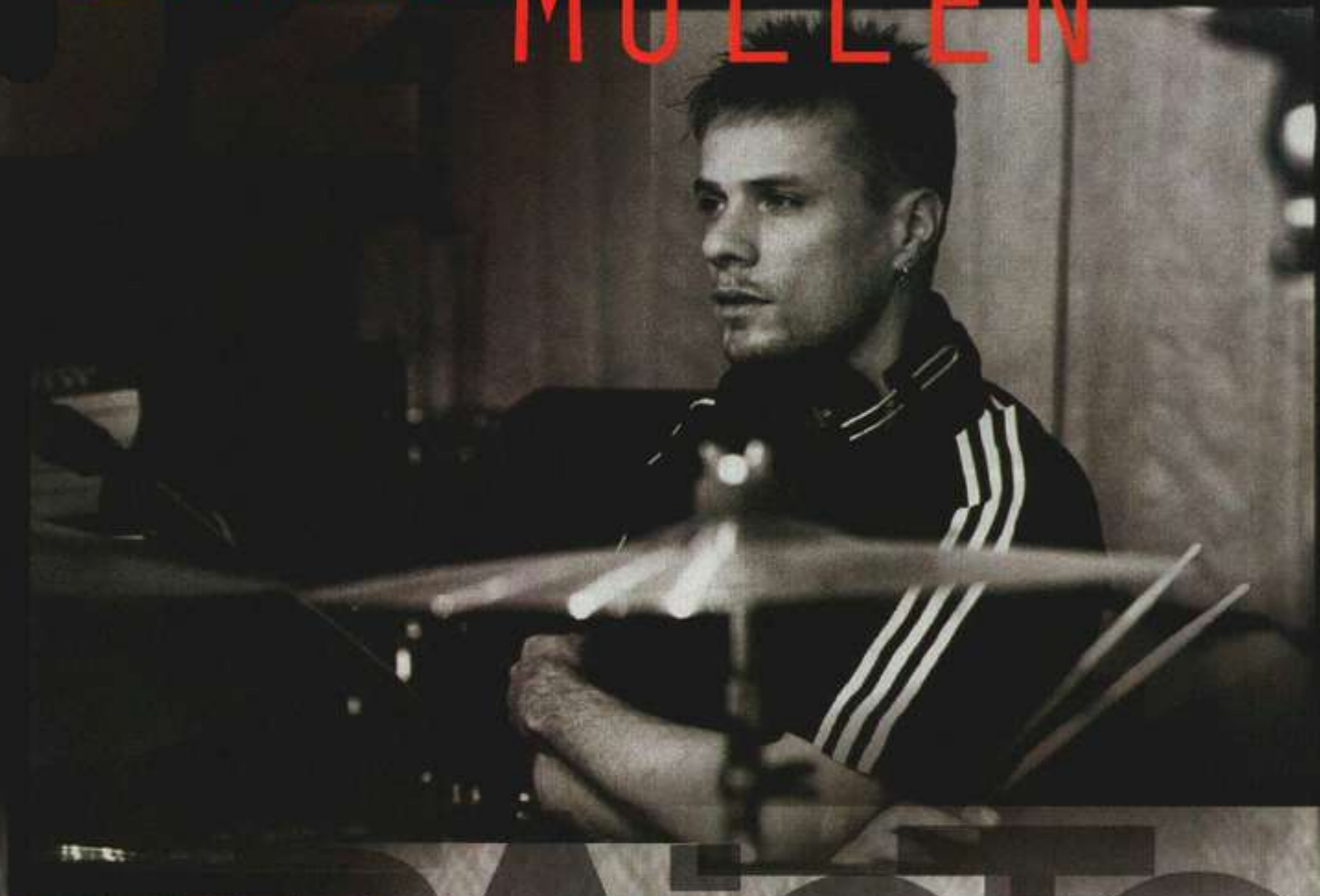
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NGDB has released numerous recordings since their self-titled debut album in 1967.

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with three singers, three guitar players, bass, two keyboard players, and Eric. Plus, we're traveling with a string section, so it's my job to keep them all together. So now I'm using the headphone monitors, which really help because I don't hear all the backslap and delays that can really mess with your head and the time.

RF: Aside from the electronics, has your setup changed much in the last ten years?

RL: The basic set may have grown just by a drum or two, but it's the same kit. [See Ricky's setup.]

RF: Have you ever thought about streamlining with a double pedal?

RL: On some gigs I have, but the blessing is that the gigs have been big enough so I can take everything and let my hair down, and that's what I do—I pull out all the stops.

RF: When did you get into double bass?

RL: I happened to be down at Paiste checking out some cymbals, and there was a kit that had a double pedal. I was fooling around on it and a wonderful man who used to work for Paiste, Steve Ettleson, said, "Man, you sound great playing that thing. I know the people at DW; why don't you give them a call and see if we can get you hooked up with some pedals?" Before I knew it, I was into it. That was around 1984.

RF: Why do you place your ride cymbal so high?

RL: It's up there, but that position feels good to me. Also, I not only have to be seen, but I have to *see* a lot of people in the band for cues. Positioning the cymbal up and out of the way allows me to do that. By the way, the ride I'm using is a 20" *Paiste Dry*.

RF: Not only is your ride high, but you sit...

RL: ...kinda low.

RF: After all these years of doing it, what about aches and pains?

RL: As you get older, you do have a few little aches and pains, although it really doesn't bother me much. I deal with the touring and all the playing as long as I'm in shape. The drag is if I haven't done it for a while.

RF: Do you warm up before a gig?

RL: Yes. I like going in and doing soundchecks, practicing before the gig, and playing a little ping-pong, believe it or not, because it keeps me loose. I do a lot of

stretching and I try to relax prior to a gig.

RF: You've just recently begun rehearsals with Clapton. What can you tell us about the gig?

RL: They sent me a set list and the new album, and I went out and bought all of his other CDs. Steve Gadd played on the new album, plus there's a lot of drum machine stuff. I'll have to do a bunch of sampling, using the Akai samplers I have—I just got the Akai *S3000XLs*. They're smaller and have better filters than the units I was using previously. They have a new way that computers can talk to samplers called MESA. Plus it has onboard effects that are really cool, so instead of having to get an external effects unit, it's in the module itself.

RF: What do you anticipate as being the biggest challenge of this tour?

RL: Making Eric happy. That's my first objective with any artist.

RF: What do you see him wanting?

RL: He really likes the new album and the way things are on it, so it's my job to cop those grooves and those sounds, because a lot of the songs are based around those sounds. That's where the samplers will come in. I could not do this particular gig without them.

RF: What about Clapton's older material?

RL: The old material is going to be the way that it is.

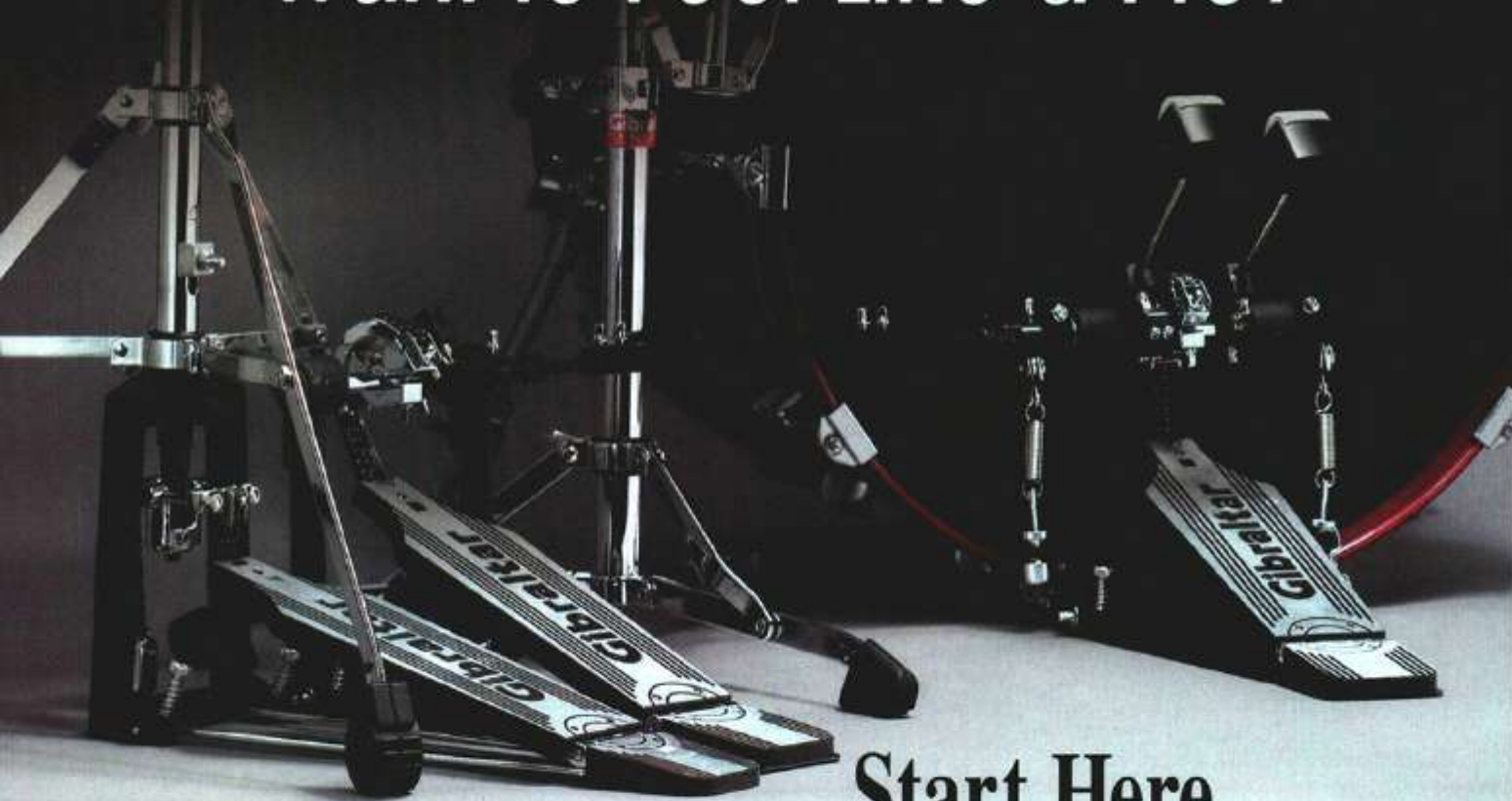
RF: How will you go about learning the songs?

RL: I'll just sit down and listen to tapes and write out what I need to write out and make my little cheat sheets, so when he calls a song, I can count it off with all the original tempos.

RF: We've talked about your road work, but we haven't discussed your studio career. Please pick five songs you've played on and take us from their inception, or the form in which they were presented, to their completion.

RL: While I was with the Yellowjackets I composed a song called "And You Know That," which was on the *Shades* album. I wrote it while I was cleaning the house one day. I would run over to my Akai twelve-track and hum the melody into it, then go back and clean some more. Then I played that through the house while I was cleaning. I started humming the bass line in there and cleaned some more. When I was done cleaning, I listened to it and pieced it

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all together well enough to take to the guys. When they got it, I actually had the groove and the melody. The feel of the song is like an old Motown, Junior Walker & the All Stars kind of vibe. I guess I had that instilled in me from growing up in Detroit. I've always liked that soulful tenor sax, and I was able to come up with a groove that fell into that kind of pocket. Then the guys all came together and helped me bring it to life. It's exciting when you're recording your own composition, and that tune eventually won a Grammy. It let me know that if you really put your mind to something you can do anything you want.

Then there is a tune called "Sweet Love" from Anita Baker's *Rapture* album. I knew Michael Powell [producer/guitar player] and Anita Baker from years before in Detroit, when they had a group called Chapter 8. When Elektra allowed Michael to produce some of her early projects, "Sweet Love" entered the picture. It had a big drum thing on the front of it. They had it written and all I had to do was fill in the gaps with what I felt was appropriate. Most R&B tunes are pretty basic, but this song started off with what was basically a drum solo—an in-the-pocket kind of thing. Then it went to a real soft little piece where she came in, to a real funky groove. The guy said, "You do your thing, and when you do something that we feel needs adjusting, we'll tell you." I played it two or three times to see where they were coming from. When people give you music, you have to get into their minds and try to figure out what they're trying to do, and then you interpret it and play the tune as if you wrote the song.

Another song I really enjoyed performing on was Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You." During the *I'm Your Baby Tonight* tour, they flew the band down to Florida to record it. The song was originally a Dolly Parton tune, so it was a lead sheet situation. David Foster was the producer on it, and he wanted to keep some of the vibe, but without the country vibe. I was able to bring it into more of an R&B feel. Of course, with Whitney singing it, it is going to have a major element of pop in there.

My next choice for studio tracks I'm proud of is a project I did with George Duke called *Brazilian Love Affair*. I can't

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remember any of the titles of the songs, but doing that whole album was really fun. One of the reasons was we flew to Rio de Janeiro to record it. It was a fantastic experience for me because I could play a Latin feel, but the Brazilian feel had a different kind of attitude about it. Plus, they used some of the Brazilian drummers from down there, so I was able to watch and learn from the way they played it. Those guys are really incredible musicians. I used to play with Flora Purim and Airto, who are from that area, but it's another kind of flavor. That was a great album and a great experience that I will remember for the rest of my life.

And my number-five recording would probably be the title track of Kenny Loggins' *Leap Of Faith* album. We did it at David Foster's studio in Malibu, and I was excited because it was my first one-on-one experience with him, as well as with Kenny Loggins. Any time you're overdubbing, you're under the microscope because it's just you. The track was already there and I had to put my part in.

RF: How difficult was that?

RL: It was really intense because sometimes the guys don't know quite what they want, but they know what they *don't* want. Kenny is one of those guys: "Okay, let's try this," "Okay, let's try that." I pieced it together and I was able to use some electronic drums to create a hypnotic kind of vibe. And then I was able to implement the acoustic kit, using a real nice snare backbeat. Plus I overdubbed a little African tom-tom thing. When it was all put together and mixed properly, it was really nice.

RF: You've now recorded your own project. How does a drummer who doesn't sing become a solo artist?

RL: My trip is more like a Quincy Jones kind of thing. He doesn't sing, he produces and puts people together. I enjoy putting people together and making good music. I've had the pleasure of working with Quincy via the Brothers Johnson. That's what I want to do: find good people that nobody will give a break to and give them exposure. I want to find the next James Ingram or Patti Austin.

RF: But this new album for you is as an artist.

RL: Yes—artist, producer, musician, songwriter. I wrote all the songs on the album and I introduced two new singers. Plus Al Jarreau, James Ingram, David Thomas from Take 6, and Vesta Williams also sang on the album.

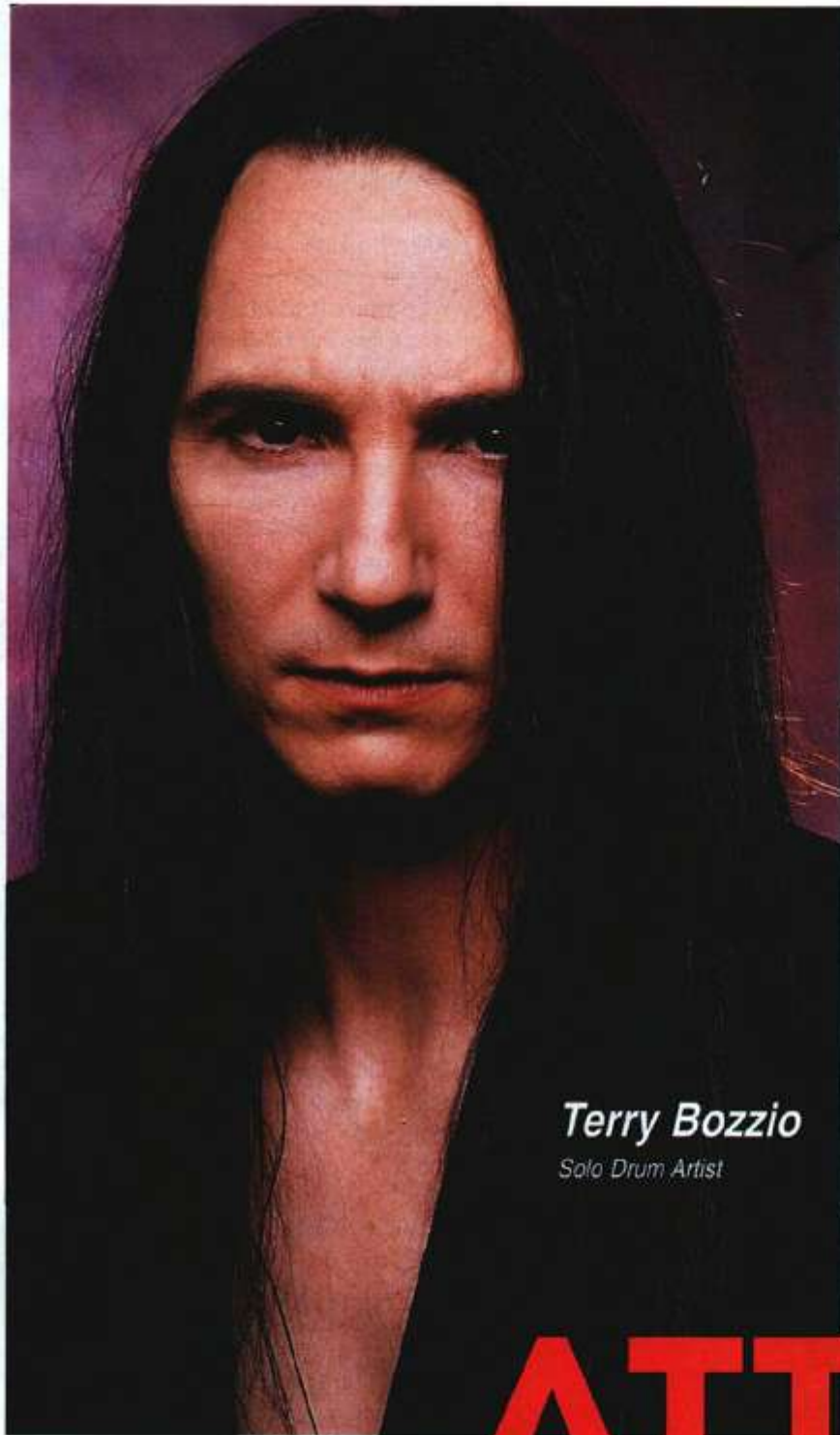
RF: How long have you been wanting to make this album?

RL: For years, but I'm really glad it happened when it did because I'm more mature now and I have a little more experience under my belt. Plus, I've got some new friends. Donald Fagen played on it, as well as Phil Collins. Gregg Phillinganes and I grew up together, and he played on it. And all of the original Yellowjackets played with Robben Ford. Plus there are some incredible saxophone performances from Kirk Whalum, Bony James, and Gerald Albright on the same song. I also have Sheila E, Peter Michael Escovedo, Luis Conte, George Duke...I'm sure I'm forgetting someone.

RF: How difficult is it to produce while you're playing?

RL: It's nuts—you play, then you run around the glass to listen, then run back and play again. It keeps you in shape—you lose a lot of weight. It's hard, but I enjoy the challenge, so I try to do it as much as I can.

RF: You recorded a lot of it at your studio. What couldn't you do in your own studio?



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RL: I couldn't mix it. We mixed it at a different location that had a million-dollar console called a Neve *Capricorn*. It processes at a very high sample rate, so your stuff sounds better. It cost me twenty grand just to mix this record.

RF: You have more energy than about ten people put together. What do you do to keep yourself so energetic?

RL: I take my vitamins, plus I take a multi-vitamin that has chromium in it called *Formula One*. Chromium gets you going. You take a couple of those at the beginning of the day and it gives you enough energy to do all the stuff you need to do. Sometimes we'd be doing recording sessions on the road and we'd be up until 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning, and we'd have a show the next day. We'd sleep on the plane and at around 1:00 we'd take one of those pills and we were good to go. You also have to eat smart, too.

RF: Do you exercise?

RL: I swim, play basketball, and walk. When I'm on the road, every hotel has a pool, so I swim, and I walk around the cities we travel to.

RF: The road must get tiring after a while.

RL: I've been blessed to play with some incredible musicians. God has blessed me again with another great gig with Eric. I'm not tired.

RF: Your career has been such a gradual, steady, consistent climb from the Yellowjackets to that of being a super-side-man.

RL: I was saying to someone recently, "From Collins to Clapton, from Houston to Jackson—and still moving." Thank God! I've got my record coming out, the movie, the books, the whole nine yards. You've got to do it. If you're talking about trying to be successful in any capacity, you really have to pull out all the stops, and I've been blessed enough that people even want to talk to me, let alone hire me. I've been given some great chances in my career. And when you get a chance, you've got to jump on it.



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Jim Black

by Ken Micallef

photos by Paul LaRaia

Free Jazz Fountainheads?

Twenty-seven-year-old Ibarra, though petite of frame, is absolutely explosive behind the drumset. Working with bassist/leader William Parker, saxophonist David S. Ware, or her husband, saxophonist Assif Tsahar, Ibarra epitomizes a player painting with rhythmic colors. With her long arms arcing like a swan, she gracefully incorporates diverse percussion, from rattling, funky llama toenails to luminous gongs to Tibetan and Indian hand cymbals and shakers—often all at once.

During a recent performance with Tsahar, Ibarra—simultaneously layering and then deconstructing sparse, flowing polyrhythms—placed small cymbals on the snare drum head and then played them. Equally unusual but melodious, she also dragged a set of cymbals-on-a-rope over the drums for a shimmering percussive effect. One song ended with Ibarra simply lifting the brushes off the head as she shook them, creating a glistening, glimmering effect like audio sparklers. Jabbing the tom-tom heads angrily or gently caressing a small gong as if in meditation, Ibarra created a whirlwind that was irresistible, even as the nonstop crescendo of saxophone notes blurred traditional notions of melody.

Dedicated vegan Jim Black, though thirty, looks about seventeen, with his penetrating eyes, unruly blond mop, and tiny, kinetic presence. Equal parts John Bonham, Paul Motian, and Dennis Chambers, Black's drumming seems an outgrowth of the Vinnie Colaiuta school of fireball fusion and manic intensity.

On a recent gig with free-funk trumpeter Cuong Vu (Black also works regularly with Tim Berne, Pachora, Dave Douglas, and his own group, Human Feel), Black bent the edges of rock familiarity, his bass drum bombing like Bonham, his high tom scalding the ear like a Stewart Copeland reggae land mine. Like a nervous president with his finger on the button, Black never kept a stick in his hand for long. Instead, a stick would be replaced by a brush or an egg shaker...then a silver bowl would appear on the floor tom to be banged for a minute...that replaced by incessant hand drumming on the floor tom—no, it's a brush in one hand and a shaker in the other...then some weird vibrating electric bug buzzing on the floor tom as Jim plays a mambo on the rims. Whew!

Susie Ibarra and Jim Black: beauty and the beast? Oh, if it were that simple. In an age when music from every era and every inch of the globe is available on CD, these two musicians have melted it all down into that rarest of things: a unique, deeply personal, highly evolved style. Black and Ibarra. Ibarra and Black. Remember the names. And leave your preconceptions at the door.

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Avant Garde Avatars?

Birthed by the sonic explorations of John Coltrane, Albert Ayler, and Cecil Taylor, and given voice by such drumming pioneers as Milford Graves, Andrew Cyrille, and Rashied Ali, today's free jazz has found an audience ready for something more potent than '60s jazz classicism or tepid post-fusion. Whether you call it "avant garde" or "new creative music" or "new and improved improv for the '90s," this music is addressing and incorporating not only American jazz, but music from around the world. From tiny clubs, like Manhattan's Knitting Factory and The Cooler, to such yearly concert series as the Vision Quest Festival, musicians dedicated to their art, with nary a nod to commerce, are pushing the goalposts into incredibly fertile and fascinating new territory.

Working both the extremes of rhythm and the sonic extremes of their kits, Jim Black and Susie Ibarra are two unusual, creative personalities who bring everything organic to bear on their drumming. Beyond exotic timekeeping, they stir up great clouds of rhythm as incendiary reaction.

Susie Ibarra

Jim Black



"You can say we're all in this underground improvisational music scene, but it's really hard to put a moniker on it. We're open to anything, whether, it's classical, country, rock, pop, drum 'n' bass, techno—anything."

—Jim Black

KM: This music scene is very vibrant and diverse, yet still considered underground.

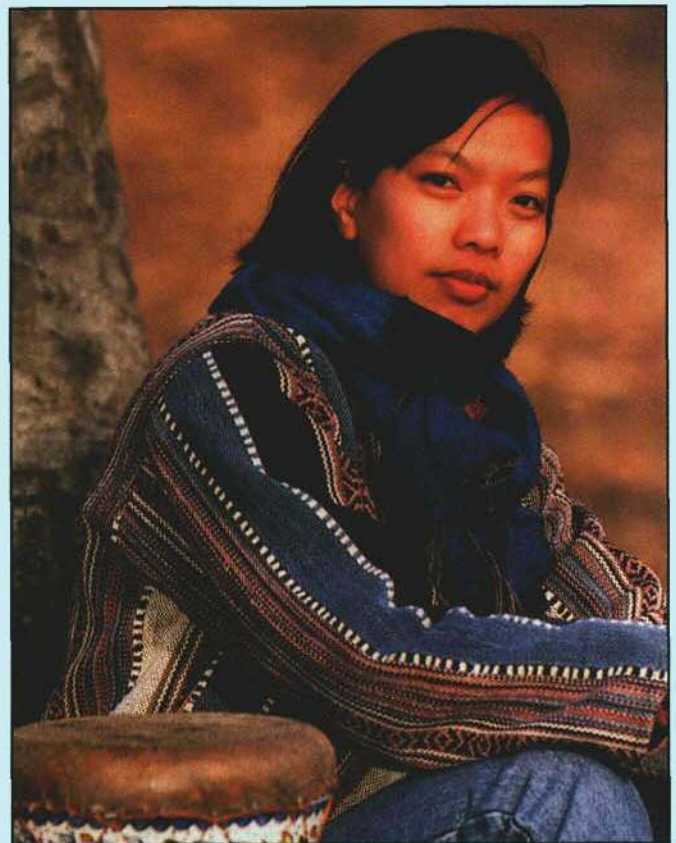
JB: Improvisationally based music started underground, but now it's getting more recognition. In New York, because of the Knitting Factory, The Cooler, and the Vision Quest Festival, all these diverse musics are breaking out.

The one thing all these different groups share is that they are all improvisationally based. You've got influences from new music classical composers, experimental electronic composers, free jazz of the Coltrane and Albert Ayler era, the jazz world from Miles Davis, Mingus, Monk—you're looking at about eighty years of available recorded music here. You can say we're all in this underground improvisational music scene, but it's really hard to put a moniker on it. It's a massive cross-community influence. These people are open to anything, whether it's classical, country, rock, pop, drum 'n' bass, techno—anything.

MD: In your drumming I hear Paul

continued on page 72

Susie Ibarra



"People think that doing something a certain way is the right way because they've seen someone else do it that way. They don't investigate their own way. That kind of thinking inhibits a lot of musicians."

—Susie Ibarra

KM: The origin of the pulse in your drumming isn't obvious; you can't easily tack it to swing, Latin, or rock.

Where does the pulse come from?

SI: The pulse may be abstract, but it's always coming from a certain foundation. With my traps drumming, I think the pulse is coming from a swing foundation. But I've also played a lot of other percussion and a lot of other rhythms. It usually depends on the piece and the music I'm playing.

I might be playing off a samba, a 6/8 groove, or swing. I might do a polymeter, playing 4/4 and then switching to 3/4, but it's always centered on a certain rhythm. Maybe I'll be playing swing, so I might play double time or four times as fast. Or I might play the backbeat with another rhythm on top of that.

KM: On William Parker's "Goggles" [from *Compassion Seizes Bed-Sty*], the beat is straight, but at the same time it's kind of wobbly.

SI: I like a beat to breathe. Sometimes you can really push a beat, sometimes you can really lay back on it. It's not like I'm trying to do something com-

continued on page 73

Motian, John Bonham, Ed Blackwell, Joey Baron, Bernard Purdie....

JB: Maybe that's because of the few things you've heard me play. If you heard me with Lee Konitz, you'd think it was jazz city. I began by being into the Police, Led Zeppelin, the Stones, Hendrix. Then I got hipped to Miles Davis, Weather Report, and Pat Metheny, and learning who Nana Vasconcelos was...one album leads to the next.

I've gone through everything, I know it all! [laughs] Some of that music I haven't heard in ten years, but you

don't forget it. I knew *Heavy Weather* like the back of my hand, and *Kind Of Blue*, and *Milestones* and many Coltrane albums. And *Houses Of The Holy* and *Physical Graffiti* are my favorite Zeppelin albums.

KM: The technical level among the musicians in this scene is very high.

JB: Most of us have worked on jazz forms, played in big bands, gone to music school—it's an insane amount of information. There was a time when I was really into funk, swing, or rock, but I never had to change my tastes drastically. I could still embrace Charlie Parker and Led Zeppelin. I was born in 1967, and in '83 I became aware of all this music at once. I was into jazz, fusion, and rock. Then later in college I learned about the European jazz



scene and contemporary classical music, which is basically hidden from the youth of society unless they happen to catch a rare orchestral series.

KM: And in Pachora you're playing folk music.

JB: Pachora's music is based upon indigenous folk music from Turkey, Greece, former Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Macedonia. There is no drumset in traditional village music, so I use a doumbek in the snare role. The doumbek is used primarily in those countries, along with shakers, bells, and tambourine sounds too. I use a hi-hat, cymbals, a bass drum, which is actually a modified floor tom, and a snare drum [positioned to the right of the doumbek].

There is a beautiful simplicity to Bulgarian music, where it is often just a doumbek playing the groove. It's not four limbs chattering all the time. I used to be petrified of playing in seven until I heard Bulgarian music. "Wow," I thought, "it doesn't have to sound corny like some dated big band approach." Fusion deals with odd times, but with these village musics, it's so round and even-feelins. In Pachora

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Free Agents

The free jazz scene includes drummers who fill every crack and crevice of improvisational spontaneity. The following are the names to look for, according to Jim Black and Susie Ibarra.

Jim Black spotlights:

Gerry Hemingway

Gigs: Anthony Braxton, Marc Dresser, Ellery Eskelin
"Gerry really opened my eyes with his *Tubworks* album. It has a suite for hi-hat, snare drum, bass drum, and cymbal, but you can't tell by listening to it which instrument is which. Gerry uses extended techniques, turning them into completely different instruments. He's amazing."

Michael Sarin

Gigs: Thomas Chapin, Myra Melford, Dave Douglas
"Michael is from Seattle. He's solid and creative, playing a lot of new original music as well as trad styles with his own unique voice."

plex, it just depends on the situation. I can play something very simple when I want to. It depends on the situation.

KM: It sounds like within the music you are constantly reevaluating each moment.

SI: This music is very organic—it's constantly moving and growing—and you have a lot of possibilities. You can pull from so many different areas. But that is how advanced improvisation has developed. There is written composition and there is spontaneous composition, but both are happening in the moment when you're playing.

KM: Are there standard forms like sixteen- or thirty-two-bar forms happening?

SI: No. Each tune may be very different. And night after night the tune may change. Just like if you play the same rhythm night after night, it's not going to sound the same. You can make it sound different. This music has all those different possibilities. I might play the same basic part, but then it might get loose in the improv and go



somewhere else.

KM: Some of the things you do, like using the stick between the ride cymbal and the floor tom—tip on cymbal and shank on the tom—or almost jabbing the mounted tom head with the stick at a 90° angle, are things I might've done as a joke. You're making music.

SI: You can do *anything* with your drumset. Look at the roots of the trapset. A hundred years ago, back in New Orleans, it was considered a contraption, with stuff from all around the world

clamped to it—cymbals, bells, different kinds of drums, a big marching bass drum. Jazz delved deep into incorporating a lot of those different sounds. But now, the general public isn't fed what is really going on. A lot of people don't know what happened after 1960. Music is progressing fast, a lot has happened over the last thirty years, and it hasn't really been digested.

KM: Your playing doesn't reveal a lot of

obvious references to other drummers.

Perhaps you reference Milford Graves, who you studied with.

SI: He definitely has his own concept of playing polymeters, and he was a hand drummer first. He really brought that to the trapset. That really spoke to me because up to that point I had been doing jazz and also a lot of percussion.

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Kenny Wollesen

Gigs: John Zorn, Sex Mob, Tom Waits

"Kenny's got a warm classic jazz sound. He wails on every genre of music out there—great percussionist, too. He can execute anything and plays it how he hears it."

Aaron Alexander

Gigs: Babkis, Hasidic New Wave, his own groups

"Aaron is another Seattle player. He plays with beautiful phrasing and dynamics, and he's a great composer."

John Hollenbeck

Gigs: Pat Zimmerli, his own Claudia Quintet

"John is a meticulous composer and drummer, and a very creative percussionist."

Susie Ibarra spotlights

"Some of my favorite drummers in the free jazz scene are the masters—Milford Graves, Andrew Cyrille, and Dennis Charles. From Chicago, there's Famoudou Don Moye and Hamid Drake. From Detroit, there's Gerald Cleaver. He's a young drummer I heard recently who has a beautifully light touch and is very creative. These are only just a few of many, but I think that these drummers have really given so much to the music and drumming through their individual voices."

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we play in 5/8, 9/8.... There are actual names for the rhythms. Like, a "rachenitsa" is a traditional Bulgarian 7/8 groove; another Bulgarian dance groove is a "gankino," which is in 11/8; a Yugoslavian rhythm in 9/8 is called a "cocek." Turkey has similar rhythms in 9/8. The Bulgarian "oro" is a dance rhythm, and there are oros in 11/8 and 15/8 as well.

KM: What is the other instrumentation in Pachora?

JB: Brad Shepik plays Portuguese guitar, Skuli Sverrisson is on six-string bass, and Chris Speed is on clarinet.

KM: Who were the fusion influences on your playing?

JB: I liked Weather Report, and hearing John Scofield's *Blue Matter* with Dennis Chambers made a big impression. When I got to see Scofield in Seattle, standing outside a club with my nose pressed to the

glass, I was in shock. Chambers had the funk and the technique to blow your mind. Then I learned that he and bassist Gary Grainger were with Parliament, so I got into Bootsy Collins and James Brown. Listening to JB's *Motherlode* album and checking out the ungodly feels of Clyde Stubblefield and Jabo Starks was important. I was also really into Jeff Watts and stalked him from gig to gig for two years, [laughs]

KM: I can hear the Stubblefield in your drumming, meshed with Bonham, Chambers, and all the hand percussion and your unusual tuning. It's a unique approach.

JB: It's because I am not thinking about it. I used to work so hard at sounding like Elvin, but after a period of time I realized, "Man, I am *not* Elvin." The more I stopped thinking about my influences, yet contin-

Fearless Drumming

Here are the albums Jim Black feels best represent his playing:

Artist	Album Title
Pachora	Pachora
Human Feel	Speak To It
Tim Berne	Bloodcount: Unwound
	Saturation Point
	Discretion
Chris Speed	Yeah...No
Ellery Eskelin	One Great Day
	Jazz Trash
Dave Douglas	Live In Europe
Tiny Bell Trio	Constellations
	Tiny Bell Trio
Mike Formanek	Nature Of The Desert
Jaime Soft/Cuong Vu	Ragged Jack
Ben Monder	Dust
	Flux
Carlos Bica	Azul
Satoko Fujii	Looking Out The Window

And here are specific records that have inspired Jim:

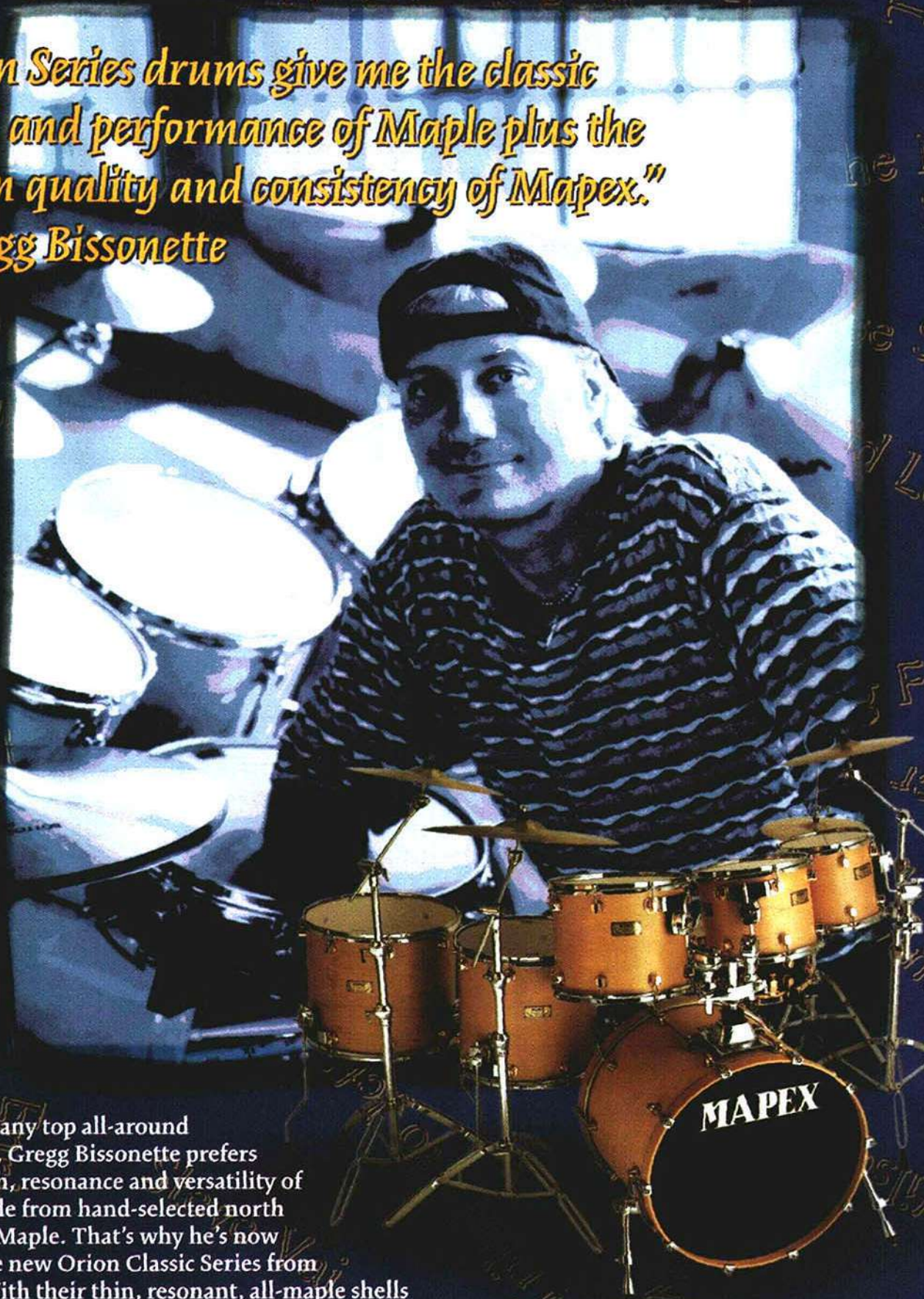
Artist	Album	Drummer
John Coltrane	Bye Bye Blackbird	Elvin Jones
	Interstellar Space	Rashied Ali
Miles Davis	Milestones	Philly Joe Jones
	No Blues	Tony Williams
Wynton Marsalis	Black Codes From The Underground	Jeff Watts
Paul Motian Trio	Live In Tokyo	Paul Motian
Bill Frisell	Before We Were Born	Joey Baron
Keith Jarrett	Standards Live	Jack DeJohnette
Dewey Redman/Ed Blackwell	Red And Black In Wilisau	Ed Blackwell
Albert Ayler	Spiritual Unity	Sunny Murray
The Police	Ghost In The Machine	Stewart Copeland
Nirvana	Nevermind	Dave Grohl
	In Utero	Dave Grohl
Bjork	Post	
Beck	Mellow Gold	

Plus anything with Steve Jordan, Tony Oxley, Gene Lake, Yuval Gabay, Smitty Smith, Papa Jo Jones, Seido Salifosky, Ravi Shankar, John Zorn, Hermeto Pascoal, Peter Scherer, Witold Lutoslawski, Gyorgy Ligeti, and traditional music from Spain, Turkey, India, Greece, Algeria, Bulgaria, and Brazil.

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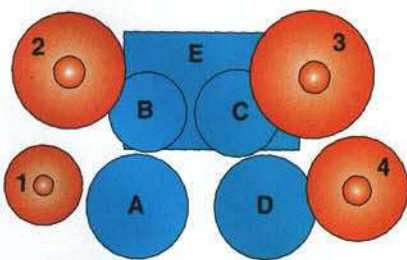
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Sticks: Vic Firth *SD Swinger* model sticks, Vic Firth timpani mallets, Regal Tip brushes

Percussion: various bells, seed pod rattles from Brazil, woven shakers from Hawaii, Remo *Fruit Shakes*, metal kitchen bowls, Turkish *doumbek*, vibrating purple bug

ued to *have* influences, the more open I became. Bringing in the percussion, writing music, learning about melody, harmony, and rhythm, listening to solo concerts by Cecil Taylor, Steve Lacy, or Ellery Eskelin—these were other elements I adopted. The drumset is just a vehicle for making music, but you can pull influences from anywhere—just find a way to translate those varied influences on your instrument. That's all I work on. When you hear Albert Ayler and that barrage of notes from Sunny Murray or Beaver Harris, you don't necessarily learn to play like that, but you get the impact and the energy from it.

KM: Do you write for Pachora?

JB: I write for Pachora and for Human Feel, a band I've had in Boston for eight years. We have four albums out, including *Human Feel*, *Scatter*, *Speak To It* [Songlines], and *Welcome To Malpesta* [New World].

KM: You came from Seattle?

JB: Yes. I had been playing in a rock band as a fourteen-year-old, but then I joined a youth big band when I was fifteen. At sixteen I was playing weddings on weekends, but that big band really kicked my butt. I

played a big Neal Peart-type kit on that gig, until I got a small jazz kit in college. In high school I played vibraphone and marimba, did solo competitions, played timpani in the orchestra, and just really immersed myself in classical percussion.

Going to Berklee in 1985 expanded my world. I got to see Ornette Coleman, Tony Williams, and Elvin Jones. After that I went back home and practiced for a year and played in the University of Washington big band and took some academics. After a year at University I went back to Berklee for two years. That is when it all really began—I toured Europe, I lived in Germany for half a year. There was a great scene there. I moved to New York in 1991.

KM: You taught at Berklee for three summer sessions. What did you focus on?

JB: Bringing in as many influences as I could to each class. I wanted to show drummers that it is great to learn traditional drumming, but that's not music. Being a drummer is not just about playing a lot of great drumistic stuff. It's about who you are playing with and your ideas as an improviser. You're an improviser and a



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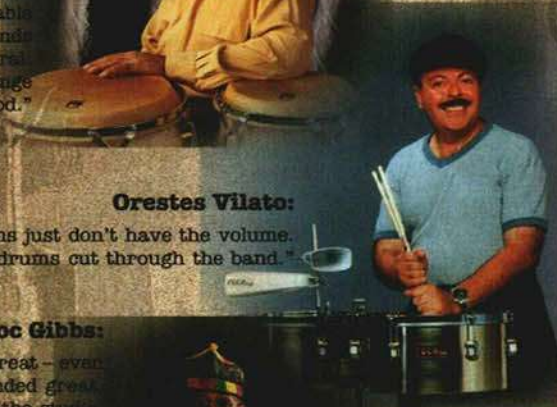
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musician first, and a drummer second. Unfortunately, when you grow up learning drums or even reading *Modern Drummer*, which I did religiously, the emphasis too often isn't on being a musician, improviser, and creative person.

It's great to be functional. I spent a year really focusing on that stuff. But playing paradiddles, polyrhythms, and cross rhythms doesn't matter if you can't play with another improviser or if you don't have any ideas of your own. I wish that creative context was taught more within drumming. Drum methods are only tools. The greatest teachers, such as Gary Chester and Alan Dawson, always emphasized that. **KM:** Your tuning goes from the first tom, which is tuned to sound like a timbale, to the bass drum, which booms and rumbles like John Bonham.

JB: I play in a lot of bass-less trios, where it's okay to have the bass drum wide open. I mute it for faster-noted music. One tone is long, one is short. I can change it depending on how much roar I want out of the drum. With Tim Berne's Bloodcount, I have to hear every note, so I mute it more.

KM: And the overly tight first tom?

JB: I use these Sonor drums that don't ring like the Camco set I had before. They have a purer tone, but a shorter sound to the ear. I need that dry sound, yet these drums sing at different tensions. If it's going to be a high tom, let's make it really high. That medium sound buzzes the snare. I just want more from my drums; I want the widest range of sounds I can get from top to bottom. And sometimes the music dictates the tuning.

I also like dry cymbals. Ring masks frequencies coming at me from the other musicians. In this music there is more happening, and less time for me to figure out what is going to happen next. I need to be able to hear every note around me.

KM: How did the hand percussion develop as part of your style?

JB: If I have to play quietly I'll use more brushes and percussion. Percussion, for me, came because I wanted other sounds. I got tired of playing quiet brushes all the time.

KM: When I saw you playing with trumpeter Cuong Vu, you constantly alternated from stick to egg shakers to bells to mallets to brushes to multi-rods to playing silver

bowls on the drumheads.

JB: I wanted colors. I get bored with the drums some days, so I need a different sound. Or I get sick of riding the cymbal for an entire tune. I'm trying to find other ways to express rhythm and texture. If you create a rhythm with sounds, it's a texture. And what you change instrumentally, or the rate at which you operate the rhythm, is almost like harmony; it creates different levels and different ambiances.

KM: Bringing in egg shakers....

JB: Kitchen bowls, rattles, Remo *Fruit Shakes*—the butternut squash and bananas are great. I also like bowing cymbals.

KM: The bow parts are very ugly, not listenable.

JB: You are not going to like everything in life that comes at you. It depends on your mood. But you've screamed and yelled, you've fought and you've cried. There is real anger and frustration in music sometimes. It's not something for the intellect, but something deep inside. When John Zorn turns on a noise generator just to create an uneasiness in everyone's gut, it's an effect he wants. He wants them to go nuts. Sometimes that is effective. It's part of life.

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KM: But shouldn't music provide an escape from noise?

JB: I can escape through music, but I also want to express and emote through music. I don't think everybody should come to a gig expecting easy listening. But they shouldn't have to expect a massive intellectual challenge either. Feeling uncomfortable is not always a bad thing. But if I want to chill I put on Coltrane's *Ballads* album or Joao Gilberto.

KM: Can you make a living playing this music?

JB: I can pay my bills and eat the food I like. I love traveling and meeting interesting people around the world. No matter what you do as a musician, there is no guarantee of money. If you're into the art, go for it, and that may entail getting a day job. I have friends who would rather paint houses than play weddings, because it keeps them musically focused. I worked telephones in New York before work became steady. However, there is more interest in this music worldwide. People outside of the US want to hear it. If it wasn't for Europe, I'd be doing something else.

KM: Part of what you and Susie do seems like an amateurish goof.

JB: When you are trying to play perfectly, and hit the center of the drum and have an even tone, and play like you're in a recording session, *that* is a massive goof sometimes. I spent so much of my formative years hearing, "Don't do this, don't do that." Well, sometimes yes, and the rest of the time, no. Be yourself, make it work. Have taste, have control over what you are doing musically.

KM: What is your take on drum machines in today's music?

JB: I think drum 'n' bass music is fascinating. You have to give it up to people like Squarepusher and Aphex Twin who use drum machine sounds to create rhythm. Talk about a slap in the face; they are doing something rhythmically you can't even dream of. They make a bass drum change, flange, and reverse in real time—that's a lot of ideas. How can I express *that* being the old-time acoustic drummer? That's a challenge. To improvise with a chorus of noise, or with a bass sound that is something you can't even recognize, brings out something else in you. Or to improvise with a drum machine, like Zachary Alford

did on David Bowie's *Earthling*—that's great. I want to embrace these things, not ran away from them.

KM: But then the drum machine has also impacted many drummer's livelihoods.

JB: I want to prosper making the music I want to make, but it would be foolish for me to pursue being a commercial studio drummer right now. A drum machine can nail it in five seconds. I don't like to talk about art and music in terms of the industry, but when you talk about surviving and making money, this is a problem. The fear you have as a music student is how to survive when you are playing music. This is a bad question to ask. [laughs] How are you going to survive as a human on the planet? That's a better question.

KM: Any particular goals for yourself as a drummer?

JB: To keep going further into the instrument itself, to keep going deeper as a musician. People always say it's all been done with melody and harmony, but that is not true. It's even less true for tone, texture, sonic possibilities, sound, and density, let alone rhythm in general.

On certain days I take a really traditional approach to the drums. Maybe it's not about changing the elements of the drums so much as it is what context you put those elements in. Why does drum 'n' bass work? It's the context, it's the elements of influence. It's what you combine to make a composite sound. That's how the drumset works—all these sounds combining to make a composite sound. Each instrument is its own orchestra. It just depends on how you manipulate it.

Susie Ibarra

continued from page 73

But people say wild things to me, like they hear Tony Williams in my playing. I'm not coming from that. Some have said they hear Art Blakey, and he had a certain influence. But Milford was a big influence. I also studied with Vernel Fournier, who has great brushwork and sticking patterns he got from New Orleans marching bands. I also studied with Buster Smith from Sun Ra Arkestra. That music had a big influence on me. And I played a lot of ethnic music from different cultures.

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KM: Are the musicians' roles different in this music?

SI: In traditional jazz the bass and drums play certain roles, and the piano plays another, but in this music things open up and the roles get blurred. You can play in a supportive manner, but you can also expand the role of the drums and come on top and play up front.

In William Parker's band the music is meant to bring out each individual's voice. If you ask a question about the music, he'll try things and move things around. He might add things in. In duet, like when Assif (Tsahar) and I play, it is really open.

KM: Would it be constricting for you to play a straight-ahead gig? Could you have a good time?

SI: I could have a good time if the other players were having a good time. It depends on my mood. The music can really lift you up. When I am in the music I try to not let emotions interfere. The music is on a different level than that. It's not about you and your emotions and if you had an argument that day. It's beyond you.

KM: In your drumming you constantly

Tone Poetry

Here are the albums that Susie Ibarra feels best represent her playing:

Artist	Album Title
William Parker's Little Huey Creative Music Orchestra	Flowers Grow In My Room Sunrise In The Tone World
Assif Tsahar Trio	Shekina Ein Sof
David S. Ware Quartet	Godspelized Wisdom Of Uncertainty
Matthew Shipp Trio	Breathing Together Matthew Shipp Trio

As for Susie's recorded influences, she says, "I was really more influenced by hearing *live* music, and studying and playing with great musicians—much more than records. In particular, these include Sun Ra, Cecil Taylor, Milford Graves, and William Parker. I was also influenced by world music, especially the music of Southeast Asia, West Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East."

Albums featuring drumset that have inspired Susie include:

Artist	Album	Drummer
Clifford Brown & Max Roach	At Basin Street	Max Roach
Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers	Three Blind Mice	Art Blakey
Sonny Rollins	Newk's Time	Philly Joe Jones
Horace Silver	Blowin' The Blues Away	Louis Hayes
Thelonious Monk	Brilliant Corners	Max Roach
Roy Haynes	Out Of The Afternoon	Roy Haynes
John Coltrane	A Love Supreme	Elvin Jones
Ornette Coleman	The Shape Of Jazz To Come	Billy Higgins
Dewey Redman & Ed Blackwell	Red And Black	Ed Blackwell
Albert Ayler	Love Cry	Milford Graves

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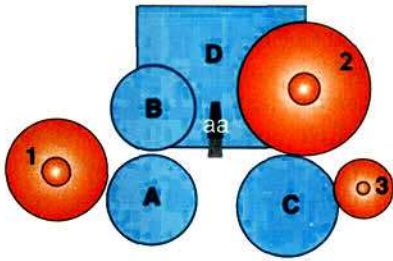
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- D. 18x20 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian

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- 2. 18" A ride ("very old")
- 3. 5" Latin Percussion Bell cymbals modified into hi-hats
- aa. Jackson Krall agogo bells

Sticks: Vic Firth 5A sticks and T-1 timpani mallets, Regal Tip brushes

construct and deconstruct the rhythm. It's very advanced yet very loose. Did you fanatically learn to count meters and work on developing your independence?

SI: Well, you always have to practice. I'm still studying. But my first reaction to polyrhythms and independence is that you have to be in the moment, right there. For me, I have to just play it. Later I might break it down and reflect on it intellectually. It's what I hear and I go there.

I never thought I had any technique—my technique comes out of the musical side, not so much the chops side. I practice very basic things, like press rolls, playing time, rudiments, and tone. Technique is not about having chops, but about how you're able to play music.

KM: How did you get into all of the hand percussion you use?

SI: I used to play with three percussion groups, which played gamelan, Latin percussion, and West African music. So those influences will just come up. Back then I was focusing on traps, but also doing the percussion stuff.

The small percussion instruments I use

are to draw certain sounds and other qualities from the set. I had all this percussion, and Assif suggested I start using it with my set. I just kept bringing in more and more. First I brought the shakers, the llama toenails, the bells, the gongs, the small cymbals. I wanted certain sounds, so I just started doing it. It became a part of what I do.

KM: When you play the snare drum with the small cymbals placed on the head, do you approach it the same way as you would without cymbals?

SI: I might play certain rhythms that I wouldn't play otherwise. I bring in a different musical idea, but I don't think my technique changes.

KM: The gong on the floor tom makes a water drum sound.

SI: I use a small Chinese gong there. It creates different pitches. Sometimes I'll play llama toenail shakers with one hand while I have a stick in my other hand, or I might play the shakers on the set.

For me, I'll hear a sound and want to emulate it on the set. For instance, I was playing in France, and one day we drove

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through fields that had all these cows with bells around their necks. We heard all these bells through the fields. It was so beautiful.

Drummers have a lot of sound choices. We have the possibility to be a whole ensemble. And when it comes to creating a sound, I'm not thinking about my technique. You imagine the sound and you play it any way you can. And you can get so many different sounds on just one drum. On a snare drum, for instance, you can get a deep sound by playing right in the middle

of the head. There are different sounds all over the drum. And don't forget that you can mute the drum or change the pitch of the head by pressing against it with one hand while playing it with another. There are infinite possibilities.

KM: Many things you do, like playing with your hands on the drums, or playing with sticks between the drums, all seem very natural. But since we don't see our favorite jazz or rock drummers doing it, we shy away from it.

SI: That's how society is: People think that doing something a certain way is the right way because they've seen someone *else* do it that way. Then they don't investigate their own way. That kind of thinking inhibits a lot of musicians from coming out and being who they are.

I know when I was combining things in more traditional situations I could feel the purist's pressure. Whether it was in jazz, Latin, or Philippine music—forget it, they wanted it a certain way. I respect that, that they don't want to bring in these different techniques. I wanted to bring it all *together*.

KM: Is it tough not only being a musician who wants to play this way, but being a drummer who is also a woman?

SI: It's tough, but I'm just happy to be where I am in life and to not be bitter. When you encounter prejudice in any way it's ugly, and it's out there, everywhere, in all kinds of shapes and colors. It can really hurt people. Even now I occasionally deal with people who aren't professional and who sometimes bring things down.

KM: Drummers reading this should not think that you don't have good technique, though. You have terrific chops. Those blazing 16ths you play with your left hand are impressive.

SI: I am left-handed, but I play a right-handed kit. I struggle with certain things on my right side, yet I try to be ambidextrous.

KM: How did you begin?

SI: I started playing classical piano when I was five in Houston, Texas. And I played organ in church. I began on drums when I was sixteen, which is really late compared to most. We had a lot of music in the family, but I got my rhythm from my dad. In high school I played in a rock band. Then I came to New York in 1988 when I was seventeen—not to play music, I was studying art. But then I heard Buster Smith with

Sun Ra and I knew I had to be a drummer. I studied Latin percussion at the Boys Harbor school. I got my diploma in music at Mannes College of Music, and then I got my BA at Goddard College. I studied with Milford Graves and then with Vernel Fournier and Keith Copeland, and I practiced at Kenwood Dennard's loft. Now *he* can play a one-handed roll! I worked as a florist until two years ago, but I was always studying. I still study now.

I did a lot of different types of gigs early on. I played some straight-ahead gigs, some percussion gigs, and I got called for all-women bands. But my first break was with William Parker's Little Huey Big Band in 1994. He really supported me. He recommended me to Davis S. Ware and Matthew Shipp.

KM: Why do people hire you?

SI: I'm compatible with certain things, and people are looking for certain sounds.

KM: How does playing with John Zorn differ from playing with William Parker?

SI: They are *totally* different musicians. It goes back to the idea of not having any premeditated assumptions. I don't compare. John Zorn's Masada plays really differently when they play with me! [laughs]

KM: Let's talk about technique. What do you practice on the road to stay limber?

SI: I practice single strokes and press rolls. But when you're on the road you are performing more and practicing less.

KM: Your arm and stick positioning is really unorthodox sometimes.

SI: I *am* into having good technique; it gives you a good sound. But there are basic techniques, and then there are *extended* techniques. They come from my searching for different sounds and tones. Drummers don't talk about the exploration of tones on the kit. They do it, but they just don't talk about it.

Searching for different sounds is an extension of traditional techniques. It's not like this stuff came out of nowhere.

However, if you are really inspired, something might just drop out of the sky. People sometimes come to me wanting to learn things they've seen me play, but when it comes down to it I still work on the basics. You have to have a good foundation before you can reach for something more adventurous.

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ENDORSEMENTS

THE REAL DEAL

How, Why, And Whether To Seek Drumming's New Brass Ring

by Adam Budofsky

"Hey, that's a *sweet* drumkit. Where'd you get it?"

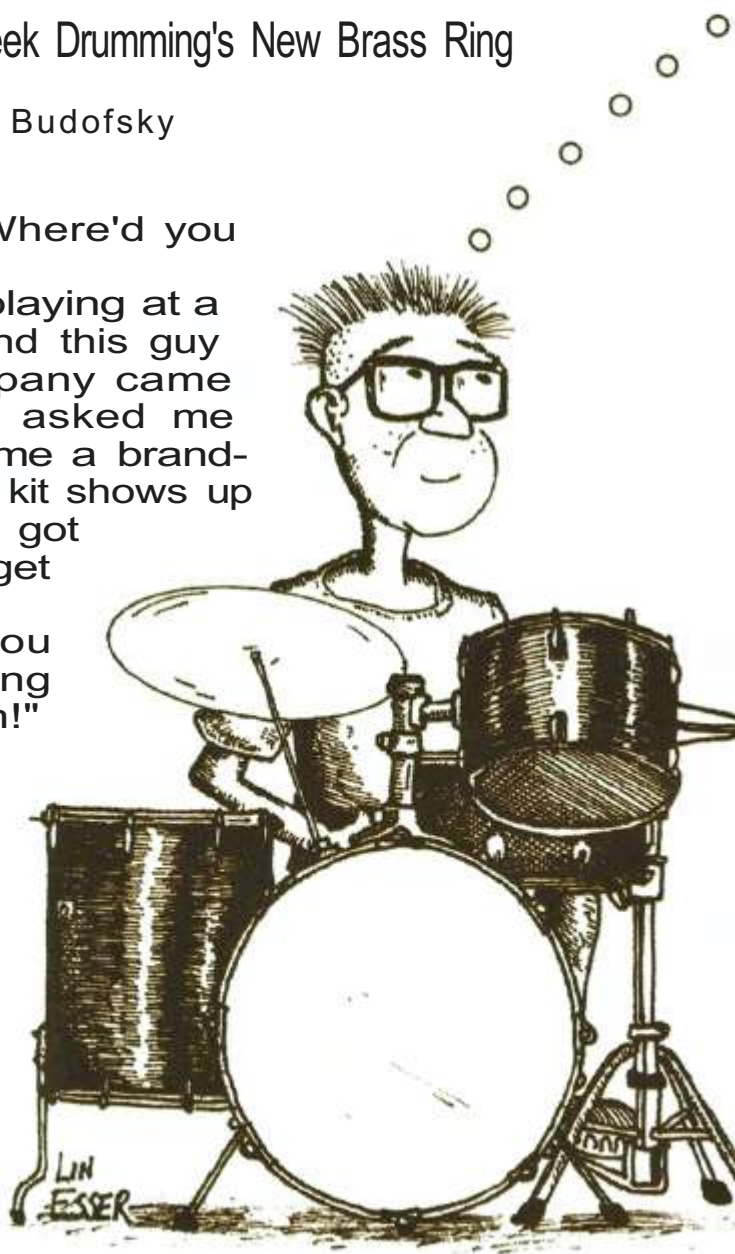
"Check it out: My band was playing at a local bar last Tuesday night, and this guy from the Diamond drum company came up to me after the show and asked me what I would think if he gave me a brand-new drumset. A week later, this kit shows up at my parents' house. Now I've got this endorsement deal, and I get free equipment all the time."

"There must be a catch. You guys haven't recorded anything yet—or even played out of town!"

"The company rep said I was such a hot player that he figured giving me free equipment was like making an investment in my future. Maybe he heard about that local drum competition I won."

"Damn. You rule, dude."

"Thanks. Hey, give me a hand taking this head with the Diamond logo off the bass drum; my band's logo is way cooler."





The preceding story is completely true—at least in the dreams of a million drummers. And let's be honest; what drummer hasn't imagined the day when all that hard work and ambition finally pays off, and manufacturers come to *us* to endorse their products. After all, we all see those ads in *Modern Drummer*. There must be *thousands* of guys getting free gear. Right?

Well.... To find out just who's getting what—and how and why they're getting it—*MD* spoke with the artist representatives of several major drum, cymbal, stick, and head manufacturers about the thorny topic of artist endorsements. Though their experiences and methods may vary, all the gentlemen we spoke to agreed that there are quite a few widespread misconceptions (the drummers in our introduction gave us a hint at but a few), and that players *and* manufacturers would benefit from some clarification on the subject.

The Not-So Cold, Hard Truth

In the sports world, the endorsement game has certainly become incredibly sophisticated and lucrative in recent years. It's common knowledge that the most successful sports figures, like Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods, actually get paid far more for endorsing products than for showing up to play.

On the surface, it would seem the music industry has followed suit. Whereas in the past it was common to see a couple of top players like Buddy Rich and Gene Krupa lending their names and images to ads, a quick glance through *Modern Drummer* today reveals literally dozens of players—some of whom you might not have even *heard* of—endorsing everything from drumsets to method books to cymbal cleaners.

But while today's proliferation of endorsement deals might give drummers the impression that there's a ton of equipment sitting in warehouses across the country just waiting for new, hot players to take home for free, consider these words by Pearl's Mike Farris: "First and foremost, companies give

endorsements for what they can get back in the deal. It's simply a marketing tool used to help sell drums." This should come as no surprise. As in every other industry, musical instrument manufacturers are in business to make money, and most decisions—including the choice and support of endorsers—have financial implications. It makes sense that they expect a certain amount of support from artists who they give a break to.

But in contrast to other industries, the individuals at the percussion manufacturing companies generally have a genuine interest in supporting the art of drumming that goes beyond increased profit margins. Many are in fact struggling, working players whose love for our instrument led them to their current positions. They understand the hardships of the working drummer, and most take personal pride in being able to support the one member of the band who oftentimes gets the least respect and attention.

Also keep in mind that the concept of loyalty continues to hold a lot of weight in the drum business. Almost all the manufacturer reps we spoke to for this article made a point of this. The word "relationship" comes up again and again, and just like in a friendship or romance, a good business relationship benefits both parties equally. Each party accomplishes things he'd be unable to without the other. Each needs to be able to rely on the other over the long haul. Each also must come to the table with something serious to offer. For the drummer who is ready for the responsibility, endorsement deals could prove a valuable aspect of their career.

IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT EQUIPMENT

A widely held belief among the general drumming public is that the most important aspect of an endorsement deal is getting a break on price. "I think it's 30% about product, and 70% about relationship," is

how Sabian's Steve Oksenuk sees it. "It's definitely *not* about free gear," states Pearl's Mike Farriss. "It's about a promise that we are going to service you. While you are out on the road, you are going to get everything you need to do your job. If you

break a part, we have to be there within twenty-four hours with a replacement, because the show won't wait. I think that has a lot more value than just about anything else we can offer."

Some players look forward to endorsement deals because they think they'll be featured in advertisements, which will hopefully bring increased credibility to their careers. "But there are so many people that you just can't handle everybody in an advertising situation," explains Paiste's Rich Mangicaro. "There are a lot of artists who I'd like to put in an ad but I can't. They are professional and are playing with good people. But it's difficult; we have over 900 endorsers."

"We do use artists in advertising," adds Mike Farriss, "but there is nothing we can do as a company to make somebody famous. You make *yourself* famous by the success of record sales and tours. Appearing in an ad is more like a reward for doing a very successful



"We'll make sure endorsers get gear anywhere they need it, all over the world. In return we expect them to fly flags: put stickers on bass drums, give us credit on recordings, and talk positively about the product."
—Remo's Bob Yerby

job. But ultimately what we are advertising is drums. We do plenty of ads that show no artists, and that's really what it's about."

"It certainly doesn't hurt your career to appear in an ad," suggests Zildjian's John DeChristopher. "But in terms of helping you get a gig with a major artist? I forget who put it this way, but I agree with the sentiment: You know Vinnie Colaiuta didn't get the gig with Sting because Sting was thumbing through *Modern Drummer* one day, saw a Zildjian ad, and said, 'That's the guy I want to play in my band.' Advertising certainly does bring a certain amount of credibility to

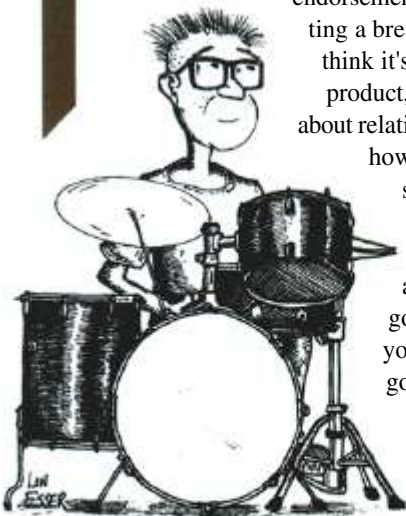
players in terms of clinics and such, but realistically, we can only advertise endorsers who help affect our business positively."

SO, ARE YOU READY FOR A BREAK?

Though manufacturers obviously see an advantage to cultivating a roster of endorsers, many in the industry feel that drummers tend to misunderstand the level and types of success they should attain before expecting company support. "To use the old cliché," says John DeChristopher, "some people are putting the



"To me, teachers are the best endorsers you can have; they have an immediate effect on kids."
—Sabian's Steve Oksenuk



cart way before the horse in terms of the stage at which they are approaching companies for endorsements. You have to realize that by signing someone up as an



"Somebody who has used and loved a product for years is more apt to say good things and be happy with it than somebody who is just looking for free stuff."

—Pearl's Mike Farriss

endorser, we are in effect removing that person from being a consumer at a retail store. In fairness to potential applicants who may say, 'Hey, I

understand I can't get free product; I'm willing to pay for it,' I still think some companies have lowered the bar by selling direct to people too early, which waters down the effectiveness of endorsements."

Vater's John Dawkes suggests that changes in the music industry—specifically, the trend of record labels to promote "one-hit wonders" rather than nurture young bands—have forced companies to rethink how they approach endorsers. "Drummers approach us like, 'Hi, we're signed,' and they automatically think they're on the endorsement wagon. But oftentimes they have no background in the business, and who knows whether they're going to be around next year? Early on I had a problem, because we were afraid to say no, and sometimes it backfired on us. So now I'm more up front about what I need from them."

So just what *does* a manufacturer expect from potential endorsers? Though most artist reps state that there are no hard and fast rules regarding endorser acceptance, as Remo's Bob Yerby suggests, "All companies have to be selective. At Remo we've got well over 750 guys, and that's just in the US; in Europe there's another 500."

"I think all companies are basically looking for the same things," Yerby adds. And those things are? Paiste's Rich Mangicaro puts it succinctly: "We are looking for visibility, and we are looking for longevity."

According to Zildjian's John DeChristopher, "If I get a promo pack with a letter on Capitol Records letterhead from the A&R manager who's working the band, that carries some weight. That says that the band is a priority for Capitol, that the label is going to spend some money on promotion, that there's a tour budget, and that they're going to try to get their video on MTV and VH1. Though these elements are not necessarily *everything* we're looking for, they definitely comprise some of our criteria."

DeChristopher will be the first to admit, however, that sometimes rare talent outweighs mass exposure: "Five years ago I



received an independent CD from the management of the Dave Matthews Band. At that time, no one outside of Charlottesville, Virginia had heard of them, but I heard Carter Beauford on that disc and thought, 'Oh my God, this guy's unbelievable! Whether this Dave Matthews thing ever happens is almost irrelevant; this guy is going to do something with *someone*.' So we developed a relationship very early on. Then they recorded their first album for RCA, and about a year later things really began to explode. The rest, as they say, is history."

DW's Scott Garrison concurs that major-label association isn't always imperative, but suggests that other factors are always at play. "We have endorsers who aren't even signed to labels. With us it's on an individual basis. But what prospective endorsers have to understand is that it's a budgetary thing for us as well, and that our decision to take someone on is sometimes dictated by timing. I've had guys say, 'Look, I'm in this band that is the hottest thing going, and we're selling out all our venues,' but if we are booked up with endorsers at that time, we can't bring anybody on board right then. So it's a tough situation."

Perhaps it's stating the obvious, but as Paiste's Rich Mangicaro suggests, "Of course, ability on the instrument is very important—although you don't have to be a virtuoso, and it doesn't necessarily have to be a chops kind of gig. But if you are musical and are playing the right thing in the context, we'll be more interested."

Sabian's Steve Oksenuk believes that name players aren't the only drummers who make good endorsers. Sabian divides their 1,100+ endorsers into three categories: the highly regarded "professional," the "gigging" or high-profile drummer, and the "educator." Professionals like Rod Morgenstein and high-profile guys like Sean Kinney are important, Steve explains, "But a guy could be a fantastic endorser even if he lives in a small town in Idaho. He

might be teaching sixty-five kids a week and play at the local Holiday Inn that two hundred people frequent over a given weekend. That's great exposure. To me, teachers are the best endorsers you can have; they have an immediate effect on kids."

SINCERITY COUNTS

The jaded among you might not buy it, but most of the reps we spoke to insist that they prefer if drummers actually *used* their products before they sought an official endorsement deal. "The first thing we consider is whether our cymbals are their choice because of their sound, not only because they might get a good deal," explains Paiste's Rich Mangiaro. "We look for drummers who grew up playing our drums," agrees Pearl's Mike Farriss, "because they are going to make the best endorsers. Somebody who has used and loved a product for years is more apt to say good things and be happy with it than somebody who is just looking for free stuff."

John Dawkes tells a common tale: "Some guys inquire about getting a Vater

endorsement, and, assuming they are already playing our sticks, I ask them what model they use. 'Oh, right now I'm using Company X's 5A model. But if you can give me a better deal, I'll use yours.' They come right out and say that! See you later. They obviously don't believe in our product. You are supposed to be using something because you believe in it—that's the *definition* of 'endorsement'—not bouncing around for the dollar."

Steve Oksenuk agrees. "You might think, 'Oh, right, he's just saying that,' but I sincerely believe people should play what they believe in. Because, frankly, I'm sick and tired of these guys switching brands left and right. When somebody approaches us about an endorsement, the first thing we ask them is, 'Do you play Sabian?' If they say no, we ask them what they play. If they say something like, 'I play another company's stuff, but they turned me down....' Okay, so we are your second choice? You begin to get an idea of where they are coming from; they're just looking for product. We're looking for a sincere, honest relationship."

MAKING CONTACT

Now, let's assume you've done some critical self-evaluation, and decided to seek some endorsements. As a professional drummer of note, you feel the exposure you can give to the products you use might be valuable enough to the manufacturers of those products that they'd be willing to work a deal with you. What now? Pick up the phone? Write a letter? Hire a skywriter to praise your favorite cymbal maker in smoke over their factory?

Most artist reps suggest contacting them initially by mail in a businesslike manner. All were quick to point out that a phone call doesn't necessarily lead you to voice-mail hell; you may in fact get someone right off the bat who can talk to you. But common sense suggests that the US Post is probably the best way to start.

As far as what to send, the infamous "promo pack" should make up the bulk of your package. "The key thing to include is some sort of recorded material," says Zildjian's DeChristopher. "We listen to every CD and tape that comes in here. A bio on the drummer and/or the band they

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play with is also important, preferably from the band's label or management company. Include as much historical information as you can. Due to the nature of my travel schedule, I request that promotional materials be sent to our office in Los Angeles for pre-evaluation. If they feel strongly about an applicant, they forward the materials to me for further consideration. From there we all discuss it and ultimately make a decision."

"We listen to the CDs so we can hear what the band is about," explains Mike Farriss. "We want to know what the lyrical message is. We also want a personal bio of the drummer—what his background is, what his influences are. I want to develop a relationship with every artist we have at Pearl, but we have to have a process in place where packages are submitted, reviewed, and evaluated, and then a decision is made."

"The bottom line is the presentation," insists John Dawkes. "Even if you are not a household name, if you are up front and tell it like it is, I think the relationship kicks off better. Case in point: the drum-

mer for the Mighty Mighty Bosstones, Joe Sirosi. I signed him up with Vater seven years ago, because he came in here and was up front. He said, 'I buy your sticks at XYZ drumshop, and I'm having a tough time now, though I'm sure this is going to break.' I saved the guy a lousy dollar fifty a pair, and all he did was rave about us. Now they've sold three million records. So attitude is a big thing. I get a lot of press kits in here that just have photocopies of cover letters from management companies, and it's clear they're blanketing everybody out there and waiting to see who is going to call them back."

"The drum business is pretty small," adds Remo's Bob Yerby, "and we all know each other. So I look for references from other people in the industry. Also, I want to see itineraries detailing the venues they are going to be playing and how many people are going to be affected by their shows. Press clippings are also very important. Basically, you want to make your package presentable to the point where I can't deny it."

Sabian's Steve Oksenuk agrees that rec-

ommendations are important. "If a guy like Mike Farriss calls and says, 'Expect a call from so-and-so,' that person has already gone up three notches on the list. How do you get to that point? You get acquainted: Go to clinics, go to a NAMM show—meet people."

Most musicians are aware that meeting people and doing the shmooze thing don't necessarily come easily to "creative types" like us drummers, but Oksenuk suggests that this is something we're just going to have to get over. "A lot of drummers are not savvy in the professional world—I was the same way before I joined Sabian. But I would suggest that the best way to approach a company for an endorsement deal is as if you were applying for a job. First thing: Appearance is everything. If you show up, look respectable. Not that you should walk your resume into every company, but appearance also means that if you are going to call, make sure you have everything together and you're not like, 'Hey, what's up, dude?'"

"Companies are going toward more of a professional attitude as far as what it takes

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to become an endorser. You've got so many more talented kids out there today than ever before; I'll tell you, three quarters of the tapes I get here will blow your socks off. So if you approach it like a professional and not like a ninny, your chances are that much better."

CLIMBING THE LADDER

All right, you've been accepted as an official endorser! Does this mean that you should expect the same "deal" as the big boys? Simple business sense dictates otherwise. I mean, who do you think is going to sell more skis this year, Picabo Street or the local pro at Sugarbush Mountain? It only makes sense percussion manufacturers treat their endorser programs the same way. To coordinate their large numbers of players, many companies roughly divide their rosters into levels, which suggest the extent of the support players will receive.

"We have five levels of endorsers," explains Paiste's Rich Mangicaro. "It just depends on where they are in their career and what we can do for them. If a drummer

becomes more active, we can move him up. The discount you get on product obviously increases the more famous you are—and how much you give back to the company in terms of support."

Vater approaches their endorser "ladder" in a similar way, as John Dawkes illustrates: "If a drummer is with a new act that is signed, he'll start at the bottom level, which gives him a percentage off cost on sticks. He's got to update me on everything that happens to him from this point. 'We just recorded, and we're going to open for Van Halen this summer.' I could kick him up a level now, and he'll get a higher percentage off, because he'll have greater visibility. Now the band takes off and are headlining their own tour, and you're going to do a story on the drummer in *Modern Drummer*. More visibility...they go into the studio and do another album and tour...and he'll get another break on price. The next step from there is like a Chad Smith or a 'Smitty' Smith; they are selling big numbers, and people want them to do clinics...so it snowballs."

Like many companies, Sabian sees the need for some type of division, but insists it's to the benefit of both the company and the players to treat everyone on their roster with the same level of respect. "We have two levels: the minor leagues and the full-fledged endorser," explains Steve Oksenuk. "Top-level guys get two cymbal setups for touring, one to use and one as a backup. Minor leaguers get a break on cost and exchanges of broken products with no questions asked—obviously we can't afford to give everything away. But everybody is treated the same. Whether you are a relative unknown or you are Rod Morgenstein, you have the same line of communication—you use the same 800 number and get the same individual. Every endorser is also invited to put a presentation together to be considered for our clinic program. We might not send just anybody to Sam Ash to do a clinic, but some players are perfect for middle and high schools."

"I think everybody is comfortable with the fact that certain endorsers—the Gadds, the Elvins, the Dennises, the Louie

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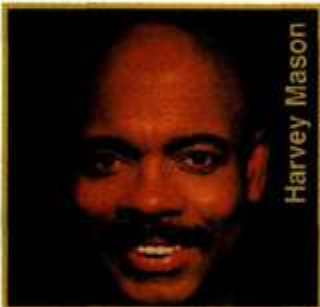
Keep It Clean...



Dave Weckl



Buddy Rich



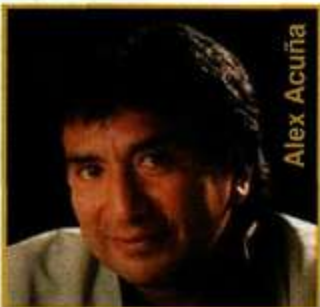
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Bellsongs—have achieved a level of success where there is almost no limitation to the amount of support we can give them," explains Zildjian's DeChristopher. "But there's a point where you have to answer to budgets. I think there is a big misconception that when you are an endorser of a drumstick company, you'll just get free drumsticks. Ninety-five percent of our drumstick endorsers pay for their sticks. Gosh, I think I can even speak for the other companies when I say that we'd all be out of business if we gave sticks away to all our endorsers. But no matter who you are, as a Zildjian endorser you'll always be treated with respect, receive product support when it's appropriate, and your needs will always be responded to in a timely manner."

YOUR SIDE OF THE BARGAIN

We've looked at what an endorser can expect from a manufacturer. But how about what they can expect from you? Bob Yerby puts it bluntly: "We'll make sure endorsers get gear anywhere they need it, all over the world. In return we expect them to help us

sell gear. We expect them to fly flags: put stickers on bass drums, give us credit on recordings, and talk positively about the product."

"At Zildjian," says John DeChristopher, "even if your career might be in a bit of a lull today, we're going to give you the same support you got when your band was selling five million albums. But because of that, you have to prove yourself. We need you to keep us apprized of where your career is going, and update us on anything new that is going on with your playing situation."

Vater's John Dawkes agrees. "It's your job as an endorser to keep us informed of your career changes. You need to take the initiative—even if you are a name player. Tell us what is coming up in the future, like tours, sessions, etc."

"We expect our endorsers to perform live or on video on our instrument at all times," states Paiste's Rich Mangicaro. "We expect their support in terms of talking about our products, and to answer any questions people might have about them. If there is a chance that we can get credit on

their records, we expect that—though we understand that that is not always possible. But generally speaking, we hope they use our instruments all the time."

"What we expect from our endorsers is the genuine feeling that they truly like the product that they are playing," offers Sabian's Steve Oksenuk. "We also expect them to be honest and loyal to the product—and in return they'll get the same from us. If there are any problems, we expect them to come to us. Overall, we're just looking for a mutually understanding and respecting relationship."

THE REAL DEAL

In the end, it seems drummers would be better off looking at endorsements as a happy result of a successful career, rather than a means to an end. "I think that if there is some sort of lesson to all this," suggests Paiste's Rich Mangicaro, "it's: Follow your musical heart. If you're going to choose to endorse an instrument, make sure you really want to play it—and that you *really* believe in it."



MODERN DRUMMER

honor roll

MD's Honor Roll consists of those drummers and percussionists whose talent, musical achievements, and lasting popularity placed them first in *MD's* Readers Poll in the categories indicated for five or more years. We will include these artists, along with those added in the future, in each year's Readers Poll Results as our way of honoring these very special performers.

ALEX ACUÑA
Latin/Brazilian Percussion

AIRTO
**Latin American and Latin/
Brazilian Percussion**

KENNY ARONOFF
Pop/Mainstream Rock

EDDIE BAYERS
Country

LOUIE BELLSON
Big Band

GARY BURTON
Mallet Percussion

DENNIS CHAMBERS
Electric Jazz; Funk

ANTHONY J. CIRONE
Classical Percussion

VINNIE COLAIUTA
All-Around; Studio

PHIL COLLINS
Pop/Mainstream Rock

PETER ERSKINE
Mainstream Jazz

VIC FIRTH
Classical Percussion

Hall of Fame:

1998:
Ringo Starr



- 1997: Terry Bozzio
- 1996: Vinnie Colaiuta
- 1995: Elvin Jones
- 1994: Larrie Londin
- 1993: Jeff Porcaro
- 1992: Max Roach
- 1991: Art Blakey
- 1990: Bill Bruford
- 1989: Carl Palmer
- 1988: Joe Morello
- 1987: Billy Cobham
- 1986: Tony Williams
- 1985: Louie Bellson
- 1984: Steve Gadd
- 1983: Neil Peart
- 1982: Keith Moon
- 1981: John Bonham
- 1980: Buddy Rich
- 1979: Gene Krupa



all-around

- ANTON FIG
2. Rod Morgenstein
 3. Kenny Aronoff
 4. Carter Beauford
 5. Dennis Chambers

1998 Readers Poll Results

STEVE GADD
All-Around; Studio

DAVID GARIBALDI
R&B/Funk

LARRIE LONDIN
Country

ROD MORGENSTEIN
Rock/Progressive Rock

NEIL PEART
Rock; Multi-Percussion

TITO PUENTE
Percussionist

BUDDY RICH
Big Band

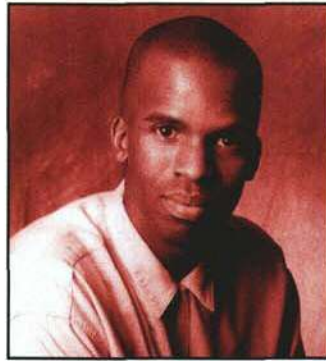
ED SHAUGHNESSY
Big Band

STEVE SMITH
All-Around

LARS ULRICH
Hard Rock

DAVE WECKL
Electric Jazz

TONY WILLIAMS
Jazz/Mainstream Jazz



electric jazz;
WILLIAM KENNEDY

2. Paul Wertico
3. Steve Smith
4. Danny Gottlieb
5. Bill Bruford/
Joel Rosenblatt



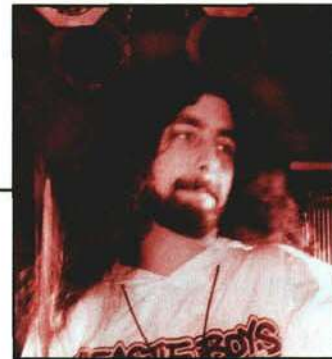
mainstream jazz

- BILL STEWART
2. Marvin "Smitty" Smith
 3. Jack DeJohnette
 4. Roy Haynes
 5. Clayton Cameron



r&b
HERMAN MATTHEWS

2. Steve Ferrone
3. Oliver Gene Lake
4. Sonny Emory
5. Tony Coleman



progressive rock

- MIKE PORTNOY
2. Carter Beauford
 3. Terry Bozzio
 4. Gregg Bissonette
 5. Virgil Donati



Studio
KENNY ARONOFF

2. John "JR" Robinson
3. Jim Keltner
4. Matt Chamberlain
5. Eddie Bayers



**pop/
mainstream rock**

- CARTER BEAUFORD
2. Mick Fleetwood
 3. Vinnie Colaiuta
 4. Chad Sexton
 5. Larry Mullen Jr.



country

BILLY MASON

2. Dony Wynn
3. Joe Smyth
4. Mike Palmer
5. Paul Leim



percussionist

GIOVANNI HIDALGO

2. Lenny Castro
3. Luis Conte/Sheila E
4. Evelyn Glennie



Hard rock

DANNY CAREY

2. Vinnie Paul
3. Matt Cameron
4. Joey Kramer
5. Mike Portnoy



recorded performance

MIKE PORTNOY—Dream Theater: *Falling Into Infinity*

2. Rod Morgenstein: *Rudess/Morgenstein Project*
3. Carter Beauford—Dave Matthews Band:
Live From Red Rocks
4. Lars Ulrich—Metallica: *Reload*
5. John Bonham-Led Zeppelin: *The BBC Sessions*



up & coming

JEREMY TAGGART (Our Lady Peace)

2. Freddie Holliday (Boys II Men)
3. Mario Calire (Wallflowers)
4. David Silveria (Korn)
5. Joey Waronker (Beck)

editor's achievement awards

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

For 1998, MD's editors are pleased to honor:

In order to present the results of our Readers Poll, the votes were tabulated and the top five names in each category listed here. In the event a tie occurred at any position other than fifth place, all names in that position were presented and fifth place was eliminated. When a tie occurred at fifth place, all winning names were presented.

READERS POLL SUBSCRIPTION GIVEAWAY

In appreciation for the participation of MD's readership in this year's poll, three ballots were drawn at random, to determine the winners of a Flashback Tee and a Pit Stop Cap from MD's Classic Casuals line. Those winners are Shane Reynolds (of Indianapolis, Indiana), Irvano Budiyo (of New Orleans, Louisiana), and Charlie DiMaggio (of Colorado Springs, Colorado). Congratulations from *Modern Drummer*!

Roy C. Knapp

Roy Knapp was born in 1891 in Waterloo, Iowa. He became a theatrical pit drummer by the age of nineteen, later joined the Minneapolis symphony, and ultimately moved to Chicago, where he established a reputation as a drummer and all-around percussionist. He became active with most of the large radio orchestras of the day, playing on various major programs from the late '20s through the 1960s. He was also featured on many studio recordings and movie soundtracks.



the late '20s through the 1960s. He was also featured on many studio recordings and movie soundtracks.

However, it was as a teacher that Roy earned his place in percussion history. Known as the "dean of percussion teachers" to several generations of drummers, Knapp helped found the National Association of Rudimental Drummers (N.A.R.D.J. in 1933, and established his School of Percussion in Chicago in 1938. By 1946 the school was fully accredited and offered college credit in the study of percussion—the first school of its kind to do so. Students would come from all over the US—and some foreign countries—to study with Roy. Many of those students went on to greatness of their own, including Gene Krupa, Louie Bellson, Dave Tough, George Wettling, Baby Dodds, and Sid Cattlett.

Although he retired from active playing in 1960, Roy continued a life-long association with percussion. He retained a keen interest in what he called "the modern stuff." An avid listener, he regularly made the rounds of jazz and rock clubs to "keep up with the times." Roy also became active as a speaker and consultant in the Percussive Arts Society (who honored him in 1972 as one of the original inductees into their Hall of Fame), and maintained his teaching practice practically until his death in 1979 at the age of eighty-eight.

Roy Burns

About forty years ago, a young kid from Emporia, Kansas suddenly appeared in the drum chair of the Benny Goodman band. The band was enjoying a revival (thanks to the recent release of *The Benny Goodman Story*), and it was a great opportunity for this Iowa teenager named Roy Burns.

Roy went on to play with Buck Clayton, Charlie Shavers, Joe Bushkin, Ben Webster, and the bands of Lionel Hampton and Woody Herman. He was also active in the recording and TV

scene in New York City in the '50s and '60s (including the *Merv Griffin Show* and the Jack Parr-era *Tonight Show*). So his performance credits are significant. But he is perhaps best known to at least a generation of drummers as the man who "pounded the pavement" across the US and around the world as a drum clinician—initially for the Rogers Drum company, later for Paiste cymbals, and still today for his own company, Aquarian Accessories. In fact, Roy can very legitimately be credited with establishing the genre of the "artist clinician." During the late 70s and early '80s it was not unusual for Roy to be on the road half of the year, doing upwards of sixty clinics, concerts, or in-store seminars. He has also been active as an author,



with several major instructional books to his credit including *Elementary Drum Method* and *Advanced Rock Drumming*. In an MD interview in April of 1977, Roy said, "It's essential that young people see that you can be a professional, understand your instrument, play well—and still take time out to answer a question for a young player. When I get too important to answer a young person's question, then I think I ought to get out of the business." Well, the questions may be different today—and the "young players" asking them are certainly different—but Roy is still answering them...and still very much "in the business."

Billy Higgins

Billy Higgins first gained national recognition in 1939 with the revolutionary Ornette Coleman Quartet. Higgins then went on to play and record with John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, and Thelonius Monk. Some of the all-time classic Blue Note LPs by giants like Jackie McLean, Hank Mobley, Dexter Gordon, Herbie Hancock, and others benefited from Higgins' imaginative contributions. During the 1970s, the



trio of Higgins, Cedar Walton, and Sam Jones was perhaps the premier rhythm section of the decade. Equally at home with traditional boppers or modernists and possessing a highly individualistic style, Billy went on to

establish himself as one of the world's most beloved and sought-after Sidemen.

In an effort to give back to the community that raised him, in the early 1990s Billy opened a studio/cultural center in south Los Angeles. He also maintained his busy performing and recording schedule, until he was stricken with liver disease requiring a transplant in 1996. Fortunately, Billy has recovered and is once again on the performing scene.

Billy has said, "Jazz is a family. It's a blessing to be a part of it." On January 12 of this year, the sixty-one-year-old drummer was the subject of a tribute performance by many of jazz's greatest luminaries, in recognition of his ongoing devotion to the art of jazz drumming.

Cozy Cole

William "Cozy" Cole was one of the first jazz drummers to develop his own brand of hand and foot coordination. He mastered the technique thoroughly, performing solos more complex than anything that had previously been done. Cozy was known for playing four different rhythmic figures at one time, giving the effect of two drummers playing simultaneously.

Born in 1909, Cozy began drumming at the age of five. Inspired by Sonny Greer, Chick Webb, Gene Krupa, and Jo Jones, he was playing with Jelly Roll Morton by 1930. He achieved national prominence between 1939 and 1942 in Cab Calloway's band, where he was featured on recordings and on stage.



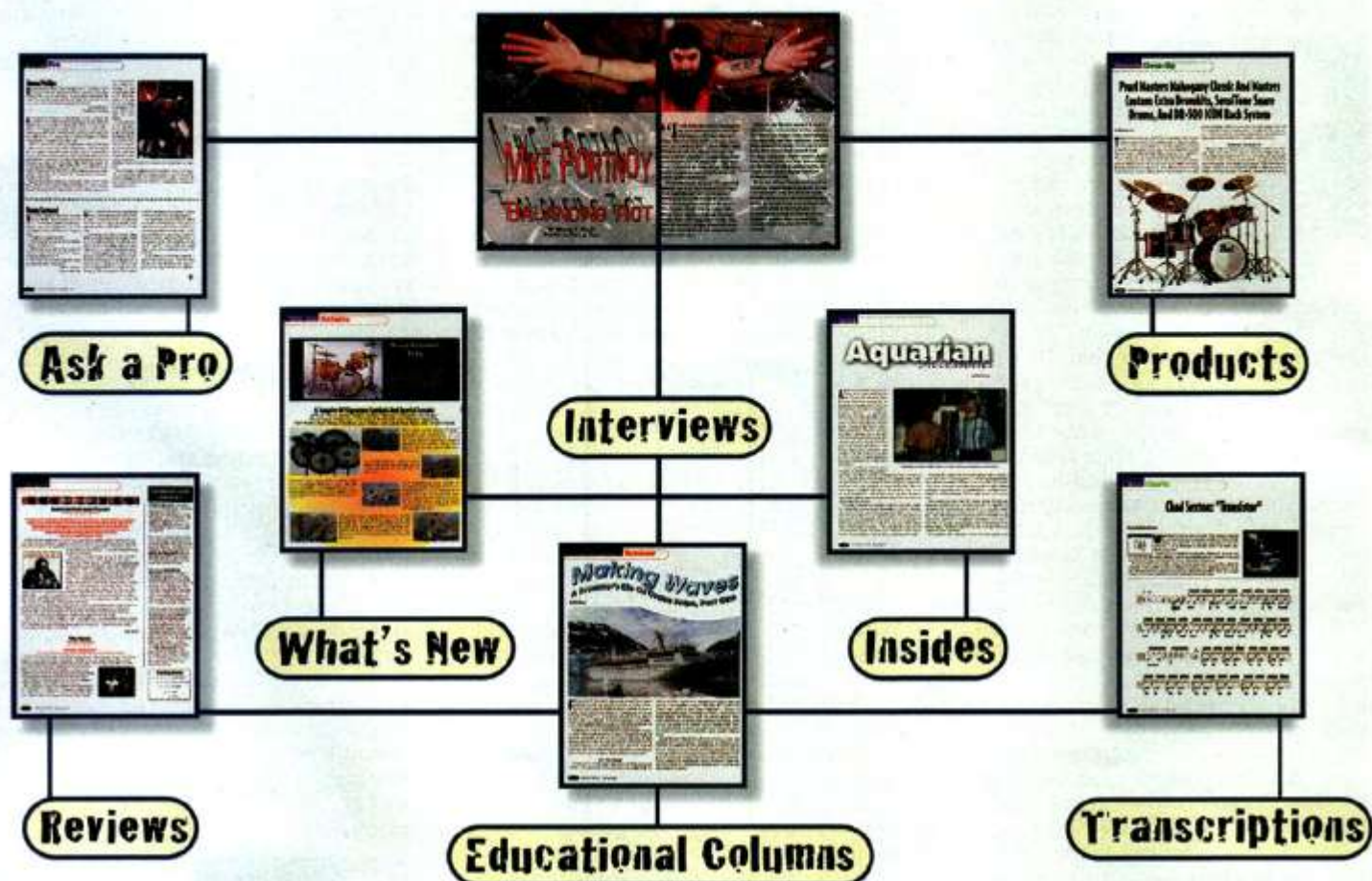
Cozy's dynamic drumming style was a perfect complement to Calloway's own flashy persona.

Cozy went on to work with Lionel Hampton, Coleman Hawkins, Roy Eldridge, Jonah

Jones, Louis Armstrong, Charlie Parker, and Dizzy Gillespie. He also worked on Broadway, and was one of the first black musicians hired as a staff player by CBS radio. During the 1950s his recording of "Topsy, Part I" became one of only a handful of drum-oriented hit records ever made.

In 1954 Cozy opened a school for drummers with Gene Krupa, and built a solid reputation as an instructor. (Philly Joe Jones was among his many students.) He continued his own study of music into his later years, including pursuing a music degree at Capitol University. Cozy died in 1981 and remains one of drumming's most important figures.

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Scheduling: The Art Of Keeping It Together

by Robin Tolleson

What's your method of keeping a schedule? Laptop, desktop, or Post-It notes? How far ahead do you book yourself? Do you talk business on the gig? Are you known as a drummer who keeps commitments? When you look at a career in drumming, the issue of scheduling involves not only organization, but strategy, loyalty, and ingenuity. Perhaps the tips from some working drummers and percussionists in this article will make you more professional about your scheduling, and let you concentrate more on what you're really in the business for—the playing. Consider the following seven scenarios:

Scenario #1—Your bandleader waits until 2:35 A.M., the very moment you're lifting your trap case over the lip of your trunk, to yell from his car, "Can you put down the sixteenth and eighteenth of next month?" You nod "yes" and go home and write down the fifteenth and eighteenth.

"People do that at the end of a gig," says Pat O'Connell, a San Francisco drummer who does 125 gigs a year in blues, swing, and society bands. "It's 2:00 in the morning, you've had a couple drinks, you're walking out the club's door—you're tired, you're confused, or you're elated—it's the wrong time to be saying, 'Oh, put me down for....'" O'Connell has made a conscious decision not to talk business on the gig. "I've been tempted to get a digital datebook that I can carry around with me, but I always like to have the excuse, 'I don't have my datebook with me, call me at home.' Then you have time to call another bandleader and say, 'Weren't you talking about something on this date?' If a guy's looking over your shoulder at your electronic organizer, you can't do those little fibs. I leave the datebook at home, and that takes the pressure off."

"I don't like to talk about business on the gig," agrees Scott Amendola, of Charlie Hunter's trio and quartet, as well as T.J. Kirk and Will Bernard's new group. "I find



"Usually when you're asked to play a gig you say, 'Oh, sure.' And then before you know it you've got three dates booked on the same day. Being organized is definitely helpful."

-Dave Weckl



"I usually do all my scheduling through faxes from companies, because I don't trust verbal agreements. You get off the phone and write down what they said. The next thing you know, they say, 'Oh, I didn't say that.'"

-Dennis Chambers

it's very distracting. I have so many problems with the music industry as it is, and talking business can just create tension because you're not always going to agree. It just taints the gig. You don't want to think about it, you just want to play with your compadres and throw down. Sometimes when you're on the road you've got to deal with business, but when possible I like to handle it at a different time."

"Saying 'no' is very hard," says Dave Weckl. "That word doesn't exist in our vocabulary until very late in our careers when hopefully we can pick and choose a little. Usually

when you're asked to play a gig you say, 'Oh, sure.' And then before you know it you've got three dates booked on the same day. Being organized is definitely helpful. I recommend having a nice big calendar that you can write everything down on and see what's happening. But you have to be conscientious and actually make the entries. I very rarely say 'no' off the bat. Depending on the gig, I'll say that of course I'm interested, let's check dates, send me some tapes so I can hear what the project is, and we'll talk about scheduling."

Scenario #2—You accept a wedding reception gig that pays \$150. A week before that gig the manager of your original alternative rock band calls to say you have the chance to open for Third Eye Blind at a local showcase club on the same night. Even though you will lose money on the deal, you accept and start looking for a sub for the casual gig.

"Backing out of a gig is really cold," says Amendola. "I never want to do that, but at the same time I understand that sometimes people have to for their career. The one time I did that was about four years ago when Charlie [Hunter] called me. Graham Connah had called me for a gig, and he had prepped it

like, 'Man, you probably don't want to do this gig....' When that happens, when you know the gig's going to be miserable, you really have no choice but to bail out of it. And of course Graham understood."

"It's tricky," agrees Dave Weckl. "It's very important to me to be loyal. If you've got a tour booked six months ahead and something better comes along, unless it's something just ridiculous that the person would understand and you could provide a good sub, you've gotta pretty much do the right thing and stick with what you'd already booked. You really take the risk of burning bridges when you back out. It's just never good policy, because you develop a reputation for dumping bookings if something better comes along. During my period with Chick Corea especially, there were a lot of great calls that came in—a David Sanborn record is one that remains in my mind—but you can't be in two places at once."

"I honor my first commitment, no matter what it costs," says Dennis Chambers. "I'm not chasing the dollar. If somebody offers a gig that pays this much, and somebody offers something that pays a little bit more, I'm not going to cancel on that first person because the other gig's paying more. If I can't do it, I can't do it; there's always a next time."

"Those calls will come again," agrees Amendola. "You have to have faith. When you're really young it's hard to realize that. And at the same time, if somebody's got such a hard line, I don't know if I'd want to play with them anyway."

Scenario #3—A top bandleader in your area who you've never worked with before calls you at home to see if you can play three

dates next month. You try to stall him as you rummage around for your datebook. "Hmmm, I think I'm already working on one of those dates; it sounds real familiar. Somebody called me already for that one, and I wrote it on a little piece of paper that's around here somewhere. Now where is that piece of paper?"

It's easy to sound uncertain and unprofessional on the phone. And if you don't sound good on the phone, you may never get the chance to show how good you sound on the drumkit. "It really boils down to how organized you are and how much you can approach gigging as a business, trying to be loyal and as together as you can," says Weckl. "A lot of this has to do with basic communication skills of returning phone calls and making yourself accessible. That seems to be a problem with a lot of musicians, making people say, 'Who knows where they are? I can't get hold of them.' Sometimes I'm probably hard to get a hold of too, because I'm gone, or people *think* I'm gone and they don't call. That used to be a big one with Chick—'Naw, he's gone'—whether you were or not. So sometimes you've got to get on the phone and hustle, letting people know, 'I'm here, I'm available.'"

Weckl is very organized. When I called him about this article, he immediately wanted to schedule a time for the interview. "I learned a lot from Peter Erskine, who's a good role model for business skills," he says. "I've always tried to be organized and have the business side as together as I can. It makes a difference."

Scenario #4—You put off buying a datebook for the new year until after Christmas, writing down gigs for January, February, and March on the last page of December and sticking *Post-It* notes on

Zildjian Drumsticks

Congratulations to all our Artists in this year's Readers Poll

<u>Artist</u>	<u>Stick of Choice</u>
Giovanni Hidalgo	Giovanni Hidalgo Artist Series Model
Bill Stewart	Jazz Wood Tip
Jeremy Taggart	Super 5A Wood Tip
John Robinson	John Robinson Artist Series Model
Freddie Holliday	Z4A Wood Tip
Luis Conte	Luis Conte Artist Series Model
Vinnie Colaiuta	Vinnie Colaiuta Artist Series Model
Roy Haynes	Roy Haynes Artist Series Model
Joey Kramer	Joey Kramer Artist Series Model
Sonny Emory	Sonny Emory Artist Series Model
Dennis Chambers	Dennis Chambers Artist Series Model
Eddie Bayers	5A Nylon Tip



the inside back cover. Over the holidays three of the *Post-Its* fall off and get recycled with gift paper. "We all have little pieces of paper," Weckl says, "but I've gotten in the habit of getting these square sticky note pads. And if I write notes, I don't tear them off, I just leave 'em there so they're all in one place."

"I should get my new datebook in November," admits O'Connell, "but I finally get it going while I'm doing my Christmas shopping, sometime in December. The first three months of the year are usually so lame that I can get away with making notes on the back page [of the previous year's book]. It's dangerous if you start writing other things in there, like funny abbreviations that you won't remember. This year I couldn't find a Week-At-A-Glance, so I got a Month-At-A-Glance instead. It's kind of cool having an overview of the month, but there's no room to make notations on it."

Scenario #5—You accept a six-week engagement on the road with a blues singer. While you're gone, several bandleaders leave messages on your machine regarding gigs, which your roommate writes down, erases over, then forgets to tell you about for two weeks. By the time you get back to town you're a forgotten man or woman. Bandleaders are reluctant to waste their time calling you again, either assuming you're still gone or that you're a flake who doesn't return calls.

The drummer Brain gave up a comfortable studio career to fill the drum chair of Primus. The gig requires a lot of time on the road, where maintaining a coherent datebook is much more difficult. "Right now I'm just basically trying to keep everything together with...um...my girlfriend," he laughed on a H.O.R.D.E.

Festival stop last year. "I call her and say I'm supposed to do this and this, and she's like a pro on the computer, so she just keeps it all together for me—my money, my taxes, everything. She's been a great help, because on the road it's hard for me."

"Being committed to Charlie [Hunter] for two and a half years was pretty easy, since that's pretty much all I was doing," says Amendola. "Before I got home I would line stuff up and make calls. When I moved to San Francisco I was playing with so many different people, and I still try to play with those people because they're part of my roots, and they're people I love playing with."

Dennis Chambers has found that more and more he is able to talk business on the road. "I'll tell them I'll take the date but I can't confirm until I talk to my wife, because she can send me faxes from the computer to wherever I am. I also carry a *Powerbook* on the road so I can check e-mail, and if she sends me something new online I can get it that way too. The only nightmares are when somebody calls you for a gig, and you really want to do it, but you're already committed. But I haven't had any major schedule clashes."

"I just have one calendar," says Weckl. "I'm pretty electronic: I travel with a computer all the time, and I also use a little organizer. Basically the calendar at home is for my wife and I to coordinate my schedule so she knows what's going on. Gigs get entered there because it's easy to look at and see where things are booked over the course of the year. But I've been a Sharp *Wizard Organizer* guy for ten or fifteen years, and I'm a Macintosh guy too, so I have a *Powerbook* that I carry on the road all the time to do both music and e-mail and maintain a Web site. I don't have to worry too much about things out on the road, unless somebody comes up and asks about a record date that I need to look up. But those things are rarely answered on the spot anyway. It's kind of like, 'Wait until I check with the office'—which is basically my house—to double-check all the entries on the calendar, because double-booking can get you into trouble."

Scenario #6—You block off two months of time in the summer to tour Europe with a Brazilian jazz group. In mid-May, word comes in that the tour has been canceled, and there had been no contract signed. As drummers, we are frequently side musicians, so we might not be part of the booking process. But it's always in your business interest to encourage your leader to get a signed contract.

"I usually do all my scheduling through faxes from companies, because I don't trust verbal agreements," says Chambers. "You get off the phone and write down what they said. The next thing you know, they say, 'Oh, I didn't say that.' And clinics, gigs, and tours are too important to be going through that. So I just have them fax me confirmation letters and I take the information from them and put it in my computer."

Chambers has a Psion palm-top computer that he carries with him at all times. "I just keep all my information in there. At home I put everything in a Macintosh desktop computer." Dennis is booked solid for the next year and a half. "With things booked that far in advance," he says, "things change. Sometimes they'll say, 'Okay, this fell through' or 'This changed,' and you just have to deal with it."

Weckl agrees that it's good to get bookings in writing. "You don't have to go to a lawyer and prepare a ten-page contract. It's just a matter of getting in writing what it is you're doing and how

Drum roll, please...

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much you're getting paid, and getting it signed. If it's dealing directly with somebody I don't know at all, especially for something that's out of the country, I'll always get it in writing—the details and the fee—just so there's no question. It's better to be organized and up front than coming back after the date, saying, 'Well, you promised me this,' and they say, 'Well, I don't remember that.'"

Weckl likes to have his schedule sketched out at least a year ahead. "It's always more secure to get with a group that can go out and do a consistent touring thing on a yearly basis. I've been fortunate to do that with people like Chick and Mike Stern. I basically use that as my skeleton, and try to fit things in around that. That's the bread and butter of touring. A lot of musicians out there are dying for a steady touring gig, especially playing jazz-oriented, creative music. People are dying to get into a situation that they can count on, because it's not the most comfortable feeling to wonder what you're doing throughout the year.

"As a Sideman," Dave adds, I basically do all my own booking. As a leader, when it comes time to have a band, the way the game is played, everybody basically goes through an agency, and the agencies deal directly with the clubs."

Some drummers book themselves and work with agents as well. This requires you to be in close communication so that overbookings don't occur. And the situation is complicated more if you are the bandleader. Pete Escovedo leads his Latin-jazz big band in the San Francisco Bay area. Pete and his wife, Juanita, book the group from their Oakland home, and he is also booked by the Berkeley

Agency. "I try to keep it together as best as I can, and not use the little pieces of paper," Pete laughs. "We put the stuff down on a computer and our calendar so we don't forget. We try to stay ahead of it, know where we're going and what we're doing, and let all the bandmembers know what's happening."

Percussionist Steve Kroon balances his time touring and recording with Ron Carter, going on the road with Luther Vandross, and recording with Stephen Scott. To Kroon it all goes back to that professional attitude. "I'm pretty good with that," he says. "I've just got one main calendar, and I keep stuff there and in my head. To be responsible, you have to know where you're going to be; you don't forget, and you don't take it for granted."

"The whole thing is recognizing that you're working for other people, and that you have a responsibility to them," agrees Amendola. "Generally, all the people I've played with are responsible people, pretty on top of things and serious about their music, and that has helped me recognize that."

Scenario #7—You spend money on a nice Week-At-A-Glance organizer, and pledge to be more professional about keeping track of gigs and appointments. But it may be too late. When you open your datebook, you find that there are no gigs—it is COMPLETELY BLANK! "The biggest scheduling nightmare would be no schedule," says Weckl. So now that your business act is together, head for the practice pads and get back on the phone! Let 'em know you're playing smart and working smart, and those pages will start to fill in.



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PORTRAITS

Robert Wyatt

Acting On Impulse

Few musical careers parallel Robert Wyatt's. As the drummer and singer with England's Soft Machine, Wyatt literally helped birth the genre of jazz-rock in the mid '60s. After four albums and mounting tensions, Wyatt split, took a stylistic about-face, and released a handful of amazing—if esoteric—solo albums. He never looked back at the potentials of stardom, though, and in fact seems to relish the artistic freedom available outside the mainstream. When the topic of Sheila E's mass exposure via a 7-UP commercial is brought up, Robert, tongue firmly in cheek, quickly responds, "Well, there's been no 7-UP commercials *this* way—though it has a busy year."

by Adam Budofsky

A child prodigy born to British intellectual "bohemian" parents, and mostly self-taught on drums, Wyatt's taste for modern jazz and twentieth-century classical music helped make Soft Machine one of the most critically acclaimed bands of the '60s. Along with keyboardist Mike Ratledge, guitarist Daevid Allen (who left early on to form the inimitable Gong), and Kevin Ayers (bass, soon to go solo), the group baffled audiences with their music, which clearly had more to do with amping-up Coltrane than weirding-up the Stones.

Despite most people's inability to comprehend the odd band from Canterbury, Jimi Hendrix invited them to open up his 1968 American tour, and forward-thinking musicians in attendance began to dig their unique sound. Of particular note was Wyatt's unbridled kit work, which was oddly accompanied by his fragile yet emotive vocals.

Directly after leaving the band, Robert formed the group Matching Mole, participated in a number of side projects, and released his first solo album, *The End Of An Ear*. A fall from a window in 1973 left him paralyzed from the waist down, after which his albums took a fascinating turn. Without the option of heavy kit excursions, Wyatt's music became rhythmically simpler—but more detailed. The treatment of every element now took on much greater importance: The subtle adjustment of a ride pattern signaled a change in scenery, the turning off of snares beat a new path through the woods. "Despite all this highfalutin education," he says today, "my songs are very simple. They

are nursery rhymes half the time."

Wyatt also collaborated with an astounding diversity of artists, including jazz pianist Carla Bley, intellectual dance-poppers Scritti Politti, electronic/soundtrack legend Ryuichi Sakamoto, and Namibian consciousness-raising group the Swapo Singers. This last project in particular highlights his passion for political activism, which continues to be a constant source of inspiration.

Today Robert Wyatt holds demigod status among a small but fanatic group of followers. Among them is Elvis Costello, who co-wrote the magnificent surprise hit "Shipbuilding" specifically for him, as well as Brian Eno and Paul Weller, both of whom made important contributions to his first long-player in seven years, *Shleep*. *Modern Drummer* caught up with Wyatt upon the release of the album.

AB: What have you been doing since your last album, *Dondestan*?

RW: I've done some singing for other people. A friend of mine, John Greaves, did a record called *Songs*, and I sang three tunes. More recently I sang a bit for Austrian composer Mike Mantler.

AB: You've worked with Mike in the past.

RW: Yeah, I have. One of the most exciting things I've ever sung against was the rhythm section that he and Carla Bley provided with Jack DeJohnette on drums on *The Hapless Child*.

AB: Your new album seems to be more about collabora-

tions than past records. You recorded at [Roxy Music guitarist] Phil Manzanera's studio, and you played with Brian Eno again, and Paul Weller—for the first time?

RW: Yes, although we've been involved in some of the same sort of political pressure groups, but never as musicians. People have been telling me that I should really work with some other people occasionally, [laughs]

AB: You have done your share of collaborations, though.

RW: I have played with a lot of people, but I do like working on my own. It's a paraplegic thing: We like to do what we can whenever we can, given that in a lot of the world we can't do as much as other people. So even on this album, I've done as much as I could myself. I try and be my own sort of mini-group. But I wanted the company. I get lonely out here, [laughs]

AB: Are you way out in the country?

RW: Yeah, I'm in a little country town. But I just thought it would be nice to see some of those musicians I used to know in London, and because Phil Manzanera's studio is very near London, I felt free to ask people on a quite casual basis to come 'round for an afternoon or two.

AB: A couple of people actually got pretty involved.

RW: Paul and Brian—neither of whom charged me anything, incidentally—actually mixed some of the tracks that they played on. I thought, well, they've made their contributions, and they worked very hard. I was really grateful, and I also didn't want to misuse their contributions. But they both seemed most concerned with getting my voice right in the mix, which was very kind. And I have to thank Phil Manzanera for providing an atmosphere where I felt I could take time on things.

AB: One thing that is consistent throughout your career is a willingness to let the ride cymbal provide almost the entire driving pulse in a song. From the new album, "Was A Friend" and "Blues In Bob Minor" come to mind.

RW: It's a generation thing I think. I'm just about a year older than people who were brought up on the closed hi-hat concept of timekeeping. I come from the Kenny Clarke ride cymbal era. It's not that I'm a jazz player, but to me that seems to be the natural feel for the kit, and I'm a very top-of-the-kit person. I don't really play "rock 'n' roll"—I don't play "rock" anyway. I like to roll around my tunes rather than rock.

I also particularly like the jazz 4/4, which is of course a 12/8. It just seems to me you can sort of imply the triplets with the ride cymbal in a very organic way, and with a very light touch. One of my favorite rhythm sections was Dannie Richmond with Charles Mingus. I was very impressed with the way they would sort of tug against each other. I don't always use that feel, but on "September The Ninth" on this album the bass and drums are sort of pushing and pulling against each other.

AB: You also seem to enjoy playing with the snares off.

RW: Oh, yeah. I did a whole LP with the snares off, which was the second Matching Mole one, *Little Red Record*. There are ways of getting a cutting edge without the snares on. I really like that slightly hollow sound. There are drummers I used to like, like Ed Blackwell, all of whose drums sounded like toms. And even now, on this record, I have the snare kind of floppy and rattly, like Max Roach. In R&B and other styles, an extremely tight snare is perfect. But not for me. I like an organic, grubby sort of

Impulse Buying

a selected Robert Wyatt discography

Most of Wyatt's solo albums are available in the States on CD, but some of the other records he's appeared on are either out of print or available only as imports. Original recording dates appear following label names, except in the case of re-releases or newly available live recordings, in which case the original recording dates appear in brackets, while the latest release dates follow the label names.

WITH SOFT MACHINE

- * Vols, I [1968] and 2 [1969] (Big Beat, 1989)
 - Third (UK CBS, 1970)
 - Fourth (UK CBS, 1971)
- * Jet-Propelled Photograph [1967] (Charly, 1994)
- * Live At The Paradiso 1969 (Voiceprint, 1996)

WITH MATCHING MOLE

- Matching Mole [1972] (Columbia, 1992)
- * Little Red Record [1972] (Columbia, 1992)

AS LEADER

- * The End Of An Ear (UK CBS, 1970)
- * Rock Bottom [1974] (Thirsty Ear, 1998)
- Ruth Is Stranger Than Richard [1975] (Thirsty Ear, 1998)
- * Nothing Can Stop Us [1982] (Thirsty Ear, 1998)
- The Animals Soundtrack [1982] (Thirsty Ear, 1998)
 - 1982-1984 (Rough Trade, 1984)
- Old Rotten Hat [1985] (Thirsty Ear, 1998)
- * Compilation (Gramavision, 1986)
- * Dondestan [1991] (Thirsty Ear, 1998)
- * Going Back A Bit: A Little History (Virgin, 1994)
 - Shleep [1997] (Thirsty Ear, 1998)

AS SIDEMAN

- * Daevid Allen: Bananamoon [1971] (Charly, 1990)
- * Kevin Ayers: The Joy Of A Toy [1969] (UK Beat Goes On, 1990)
- * Kevin Ayers: Shooting At The Moon [1970] (UK Beat Goes On, 1990)
 - * Ayers, Cale, Nico, Eno: June 1, 1974 (UK Island, 1990)
- * Brian Eno: Taking Tiger Mountain (By Strategy) (EC, 1974)
 - * Brian Eno: Another Green World (EC, 1975)
- * Brian Eno: Before And After Science (EG, 1978)
 - Brian Eno: Music For Airports (EG 1979)
- * Ryuichi Sakamoto: Beauty (Virgin, 1989)

Also, check out the book *Wrong Movements: A Robert Wyatt History* (ISBN 0 946719 101) from SAF Publishing, UK.

sound.

AB: A long time ago in an interview you made mention of "submerging yourself in the work of learning to play three or four drums." You have always had a relatively small kit, even with Soft Machine....

RW: It's even smaller now! [laughs] All I'm really using now is a snare and two cymbals, with a few little toy ones for the odd "psh."

I like the gradations of sounds you can get on one drum rather than always having sudden steps from drum to drum. It just seems to be more organic than the rock thing. I really departed from the rock thing, where you have this: [sings descending notes]. I just like the sounds to merge into each other more. My

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"Being deliberately eccentric is as silly as being deliberately conformist. If you just get comfortable, then your natural characteristics will come through."

favorite drummer was Elvin Jones, and the thing about him that really impressed me was that nearly every drum was almost tuned the same.

It's the same with cymbals. I'd rather play a different part of a good cymbal than have like eight cymbals up and only hit the same place on each one. It's not intimate enough for me. To me, each cymbal and drum is a complex instrument in its own right. And of course it's a physical thing now. I can't reach out all over the place; I'm quite liable to fall over, [laughs] So I like my kit close to my body and tight and everything within very easy reach. That also concentrates the mind.

AB: Do you think there is some connection to your lyrics and your drumming style? You've made mention in the past of a conscious decision to make the lyrics simpler and more conversational. Your drumming has taken on a similar kind of evolution.

RW: Actually, I've never really thought of that comparison before. I'll have to think about that; you may be right. I should point out, though, that when I'm talking about music, everything seems more deliberate than it actually is. When you are actually playing, you

are acting on instinct. You do a lot of calculating before you play, and maybe after you play, but not while you are doing it. I don't always know what I've done till I sit and think about it. Actually, more and more, I've discarded every theory that I ever had about what things *ought* to be like—even the thought that they've got to be different. I'll use a common device just as happily as an unusual one. All I think now is, "Does it feel alive; does it feel right?"

It's like when drummers are worried about their personality coming through their playing. I don't think you have to think about that. Being deliberately eccentric is as silly as being deliberately conformist. If you just get comfortable, then your natural characteristics will come through. We are all unique without trying, as anyone who has studied fingerprints or voiceprints will tell you.

AB: If you can call it this, one happy result of your not being able to play a traditional trap set is a sort of elimination of the *sound* of a drumset on your albums. When most drummers sit behind a kit, they seem obliged to have to make noise with every limb.

RW: People do like to wiggle all four limbs at least once every four seconds; I've noticed that. Actually, I don't think like a drummer really, or a singer, or any of these things. I'm thinking like a composer. That may sound a bit pompous, but that's the best word for it. I'm just trying to think about what the music needs. It's really exciting to realize that on some tracks I only need to keep time, that I don't need to have a drum on it at all. It's amazing what you can leave out, because immediately the space becomes available for some other instrument. Everybody is in the rhythm section in the end—not just the drummer. You won't fall down a great vacuum cavity if you stop using a limb temporarily.

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AB: If you try that in rehearsal, you're liable to have the rest of the band look at you like, "Well, why aren't you playing the whole kit?"

RW: Right. Very often the difference between an amateur and a professional musician is that the amateur is playing and the professional is listening. That's really the job. That's another reason I like the translucence of the cymbal sound, because you can hear right through it. It's important for me to be able to do that. The real problem I had after my accident was not losing the bass drum, because as I get older my tastes get more old-fashioned, and I really don't need that bass drum thing very often. But I did have trouble not having a hi-hat. Listening to Billy Higgins playing and realizing that he was squeezing the hi-hat with such a light touch led me to think, I'll just go one step further *and fantasize* about playing the hi-hat, and my body will kind of move with that.

AB: I'd like to go back in time a bit. You were lucky enough to grow up in a home where you were encouraged to listen to music that a lot of your peers probably never even knew existed.

RW: I was very lucky. For one thing, a lodger came to stay at our house once whose name is George Niedorf. I think he had taught at Valley Drum City in California and had run clinics with Joe Morello. But his favorite was Philly Joe Jones, and he used to teach me to listen—not to drummers, but to rhythm sections. That was very, very useful to me. So I used to listen to a lot of things, like Jimmy Cobb with Miles Davis. My older brother had a terrific record collection, so that was perhaps why my tastes were a bit more old-fashioned than some of my contemporaries'. I mean, at school most of my friends were listening to the Everly Brothers. I

"It's really exciting to realize that on some tracks I only need to keep time, that I don't need to have a drum on it at all. Immediately the space becomes available for some other instrument."

just liked my brother's records more than theirs—it's as simple as that.

AB: So by the time Daevid Allan came along, also as a lodger at your parents' house, you two were listening to the same sorts of things.

RW: He had a lot of the same records as my brother. Even before then, though, my father had listened to twentieth-century classical music a great deal—not extremely avant-garde, but certainly Prokofiev and Benjamin Britten and so on. So I got used to kind of dense, twentieth-century harmonic ideas. I never had any problem with what people called "discord." There's no such thing; it's just conditioning as far as I can see.

It was only later that I discovered pop music. I didn't understand it at all at first. When I heard the Beatles I thought Ringo Starr was just so banal. Now I can see what a perfect drummer he was. But it

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took me years. The people that are called "avant-garde," I hear it straight away. [laughs]

AB: In the mid '60s, audiences were becoming open to more out stuff. The timing seemed pretty good for Soft Machine.

RW: I think we would have been better off a couple of years later. We had some pretty rough rides with audiences, I can tell you. I think I had this need to kind of lose the beat and find it again. People found that very unnerving—including a lot of musicians I played with! But sometimes I just like to stop playing. Dannie Richmond used to do that quite a lot with Charles Mingus. There would be whole sections where he would just, BANG, stop, the band would carry on, and he'd come back in a chorus later. But that was because Mingus told him to. Nobody told *me* to.

AB: You've said that touring with the Jimi Hendrix Experience was positive for the group, musically at least.

RW: First of all, they were encouraging personally. They didn't pull rank, which headliner groups can do. Second, Hendrix very deliberately allowed Mitch Mitchell a lot of space to create drum parts and to improvise. And they were doing it, not in front of tiny jazz club audiences or avant-garde elite, but stadiums full of rock fans—and they were getting away with it! And I realized that if you do something with authority, as if you mean it, people will go with that.

AB: Soft Machine and Pink Floyd have some common history. Nick Mason, the drummer in Floyd, almost seems like your stylistic opposite, yet you've worked together a few times.

RW: The Floyds were always very helpful to us. When I was working on *Rock Bottom* I was taking the responsibility for more than I had taken on before. I just thought it would be great to have the ear

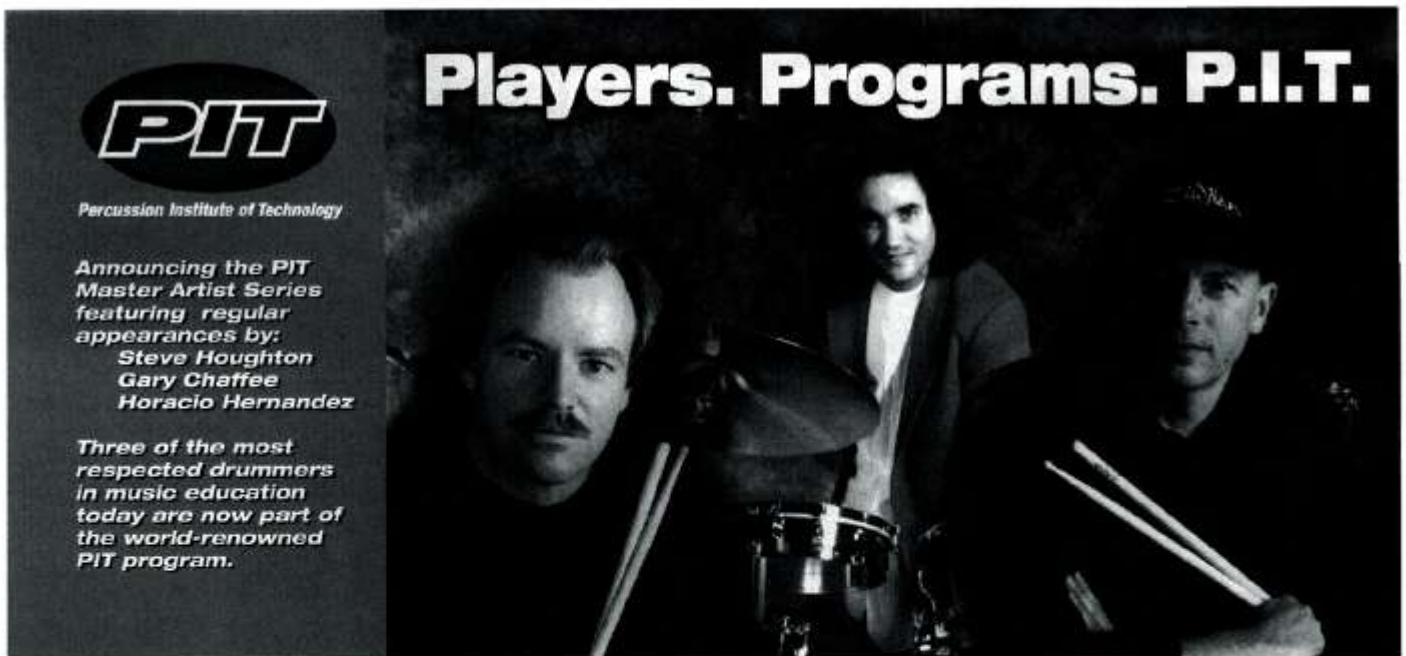
of someone else who wasn't in the middle of it, who really had a lot of experience working in studios and making things sound right. Nick drummed in order to make the piece of music sound right, not in order to show off. He would just gently increase or decrease the pressure throughout the song where appropriate. I felt that sense of space and structure could help me in the studio, and I was right. He was extremely helpful.

AB: The drummer on *Rock Bottom* is Laurie Allan, who American audiences might not be familiar with.

RW: When it came time to do my first record where I couldn't really play the kit, Laurie was the first person I thought of. He was part of the London scene and worked quite a lot with some show bands and various free-jazz groups, but he understood rock music as well. I felt in tune with him because of that. I also really liked his sound and felt a real kinship with him, and that makes a difference. Without friendship and companionship it's just a cold exercise. Cleverness is not enough.

AB: You and the other members of Soft Machine worked on [Pink Floyd founder] Syd Barren's first solo album. That must have been quite a task, since his behavior had become quite erratic by that point.

RW: I was actually very touched that he asked us. People say, "Are you upset you weren't given credit on the record?" But I think he left our names off out of kindness, [laughs] We went into the studio and he was virtually mute. He just played us the songs that he had recorded, and they were quite difficult in the sense that there was hardly any sort of steady, regular time going through them. They were structured around the words, which were not in any kind of regular meter.



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We rehearsed the songs a little and then were ready to record them, at which time he said, "Right, that's it. Thank you very much." So those initial takes became a few tracks of *The Madcap Laughs*. But I think it was a wonderful record, and today I can see exactly why he wanted to leave it as this clumsy searching sound. He didn't want a smooth thing. I enjoyed the experience very much, and I liked him. All the Floyd were very nice people.

AB: It sounds like his ideas were more intentional than people assume.

RW: If you look at other art forms—like the paintings of Max Earnst or the dadaists or early surrealists—you see that there's nothing unusually eccentric about people like Syd Barrett. I myself was brought up as much with painters as musicians. Syd didn't strike me as particularly eccentric; he struck me as a perfectly normal and sensible songwriter—which maybe says something about me that I don't want to know!

But I do think that we are not here to please the structures in music, or in life. The structures are there where and when we need them to help us out of the chaos if we are lost. But they shouldn't be our masters. I think when any idiom sort of petrifies, it is precisely because the structures have taken over from the impulses that have set them up.

AB: You've mentioned being influenced by visual artists, but are there any particular musicians you've been into lately?

RW: Some of the things I've been listening to include a Japanese group called Ground Zero, who do remixes and sampling and things, but not as dance music. I also listen to a lot of the great American standards—Gershwin, Cole Porter. And I've been listening to an old singer named Jimmy Scott a lot, as well as a record

that Linda Ronstadt did with Nelson Riddle, which was done with a lot of respect.

People sometimes listen to my lyrics and think, "Oh, he must be really anti-American," but that's not the case at all. It's just that I find all imperialist governments a pain in the bum. But it's not the people's fault; don't blame the culture. The fact is that something extraordinary happened in American culture in the last hundred years or so: Diverse immigrant groups came together and reinvented their identities alongside each other in ways that have just been fantastic. When you think of Miles Davis and Gil Evans doing *Porgy And Bess*, and you think of the history of the ideas on a record like that—from black Americans to Jewish Americans to goodness knows who else...that's really the area that interests me most at the moment.

I don't feel any obligation to keep up to date. I agree with Byron, who said, "Every time somebody tells me about a wonderful new book, I go out and buy an old one."

AB: There does always seem to be old stuff to discover.

RW: That's right. In fact, I didn't really appreciate Bob Dylan so much at the time, although Hendrix used to say how great he was. But since then I've liked him more and more, which is why I've got that little Bob Dylan tribute on the record, "Blues In Bob Minor."

AB: I guess you haven't heard from him on it yet.

RW: No. I just hope that he will realize that I'm "Bob Minor" and he's "Bob Major"!

Thanks to John Godlewski from Absolute Vinyl in Montclair, New Jersey for invaluable research help on this article.



8

R L R L R L R R L R L R L R L L

9

R L R L R L R R L R L R L R L L

10

R L R L R L R R L R L R L R L L

11

R L R L R L R R L R L R L R L L

12

R L R L R L R R L R L R L R L L

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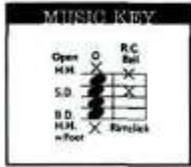
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Brazilian Perspectives

by Kevin Winard



America has for decades had a love affair with Brazilian music, Brazilian jazz in particular. Recently there has been a resurgence of interest. Artists like Djavan, Ivan Lins, João Bosco, Dori Caymmi, and, of course, Sergio Mendes have come to the forefront, enticing us with their beautiful melodies, rich harmonies, and seductive rhythms. But what *makes* those rhythms so seductive? As students of the drumset, knowing the proper feel of these wonderful beats should be of paramount importance.

Everyone has heard of the rhythm called "samba," but when many drummers here in America think of samba, they usually assume that it's at a fast tempo propelled by a jazz pattern on the ride cymbal, like this:



In Brazil, it's quite the contrary. It is true that the "escola de samba" (samba schools) that play during Carnival sometimes perform at blazing tempos. But it's *the feel* that makes it swing. Yes, *swing*. Since moving to the LA area, I've been fortunate to play with some wonderful Brazilian musicians, and the word they use to describe a good Brazilian groove is just that: swing.

The first thing you should know is that samba is always felt in cut time—or two—never in four. Think of the feel in terms of walking or marching: When you walk, you take two steps: *left-right, left-right*. Therein lies the two feel.

To find out more about the feel, let's analyze some of the different elements of the groove. The batucada pattern that is played in Rio is comprised of three basic elements: First, a constant 8th-note pattern is performed by the shaker and pandeiro (Brazilian tambourine). Second, syncopated patterns are provided by the tamborim, a small drum that is played with one stick while the other hand plays the open and muffled tones. And third, downbeats 1 and 2 are supplied by the surdo, a big metal drum that is played with a mallet in one hand, with muffled tones on 1 and open tones on 2. There are other instruments that are used in samba, such as the agogo, caixa (snare), triangle, etc. But for practical purposes we will concentrate on the basic instruments.

Getting back to the feel of samba, the entire rhythm has a feel lying somewhere between 8th notes and triplets. A good way to conceptualize the feel is to think of a galloping horse. It does not sound straight and perfect or "quantized," but rather it has a loping feel.



Now, to make things even more complicated, take the galloping feel and move it one 8th note forward. Now you are starting to samba.



Here is the basic batucada pattern:
Surdo



Tamborim



Shaker



The tamborim can also play the following pattern, giving a driving upbeat feel.



Now let's apply these basic patterns to the drumset. The left hand plays the tamborim pattern as a cross-stick on the snare drum. The bass drum plays the part of the surdo. Make sure that the bass drum is played at equal volume throughout—no accents are necessary. Notice that the right hand is playing all of the 8th notes. This emulates the shaker and pandeiro pattern played either on the hi-hat or ride cymbal.



At faster tempos, the right hand can play this pattern on the ride cymbal bell:



It is also important to note that the opening of the hi-hat on the "e" of 1 and 2 gives the groove a nice forward movement—again, simulating the pandeiro.



As a general rule, you should avoid playing the typical jazz ride cymbal pattern. Why? Because it makes the samba feel heavy, and sambas, no matter how loud or soft, should *always* feel light. Conceptually, samba should be thought of as playful and joyous. (After all, consider the country in which the rhythm originates.) The way to accomplish this is to think of the groove coming from the upbeats.

Here are some other patterns that you can sink your teeth into. Remember to keep the feel light and swinging.



Another rhythm that is popular in Brazil is the partido alto, or "happy dance." This is fun to play, because it incorporates more of a funk element.



Now it's time for a little quiz: What pattern is common to both the samba and the partido alto? That's correct, it's the tamborim pattern shown above. In fact this rhythm is the basic foundation for many Brazilian feels. One *could* think of it as a Brazilian clave pattern, but it's important to note that this is an *implied* rhythm underlying the feel in many musical situations.

For the final challenge, go back and forth between the samba and partido alto patterns. Remember to keep it light.

Some suggested recordings to listen to are: Sergio Mendes' *Brasileiro* (an absolute must-have), Dori Caymmi's *Brazilian Serenata* and *Kicking Cans*, Kevyn Lettau's *Kevyn Lettau*, Yutaka's *Brazasia*, Djavan's *Flor De Lis* and *Birds Of Paradise* (first track), and Ivan Lins' *I'm Not Alone*. Remember to not only listen to the drums and percussion on these albums, but to pay close attention to what the guitar, bass, and keyboards are doing to give another perspective to the feel.

I hope this gives you some insight into this beautiful music. Have fun and keep grooving! *Munto obrigado-ciao!*

Kevin Winard lives in the LA area and has played and/or recorded with Sergio Mendes, Kleber Jorge, Velas, The Captain & Tennille, Doc Severinsen, Jack Jones, and many others. He is also a member of the group Murumba, along with percussionists Kalani and Michael Faue.



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Four Into Three

by Neal Busby

MUSIC KEY

HH	X	CC
SD	●	
BD	●	

This article focuses on two basic concepts that I use to move a four-note grouping through 8th-note or 16th-note triplets. The first is linear and involves splitting the triplets between hands and bass drum. The second utilizes the four-note groupings to pick unusual accent points across the bar.

Let's start with the linear concept of splitting the triplets between the hands and feet, using a bar of 8th-note triplets and a single-stroke sticking pattern:

R L R L R L R L R L R L

Without messing up the sticking, let's "replace" one of the hand notes with the bass drum. Start with the first right-hand note. Now simply move over three more notes, do it again, and repeat the process until the bar is completed. The result is this:

L R L L R L L R L

Since we are dealing with triplets, there are two more starting points that will give us all the variations:

Starting With The Second Note

R R L R R L R R L

Starting With The Third Note

R L L R L L R L L

To practice these patterns, I encourage that you play them along with a metronome set to very slow quarter notes. While you're doing this, try to beat your left foot in four on the hi-hat. This will give you a strong reference point for keeping the triplet feel, which is being tested by the four-note pattern.

Once you can keep the triplet feel going, try moving your hands to other sound sources: closed hi-hats, toms, cowbells, etc. I think you will find the effect quite interesting.

The application so far has been for one bar of triplets used as a fill. However, we can use the same idea to create linear grooves as well. For example:

The concept of bass drum replacement can also be applied to triplets using other sticking patterns. For example, try RLL, RLL, RLL, RLL:

L L R L R L R L L

or RRL, RRL, RRL, RRL:

R L R L R R R R L

The second idea for applying this concept, playing unusual accent points in the measure, follows essentially the same course as what we've just done. The difference is that instead of replacing notes with the bass drum, we are going to use the four-note grouping to play accents. So once again, let's take a bar of 8th-note triplets. Accent the first note, and then count over three notes, repeating until the bar is completed.

Use the accent as a guide for hitting toms, China cymbals, hi-hats, etc. Here's one of my favorite patterns:

Another idea might be to string a couple of different bars together to create longer, more involved fill and solo passages. The whole idea is to experiment as much as possible. Perhaps you'll come up with something that's never been played before!



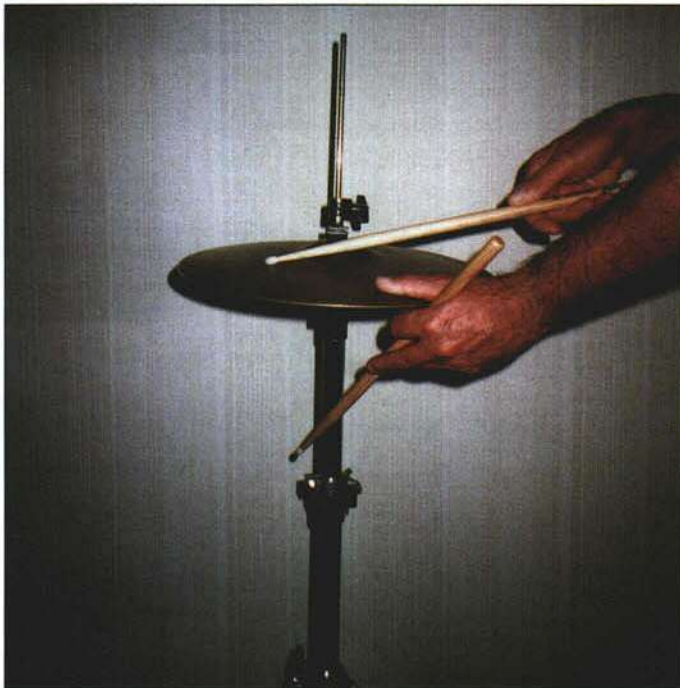
Tickling The Hi-Hats

by Will Dower

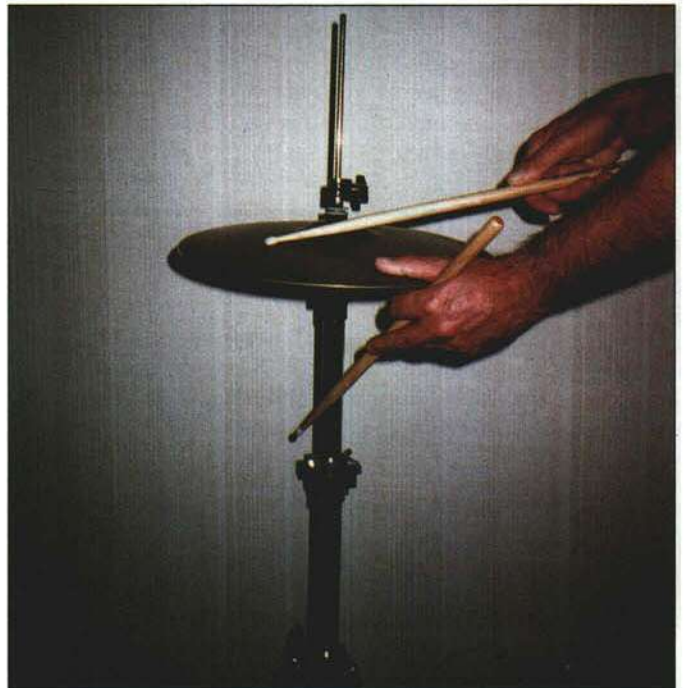
Some years ago, while listening to records by the Count Basie Orchestra, I heard the drummer tapping gently and rhythmically on closed hi-hats behind the Count's piano solos. Other tapping sounds became apparent to me, which I later found out were made by the drummer hitting both the stem of the hi-hat

with the left stick and the butt of the left stick with the right (striking the stick on its shaft, behind the left hand).

To get a better idea of exactly what is going on with the "tickling the hi-hats" technique, check out the following photographs:



Here, the right hand taps a closed hi-hat cymbal, with the thumb of the left hand resting on the cymbal. Then you squeeze the fingers of your left hand to tap the hi-hat stem with the left stick.

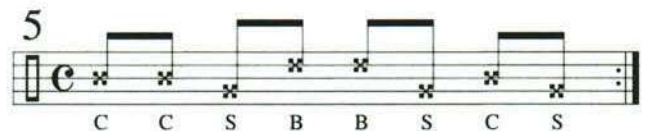
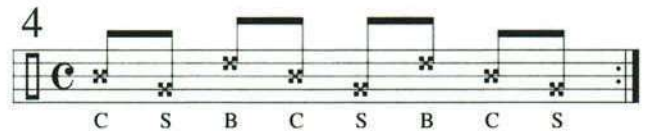
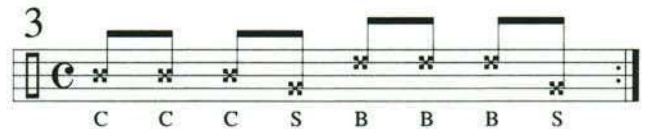
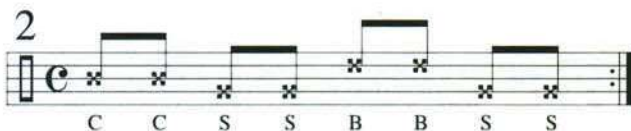
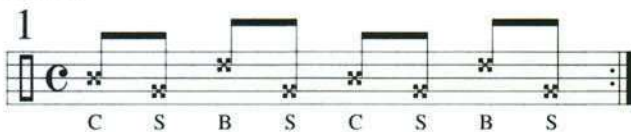


This photo shows the right hand coming over to tap the butt of the left stick (shaft, behind the hand) of the left stick.

Tickling Exercises

The following examples will give you some ideas on how to get started with this technique. The key to the following symbols is: S (appearing on the second line): Play the stem of the hi-hat; C (notated on the third line): Play the closed hi-hat; B (on the fourth line): Strike the butt end of the stick.

8th Notes



Triplets

6 C S B S C S B S C S B S

7 C S S B S S C S S B S S

8 C C S B B S C C S B B S

9 C S S B S C C S S B S C

10 C C S B S C C S B S C C S B S



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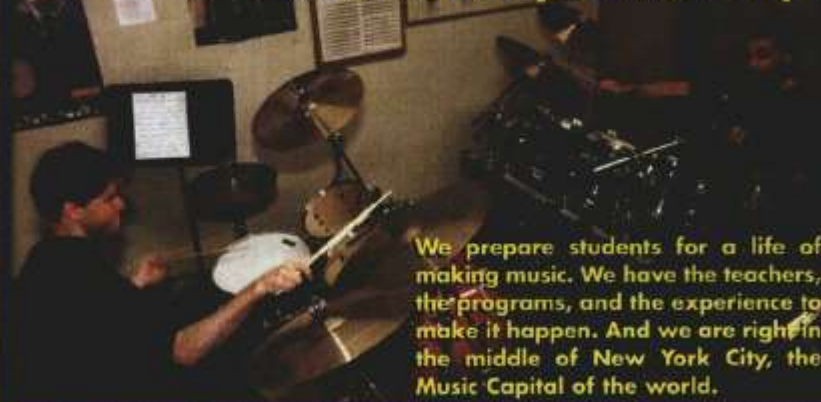
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Philip Smith

Thirty-year-old Phillip Smith hails from Marietta, Georgia, where he is busy with both performing and teaching. His own musical education includes a bachelors degree in music from the University of Tennessee and a masters degree from the University of Memphis, along with private study with Keith Brown, Ed Soph, Jeff Hamilton, Steve Houghton, and Roy Burns. This high-intensity training (along with the influences of such drummers as Philly Joe Jones, Tony Williams, Art Blakey, Vernel Fournier, Mel Lewis, Max Roach, Elvin Jones, and many others) leads Phillip to describe his playing



style as "primarily jazz—including all Latin styles—along with big band, rock, and funk." His playing credits span large- and small-group jazz bands, shows with such artists as Robert Goulet and Chet Atkins, and literally

hundreds of studio recording dates and casuals around the globe. Not surprisingly, Phillip's demo tape reveals him to be a drummer of musical taste and abundant technique.

Phillip currently exercises his skills as leader of the Atlanta Jazz Consortium, as a member of the Mike Kelly trio, and as a freelancer for live gigs and recording sessions in and around Marietta. He performs on a combination of Gretsch, Yamaha, and Ludwig drums, and endorses Bosphorus cymbals, Aquarian drumheads, and Regal Tip sticks and brushes.

Phillip also maintains a forty-student teaching roster, and has written several articles for *Modern Drummer*. "My goal," he concludes, "is to evolve into the most complete musician possible by balancing all facets of music: performing, writing educational materials, composing, arranging, and teaching."

Teri Coté

Austin's Teri Cote has had a varied drumming career already—and she's only been at it fifteen years. The twenty-nine-year-old is proud to say that "All I've done for a living is play drums. The drumming world has been beautiful *to and for me*."

Teri was a professional even in high school, playing with the Marcy Bros., a band signed to Warner Bros. Records. She had the somewhat schizophrenic experience of opening for major acts and headlining shows—while still playing snare drum in the high school drum corps whenever she was home.

After leaving high school Teri "hit the road" professionally and has never looked back. She's lived and worked in Reno, Lake Tahoe, Las Vegas, Japan, and now Austin. She's studied with Mark Craney,



Jim Chapin, Dom Moio, and Barry "Frosty" Smith, and she's played "every style of music one could think of, from funk, rock, and country to Dixieland jazz, Latin, and Malaysian!" Teri has also traveled extensively throughout the US, Australia, Japan, and Asia, and has recorded CDs and movie tracks with acts like the Corry Morrow band, Barrio Latino, Nidia Rojas, and Franceed Reed.

Currently, Teri is playing with two bands. One—a

funk group called Soul City—hopes to tour Europe this year, and both that band and her *other* current project (a funk/rock group called the Hell Fire Club) recently appeared regularly on the Internet. A versatile and talented drummer (and singer to boot!), Teri endorses Sabian cymbals and Vic Firth drumsticks.

Michael Galante

Michael Galante began drumming at eleven, and pursued his interest throughout his school career—including a year in his high school band. Also during high school he performed and recorded with several bands in the Baltimore area. He drew inspiration from drummers like Stephen Perkins, Chad Smith, Jimmy Chamberlin, and John Bonham, but gained formal training from teachers like Grant Menefee. He also spent three semesters at Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he expanded his musical horizons to include blues, Latin, jazz, funk, and rock styles.

After returning to

Baltimore and the local gigging scene (on both drumkit and hand percussion), Michael answered an ad for a Smiths cover band—and met singer/songwriter Sean Michael Dargan. The two hit it off, and Michael became a member of Dargan's band, playing "heavy alternative, country-influenced jangle pop." The band has built a local following in the Baltimore/D.C./Virginia area, and has opened for Matthew Sweet, Hootie & the Blowfish, and others. A tape of Michael's work with the band displays his ability to lay a solid foundation while keeping the pulse bubbling along creatively.

The twenty-two-year-old



drummer plays a Slingerland kit with a Ludwig snare, Zildjian cymbals, and Pearl hardware. He hopes to continue with the Sean Michael Dargan band, eventually taking it to a nationally recognized level.

If you'd like to appear in *On The Move*, send us an audio or video cassette of your best work (preferably both solo and with a band) on three or four songs, along with a brief bio sketch and a high-quality color or black & white close-up photo. (Polaroids are not acceptable. Photos will not be paid for or credited.) The bio sketch

should include your full name and age, along with your playing style(s), influences, current playing situation (band, recording project, freelance artist, etc.), how often and where you are playing, and what your goals are (recording artist, session player, local career player, etc.). Include any special items of interest pertaining to what

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



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to these SABIAN artists, and to all the winners of this year's Modern Drummer Readers' Poll. And thanks to all who voted for these great players.

WINNERS (L-R)

Evelyn Glennie Percussionist, **Jack DeJohnette** Mainstream Jazz,
Herman Matthews #1 R&B, **Terry Bozzio** Progressive Rock,
Steve Ferrone R&B, **Virgil Donati** Progressive Rock,
Rod Morgenstein All Around, **Vinnie Paul** Hard Rock,
Matt Chamberlain Studio, **Tony Coleman** R&B,
Mike Portnoy #1 Progressive Rock; Hard Rock

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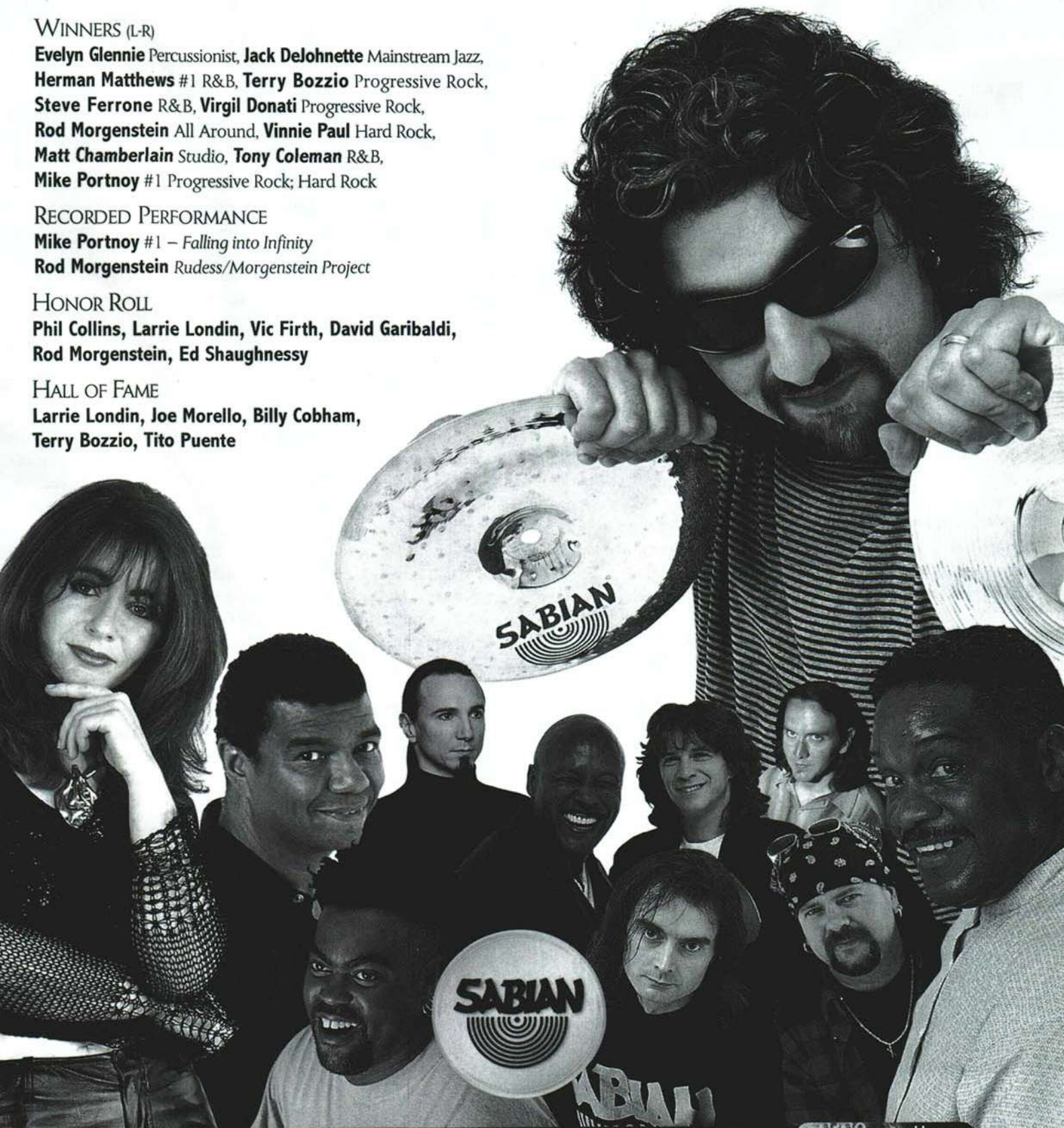
Mike Portnoy #1 - *Falling into Infinity*
Rod Morgenstein *Rudess/Morgenstein Project*

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Phil Collins, **Larrie Londin**, **Vic Firth**, **David Garibaldi**,
Rod Morgenstein, **Ed Shaughnessy**

HALL OF FAME

Larrie Londin, **Joe Morello**, **Billy Cobham**,
Terry Bozzio, **Tito Puente**



More Sites To See

by Matt Peiken

Publishing a Web site is easy. Attracting people to it is a riddle that has plagued mankind since—well, since the mainstreaming of the Internet. Advertising is hit-and-miss, and inviting your friends will only take you so far. But the following drum companies and individuals took the same elusive, all-important first step toward fame—they let *me* know about their Web sites. So here, following their self-promotion via e-mail, is a smorgasbord of cyberspace, connected in one way or another to drums, drummers, and drumming.

Illegal Radio (www.iuma.com/IllegalRadio/)

The Internet Underground Music Archive is one of the most densely populated (if not the oldest) collections of independent music in all its eclectic splendor. One of the stops on the IUMA dial is "Illegal Radio," where founder L. Michael Welch pitches a range of programs dedicated to music ranging from avant and ambient to anti-social spoken word and what he calls "cyberjazz."

He's also the founder of the *Michael Welch Quadragrip For Drumset*. At this Web site, Welch introduces visitors to his "All Drums" library, a CD set reportedly featuring more than two hundred hours of acoustic and electronic drum tracks.

The site features the look of an old-style mahogany radio. One problem: The top of each page looks exactly alike, so it's hard to know, without scrolling on your own, if your click has actually taken you anywhere.

Impact Industries (www.power.net/users/impact/)

If you didn't make it to the latest NAMM show, don't fret, because Impact Industries takes you to their booth on the home page of their Web site. While here, check into Impact's line of cases, bags, and drums, featuring patented sound holes cut into the front of the fiberglass shells. There's a list of endorsers, and you can e-mail the Wisconsin company to get pricing information.

GRDrums (www.erols.com/grdrums/)

Gary Rosensweig's site is part commercial, part charity. He claims all the instructional books and tapes you'll ever need can be found in his "Progressive Drummer Series." Be the judge yourself here by scanning sample pages and listening to sound clips from each part of the series.

But Rosensweig is more than a salesman. His Web site features

free lessons, updated weekly, and there's a drummer's bulletin board where you can "Ask Gary" about technique and other playing matters or hop onto drumming-related discussions. If you leave your e-mail address, Rosensweig will let you know when he's updated his site.

Black Swamp Percussion (www.blackswamp.com/bswamp)

This is a smart-looking, easy-to-steer site detailing the company's drums and hand percussion, including the skinny on Black Swamp cable snares and bamboo timpani sticks. There's also a thorough online catalog featuring photos, available models, finishes, and upgrades. Soon, the site will feature RealAudio sound clips, allowing you to hear recorded versions of Black Swamp instruments.

Pork Pie Percussion (www.westworld.com/~porkie/index.html)

Check out a photo gallery featuring Pork Pie's *Full Pie* (top-of-the-line) and *Junior Pie* kits. There's a list of endorsers, dealers, and—possibly most telling—a list of well-knowns who have purchased Pork Pie equipment.

Get details on custom services such as re-coverings, bearing edges, and one-of-a-kind painted finishes. Learn about new Pork Pie products and read some advice-minded press clippings (with topics like rebuilding and cleaning your kit), reprinted with permission from *Modern Drummer*.

Mike Kolesar (members.aol.com/okolesar/mk_homel.htm)

According to his online bio, Kolesar has played drums in bands in and around Pittsburgh for close to thirty years. He currently plays with Mon Gumbo, a group he says "mixes zydeco, New Orleans-style R&B, and Cajun, twisted with our own variety of influences." Mike's also the house drummer for the Waverly Opera House and has given workshops at Blandland's Drum Day events.

For laughs, read about his gig in a Pennsylvania prison and visit his drum solo tribute page, where he spins a yarn about his kit catching fire—complete with eyewitness photos—during a local live TV gig in 1975. Spinal Tap would be proud.

Let Matt Peiken know about your drumming-related Web site by sending e-mail to mapeiken@pioneerplanet.infi.net. He also wouldn't mind if you checked out his own site at www.pioneerplanet.infi.net/~mapeiken.

SPEAK OUT: Bass Drum Pedals

From Modern Drummer Online, www.moderndrummer.com

Modern Drummer Online features a section called "Speak Out," where drummers are invited to speak their mind about drum-related topics. This month's topic was on bass drum pedals, and it seemed that everybody with access to the Net chimed in with their thoughts on favorite pedals and the technique they use to play them. (Thanks to all for responding!) Here are just a few of the comments we received.

Great topic. I use an old Rogers bass drum pedal—I bought it in 1975—and it's the smoothest pedal I've ever tried. I've had to replace the leather strap that attaches the footboard to the beater (several times), but it's a simple operation (I use old belts) that I don't mind doing to be able to continue using this gem.

By the way, I play with my heel down with a medium-to-hard spring tension. I get plenty of power and volume with this setting, even out of my 20" bass drum. Thanks for asking.

Bud Johnson

I have big feet (size 14 shoe), and I've always had trouble finding a pedal with a footboard that was big enough to fit my dogs'. I'm currently using a Gibraltar double pedal because of its large footboard. I'm happy with it, but I'd be interested in checking out any other double pedals with large footboards that would fit my feet. Any recommendations?

Larry "Big Foot" Dulabaum

I'm sixteen and I use an Axis double bass pedal. My Axis pedal is quick to react, and I can go from *mp* to *ff* in a flash. The pedals are a little more expensive than most, but they're worth it.

Everett Tonyan

I saw your "Speak Out" section on your Web site about bass drum pedals and I just had to give you my input, because the kick drum is the foundation of my playing. I use a DW 5002 Delta double pedal. I actually won it in a drum contest. Since then, I haven't bought anything but DW. The rea-

son is that they are perfect, no matter what style of music I'm playing.

As far as my approach to the pedals, I play heels up. It's the most comfortable for me. When I used my old pedals, particularly when playing jazz, I had to literally change my approach to the pedal. In other words, I had to play heels down. That was very uncomfortable for me. But now I can go from one style to the next and not change a thing with my foot.

Chad Wright

I am fourteen years old, and I use a DW 5000 single pedal. I use this pedal because it's fast. The spring is set tight because I get a faster response that way. I use a Danmar wooden beater and kick plate. Most of the time I use the heel-up technique because it is easier for me, and I feel I have more control with it.

Kris Dixon

I recently purchased a Pearl P-101 Powershifter pedal. I was looking for a pedal that could deliver all the energy I was putting out. I need that extra power when I play in my band so I can hear the bass drum.

Joe Cash

I am a drummer playing with a hard-working blues band. I have found that blues front men are fond of hearing, or rather feeling, a lot of kick drum on the downbeats and primarily the "1," so I have to lay into the kick.

Currently I am playing a pre-Iron Cobra Tama single strap-drive pedal that is tensioned a bit tighter than the pedal was originally designed. (The original loops that attached the tension spring to the chassis are long broken away and were replaced by key-chain hoops. The key-chain hoops add the extra tension.) I use 95% heel-up except when "feathering" the kick during jazz tunes. My leg position is a shade higher than parallel to the floor to get extra leverage and not sacrifice balance.

Stephen M. Boudreaux

There's no doubt that, along with the snare drum, the bass drum pedal best reflects a drummer's individual preference when sitting at a drumkit. Go ahead and ask any of your drummer friends or go to one of those multi-band concerts and ask the drummers what is the one thing they need to have to perform comfortably. They'll answer, "My bass drum pedal."

In reference to live playing, the band I'm currently with is in the alternative rock vein, although I've used my Yamaha pedal for blues, funk, fusion, and jazz gigs. It has never let me down. If there's any pedal I'd like to try in the future, I guess it would have to be a DW 5000, 'cause I really admire the company's commitment, whether it's drums or hardware.

Enrique "Bugs" Gonzalez

I play with my heel up because I have found it easier to get the right kind of power in my beat with it. I can also take advantage of fast up-and-down "nervous" motions that my leg makes, adding some more flavor to the music.

I have found that some drummers who play heel down don't get enough power into their stroke, which is very distressing to a sound engineer at a concert. It also makes the rest of the band sound terrible when the bass drum totally disappears.

Daniel Nilsen

After all the pedals I've tried, which include Ludwig, Tama, Gibraltar, Pearl, Rogers, and Yamaha, all were double pedals except the Ludwig. I would have to say that, for me, DW is the best pedal by far. I say this because every other pedal I've used is very difficult to balance, and I could never get the correct tension of the spring that I needed. I play hardcore, which is a type of hard rock/metal that uses a lot of double bass. I depend on my pedal's durability.

Chris Ciaffaglione

Of any pedal I've ever used in my years of percussion, I've never been more satisfied than with my Ludwig Speed King. I use a heel-up method, sliding my foot a lot on

the footboard for triplets and doubles. If you ever run across a *Speed King*, try it.

Steve Bain

I've been using a great pedal since I bought it in 1976—a *Ghost* pedal. This pedal has served me well in a variety of musical styles—rock, hard rock, blues, and country. I have never had a problem with it. It's indestructible. But it is too bad that the pedal is no longer made. Does anyone have the patent? Could they start producing this amazing pedal again?

Rick Cabral

I'm using a Tama *HP20 TW*, with the felt side of Tama's double beater, which I am very pleased with. The pedal's not expensive, but it works fine. I have it set to a medium tension.

Jacob Willersrud

I am convinced that there is no "perfect" pedal in existence. I am not sure exactly what qualities a perfect pedal would have, but I know that I have tried many different types. Early on I used a standard-issue Tama. When I equipped it with a DW two-way beater, it performed rather nicely.

Unfortunately, the thing fell apart over time. My next pedal was a Gibraltar double pedal. This pedal was alright, but it did not have a silent action. At a friend's recommendation, I moved on to the single version of Premier's *EDP*. It's not as fast as I was led to believe, but it is incredibly adjustable. I recently tried a Tama *Iron Cobra* double pedal. Tama pedals, though not perfect, are the most underrated pedals out there. From that first Tama pedal to the *Iron Cobras*, I'm a fan.

Trent Wolfred

I currently use a Yamaha single pedal that I purchased some time ago. It's the model that Dave Weckl uses. I bought the pedal because it utilizes the "cam" concept and is fairly quiet.

As far as pedal tension, I like to have just enough tension to allow the beater to keep up with my fastest foot speed. This equates to a fairly low tension, which makes playing quiet gigs easier, especially if I need to play fast tempos at low volume (jazz sambas, for example). I used to use the Yamaha felt beater that came with my pedal, until I broke the shaft one night on a heavy rock gig. It was then that I discovered the

Yamaha "curse"—only a Yamaha beater will fit the pedal! To spite them, I bought a Danmar beater and modified it to fit. Ha!

Bill Engebretson

I have always been a fan of DW pedals. My first pedal was a 1958 Gretsch *Floating Action* pedal, which the DWs remind me of. But just last week a friend gave me a Slingerland *Yellowjacket* pedal, and it has to be one of the best-designed pedals I have ever seen. It feels great. The bolts for the springs lock in place. The rim clamp has an adjusting nut and a tightening arm. You adjust the nut once, and the tightening arm locks into place on the rim. The strap is actually metal, and the spurs are sharp!

I play different styles of music, but mainly hard rock. I always play heel up. I use felt beaters, but on occasion I use wood with the Danmar click pad. The tension is usually a little loose.

I am mainly writing you to tell you about the Slingerland pedal. I don't know if you can get them anymore, but they are worth checking out.

Jeff Consi



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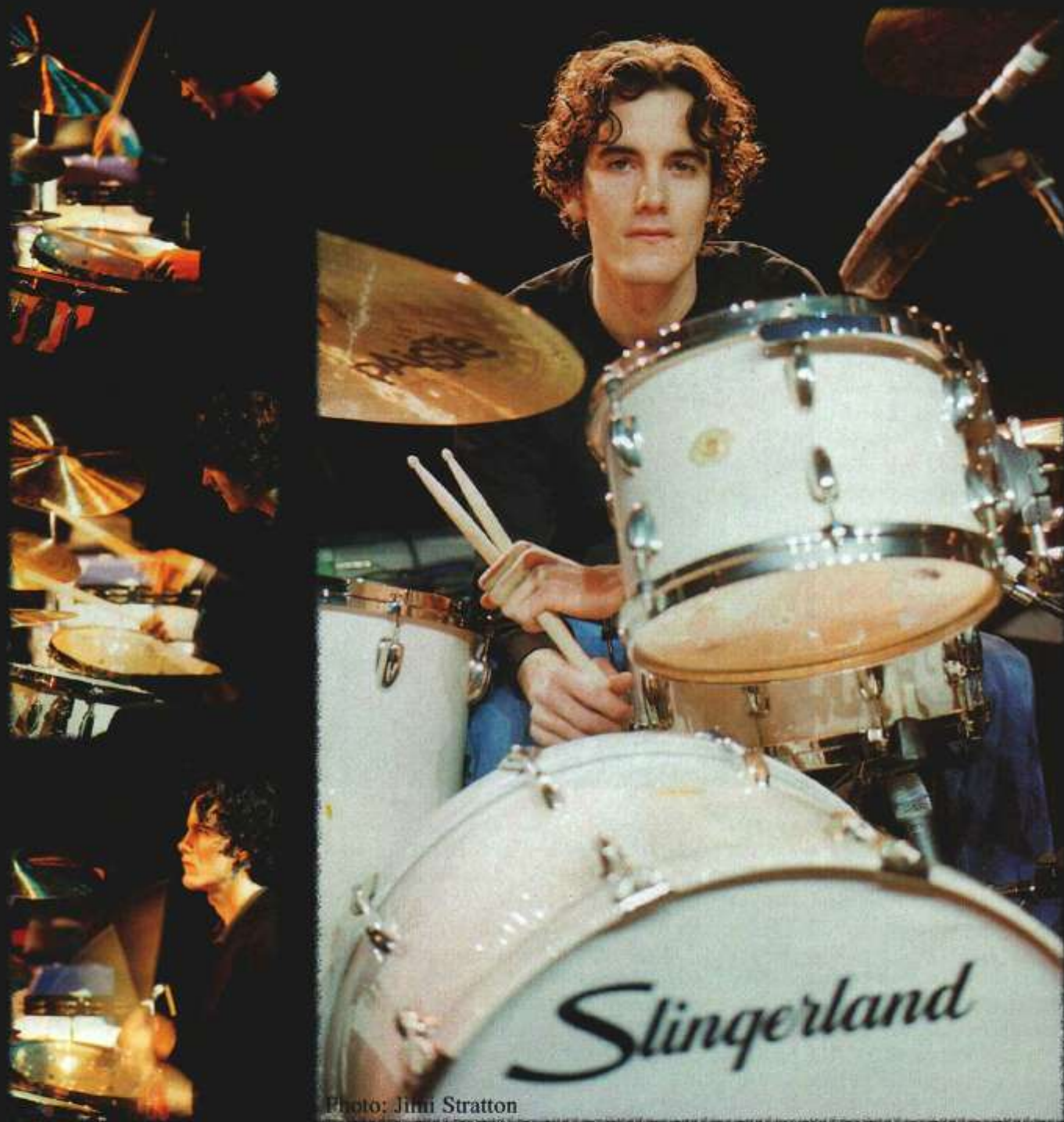


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Jeff Porcaro

by Mark Griffith

Six years ago, the music world lost a great artist, the drumming world lost a great friend, and three young boys lost a father. The phrase "gone but not forgotten" pertains to a number of history's great drummers—Gene, Buddy, Tony, and Larrie—but within the drumming community, nowhere is it applied with more sincerity and heartfelt respect than to the one and only Jeff Porcaro.

From the second that Jeff hit the scene in 1971, playing double drums with Jim Keltner on Jack Daughterly's *The Class Of 1971*, it was obvious that he had something special. For a young drummer, playing double drums with anyone is hard. But if the drummer you have to lock in with happens to be your idol, as Jim was to Jeff, you're faced with an entirely different kind of pressure. Then again, Jeff was not just *any* young drummer. Rising to that challenge in his first recording session launched one of the most celebrated studio drumming careers in recent history.

From there, Jeff played with Sonny & Cher in Las Vegas, on TV, and on their excellent album *Live In Las Vegas*. This music may not fit today's taste, but if you listen closely, you'll discover some great grooves and a very tight rhythm section that made the music really come alive.

Only five years after Jeff entered the recording business, he played on Boz Scaggs' memorable *Silk Degrees*. Even at that young age Jeff was able to manipulate the time feel in many ways. On "What Can I Say" he lays back, playing well behind the beat. On "Georgia" he's as "on top" as he could be without actually rushing. And in

both cases the groove is amazingly comfortable. On "Jumpstreet" Jeff splits the difference, placing the beat absolutely dead center. His cut-time reggae groove on "Love Me Tomorrow" is almost as great as his "Lido Shuffle" beat, a classic groove that every drummer should learn.

By the time of Boz's 1977 recording *Down Two, Then Left*, Jeff's drumming had changed. Though still young, he had already made many recordings, and, like any great musician, he was constantly evolving and improving. I have heard many people refer to Jeff's "silky" hi-hat work. Throughout this article we will chart the evolution of this Porcaro trademark. Isolate Jeff's hi-hat parts on "A Clue" and "Gimme The Goods," focusing not on the pattern he plays, but on how he varies the part of the stick with which he strikes the cymbals. This technique varies the hi-hat's texture, making it sound more like a maraca, and fills the music with forward motion.

Compare this to the more static hi-hat sounds on *Silk Degrees*, made just the previous year. This is only the beginning of Jeff's unique hi-hat style. (And speaking of Jeff's hi-hat, notice the absence of it entirely on the shuffle "1993.")

In 1980, Jeff recorded Boz Scaggs' *Middle Man*. On "Angel You" and "JoJo," notice how he places the beat exactly and consistently dead-center, and how on the latter he makes the very difficult hits seem effortless. "You Got Some Imagination" shows Jeff playing more aggressively. Pay special attention to how his busy bass drum locks in perfectly with the bassist. "You Can Have Me Anytime" is one of those "not slow but not fast" in-between tempos. Jeff attacks this difficult gray area, and even gets creative with it. And what can you say about the rockin' "Middle Man" except that it's perfect. These three great Boz Scaggs tunes provide an ideal study of the evolution of Jeff's style. Jeff also played on Boz's



Sam Emerson

Other Roads, recorded in 1988.

If you explore Jeff's recording career you will notice some names that appear repeatedly. A couple of the most notable are Larry Carlton and Les Dudek. With Carlton Jeff made three recordings: *Larry Carlton* (check the outstanding "Point It Up"), *Sleepwalk*, and *Friends*. The latter, highly recommended, is a record-long showcase of quintessential Porcaro: wide beat, deep-in-the-pocket drumming. The three early Les Dudek releases sound similar to Carlton's, but possess more of an edge, like early Little Feat. (You can hear some very distinct Richie Hayward influences both in Jeff's sound and style.) *Say No More* and *Ghost Town Parade* are good, but Dudek's self-titled recording is excellent. Jeff shifts beats and sounds very funky on "City Magic," the Zappa-ish "Don't Stop Now" lets him display some early Purdie influences, and he gets down and swampy with "Take The Time." The most recent Les Dudek album, *Deeper Shades Of Blue*, is also outstanding. This recording presents Jeff's many blues shuffle variations and could serve as an encyclopedia of this drumming style.

Steely Dan's entire *Katy Lied* is a Porcaro masterpiece. His uptempo shuffle on "Black Friday" is notable, and the swinging "Your Gold Teeth II" stands out as a drastic departure from the rest of his career. The slower shuffle of "Chain Lightning" is further proof that Jeff owned this style of groove. You can also hear him moving the time feel around from playing on top in "Rose Darling," to slightly behind on "Daddy Don't Live In New York City," to dead center on "Everyone's Gone To The Movies." Sure, Jeff could have played "more" drums on this recording, but that's not what the music called for, and whenever Jeff played, the music came first.

In 1982 Donald Fagen called Jeff to do some of the drumming on his solo debut, *The Nightfly*, on which Jeff plays yet another shuffle variation on "Ruby Baby." Compare his shuffle approach to Steve Jordan's shuffle feel on "Walk Between The Raindrops" on this same album. Also compare Jeff's dead-center time feel on *The Nightfly* to his earlier, ultra-laid-back groove on Steely Dan's "Gaucho" from the album of the same name. But regardless of his varied treatment of the time feel, Jeff always had full command of the time.

Toto's collective musicality and their great songwriting skills make it a drummer's dream gig. However, Jeff didn't just play Toto's music; his grooves helped *define* Toto's sound. In fact, many of Toto's greatest songs were so dependent on Jeff's grooves, it is often very hard to tell which came first, the song or the groove.

On Toto's self-titled album (1978), which features the hits "Child's Anthem" and "Hold The Line," Jeff's hi-hat approach was evolving. On "Georgy Porgy" and "I'll Supply The Love," his hi-hat is static, but

he applies his trademark "silky" hi-hat on "You Are The Flower" and "Takin' It Back." Compare the in-the-pocket "Rockmaker" to the similar but edgier "I'll Supply The Love." Even this early it was apparent that Jeff was becoming a master at manipulating beat placement.

Toto's *Hydra* finds Jeff's hi-hat work getting even smoother. Check out the title tune and "99" for Jeff's subtle hi-hat, and the often overlooked "Mama" for yet another variation of the great "Porcaro shuffle."

Turn Back has many highlights. "English

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Eyes" features some of Jeff's most aggressive drumming, but he doesn't let that affect the tune's laid-back time feel. It also contains one of the first examples of my favorite Porcaro trademark. In the middle of this song, there is a break that he fills in a signature way: The tune has an 8th-note rock feel, but Jeff shifts gears and plays a half-time 16th-note groove as the fill. He did this much more (with other time feels) later in his career.

Outside of his underlying groove, perhaps the most important aspect of Jeff Porcaro's drumming was his patience. Jeff let songs and grooves evolve, knowing that a groove doesn't just happen; it is created through repetition and sincerity. Jeff was confident enough to be repetitious, and he never played an insincere note. Listen to how he paces himself throughout "I Think I Could Stand You Forever." Jeff contributes to the song's momentum with his "larger than life" tom fills, but he doesn't complicate the groove. Instead, only his bass drum gets busier—but not until the end of the tune.

Toto IV is recognized as a classic, but it's much more than the legendary "Rosanna" and "Africa." Listen to how Jeff incorporates the parts of the song into his "Good For You" groove. This is more than just a beat; it is one of the greatest examples of orchestrating a drum part around the drumset ever recorded. Compare "We Made It" to Toto's earlier "I'll Supply The Love." The main groove is very similar, but notice how Jeff's pocket has developed over time. While closely listening to "We Made It" and "Waiting For Your Love" you'll hear that Jeff by then had mastered his silky hi-hat technique. And upon even closer examination, you'll find that there are many other grace notes (besides his hi-hats) within "Waiting For Your Love." The notes that aren't heard are the ones that can transform a drum beat into a groove.

Notice how Jeff's perfectly orchestrated tom fills (yet another trademark) keep the ballad "I Won't Hold You Back" moving. Jeff knew how to make an entrance. Be it on Boz Scaggs' "Lido Shuffle," Toto's "Africa," "I Think I Could Stand You Forever," and "Could This Be Love," Michael Bolton's "When A Man Loves A Woman," or Robben Ford's "I Got Over It," Jeff's melodic fills were unpredictable yet precise, dramatic yet musical—and always instantly identifiable as Jeff Porcaro.

Isolation was a different type of recording for Toto and Jeff. The rhythmic lilt and the manipulation of the beat were absent. All of Jeff's drumming on this record was exactly in the middle of the beat. If you don't hear it at first, compare it to Larry Carlton's *Friends*, made just the previous year. However, "Lion" (from *Isolation*) proves that Jeff could make "dead center" groove more than anybody. Also note the big fills on "How Does It Feel," and the overdubbed hi-hat on "Endless."

On *Fahrenheit*, Jeff really shines. "Can't Stand It Any Longer" is a perfect Porcaro cut: very aggressive, silky smooth hi-hat, and a deep pocket. The title track is made especially unusual by the second-line idea at the end of the song. "Without Your Love" is another difficult in-between tempo that Jeff holds perfectly. And "Somewhere Tonight" adds one more chapter to the "Porcaro Encyclopedia Of Shuffles," this time with a strong reggae influence.

From *The Seventh One*, "Mushanga" is a unique and creative groove. "These Chains" is yet another amazing shuffle, and "A Thousand Years" is yet one more difficult tempo made easy by Mr. Porcaro.

Kingdom Of Desire is, simply put, a modern rock drumming mas-

Tracking Them Down

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

Jack Daughterly

The Class Of 1971 (out of print)

Sonny & Cher

Live In Las Vegas, MCA 2-8004

Boz Scaggs

Silk Degrees, Columbia CK 33920

Down Two, Then Left, Columbia CK 34729

Middle Man, Columbia CK 36106

Other Roads, Columbia CK 40463

Larry Carlton

Larry Carlton, MCA MCAD-42245

Sleepwalk, MCA MCAD-42247

Friends, MCA MCAD-42214

Les Dudek

Les Dudek, Columbia CK 34397

Say No More, Columbia CK 33702

Ghost Town Parade, Columbia JC 35088

Deeper Shades Of Blue,

Geosynchronous GSR-00172

Steely Dan

Katy Lied, MCA MCAD-31194

Gauche, MCAD-37220

Donald Fagen

The Nightfly, Warner Bros. 23696-2

Toto

Toto, Columbia CK 35317

Hydra, Columbia CK 36229

Turn Back, Columbia CK 36813

IV, Columbia CK 37728

Isolation, Columbia CK 38962

Fahrenheit, Columbia CK 40273

The Seventh One, Columbia CK 40873

Kingdom Of Desire, Columbia CK 471633-2

Michael Bolton

Time, Love & Tenderness, Columbia CK 46771

Robben Ford

Talk To Your Daughter, Warner Bros. 25647-2

Etta James

Deep In The Night, Warner Bros. BSK 3156

Hall & Oates

Beauty On A Back Street, RCA AFL1-2300

Jackson Browne

The Pretender, Asylum 6E-107

Aretha Franklin

Love All The Hurt Away, Arista AL 9552

Allen Toussaint

Motion, Warner Bros. BSK 3142

Tom Scott

Street Beat, Columbia JC 36137

Sarah Vaughan

Songs Of The Beatles, Atlantic SD 16037

David Gilmour

About Face, Columbia FC 39296

James Newton Howard

And Friends, Sheffield Lab CD-23

Warren Zevon

Mr. Bad Example, Giant 9 24431-2

Stan Getz

Apasionado, A&M 75021 5297 2

Greg Mathieson

Baked Potato Super Live, CBS/Sony 32DP452

Luis Conte

Black Forest, Denon CJ 74100

Los Lobotomys

Los Lobotomys, Creatchy SFB1002

Brandon Fields

Other Places, Nova 9025-2

Bill Meyers

Color Of The Truth, Agenda 4701-2

Soundtracks

Dune, Polydor 823770-1

Dick Tracy (I'm Breathless),

Sire/Warner Bros. W226209

Glengary Glen Ross, Elektra 961384-2

Lee Ritenour

Captain Fingers, Epic PE 34426

Madonna

Like A Prayer, Sire 925844-2

Nik Kershaw

The Works, MCA DMCF3438

Michael McDonald

If That's What It Takes, Warner Bros. 23703-2

Eric Clapton

Behind The Sun, Warner Bros. 25166-1

Pages

Pages, Capitol ST12123

Performance Video

Toto Live In Paris 1990, Sony Video

(Japanese import)

Instructional Video

Jeff Porcaro, Star Licks Video

Tower Records Mail Order, (800) 648-4844

J&R Music World Mail Order, (800) 221-8180

Audiophile Imports, (410) 628-7601

Third St. Jazz And Rock, (800) 486-8745

Rick Ballard Imports, PO Box 5063, Dept. DB, Berkeley, CA 94705

Double Time Jazz, PO Box 1244, New Albany, IN 47151

Scott Davidson Music, (302) 529-1081

terpiece, and is *highly* recommended. With his drumming more aggressive than ever, this is the ultimate Jeff Porcaro. There is also a video of Toto live in Paris in 1990 (released in Japan) that is absolutely indispensable. Also see Jeff's own instructional video for more visuals of the master.

So far we have surveyed the gigs and recordings that Jeff Porcaro

is immediately associated with. But since Jeff was also a very busy session/studio musician, let's look at some of the older sessions that his playing helped define. Etta James' *Deep In The Night* was a perfect session for Jeff. The bluesy and soulful James sank into his groove on "Piece Of My Heart" and "Take It To The Limit," as well as the funky "Blind Girl." Porcaro is strong, precise, and dead-center on Hall & Gates' *Beauty On A Back Street*, and on Jackson Browne's *The Pretender*. His mastery of ballads is clear on Aretha Franklin's *Love All The Hurt Away*. Allen Toussaint's *Motion* delivers the funky "Nightpeople," "Optimism Blues," and "Viva La Money." The title track of Tom Scott's *Street Beat* features some of the funkier Jeff Porcaro ever. And although Sarah Vaughan's *Songs Of The Beatles* has heavy disco overtones, Jeff is very strong throughout.

More recently, David Gilmour's *About Face* displayed some of Jeff's best all-out rock playing. In the same year Jeff played on the outstanding James Newton Howard *And Friends* album, featuring multiple synths, drums, and percussion. Warren Zevon's *Mr. Bad Example* glows from Jeff's presence, as do four tunes on Michael Jackson's landmark *Thriller*. And if all these credits don't point to Jeff's incredible range and versatility, throw this into the stew: Stan Getz found Jeff to be the perfect drummer for his modern Brazilian-influenced recording *Apasionado*, as did Bill Meyers for his pop-ish *The Color Of The Truth* and Greg Mathieson for his outstanding rock-out *Baked Potato Super Live*, with Jeff and Steve Lukather doing the kickin'.

Jeff was *the* master of leaving space, making him a favorite among percussionists. This trademark always came to the forefront with Toto. While *Los Lobotomys* features Jeff playing double drums with either Vinnie Colaiuta or Carlos Vega, all the drummers leave ample space for Lenny Castro's percussion. Brandon Fields' *Other Places* also features Jeff with Lenny Castro. And Luis Conte's *Black Forest* is outstanding.

Jeff also did a great deal of film soundtrack work. For *Dune*, an orchestra was called in to augment Toto for the entire soundtrack. In *Dick Tracy (I'm Breathless)* Jeff supported Madonna on four very different songs. And Jeff plays quality background music with a small group featuring

Wayne Shorter in *Glengary Glen Ross*.

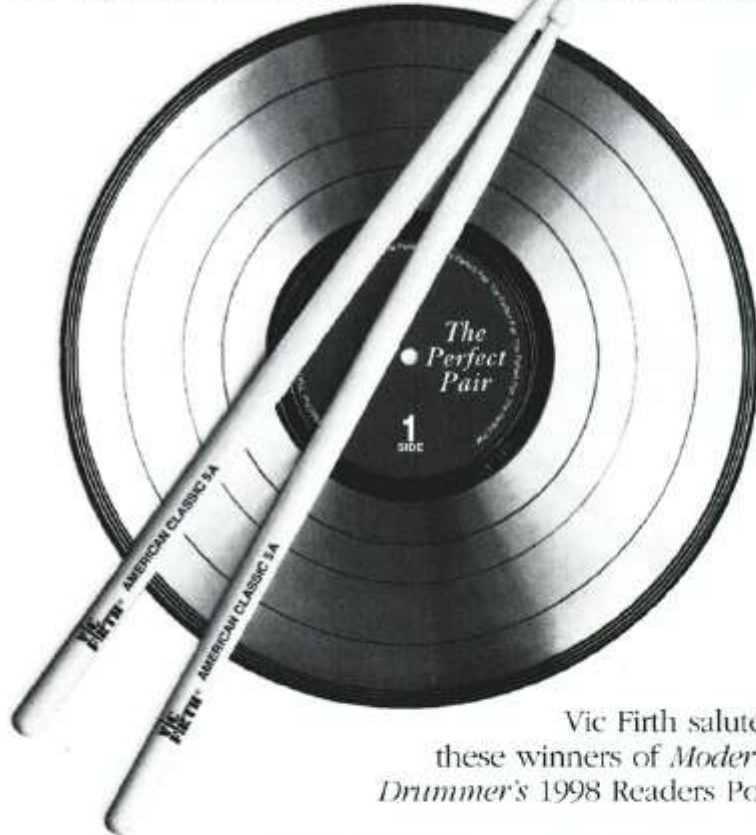
Because of his gift for playing all kinds of shuffles, Jeff often got called to do just that—and only that. On Lee Ritenour's *Captain Fingers* he plays on just two selections, one of which is the perfectly executed "Isn't She Lovely?" On Madonna's *Like A Prayer*, Jeff's shuffle is the lifeblood of "Cherish." Jeff also steps in for Vinnie Colaiuta for one song on Nik Kershaw's *The Works*, because even Vinnie couldn't have played the shuffling "Walkabout" as well as Jeff.

There's another groove that Jeff was called to play quite often. For examples, check out Michael McDonald's "I Keep Forgettin'," Eric Clapton's "See What Love Can Do," and Pages' "You Need A Hero." It doesn't have a name yet, but perhaps we should call the silky-smooth, 16th-note, deep-in-the-pocket groove simply..."JEFF."

Thanks for the grooves, Jeff. You are not forgotten.



Readers' Choice



Vic Firth salutes these winners of *Modern Drummer's* 1998 Readers Poll

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Kenny Aronoff | Anton Fig |
| Gregg Bissonette | Oliver Gene Lake |
| Terry Bozzio | Rod Morgenstein |
| Matt Cameron | Mike Palmer |
| Matt Chamberlain | Vinnie Paul |
| Jack DeJohnette | Chad Sexton |
| Sheila E. | Steve Smith |



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RECORDINGS

Brian Blade

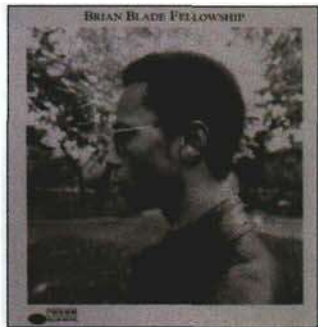
Brian Blade Fellowship (Blue Note)

⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ½

drummer: **Brian Blade**

with John Cowheard (pno, Wurlitzer), Christopher Thomas (bs), Melvin Butler (tn, sp sx), Myron Maldron (al sx), Jeff Parker (gtr), Dave Easley (pedal steel gtr)

Befitting Brian Blade's tenure with Joshua Redman and Kenny Garrett and the acclaim that followed his solo debut is another example of this young drummer's instincts for playing with depth, power, and sensitivity. As explosive as Elvin Jones by way of New Orleans, Blade plays in responsive waves, surging in catharsis one moment, gently swelling the next. Brian Blade Fellowship, a seven-piece band that features both electric and steel guitar and two saxophones, shows yet another side to this Louisiana native's creativity. This is no bebop blowing fest, but a thoughtful, almost suite-like album, as the group soulfully plays its meditative melodies and unusual arrangements.



On the opening "Red River Revel," Brian plays a chaotic mambo beat, as the saxophonists spin dense webs of sound above. "The Undertow" is a slow blues that marries the group's unusual instrumentation to Blade's penchant for country-influenced atmospheres, establishing *Fellowship's*

voice early on. "Folklore" is the album's centerpiece, a witty blend of pygmy chants, stark harmonies, and hard-edged group improvisation. Blade is back in Latin mode here, extracting a beautiful rhythm and playing an understated solo of tricky stick-on-stick accents, warm tom-bass drum fills, and shrapnel-like cymbal crashes. Brian Blade's musical language is always shifting and surprising, with an organic ease and flow that is nothing less than spiritual.

Ken Micallef

Bill Frisell

Gone, Just Like A Train (Nonesuch)

⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕

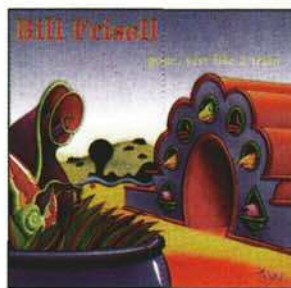
drummer: **Jim Keltner**

with Bill Frisell (gtr), Viktor Krauss (ac bs)

First off, let's just say it's about time envelope-pushing guitarist Bill Frisell made a record with a drummer again. Frisell's last two LPs were done without traditional rhythm sections, and perhaps as a result of this time away, he returns to the standard trio format with some of his most inspired compositions and beautiful playing on record. The bulk of *Gone* has a breezy, familiar tone that, like much of the bandleader's stuff, wears like a pair of comfortable shoes. Stylistically, this is uniquely American music, falling at the crossroads of blues, country, folk, and Aaron Copland (whose *Billy The Kid* Frisell has covered). And as a nice change of pace, there are several louder, more searing numbers that attest to Frisell's obvious affection for rock 'n' roll.

Jim Keltner paints his rhythms in broad strokes, using little fills and ghost notes as the power of suggestion to imply many feels within the pulse of a given tune. Quite often he takes the linear approach (striking just one source at a time), and his work with brushes is both swinging and contemplative. Keltner's kit sounds stunning: A huge, open bass drum gives way to an array of snares (sometimes played together in the same piece), and the one he uses most often has a delicious low, fat tone.

Since we're so used to hearing Jim Keltner play on vocal records, it's fun to hear the venerable session guy get loose with some instrumental music—music that, like *Gone*, suits him perfectly.



Michael Parillo

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

New on CD, *The Roar Of '74* (Beast Retro) reaffirms what idolaters and detractors alike said about **BUDDY RICH**, from "busy and bombastic" to "brilliant." Despite or because of an even more dominant than usual Buddy, a top-drawer ensemble and sparkling arranging make this a big band lover's prize.

Pianist James Carney's second disc, *Offset Rhapsody* (Jacaranda), features his eclectic, beautiful, and sometimes haunting compositions, this time with an acoustic bent. Drummer/percussionists **DAN MORRIS** and **ALEX CLINE** lend a fluid, sixth-sense textural stream to the groove.

Hilario Duran & the Cuban All-Stars are sparked by the keyboardist's passionate mix of old and new Cuban styles on *Killer Tumbao* (Justin Time). This hot, hungry ensemble is kept aflame by conguero **TATA GUINES**, the legendary **CHANGUITO** on timbales, and the fiery young **DAFNIS PRIETO** on kit. Dafnis is definitely a contender to watch!

Guitarist Carl Filipiak puts out another strong effort, *Hotel Real*, with longtime drummer **DENNIS CHAMBERS** alternating with **WILL CALHOUN** and **JOHN THOMAKOS**. (*Geometric*, 2821 Chesley Ave., Baltimore, MD 21234, (410)426-7606)

Rating Scale

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

Three new titles prove that progressive rock continues to find new ways to express itself.

Mike Keneally & Beer For Dolphins
Sluggo! (Immune)



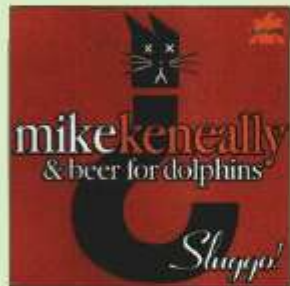
drummers: Frank Briggs, Tom Freeman, Mike Keneally, Mike Mangini, Toss Panos, Joe Travers
percussionists: Mike Keneally, Toss Panos
 with Mike Keneally (gtr, bs, kybd, vcl), Bryan Seller (bs)

Many phenomenal players have come through the groups of the legendary Frank Zappa, but none have been able to capture the genius, humor, and off-centered imagination that Zappa had mastered...until now. The maestro's influence is heard in detail on multi-talented Zappa alumnus Mike Keneally's *Sluggo!*, and the drummers he has chosen (including himself) give outstanding performances in the Zappa tradition.

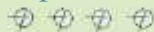
Drummer Frank Briggs starts the show by laying down a solid alterna-pop groove on "Potato," with clever fills not typically found in this genre, and later fires off some funky double-stroke (Gadd-style) fills on "Looking For Nina." "I, Drum-Running, Am Clapboard Bound," "Tranquillado," and "Cardboard Dog" unveil Keneally's true musical genius at composition—and drum talent, as he proves very capable of performing with a feel and emotion over complex odd time changes. Toss Panos, Tom Freeman, and Joe Travers give solid performances as well,

with superior drum sounds. "Egg Zooming," however, is the standout track that drummers will be talking about and feverishly trying to figure out. Performed by amazing rhythmist Mike Mangini, "Egg Zooming" may just turn "The Black Page" white with its crazy subdivisions, placing thirteen and then nineteen even notes over bars of four.

Just as Zappa highlighted some of the greatest drummers of our time, Keneally allows these exceptional players to show their stuff in his world. Brilliant! (9269 Mission Gorge Road, San Diego, CA 92071, Immune@connectnet.com)



Liquid Tension Experiment
Liquid Tension Experiment (Magna Carta)



drummer: Mike Portnoy
 with Tony Levin (bs), John Petrucci (gtr), Jordan Rudess (kybd)

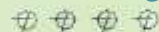
From the opening of lead-off track "Paradise Shift," where Mike Portnoy and guitarist John Petrucci unleash a unison line of 16th notes in groups of threes, played as fast as humanly possible, you get the feeling that these gentlemen have been anxiously waiting to express themselves in a more open forum than Dream Theater has recently allowed. This project is similar to the *Black Light Syndrome* album, which featured Terry

Bozzio, in that the same record label (Magna Carta) approached Portnoy to create a "wish list" of players that he would like to experiment with musically. (King Crimson bassist Tony Levin, a contributor to *Black Light Syndrome*, appears here as well, as does keyboardist Jordan Rudess, fresh off his collaboration with Rod Morgenstein.)

Although this is not simply a thrash session, Portnoy is relentless throughout. "Freedom Of Speech" allows Mike to stretch a bit, while "Chris And Kevin's Excellent Adventure" gives us an opportunity to hear him play *real* out and funky, displaying some serious over-the-bar-line chops. The impressive set ends with "Three Minute Warning," an insane twenty-eight-minute, totally improvised jam that shows just how creative "educated rockers" can get. Portnoy has safely secured his place in progressive rock drumming history with this recording.

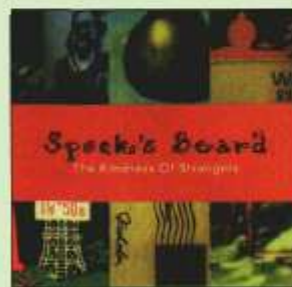


Spock's Beard
The Kindness Of Strangers (Radiant)



drummer, percussionist: Nick D'Virgilio (also vcl)
 with Neal Morse (gtr, kybd, vcl), Alan Morse (gtr, vcl), Dave Meros (bs, vcl), Ryo Okumoto (kybd)

Dream Theater may hold the progressive reins when it comes to technical prowess and sheer power. But for thought-provoking, melodic, pop-influenced progressive rock, look no further than Spock's Beard, whose new album, *The Kindness Of Strangers*, evokes *Fragile-era* Yes with a heavy '90s edge.



Immediately you learn that Spock's "backbone," drummer Nick D'Virgilio, can *play*, as opening cut "The Good Don't Last" features a loose swing groove that quickly shifts gears into a heavy Bruford-style three feel. D'Virgilio, who has performed with such heavyweights as Genesis, Peter Gabriel, and Tears For Fears, maintains a "big drum" feel throughout this

disc's twisting and turning arrangements, yet embellishes each track with tasty fills. "In The Mouth Of Madness" and "Flow" in particular allow him some interesting breaks, as each track momentarily picks up the pace into "fusion" mode. The drum sound also varies from track to track, giving each song an individual identity. If the pop world had any sense at all, they would be welcoming this release with open arms. (PO Box 123, Cross Plains, TN 37049, radiantus@aol.com)

Mike Haid

Will Bernard 4-Tet

Medicine Hat (Verve)



drummer: Scott Amendola

with Will Bernard (gtr), John Shifflett (bs), Rob Burger (org, acdn)

Comparisons are inevitable between guitarist Will Bernard's 4-Tet and Medeski, Martin & Wood, due to the up-front organ and hot funk-rock grooves. But there are tracks where the 4-Tet takes a different tack, like the suspenseful "Trap Door Spider" with guest bass clarinetist Beth Custer and trombonist Jeff Cressman, and the unusual "Nobody's Looking," with a sparse percussion pattern of brushes, toms, and cymbal swells. For the most part on this session, Scott Amendola skips over the organ riffs with a slick hi-hat beat or funky snare-driven second-line improv going right through the bass and guitar syncopations. The drummer makes it swing. This is not Brain

Salad Surgery, or as challenging as some of the Charlie Hunter stuff Amendola's played on, but it *is* a fine groove-based date with some colorful melody too. And it's nice to hear Amendola with John Shifflett playing a true dedicated bass (no slight meant to Mr. Hunter). Listen to the sly stickwork on "Prankster" and the Idrisisms on "3-Ply" to be assured of Amendola's mettle. There's always a Booker T & the MG's-meets-Jimi Hendrix edge, thanks in no small part to producer Lee Townsend.

Robin Tolleson

Dean Anderson

Divinations: Music by Child, Etler, Korde, Kraft, Marvuglio (Neuma)

William Kraft: Concerto For Percussion & Chamber Ensemble, Settings Prom Pierrot, Episodes, Galley 4-5 (Albany)



Often, contemporary chamber music can be a struggle for listeners. But that is certainly not the case with these two recent recordings featuring percussionist Dean Anderson. "XL+1," from *Divinations*, highlights Anderson's expertise in the selection of instruments, and the interplay between pitched and non-pitched instruments here is particularly striking. The CD's title track, a collaboration between Anderson and William Kraft, features conventional instruments like toms, bass drum, snare drum, and field drums alongside tuned cowbells, nipple gongs, and cup bells, creating a remarkable mixture of rhythms and textures. On the all-Kraft disc, "Concerto For Percussion & Chamber Ensemble" moves from a traditional rudimental snare drum solo through a series of cadenzas and interludes, and features bowed vibes and parts where percussion-

ists are instructed to play with fingers or gloved hands. Overall, these two discs offer innumerable lessons in the composition, orchestration, and execution of percussion music, and should prompt uninitiated listeners to check out more of this idiom. (Neuma Recordings: 71 Maple St., Acton, MA 01720; Albany Records: [518]453-2203)

Gary Spellissey

Vasen

Whirled (Northside)



percussionist: Andre Ferrari

with Olov Johansson (contra bass harp, "nyckelliarpa"), Mikael Marin (via, vln), Roger Tallroth (gtr, bouzouki, mandolin)

It took weeks for me to take this latest recording by Vasen (pronounced "Veh-sen") out of the CD player. The music here is deeply rooted in the ancient folk music of Sweden (known as "Uppland"), yet the sound of these original compositions is hauntingly familiar—a Celtic-Shakti-Zappa drone of sorts, if you will, simultaneously rowdy and beautiful. Andre Ferrari's colorful percussion in particular really drives the band. Often a "thud" drum (actually, an Ecuadorian bombo) is played while stomping along with ankle bells. There are also well-placed zil (bell) hits and polyrhythmic doumbek patterns that provide tremendous support. This ultra-high-quality recording is a treat for the ears!

David Licht

BOOKS

Brush Fire

by Willis Kirk

(Hal Leonard)



level: intermediate to advanced

\$12.95

Drummers wishing to add an extra dimension to their playing will find *Brush Fire* a very good primer for the development of jazz brush technique. Mr. Kirk covers a good bit of ground here, offering diagrams for brush patterns from a slow ballad to a fast 2/4 feel, as well as all basic even and odd time signatures. The graphic format showing the brush motion as a sweeping direction with corresponding beats is effective, and the manner in which these diagrams are incorporated into "traditional" musical notation is on the money. The written text, however, while adequately explaining the exercises presented, never really inspires the reader or gives much advice. I would like to have seen some of these basic concepts taken one step further, and a few more advanced brush patterns could have been presented.

The end of the book contains brush solos written with dedications to some of the brush heroes of the jazz world, including Papa Jo Jones, Denzil Best, Max Roach, and Sid Catlett. These solos are all challenging and provide a great way to get a feeling for just how musical brushes, a bass drum, and a hi-hat alone can be. However, a more advanced solo with some more difficult drumset techniques wouldn't have been out of place. In the same vein, a section or two on Latin brushwork would have been nice, as well as a few cymbal and tom patterns along with more advanced fills. But maybe I'm just being greedy. The fact remains that what *is* presented here is done very well, and this book will give you more than a few new ideas for the too-often neglected wire contraptions stuck in your stick bag. Grab those brushes and get to work!

Ted Bonar

Rock Drumming & Soloing Methods

Progressive Rock Drumming & Soloing Methods

by Rob Leytham
(Mel Bay)

level: beginner to advanced
\$9.95 (with accompanying CD)

These two reasonably priced books offer some interesting groove and fill ideas and deliver complicated odd-meter patterns to challenge the intermediate and advanced player. There are some problems, though. First, Leytham plays through every exercise without pausing or recognizing each numbered section, easily losing the beginning reader. Beginners will also have to be a fairly good readers to keep up with the tempo of the examples on the accompanying CDs. As for the accompanying CDs, Leytham half-heartedly lays down his grooves and fill ideas (after all, this is ROCK), and many of his solo and fill ideas sound outdated. But if drummers can individually practice the patterns and ideas shown in both these books at a slow tempo, one line at a time at first until comfortable, and then approach the accompanying CD with an open mind, for the price of admission, they *may* get some worthwhile mileage out of these collections.

Mike Haid

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Give Me Your Junk

by Scott Goldstein

The mission began this way: I took an associate to rescue his young son's toy drumset from the garbage (where it had been placed by the boy's mother). It was the cutest little thing I ever saw: tiny sizes, with paper-thin stamped cymbals—although it used regular drumheads. The strainer on the 10" snare was a one-sided affair that used a bent metal spring to hold a handful of crooked snares against the bottom head. It was intriguing, and I soon found myself growing jealous of a six-year-old's toy drumkit.

This was my problem: After playing for ten years on the same set of Yamaha *Recording Customs*, I was bored with perfect. The Yamahas are made well—their quality of construction set the standard by which all other drums were judged for a long time, and the hardware is sturdy and engineered with a fair amount of common sense. The only problem with them is that they sound too damned *perfect*. You can try to tune them into an interesting spot, but they defy you to make them sound any way other than studio-pure. If my set has any saving grace, it's that I've worn out two sets of cases with them, and now all the rims are a bit less-than-round. This helps to bring the sound a *little* closer to what I like, but not enough to keep me from yawning. A drumkit's sound isn't perfect if it makes you bored, it's just neutered.

So I began to get excited about the prospect of finding a fine instrument just like the toy kit. This was a big deal for me, since I haven't been excited about buying drum stuff for many years. All my drum money goes for replacing broken cymbals and tom-tom mounts, new sets of heads, boxes of sticks, and cases that don't last.

I figured it would be easy. I could prob-

ably find a set just like the one I saw at any second-hand store, right? Hmm.... After a wasted afternoon driving from pawn shops to Salvation Army stores, I realized that my quest would become more complicated than I had expected. I still wanted a toy set, but now I was willing to include anything that would be cheap, small, and relatively quiet. It was still a struggle to find something cool, though, since the typical music stores didn't appreciate or understand my vision. The pawn shops were out

brands. But what mattered to me was the giant room full of used junk in the back. Hopefully the guys at the store would be patient enough to understand my quest, and open-minded enough to point me in the right direction.

The fellow who owns the store deserves an award for customer service. He listened to my idea—as silly as it appeared—and seemed only vaguely amused. In the back room was every imaginable make and style of drum and hardware—along with

"I spent less than a hundred bucks for the most satisfying drum purchase of my life. It's old, it's ugly and it sounds like crap. It's just what I wanted."

of their melons with the amount of loot they wanted for their less-than-cool junk. I knew that just browsing the classified ads for a while would be the way to go, but that could involve more driving and time than I was willing to commit to this venture.

My gumption was wearing thin, but I had one last chance to come home with the goods: a new/used drum store way out in the suburbs. I didn't really hold much hope that a shop so far out in the boondocks could attract a market for anything besides the garden-variety new stuff they sell at such places. But as soon as I walked in the door I was glad I came. The place had *everything*. Sure, there were the usual brand-new, beginner-grade sets, as well as top-of-the-line merchandise of many

cannibalized shells and boxes of old, rusty chrome—waiting for the owner of the store to assemble the pieces into something he could sell. He pointed me towards this magical room.

After considerable rummaging (and some help from the owner), I soon had assembled the pieces to my new favorite set. I found an old 5x14 Rogers snare with six single-tension lugs and a fancy two-tone paint job in blue and silver. It had no strainer, but there were enough parts there to rig something together later, so I wasn't worried. When I asked the owner for a snare stand, he tried to sell me something new from the front of the store, which was to be expected. He didn't think any sane person would want anything from out of the boxes of rusty junk. But I pressed him

on it and he gave in, shrugging off any attempt to sell me something new. I found the most rickety, cheapo, ancient, non-adjustable snare stand I ever saw. Yee-haa! Now I was fired up.

I spotted an equally archaic Slingerland hi-hat stand, the kind with the leather strap connected to a hook on the pedal. I didn't need a throne or any more stands, but I did need cymbals and a bass drum. There weren't any bass drums small enough to satisfy my craving, but after poking around for a bit, the owner found me a no-name 20" *thing* with six lugs and no spurs. They'd been using it for lessons, pointed against a wall and full to the top with foam padding. There was more wonderful cheap stuff to be had: a set of 13" stamped hi-hats, and an old sizzle cymbal that was green with oxidation.

I spent less than a hundred bucks for the most satisfying drum purchase of my life. It's old, it's ugly, and it sounds like crap. It was just what I wanted. But it wasn't until I got my junky set home and set up that I realized the true extent of my genius. The "new" set was my Zen, my instant transportation back to making music with drums. The old Rogers snare has more musical colors on its palette than I can really make use of. I can practically make the thing speak Latin with a set of brushes. The bass drum has to have a brick in front of it, since there are no spurs nor parts with which to rig any. With a loose, sloppy head, a soft beater on the pedal, and just a couple of old dish towels for muffling, the cheap little bugger sings beautifully.

I'm trying to teach myself traditional grip, so I've got the snare pointed away and right in my lap. I took the throne up super-high, and my leg is nearly straight to the bass pedal. These things are all opposite to what I've learned over the past fifteen years of banging out loud rock. But embracing each new dynamic of my junkpile specials has opened my mind again. Of course I wouldn't pit them against the Marshalls, Hiwatts, and Ampegs at a rock show; my Yamahas still excel in that environment. But for writing, making kooky basement recordings, and playing the odd jazz jam now and then, my collection of debris from the garbage pile has already proved its value.



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Alternative Tom Mounting

I recently added a 12x14 tom to my kit, and I didn't like the approach of clamping the tom arm to a cymbal stand. The tom wiggled too much, and I had to readjust the tom if I moved the cymbal (and vice versa).

A better approach is to insert the down post of the tom arm into the base of a snare-drum stand. (If the tom arm and snare stand are from the same manufacturer, they should fit.) If you don't have a spare snare stand, look for an inexpensive one from an import brand. (Just make sure that your tom arm fits the new stand before purchasing.) You'll also have a spare snare "basket," should yours ever break!

Larry Kennedy
Albany, GA

Dealing With Drumhead Dents

My bass drum head was getting a deep dent. I cut away the edge of a clear, flexible yogurt container top, and attached it to the drumhead with Aleene's *Tack-It*. (That's a hobby/crafts glue that allows you to remove the item if you don't want it left permanently.) Apply the glue to one side of the plastic top and let it dry overnight.

The plastic "patch" made the bass drum sound better, and it's still removable for a different sound.

Glen Ballard
Fordyce, AR

Holding On To Your Sticks

Sweaty hands occasionally have presented a slippery situation for me (pun intended), because I have a few twirls, spins, and other stick tricks that I try to work into a night's playing. Various stick wraps available have never been my preference, because they have an effect on the stick's balance. I've tried various sporting-goods hand treatments, but many don't fit the bill. For example, magnesium carbonate powder used by

weightlifters and gymnasts is intended to reduce friction between the athlete's hands and the equipment—making them smoother and more slippery. I almost killed a guitar player one night using that stuff. By contrast, the powdered rosin used by tennis players and baseball pitchers is so sticky that I could have picked up a stick just by pressing my palm down on it.

The drummer's best bet is the unscented, unrefined talc used by billiard players. It's designed to absorb moisture, but does not reduce stick friction. Find some that's already powdered; don't get the large block found in some pool rooms. I purchased a brand called Sportcraft at \$1.99 per 3-oz. bottle.

J. Rafe Hyatt
Austell, GA

The Wonders Of Bicycle Tires

When building custom drums, upgrading, or replacing lost or missing drumshell-hardware isolation gaskets, look no further than your local bicycle shop or thrift store. A new bicycle tire inner tube costs around \$3 and can be cut to any size or shape of lug, bass-drum spur, tom mount, etc. Use a hole punch to obtain perfect lug holes. The thin yet sturdy black rubber also works well as a protective isolator between multi-clamps and stands, and within worn rack clamps. You can also use a piece of the tube as a protector between the bass drum hoop and the pedal clamp.

Jonathan Karow
Augusta, GA

Mounting A Splash Cymbal



Here's how to mount a splash cymbal in a convenient spot, without having to buy a mounting bracket or cymbal stand. Place three thick felt cymbal pads on the hi-hat pull rod, above the top portion of your hi-hat clutch. (If you can find some clear plas-

tic tubing that will fit over the pull rod, so much the better.) Slip your splash cymbal over the rod so that it rests on the felts. Make a wrap of electrical tape around the pull rod an inch or so above the cymbal to prevent it from bouncing around too much (and potentially flying off the rod).

This method will help your playing, as well. With one flick of the wrist you can quickly nail a kick or accent without having to reach all the way across your kit to hit the splash.

Matthew McGinley
Geneva, NY

A Tacky Muffling Method

A putty-like substance called *Blu-Tack* here in Australia (and known as *Fun-Tak* and similar brand names in the States) can be used to control unwanted ring/resonance from snare drums and toms. In contrast to some other methods and products available, *Blu-Tack* is reusable and can easily be adapted to suit specific applications.

Any given amount of the product can be shaped as desired and made to have more or less contact with the drumhead for different levels of muffling. For example, it can be rolled into a ball and placed onto the drumhead (with varying pressure), flattened to increase its surface area, rolled lengthwise to cover more of the head's edge, or split into more than one piece for placement at different points around the drum's perimeter.

This material saves you from having to change the amount of tissue paper and/or gaffer's tape you're using, or from searching for a suitably sized O-ring. Also, due to the nature of the product, *Blu-Tack* can be stored anywhere on the kit for quick and easy application.

Christopher Ng
Toorak, Victoria, Australia

Note: The tips presented in Drumline are suggestions based on the personal experience of individual drummers, and are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Modern Drummer magazine. Modern Drummer cannot guarantee that any problem will be solved by any Drumline suggestion, and cannot be responsible for any damage to equipment or personal injury resulting from the utilization of any such suggestion. Readers are encouraged to consider each suggestion carefully before attempting to utilize any Drumline tip.



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Slingerland Du-All Snare Drum

by Harry Cangany

I receive up to forty requests a day for information. Some are mailed to MD, some are mailed directly to me, some are e-mails, and some are phone calls. Most requests concern drums and companies that are easily identifiable. But some refer to real rarities of drum history. Among those are two Slingerland snare models that are out there in very low numbers. They're known as the *Du-All* and the *Black Beauty*. This article is about the *Du-All*—a drum whose name is a play on words for "Do AU" and "Dual." The name emphasizes that it's an all-purpose, dual action (parallel) strainer snare drum.

Imagine my surprise when two requests regarding *Du-All* snares came to me within one week. The first was from ace collector Mike Curotto in California; the other came from David Brown of Wigan, England. Each of these drummers was kind enough to send me the pictures you see and to give me as much information as I needed. More on these specific drums and their owners in a moment.

The *Du-All* is featured only in the 1934 Slingerland catalog, and in one flyer (which is reproduced in Rob Cook's *The Slingerland Book*). The drums were top-of-the-line models with ten tube lugs, high hoops, and parallel strainer mechanisms. The key words are the last three.

In 1934, there were four other parallels: the Ludwig & Ludwig *Super* and *Supersensitive*, and the Leedy *Parallel* and *Dual*. The problem for Slingerland was that Ludwig & Ludwig and Leedy were both owned by Conn LTD. It was quite permissible for sister companies to share patents and technology, but not for competitors. So the Conn attorneys pulled out the famous "cease and desist" order.

The idea behind the parallel strainer was that the snares could remain "on" or rigid. They were never bent as with a normal throwoff, and the player did not have a partial snare sound if the snare wires farthest from the throw arm still touched the snare head. In the 1920s, before the Conn purchase, Leedy tried to accomplish the same thing on their *Marvel* model with a



bar below the snare head, on which the snares were mounted. Rogers perfected that idea in the '60s with the *Dyna-Sonic* snare frame.

But in the Ludwig & Ludwig/Leedy/Conn era, the idea was to use the Ludwig design carried over from the '20s, when the Ludwigs owned their company. Bill Ludwig Sr.'s brother-in-law, Robert Danly, was the designer of the "rod through the shell" parallel-action unit, and the Ludwig Company was assigned a patent dated January, 1924. Nine years later, H.H. Slingerland bought a patent assignment from a Minnesota inventor for a similar device. That's where the lawyers came in. And that's why there's only a handful of these Slingerland *Du-All* gems.

Let's take a look at these wonderful drums (while we lament our own bad luck for not being able to find them). In the 1934 catalog, Slingerland offered the *Du-All* in metal and solid wood. The metal shell was one piece of spun brass, available in 5x14 and 6½x14 sizes, and in chrome, nickel, or engraved black metal plating with chrome or art gold trim. The same plating choices were available on a solid mahogany or walnut shell, either naturally finished or in black or white duco. The catalog also listed "other colored duco shells." Those were silver and blue, gold and blue, silver and black, and gold and black. Also available were the following pearl choices: marine pearl, sparkling green, gold, silver, and red, coral pearl, black diamond pearl, sea green pearl, and opal (peacock) pearl.

Slingerland also offered "full dress" finishes. In vintage catalogs that term referred to the application of diamond patterns in various sparkle combination. The diamonds were glued in between each lug (as you can see on David Brown's drum).

So on to the beautiful examples from Mike and David. David's drum is a 5x14 marine pearl with nickel hardware and the famous *Tone Flange*, an interior metal hoop that sits on the top of the mahogany shell and is the actual bearing edge. This snare has two-tone diamonds: gold and green sparkle. David is a thirty-three-year-old drummer who's been playing for twenty-eight years. He seems to be a true vintage addict, with this rare snare (and its matching bass



drum) as the centerpiece of his collection. He found them at the 1997 Chicago Vintage Show.

Mike Curotto is a player/teacher from the San Francisco Bay Area. He was lucky enough to start his collection about thirty years ago, when drums were drums and prices were low. Currently, he has over one hundred fifty snare drums, including *Black Beauties*, *Elites*, *Broadways*, *Supers* and *Supersensitives*, and a *Billy Gladstone*. Mike's *Du-All* drum is particularly interesting because it's covered in rose marine pearl—a Slingerland color from 1929. Isn't that just like a drum company? Was the finished shell sitting around for five years, or was the drum a special order? We'll never know.

I'd like to thank David and Mike for sending me the pictures of their drums. The *Du-All* was the snare that "Conn shut down," and each of these is a perfect example of "a drum too tough to die." Think of the *Du-All* as the rarest *pie-Radio King* made. By adding a parallel strainer and the optional *Tone Flange*, Slingerland gave old-time drummers a glimpse at perfection. So now we collectors know what we're looking for.

I would consider a *Du-All* in excellent condition to be worth \$4,000 and up. Write me if you find one.



Correction

In the May 98 'Collectors Corner' featuring the Fibes SFJ690 snare drum, the current owner of the Fibes Drum Co. was incorrectly identified as Tommy Thompson. That gentelman's correct name is Tommy Robertson. We apologize to Tommy for the error.

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In Memoriam Melia Peavey



The entire musical-instrument manufacturing industry was stunned to learn of the passing of Melia Peavey, president of Peavey Electronics Corporation and wife of company founder Hartley Peavey. Mrs. Peavey died Saturday, March 7 of a cardiac arrest caused by a diabetic coma.

Melia Peavey began her career with the Peavey Corporation (manufacturers of over 2,000 products, including Peavey drums) at the age of seventeen, and from there rose to a level of prominence shared by few other women in the industry. Her contributions to the business aspects of Peavey's growth cannot be overstated. Additionally, she was personally responsible for the major support that Peavey Corporation gives to the field of education, and was the heart of a movement to protect and care for abused and neglected children. Donations in her memory may be sent to Peavey House, the home Mrs. Peavey founded to provide that protection and care. (The address is PO Box 2898, Meridian, MI 39302.)

Modern Drummer extends its condolences to the family and friends of Melia Peavey.

Zildjian Honors Charlie Watts

The Avedis Zildjian cymbal company recently honored legendary drummer Charlie Watts of the Rolling Stones by presenting him with a special award in recognition of his numerous contributions to the world of drumming.

Watts—best known for the rock-solid foundation he has laid for the Stones for more than thirty-five years—was presented with a very rare Zildjian cymbal. Manufactured during the 1930s, the cymbal came from the personal collection of Zildjian president Armand Zildjian, and was personally signed by him.



The award was presented to Charlie in New York City during the Stones' *Bridges To Babylon* tour by John DeChristopher, Zildjian's director of artist relations. Commented DeChristopher: "Charlie is one of the most significant drummers in the history of popular music, and he has influenced countless players of all styles. We felt it more than fitting to acknowledge all of his many important contributions."

Endorser News

Ginger Baker is now playing Drum Workshop drums, pedals, and hardware.

New endorsers of Pork Pie drums include **Stan Turner** (Bill Wharton & the Ingredients), **Scott Marcus** (Fly), **Martin Sandberg** (Swedish independent), **Wynand van der Walt** (Jazz Hounds), **Brendan Gamble** (The Moon Seven Times), **Billy Slater** (Plastiscene), **Paul Kodash** (Apollo 44), **Jose Pasillas** (Incubus), **Bernard Williman** (Gouds Thumb), **Angie Adams** (Fluffy), **Dave Raun** (Lagwagon), **Christian Teele** (Old Soul), **Dave Armstrong** (Size 14), **Scott Raynor** (Blink-182), **Tyler Clark** (Spank), **Justin Thirsk** (98 Mute), **Alex Wong** (Din Pedals), and **Phil Rowley** (Earl Thomas & the PO' Boys).

German touring and theater percussionist **Martin Hesselbach** is playing Meinl percussion.

Drummers currently playing Chris Brady & Craftsmen snare drums include **Olbin Burgos** (Gloria Estefan), **Greg Eklund** (Everclear), **Ginger Ford** (Dub War), **Ben Gillies** (Silverchair), **Chad Gracey** (Live), and **Scott Mercado** (Candlebox).

Percussion trio extraordinaire **Hip Pickles** is now playing Sabian cymbals.

Jeff McManus (Pistons) now uses K&K Sound Systems microphones.

Currently endorsing Shure's *PSM 600* Personal Stereo Monitor system are drummers **Dennis Chambers**, **Peter Erskine**, **Jim Keltner**, **Ricky Lawson**, **Ian Wallace**, and **Dave Weckl**. Additionally, **Sheila E** and **Kenny Aronoff** are now endorsing Shure microphones.

Now playing Evans drumheads is **David Garibaldi**.

New Zildjian cymbal artists include **Will Kennedy** (Yellowjackets), **Dan Wojciechowski** (LeAnn Rimes), **Keith Carlock** (Steely Dan), **Larry Hanier** (Chumbawamba), **Larry Ciancia** (Fiona Apple), **Jay Bellerose** (Paula Cole), **Jim Bogios** (Sheryl Crow), **Billy Conway** (Morphine), **Bobby Thomas Jr.**, **Mark Trojanowski** (Sister Hazel), and **Kenny James** (the Samples). Playing Zildjian sticks are **Giovanni Hidalgo**, **Marc Quinones**, **Billy Hart**, **Jeff Hirshfield**, and **Tony Reedus**.

Scott Travis (Judas Priest), **Dave Grohl** (Foo Fighters), **Scott Abels** (Hepcat), **Ian Falgout** (Non Fiction), **Jack Mouse** (Janice Borla Group), **Mike DePetrillo**, **Joe LaBarbera**, and **Jeff Hirshfield** are new Aquarian drumhead endorsers.

Peter Magadini is also playing Aquarian heads, along with Paiste cymbals.



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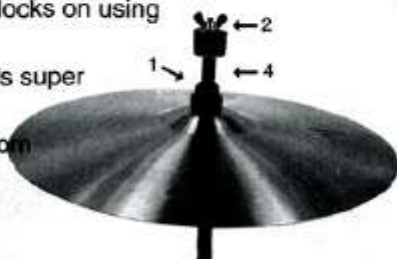
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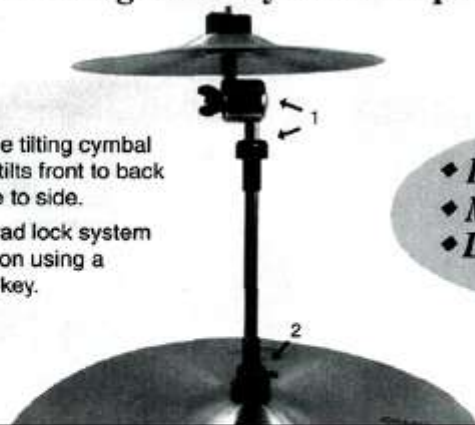
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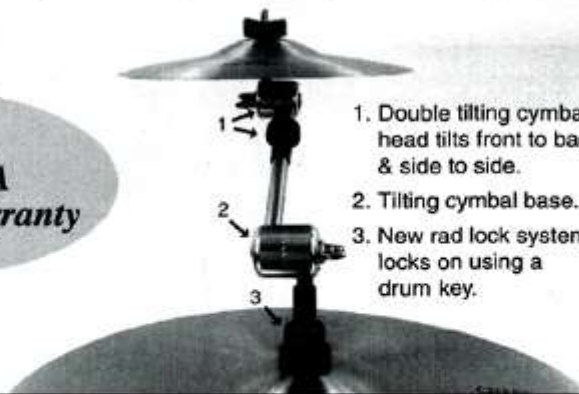
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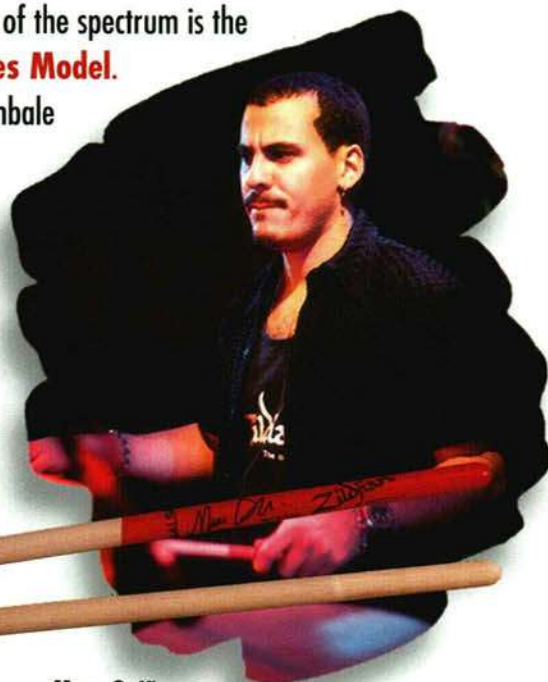
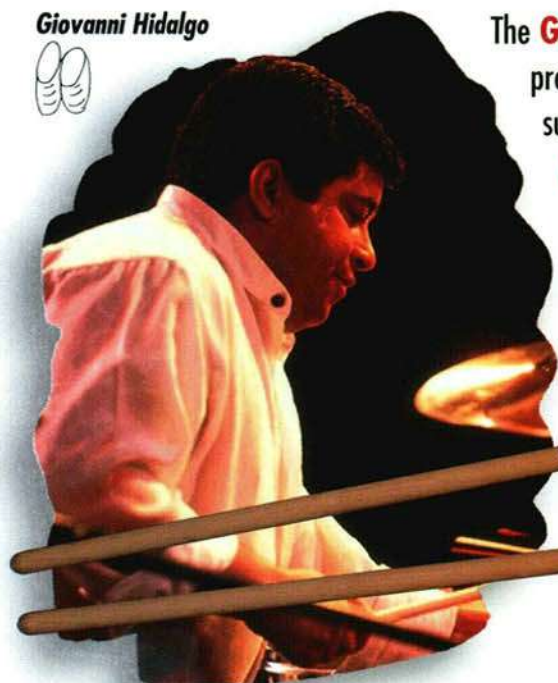
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