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**An Exclusive Interview With
NEIL PEART**

PAUL MOTIAN
Drawing From Tradition

**Timp Talk With
FRED BEGUN**

**MD Visits
REMO, INC.**

**Survival On
The Club Scene**

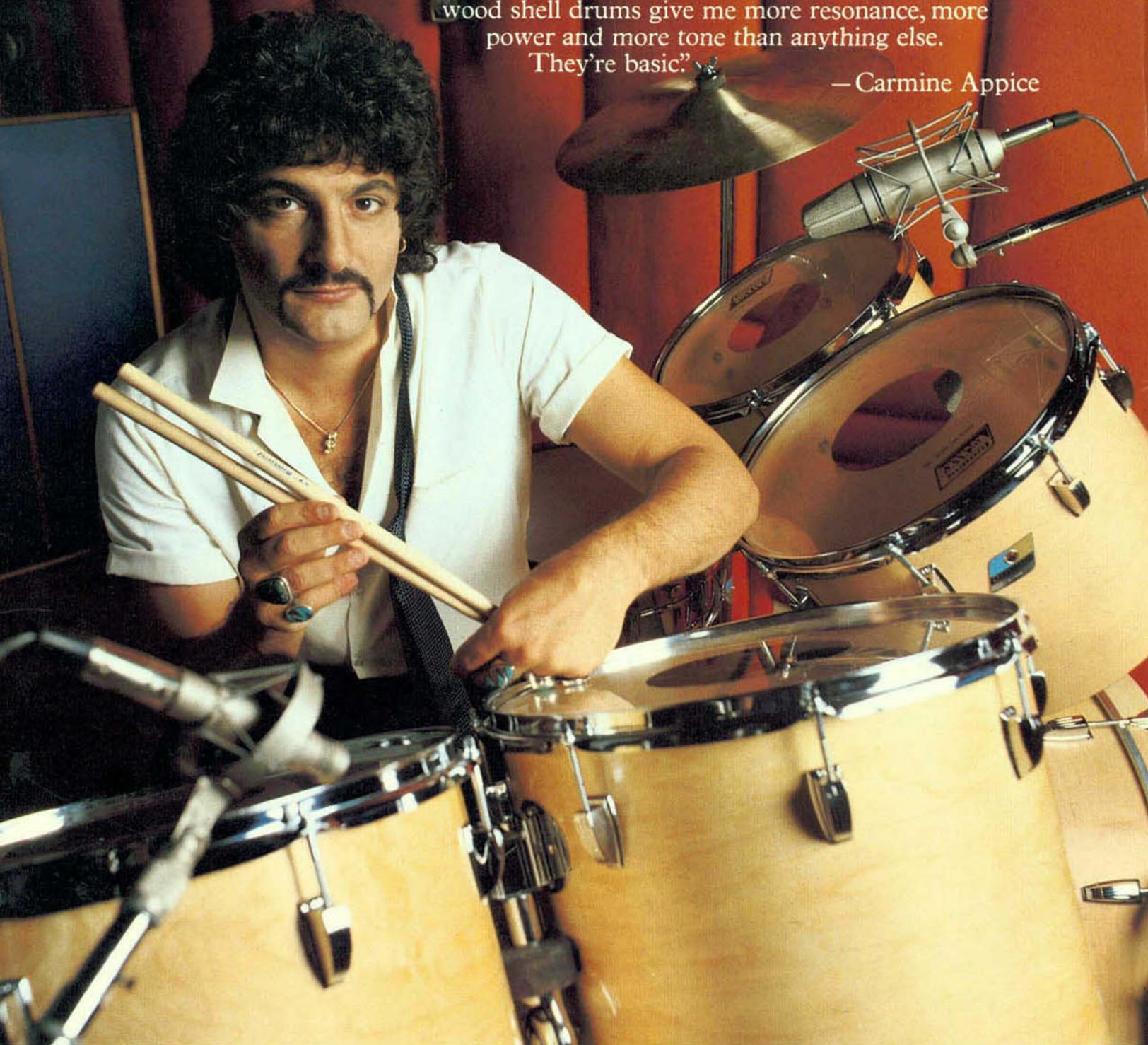
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FEATURES:

NEIL PEART

As one of rock's most popular drummers, Neil Peart of Rush seriously reflects on his art in this exclusive interview. With a refreshing, no-nonsense attitude. Peart speaks of the experiences that led him to Rush and how a respect formed between the band members that is rarely achieved. Peart also affirms his belief that music must not be compromised for financial gain, and has followed that path throughout his career. **12**



PAUL MOTIAN

Jazz modernist Paul Motian has had a varied career, from his days with the Bill Evans Trio to Arlo Guthrie. Motian asserts that to fully appreciate the art of drumming, one must study the great masters of the past and learn from them. **16**

FRED BEGUN

Another facet of drumming is explored in this interview with Fred Begun, timpanist with the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington, D.C. Begun discusses his approach to classical music and the influences of his mentor, Saul Goodman. **20**



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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



The feature section of this issue represents a wide spectrum of modern percussion with our three lead interview subjects: Rush's Neil Peart; jazz drummer Paul Motian and timpanist Fred Begun.

The Neil Peart interview was a story we pursued for many months. Coordinating a meeting place was not easy considering the extremely hectic road schedule the band maintains. We finally tracked them down at a fairgrounds concert in Allentown, Pennsylvania where MD's Cheech Iero spoke to Peart at considerable length. A talented and opinionated artist, Neil discussed numerous aspects of his music. Not impressed by mob fan adulation, Peart maintains a philosophy indicative of the seriousness with which he views his drumming; "If I go in front of 35,000 people and play really well, then I feel satisfied . . . adulation means nothing without self-respect."

Paul Motian has been on the New York jazz scene for quite some time. He's worked with Keith Jarrett, Stan Getz, Thelonius Monk, Lee Konitz and Charles Lloyd, and was a key member of the celebrated Bill Evans trio with bassist Scott LaFaro. Motian talks about his involvement with composing and his affinity for the drumming masters of the past: "All musicians should check out the tradition of the instrument. . . their type of playing is disconnected with the way people are playing today."

Fred Begun has been principal timpanist with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C. for nearly 30 years. This Juilliard trained percussionist discusses his background as a student of Saul Goodman, his aspirations as a writer, and the current state of percussion ensemble literature.

If you've ever wondered what goes on inside a drumhead factory, MD's David Levine has the full story. His *Inside Remo* tour takes you every step of the way through the firm's 54,000 square foot facility in southern California. Company president and founder Remo Belli talks about the early days of Remo, Inc., the plastic drumhead, and the challenges which face the company in the future.

A Day In Las Vegas, reported by Laura Deni, is the complete lowdown on the finals at the Slingerland/Louie Bellson National Drum Contest. Thirteen young drummers under the age of 19 competed at the University of Las Vegas for thousands of dollars in prize and scholarship money and an opportunity to appear with Bellson on Johnny Carson's *Tonight Show*. It turned out to be quite a contest and an event we hope will be repeated each year. Our hats are off to Lou Bellson and all those at Slingerland who were responsible for coordinating this incredible project.

We'd like to welcome David Ernst and Charlie Perry to the column roster this year with *Electronic Insights* and *Teachers Forum* respectively. Both gentlemen are experts in their fields and have a great deal to say.

Another new entry for 1980, making its debut with this issue, is *The Club Scene*, a highly informative column containing some great advice for drummers active in the competitive club date business. Author Rick Van Horn has a wealth of experience in this area and we think you'll find his column a real winner.

The results of MD's Second Annual Reader's Poll are now being tabulated. You'll find the exciting results in our June/July issue, along with Part 1 of *The Great Jazz Drummers: An Historical Perspective*, and a revealing exclusive interview with the extraordinary Carl Palmer.

READERS PLATFORM

I am writing in response to several previous letters criticizing Carl Palmer.

Pleasing to mind and pulsating to soul. Palmer's artistry displays qualities beyond reproach. If anyone doubts his ability to show solid time with speed, balanced at full tilt, just listen to "The Enemy God", (live version). His respected standing is truly deserved and formidable.

THOMAS LAPOINTE
LAWRENCE, MA

Just want to let you know that my drum cases are weatherproofed! The article was great. It was so easy going. I lined them with red felt and they look sharp. Now I don't have to worry about damaging my drums. Thanks again for the instructions.

TONY SIGNORELLI
PALM BEACH, FL

Michael Shore must be commended for his excellent interview with Barriermore Barlow in the December/January issue. I cannot think of a single point that was not covered regarding this superb drummer. Barlow is so humble; his comments about his playing ability and technique floored me. Again, thanks for an excellent article.

BOBBY MCGLOWN
MOBILE, AL

In regard to Charley Perry's article "Basic Brushes." I wish to question his statements regarding the history of brushes. Mr. Perry states that, "brushes are a fairly recent addition to the drummer's arsenal ... go back perhaps 40 years and have been used almost exclusively in jazz and dance bands."

Actually, the brush (rute, switch, etc.) was known as far back as the time of Haydn and Mozart, and was later requested by Mahler and Strauss. The original form of the brush was a bundle of twigs or a split rod. In *Percussion Instruments and Their History*, James Blade speaks of Mozart's *Il Seraglio* in which the Tamburo grande is played with both a stick and a "switch of twigs," an effect which is "evident in the swish of the modern wire brushes."

HOWARD I. JOINES
HATTIESBURG, MI

I must congratulate you on an excellent magazine. I much enjoy your interviews with drummers who have found the key to success, and your articles on the current state of the art in drum equipment. But I was quite pleased to see a human interest type story "Flipped Over Drums" in your December-January issue. While working for RCA records at the time Whitehorse was working on their album, I caught a few sessions and can attest to the fact that Mr. Valentine is a fine and innovative drummer right side up, as well as upside down. Though I never caught his act live, I heard numerous positive reports from the grapevine. Keep up the off-the-wall (in this case off-the-ceiling) type articles.

BOB SOLAR
PINOS ALTOS, NM

Thank you for the tribute to the greatest man ever to play the drums. Gene Krupa. It is a true collector's item and I will keep my issue forever.

Gene and Cozy gave me drum lessons at their school in Manhattan many years ago. Although I was young at the time, I will never forget the art of drumming the way the master taught it. He had patience and understanding and always took the time to show the correct habits of drumming. I'm happy that I shared some of my greatest moments with this man. Although I'm not famous like Buddy Rich or Louie Bellson, I play the drums in the tradition of my friend and teacher—Gene Krupa.

ANTHONY GUARDING
BAYSHORE, NY

Modern Drummer Magazine is definitely a plus to both the drum and music industry. As the opportunity presents itself, I can assure you that I plug your magazine in any way possible.

Perhaps the major thing that irks me is the failure of the interviewers to obtain more information on the equipment the musician uses. Some interviews seem to focus more on the personal side of the musician, as opposed to the methods or equipment they use. This is fine with me but I think the main purpose of MD is to present drummers with information that will be useful to develop the knowledge of their trade.

JAMES E. VALLONE
BUFFALO, NY

I'm writing in reply to Jack Gilfooy from Indianapolis, Indiana, whose letter concerning the Blue Bear School of Music appeared in the December/January issue. He stated, "If the student is intelligent enough, a master drummer will be found who can provide something more meaningful than a garage band environment. Who needs to pay good money for that? "

I'm a 17 year old progressive rock percussionist. I'm one of the above mentioned people who have played in garage bands. I have also played in clubs, theatres, gyms, etc. I listen to and appreciate classical music, but rock is my first love. I have had some classical training and it can be good, but it's not the only way.

"Who needs to pay good money for that? " In my area, club rock performers are in demand. Also, what about the rockers who started in garage bands? They are now playing to sellout crowds at \$10 a ticket.

Mr Gilfooy: You do your thing and I'll do mine. That's what keeps music alive!

FRANK SPICER
VINELAND, NJ

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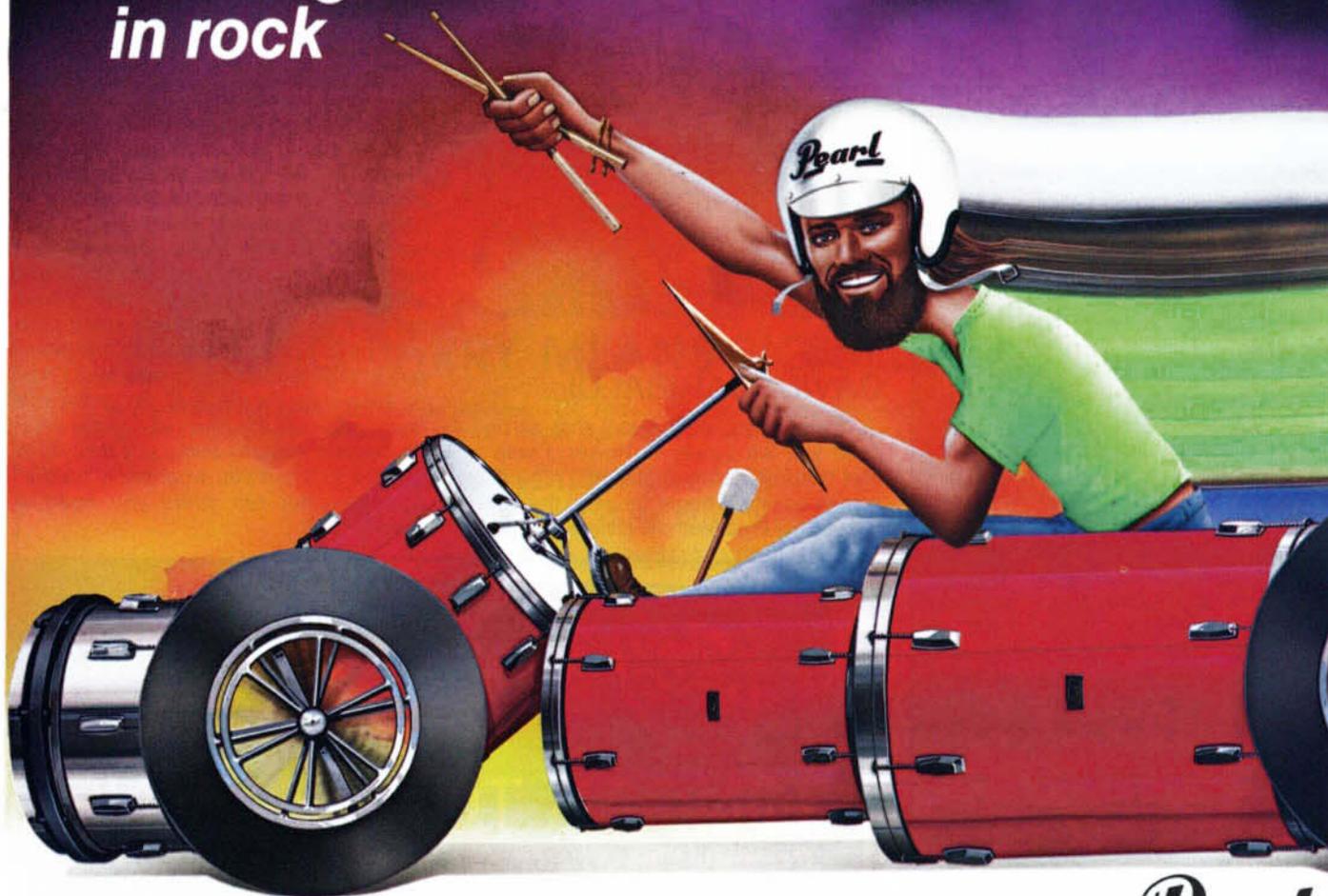
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ASK A PRO

TERRY SILVERLIGHT

Q. Could you please give me some advice on building endurance and speed for my left foot on the hi-hat?

Matthew Plumeri
St. Louis, MO



A. The first exercise I would recommend would be to play the hi-hat on the quarter notes (1, 2, 3, 4) of each bar, and alternate that with a bar of the hi-hat on 1 and 3, while building the speed of the tempo. Eventually, substitute the 2 and 4 with the snare drum.

For the second exercise, play the hi-hat on all four quarter notes of the bar, with any standard Latin, jazz, or rock and roll beat. Get used to the coordination of playing the hi-hat on all the beats against whatever you would normally play. Also, start slow with the hi-hat playing quarter notes and increase the tempo until your leg starts to hurt. At this point, hold it there and keep going until you can't stand it any longer. Rest, and repeat this procedure until you feel the pain once again, and keep it going as long as possible. If you can do this about 25 times a day, at the end of 2 weeks you should definitely see an improvement.

Another exercise that is helpful to me when playing fast tempos on the hi-hat is to play with the toe of the foot, rather than the flat part of the foot or the heel-toe method. You'll probably find at slow to medium tempos the foot resting flat on the hi-hat pedal will give you the control necessary, however very fast tempos will be played easier with the toe, because all the weight of your leg will rest on your toe, enabling you to create a bouncing movement with your leg.



STEVE FERRONE

Q. On Average White Band's latest album *Feel No Fret* your playing was dynamic. What were your thoughts while recording the title cut?

John Milton
London, England

A. When you put down a track, you're always in a certain frame of mind. "Feel No Fret" is a sort of West Indian influenced reggae groove. When we did the track, I was extremely angry. I was going through some personal problems and you could hear it in the drums. When you come down to the mixing, you have to be able to bring out what was there in the beginning. When you put down a track, you can hear it. You've got the track, then of course you add the vocals, and sweeten it. That's fine, but I don't think you should lose what you had in the beginning. If you've got a good track, it's a good track!



DAVID GARIBALDI

Q. I am aware of the fact that at one point you left Tower of Power. I was a little disturbed to hear this, as I regarded you as having a bright future in the business. Now I realize how difficult it can be

at times to deal with the music business, so I would like to gain a little insight from you. If you care to elaborate on your reasons for leaving, or why you stopped playing, I would find this informative in gaining a perspective of the music business.

Gary Dates
Red Bank, NJ

A. The incident you are referring to was in 1974, and at that point I just needed a break. So I left the group. I was tired of doing it. I just got married and needed to have some answers in my life. It had nothing to do with music, because that part was going very well, and I knew it always would. I just stopped and cooled out for a couple of months. I spent time with my new wife and studied the Bible, because when the music was over I had no answers in my life at all. So I went and found some. That's basically what it was. At the time, I hadn't taken any time off in ten years. When you work really hard at something for ten years you need a break.



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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Q. I am planning a cruise to the Caribbean next summer and would like to bring back some percussion instruments distinctive to that area. Can you give me some information on possible places to look, and what to look for? I want to get away from the usual tourist trinkets.

D.B.
Athens, GA

A. *Instruments of the Caribbean Islands are usually hand-made. Items which some people may consider trinkets turn out to be excellent percussion instruments. If you are in the market for steel drums, this is an ideal place to purchase them. Once you get there, get in touch with the working professionals. They will probably be able to guide you in the right direction.*

Q. Could you give me some information on the death of the great drummer Chick Webb?

F.C.
London, England

A. *Chick Webb died of tuberculosis on May 16, 1939 in Baltimore, Maryland, at the age of 32.*

Q. I'd like to know if there is a book listing all the drum companies and their addresses? If so, where can I get one?

P.S.
Las Vegas, NV

A. *Since there have been numerous requests for this item Modern Drummer will soon be offering its Percussion Industry Directory; an up to date listing of percussion companies, drum shops, publishers of percussion music and literature, etc. Addresses, phone numbers, and the products they make will also be included.*

Q. How do you tune a 5 piece drum set in fourths?

C.N.
Chicago, IL

A. *Some drummers do not think in terms of tuning the snare drum, or the bass drum to the scale being used. The pitch of the snare and bass drums are simply made compatible to the rest of the tom tom voices. Other drummers utilize the snare and bass drums in the scale. Whatever the school of thought, you must remember the drum cannot be tuned to an absolute pitch, but can only get into the range of that pitch. Assuming you are using a standard 5 piece set, and are including all drums in the tuning process; tune your snare drum to middle C, left hand mounted tom to C below middle C, right hand mounted tom to D below middle C, floor tom to A below D, and the bass drum to C.*

Q. Where can I write to The Who's drummer Kenny Jones?

T.M.
Antioch, IL

A. *All correspondence for Kenny Jones may be addressed to The Who's personal management: Trinifold, 112 Wardour, London, England, W1V 3LD.*

Q. I am the section leader of my school orchestra's percussion section and I have a problem. I play snare along with two other members and whenever we get to the 32 bar snare drum solo in this one particular piece, we sound as though we are playing three different parts after the first 8 measures. Any suggestions?

B.M.
Billings, MT

A. *Since you are in charge of the percussion section, call for a sectional rehearsal. Discuss the part thoroughly. Find the trouble areas, and discuss the type of strokes being used; sticking, the height of the strokes, and the dynamics. Practice the solo individually and together at a slower tempo, gradually building to the required speed. Most important, listen to each other.*

Q. How do the dimensions of the shell of a drum affect its tonal character? Does depth and diameter alter pitch and sustain?

H.D.
Oakland, NE

A. *According to advisory board member Ed Shaughnessy, "Generally the deeper the dimension of the drum, the longer the sustain. As for the diameter of the shell, the larger the head, the deeper the fundamental sound of the drum."*

continued on page 10

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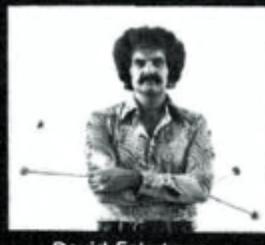
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It's Questionable: continued from page 8

Q. I have a white drum kit, only they're not white anymore. Any suggestions for the removal of yellowing that has occurred over the years?

J.N.
GlenBurnie, MD

A. There's not much which can be done about the yellowing. Bleaching the shells can often crack the finish. Yellowing is often caused by the nicotine from the smoke in night clubs. Drums displayed in store windows are often victims of the yellowing effects of sunlight. Preventive maintenance is the key! Keeping the finish waxed with a white cream car wax is helpful.

Q. Where can I obtain a book dealing with the study of Tabla drums?

M.H.
San Jose, CA

A. Donald Robertson's *Tabla*, published by the Peer International Corporation, 1619 Broadway, N. Y., N. Y. 10019, is recommended. It covers the history of the drum, developments, tuning, various strokes, etc.

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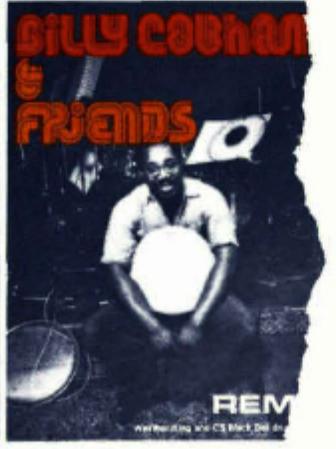
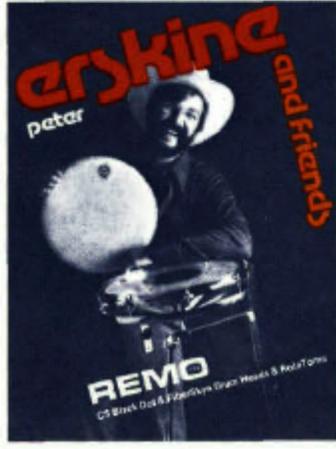
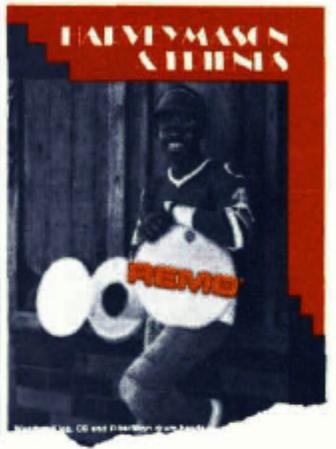
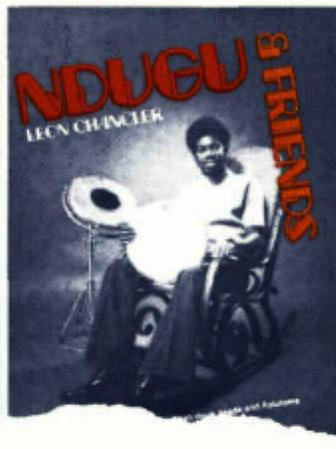
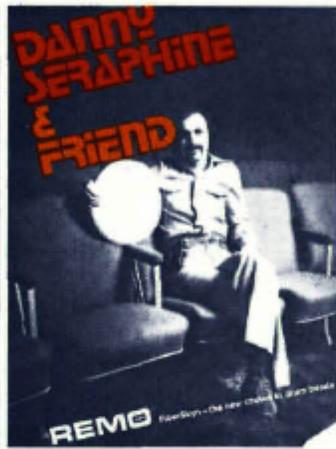
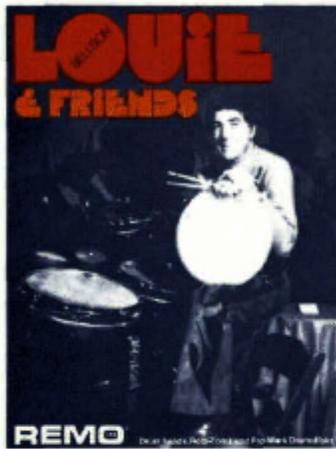
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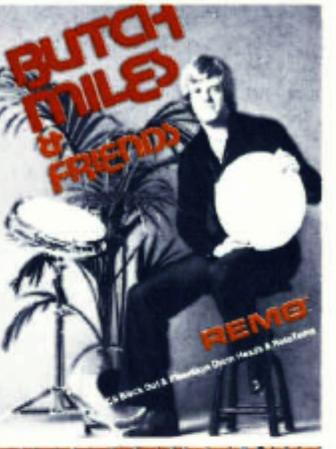
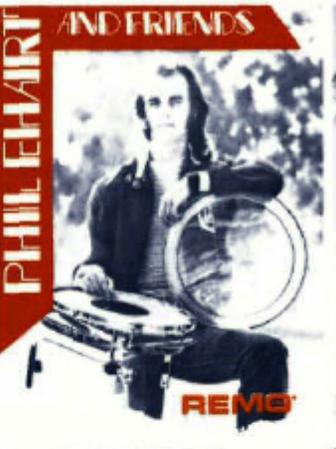
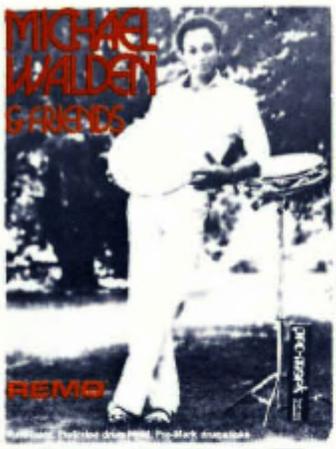
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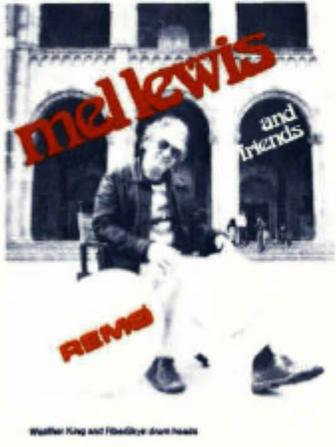
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NEIL PEARL

by Cheech Iero



CI: Tell me a little about your set up. It's a beautiful looking set. What kind of finish does it have?

NP: It's a mahogany finish. The Percussion Center in Fort Wayne, where I get all my stuff, did the finish for me. I was trying to achieve a Rosewood. At home, I have some Chinese Rosewood furniture, and I wanted to get that deep burgundy richness. They experimented with different kinds of inks, magic marker inks of red, blue, and black, trying to get the color. It was very difficult.

CL: What is the cost of your drum set?

NP: I don't think about it. I've never figured it out. I didn't buy it all at once. I've just never thought about it.

CI: Do you enjoy the hectic schedule you keep on the road?

NP: To me, it's just the musician's natural environment. I won't say that it's always wonderful, but it's not always awful either. As with anything else, I think it's a more extreme way of life. The rewards are higher, but the negative sides are that much more negative. I think that rule of polarity follows almost every walk of life. The greater the fulfillment that you're looking for, the greater the agony you'll face.

CI: During your sound check, you not only use the opportunity to get the proper sound, but also as a chance to warm up and practice a bit.

NP: Well, sound check is a nice time to practice and try new ideas, because there's no pressure. If you do it wrong it doesn't matter. And I'm a bit on the adventurous side live, too. I'll try something out. I'll take a chance. Most of the time I'm playing above my ability, so I'm taking a risk. I think everyday is really a practice. We play so much and playing within a framework of music every night you have enough familiarity to feel comfortable to experiment. If the song starts to grow a bit stale I find one nice little fill which will refresh the whole song.

CI: Refresh it for the rest of the group as well.

NP: Sure for all of us. We all put in a little something, a little spice. The audience would probably never notice, but it just has to be a little something that sparks it for us. And for me the whole song will lead up to that from then on and the song will never be dull.

CI: How did you become involved with Rush?

NP: The usual chain of circumstances and accidents. I came from a city that's about 60 or 70 miles from Toronto. A few musicians from my area had migrated to Toronto and were working with bands around there when they recommended me as someone of suitable style. I guess they tried a few drummers, but we just clicked on both sides. There was a strong musical empathy right away with new ideas they were working on and things I

had as musical ideas. Also, outside of music we have a lot of things in common.

CI: Where has this tour taken you?

NP: Well, this isn't really much of a tour. By our terms, most of our tours last 10 months or so. This one is only 3 or 4 weeks. This is just a warm up as far as we're concerned. We've been off a couple of months. We took two weeks of holidays and then spent six weeks rehearsing and writing new material. After that kind of break, we just wanted to get ourselves out on stage. That's the only place where you really get yourself into shape. Rehearsals will keep you playing well and you'll remember all your ideas and learn your songs and stuff, but as far as the physical part of it, the feeling of being on top of your playing, you've got to have the road for that.

CI: This is a warm up for what?

NP: The studio.

CI: At what studio will you record?

NP: We will be going to Les Studio which is in Montreal. We'll record there and mix at Trident in London.

CI: When the members of Rush are composing a piece of music, is the structure determined by the feedback you receive from one another?

NP: Yes, to a large extent. It depends really on what we're coming at it with. Often times, Alex and Getty will have a musical idea, maybe individually. They'll bring it into the studio and we'll bounce it off one another, see what we like about it, see if we find it exciting as an idea and then we get a verbal idea of what the mood of it is. What the setting would be. If I have a lyrical idea that we're trying to find music for, we discuss the type of mood we are trying to create musically. What sort of compositional skills I guess we'll bring to bear on that emotionally. The three of us try to establish the same feeling for what the song should be. Then you bring the technical skills in to try to interpret that properly, and achieve what you thought it would.

CI: Your role as a lyricist has drawn wide acclaim. How did you develop that particular talent?

NP: Well, that's really hard to put into focus. I came into it by default, just because the other two guys didn't want to write lyrics. I've always liked words. I've always liked reading so I had a go at it. I like doing it. When I'm doing it, I try to do the best I can. It's pretty secondary. I don't put that much importance on it. A lot of times you just think of a lyrical idea as a good musical vehicle. I'll think up an image, or I'll hear about a certain metaphor that's really picturesque. A good verbal image is a really good musical stimulus. If I come up with a really good picture lyrically, I can take it to the other two guys and automatically express to them a musical approach.

CI: The tune "Trees" from *your Hemispheres* album comes to my mind as you speak.

NP: Lyrically, that's a piece of doggerel. I certainly wouldn't be proud of the writing skill of that. What I would be proud of in that is taking a pure idea and creating an image for it. I was very proud of what I achieved in that sense. Although on the skill side of it, it's zero. I wrote "Trees" in about five minutes. It's simple rhyming and phrasing, but it illustrates a point so clearly. I wish I could do that all of the time.

CI: Did that particular song's lyrics cover a deeper social message?

NP: No, it was just a flash. I was working on an entirely different thing when I saw a cartoon picture of these trees carrying on like fools. I thought, "What if trees acted like people?" So, I saw it as a cartoon really, and wrote it that way. I think that's the image that it conjures up to a listener or a reader. A very simple statement.

CI: Do all of your lyrics follow that way of thinking, or have you expressed a more philosophical view in other songs that you have written?

NP: Usually, I just want to create a nice picture, or it might have a musical justification that goes beyond the lyrics. I just try to make the lyrics a good part of the music. Many times there's something strong that I'm trying to say, I look for a nice way to say it musically. The simplicity of the technique in "Trees" doesn't really matter to me. It can be the same way in music. We can write a really simple piece of music, and it will feel great. The technical side is just not relevant. Especially from a listening point of view. When I'm listening to other people I'm not listening to how hard their music is to play, I listen to how good the music is to listen to.

CI: When you listen to another drummer, what do you listen for?

NP: I listen for what they have. There's a lot of different kinds of drumming that turn me on. It could be a really simple thing, and I don't think that my style really reflects my taste. There are a lot of drummers that I like who play nothing the way I do. There's a band called The Police and their drummer plays with simplicity, but with such gusto. It's great. He just has a new approach.

CI: Who are some of your favorite drummers?

NP: I have a lot. Bill Bruford is one of my favorite drummers. I admire him for a whole variety of reasons. I like the stuff he plays, and the way he plays it. I like the music he plays within all the bands he's been in. There were a lot of drummers that at different stages of my ability, I've looked up to. Starting way back with Keith Moon. He was one of



Photo by Karen Larcombe

my favorite mentors. It's hard to decide what drummers taught you what things. Certainly Moon gave me a new idea of the freedom and that there was no need to be a fundamentalist. I really liked his approach to putting crash cymbals in the middle of a roll. Then I got into a more disciplined style later on as I gained a little more understanding on the technical side. People like Carl Palmer, Phil Collins, Michael Giles the first drummer from King Crimson, and of course Bill, were all influences. There's a guy named Kevin Ellman who played with Todd Rundgren's Utopia for a while. I don't know what happened to him. He was the first guy I heard lean into the concert toms. Nicky Mason from Pink Floyd has a different style. Very simplistic yet ultra tasteful. Always the right thing in the right place. I heard concert toms from Mason first, then I heard Kevin Ellman who put all his arms into it. You learn so many things here and there. There are a lot of drummers we work with, Tommy Aldridge from the Pat Travers Band is a very good drummer. I should keep a list of all the drummers that I admire.

CI: Do you follow any of the jazz drummers?

NP: I've found it easier to relate to the so called fusion actually. I like it if it has some rock in it. Weather Report's *Heavy Weather* I think was one of the best jazz albums in a long time. Usually, just technical virtuosity leaves me completely unmoved, though academically it's inspiring. But that band just moved me in every way. They were exciting, and proficient musicians. Their songs were really nice to listen to. They were an important band, and had a great influence on my thinking.

CI: What drew you towards drums?

NP: Just a chain of circumstances. I'd like to make up a nice story about how it all happened. I just used to bang around the house on things, and pick up chop sticks and play on my sister's play pen. For my thirteenth birthday my parents paid for drum lessons. I had had piano lessons a few years before that and wasn't really that interested. But with the drums, somehow I was interested. When it got to the point of being bored with lessons, I wasn't bored with playing. It was something I wanted to do everyday. So it was no sacrifice. No agony at all. It was pure pleasure. I'd come home everyday from school and play along with the radio.

CI: Who was your first drum teacher?

NP: I took lessons for a short period of time, about a year and a half. His name was Paul, I can't remember his last name. He turned me in a lot of good directions, and gave me a lot of encouragement. I'll never forget him telling me that out of all his students there were only two that he thought would be drummers. I was one of them. That was the first encouragement I had which was very important to me. For somebody to say to you, you can do it. And then he got into showing me what was hard to do. Although I wasn't capable of playing those things at the time, he was showing me difficult rudimental things, and flashy things. Double hand cross-overs and such. So he gave me the challenge. And even after I stopped taking lessons those things stayed in my mind, and I worked on them. And finally I learned how to do a double hand cross-over. I remember thinking how proud I would be if my teacher could see it.

CI: Did you study percussion further with other instructors?

NP: Well, it's relative. I think of myself still as a student. All the time I've been playing I've listened to other drummers, and learned an awful lot. I'm still learning. We're all just beginners. I really like that Lol Creme and Kevin Godly album. The L thing on their album stands for "learner's permit" in England. And that album is so far above what everybody else is doing, yet they're still learning. I really admire them.

CI: When you were coming up, did you set your sights on any particular goals?

NP: My goals were really very modest at the time. I would get in a band and the big dream was to play in a high school. Ultimately, every city has the place that's the "in" spot where all the hip local bands play. I used to dream about playing those places. I never thought bigger than that. For every set of goals achieved, new ones come along to replace them. After I would achieve one goal it would mean nothing. There's a hall in Toronto called Massey Hall which is a 4,000 seat hall. I used to think to play there would be the ultimate. But then you get there and worry about other things. When we finally got to play there we were about to make an album, and thought about that.

CI: Your mind was a step ahead of what you were doing at the present.

NP: Yes. I think it's human nature, not to be satisfied with what you were originally dreaming of. Whatever you were dreaming of, if you achieve it, it means nothing anymore. You've got to have something to replace it.

CI: Describe your feelings, walking on stage and looking at an audience of 35,000 screaming fans.

NP: Any real person, will not be moved by 35,000 people applauding him. If I go on in front of 35,000 people and play really well, then I feel satisfied when I come off the stage. I'm happy because those 35,000 people were excited. If we're in front of a huge crowd and I have a bad night, I still can't help being depressed. If I come off stage not having played well, I don't feel good. I don't see why I should change that. Adulation means nothing without self respect.

CI: You feel you must satisfy yourself first.

NP: I never met a serious musician who wasn't his own worst critic. I can walk off stage and people will have thought I played well, and it might have even sounded good on tape, but I still know I didn't play it the way it should be. Nothing will change that.

CI: Do you feel there are certain things that contribute to a particularly good or bad night?

NP: I don't think there is anything mystical about it at all. I just think it's a matter of polarity. I go looking for a lot of

parallels. I find it in that, because certain nights it is so magical, and the whole band feels so good about how they played. The audience was so receptive and there's feedback going back and forth, and good feelings generated by the show. That has to be the ideal. That particular show might happen 5 or 6 times out of the whole 200 show tour. But that is the ideal show. Every other show has to be measured on those standards. Our average is good. We never do a bad show any more. We have a level where we're always good. Even if we're bad the show will be good. Somerset Maugham I believe said, "A mediocre person is always at his best." And that's true. If you play really great one night, you're not going to be great every night. As far as my experiences go anyway, I've never known any musician that was. I'm not. Some nights I'm good and some nights I'm not good. Some nights I think I stink. I think it's just a matter of knowing that you have an honest appraisal of what your ability should be, and know how well you've lived up to it. To me, there's no mystery about that at all. You know inside.

CI: What type sticks do you use?

NP: I use light sticks generally. I've used butt end for as long as I can remember. It gives me all the impact I need. When I'm doing anything delicate, I play matched grip with the bead end of the sticks.

CI: So you use both matched and traditional grips depending on the feeling of the music.

NP: Yes, both. I go back to the conventional grip when I have to do anything rudimentary because that's the way I learned it. It's not the best way. For anybody else learning I wouldn't advise that. I've seen a lot of drummers who could play a beautiful pressed roll with matched grip.

CI: Why do you tape the top shaft of the bass drum beater so heavily?

NP: That's an interesting trick that other drummers should know about. I break a lot of beaters off at the head, because the whole weight of my leg goes into my pedals. And I always break them where the felt part of the beater meets the shaft. They break right at the shaft, and then the shaft goes through the head. If you put that roll of tape on there you'll never break your drumhead. In fact I can still get through half a song if I have to, until the beater can be changed. The worst thing that could happen in a show would be for your bass drum to break. Anything else could be changed or fixed or re-rigged somehow. But, if you break a bass drum head the show stops. We once had to stop in the middle of filming Don Kirshner's "Rock Concert" because I broke a bass drum. So we stopped and fixed it. That's all you can do. It doesn't

happen anymore, because of that idea and because Larry keeps an eye on the heads and changes them.

CI: Who mikes your drums?

NP: Our sound man Ian chooses the mikes, and positions them.

CI: You have your own monitor mix during live performances, correct?

NP: Yes, Larry mixes that. That's really just my drums in a separate mix, because we have front monitors.

CI: Are the monitors on your left and right side just feeding you the drums?

NP: Yes. All I hear is myself coming from those monitor. The front monitors give me all synthesizers and vocals, and when it comes to guitar, and bass they're right beside me. There are only two other guys, I'm fortunate in that respect, so I don't need them in my monitors. I have direct instruments to my ears which to me is the best. I'd rather have that than to fool around with the monitors. And the stuff the other guys need in their monitors I get indirectly, because it's pointing at them, so I also hear it. I know a lot of drummers who prefer to have the whole mix in their monitors, and in some cases need the whole mix in their monitors.

CI: Have you ever worn earphones while playing live?

NP: No, not really, they fall off. I even had a lot of trouble in the studio keeping them on. I went through all kinds of weird arrangements, getting the cord out of my way. It's just not worth it, I like to hear the natural sound.

CI: What are your thoughts on tuning?

NP: Concert toms are pretty well self-explanatory. I just know the note I want to achieve and tighten them up.

CI: Do you use a pitch pipe, get the note from the keyboard or just hum the note you're after?

NP: I've been using the same size drums for several years, and I just know what note that drum should produce. When you combine a certain type of head with a certain size drum I believe there is an optimum note, which will give you the most projection and the greatest amount of sustain. With the concert toms I just go for the note. I have a mental scale in my head. I know what those notes should be. By now it's instinctive. With the closed toms, I start with the bottom heads. I'll tune the bottom heads to the note that drum should produce, and then tune the top head to the bottom.

CI: How often do you change the heads on your drums?

NP: Concert tom heads sound good when they're brand new, so they get changed a bit differently. They last through a month of serious road work. The Evans *Mirror Heads* are used on the tom toms and take a while to warm up. It takes a week to break them in. I don't change those much more than every six

weeks or so. They do start to lose their sound after a while. You start to feel they're just not putting out the note they should be. Then you say, "I hate to do it but let's change the heads." I like *Black Dots* when they're brand new. I used to use those on my snare, and the *Clear Dots* also sound good when they're brand new. But the Evans heads don't. It takes awhile. I've gone through agonies with snare drums. I guess most drummers do. I had an awful time, because there was a snare sound in my mind that I wanted to achieve. I went through all kinds of metal snares. And I still wasn't satisfied. It wasn't the sound I was after. Then my drum roadie phoned me about this wooden Slingerland snare. It was second hand. Sixty dollars. I tried it out and it was the one. Every other snare I've tried chokes somewhere. Either very quietly, or if you hit it too hard it chokes. This one never chokes. You can play it very delicately, or you can pound it to death. It always produces a very clean, very crisp sound. It has a lot of power, which I didn't expect from a wooden snare drum. It's a really strong drum. I tried other types of wooden snare drums. I tried the top of the line Slingerland snare drum. This one was a Slingerland but very inexpensive. I've tried other wooden snares, but this was the one, there's no other snare drum that will replace it for me.

CI: What has been done to the inside of your drum shells?

NP: All of the drums with the exception of the snare have a thin layer of fiberglass. It doesn't destroy the wood sound. It just seems to even out the overtones a bit, so you don't get crazy rings coming out of certain areas of the drums. You don't get too much sound absorption from the wood. Each drum produces the pure note it was made to produce as far as I'm concerned. There's no interference with that either in the open toms or the closed toms. The note is very pure and easy to achieve. I can tune the drums and when I get them to the right note I know the sound will be proper.

continued on page 46



PAUL MOTIAN:

Drawing from Tradition

Story and photos by Scott Kevin Fish

In preparation for my interview with Paul Motian, I listened to recordings he has made, and read as much material as I could find about him. Throughout these record reviews, concert reviews, critiques and analyses, the accolades were many. One writer said, "Paul Motian can turn a set of drums into an orchestra without overshadowing his fellow players." Another critic wrote, "To him, percussion is music at every level and he could never be accused of playing anything for superficial effect."

Paul Motian's professional career began around 1956 in New York. Since then, Mr. Motian has played and/or recorded with some of the greatest musicians in jazz including Bill Evans, Keith Jarrett, Oscar Pettiford, Art Farmer, Mose Allison, Thelonious Monk, Tony Scott, Stan Getz, Lee Konitz, Lennie Tristano. The Jazz Composers Orchestra, Charles Lloyd and Don Cherry.

In 1972, Paul, as a leader, released his first album, *Conception Vessel* on ECM records. Two other albums have been released since. *Tribute* in 1975, and most recently *Dance* released in 1978.

I met Paul Motian at his apartment in Manhattan one afternoon. He answered the door dressed in army pants, Oriental shirt, and knitted cap. He is not a tall man, but Paul has a striking presence, especially in his dark brown eyes that have an observant quality.

The apartment was decorated with gongs, bells, maraccas, plants, a piano, and a black five-piece drum set. "Almost everyone in the building is a musician," Paul explained. The sound of a tenor sax seeped into the hallway. "Once I was in the elevator and a woman asked, 'Is that you playing the drums?' I said yes and told her if it was bothering her I'd try to keep it down. 'Oh no,' she said. 'I like it! It sounds very good.'

"I started playing when I was about 13, in Providence, Rhode Island," he began, puffing on a cigarette. "I was born in Philadelphia, but I grew up in Rhode Island. There was a guy who played drums a few blocks away from my house. When he would play you could hear it in the street. I was fascinated with

it. He played in a Gene Krupa bag. I use to go over there and listen to him every once in awhile. I started fooling around at home with some wooden sticks, and finally he gave me a couple of lessons.

"After that I studied reading and syncopation with Emilio Ragosta and George Gear in Providence. George Gear use to be friendly with George L. Stone from Boston. I played with the high school band. I might have played a couple of dances and clubs with musicians from that band." Motian thought in response to a question I'd asked about how many gigs he played in his hometown. There weren't any gigs to speak of, and Motian could only explain it by saying, "It just didn't happen."

"Most of my career just sort of happened," he told me. "People ask, 'You mean you always played the drums?' That's true. I've always played the drums. I've never wanted to do anything else. It's always been there, as sort of a natural thing. I just never thought about it that much. It was just something that I did.

"I heard a lot of music when I was a kid. My parents were born in Turkey. They were Armenian and they used to play a lot of Turkish music and some Armenian music. I remember my mother telling me that when I was around two years old, I was always dancing to this music. My parents would say, 'Gee. Maybe he's going to get into music some way.'

When the Korean War broke out, Paul enlisted in the Navy. "All my friends were being drafted in the Army and coming back frostbitten. That's why I went into the Navy. Somebody told me about the Navy School of Music so I thought I would do it that way. I was stationed in Brooklyn, living off the base. When I got out of the Navy, I moved into Manhattan. I studied with Billy Gladstone, and then I went to the Manhattan School of Music for awhile and studied timpani with Alfred Friese and Fred Albright.

"That's when I started playing around," Motian continued. "The professional part of my career didn't start until I was 24 or 25 years old, around 1955 or '56. I use to carry my drums all over the city, man. I use to take them everywhere." By the time



Paul Motian got on the New York scene, the musical mecca of the 52nd St. days had all but ended. Charlie Parker died in 1955 and it was symbolically the end of an era.

"I'm sorry I missed that," Paul said. "One of my favorite drummers was Sid Catlett. I never saw him play. The person that I did see play a lot and who was a major influence on me was Kenny Clarke. He was in New York at that time. Max Roach was also an influence. I first heard his stuff when I was a teenager. I liked it a lot.

"I remember one time going to a place where Thelonious Monk was playing. The drummer hadn't shown up and the promoter knew I played the drums. He said, 'Hey man. Go get your drums and you can play with Thelonious!' I ran as fast as I could all the way home, got the drums and played that night with Thelonious. That was a thrill for me. Later on, I worked with him for a week in Boston.

"One time I was playing with Monk and I think the tempo picked up a little bit. At the end of the set I went over to him and said I was sorry; that I might have rushed a little bit on that number. Monk said, 'Well, if I hit you in the side of the head you won't rush!' Paul broke up laughing. "That's great advice," he said. "I've never rushed after that."

Motian expressed sincere gratitude to the forces that be for the opportunities that he's had in his musical career. Aside from Monk, there was a period when Paul Motian played drums with the Oscar Pettiford quintet and big band; and he has also been fortunate to have worked with several other premier jazz bassists including Scott LaFaro, Charlie Haden and Gary Peacock.

Paul sat back in an easy chair. He'd run out of filter cigarettes and sat smoking one of my non-filters through a cigarette holder. I asked him if he could recall any pertinent discussions he may have had with some of those bass players that would interest other drummers.

"I'm trying to think back about Scott LaFaro and Bill Evans," he said. "I know that we always made suggestions to each other about different things. I know there were really musical questions and discussions. I remember talking with Bill

one time, thinking of different things. What if you had to play a tune that could take five, ten or fifteen minutes, and you had to play every quarter note in that tune differently? It's just a suggestion or an idea to make you aware of the music. If you're thinking about things like that, think what could happen!

"Bill and I use to play gigs together and we lived in the same building. After Bill had been with Miles Davis, he had his own trio and was playing Midtown, I think at Basin St. His drummer couldn't make it one night so Bill called me. Scott LaFaro was playing around the corner and he came by and sat in. It seemed like that was it! Bill liked it a lot and we just kept it together for about two years."

I questioned Paul about one writer's opinion that he and Scott LaFaro were responsible for the "freeing up" of Bill Evans.

"I think that might have been more mutual," he answered. "Nobody was playing bass like Scott. Bass players played roots of chords all the time and this was the first time the bass was playing with the pianist. I guess that freed Bill. I played what I heard and tried to fit in with them. I never thought of playing that way," Motian emphasized. "I've never pre-thought something. It seems like it's always been something that's happened through my involvement in the music and the musicians. I think it was something that just happened.

"I believe that 'time' is always there. I don't mean a particular pulse, but the time itself. It's all there somehow like a huge sign that's up there and it says *time*. It's there and you can play all around it. I guess playing with Bill Evans was a freeing up for me too.

"We had reached a really nice point just before Scott died. I remember the gig at the Village Vanguard after we made those recordings (Milestone 47002) and we were all real happy. It seemed that we had musically progressed to a really nice point and now we could really get going. A few weeks later, Scott was killed."

Motian stayed with Bill Evans from 1964-65. "It got to a point where it didn't seem like it was me anymore," he said. "I didn't seem part of it. I wanted to go in other directions because there was a lot of music happening in New York at that time.

"I played with Carla and Paul Bley, Albert Ayler, and John Gilmore. It's better now in New York, but I think that 1965 was one of the good periods in New York. That was around the time the Jazz Composers Guild was organized. I was playing a lot but I wasn't making any money. I used to work for two dollars a night. That was it. That went on for a couple of years, but I managed.

"I took a couple of commercial gigs. I was working an Israeli club playing floor shows. Then I worked for awhile on the East side with a trio. I guess that's how I survived. There are so many clubs now and so much happening. The loft scene and all that. At those times there were things happening in lofts but there was just no money in it. It wasn't publicized as much, I think.

"Shortly after that, I got hooked up with Keith Jarrett. I met him at a gig he was playing with Tony Scott and he sounded great to me. He was about 19 or 20 then. Later on he called me and Charlie Haden and we did Keith's first trio album. That was in 1967 and later on I played with Keith in Charles Lloyd's band.

"We did a fantastic tour of Asia. That was a great experience. Then I went with Arlo Guthrie for awhile. Arlo's bass player knew of me through my work with Bill Evans so he suggested me. Arlo had a hit record with *Alice's Restaurant* and was about to start touring. I enjoyed that," Paul said. "It wasn't a big musical experience but it was fun. I can play country/western music: keep time with brushes and have fun. I did a couple of tours with Arlo and part of that would be the Woodstock Festival.

"Afterwards it was mostly Keith. A trio first and then Dewey Redman joined around 1972." We spoke about some of the miscellaneous records that Paul had played on and two that he was

most proud of were Charlie Haden's *Liberation Music Orchestra*, (both Motian and Andrew Cyrille are credited with playing percussion instruments). When asked what he specifically played on that LP, Motian said he played on all of the tracks except "Circus '68 '69" on which Andrew Cyrille is percussionist, and the monumental project *Escalator Over the Hill* by Carla Bley.

When Paul Motian started leading his own group, he ran into a few problems. He found that he had to have a knowledge of music "business" but more than that he became heavily involved with musical composition. "I've been studying piano and composition," he told me. "I think that's really important for drummers. All drummers should play a little bit of piano. If they've got something against the piano, then study vibraphone or xylophone or buy a wooden flute, man!"

"My composition stuff is all recent. I never even dreamed that I could do that kind of thing," Motian said with an air of pride. "When I got offered to do my first record for ECM, I put together some music and found out that I could do it. Plus, I had some good musicians to help. That's what I'm working on now. I would like to get that together. That's very important. I mean, it took me a year just to get a book together for my band!"

I was interested in knowing how Motian went from the initial composing of a piece to working it out with his band, to performing it. Paul explained, "I'll work it out myself first. When it seems satisfactory, then I'll write out parts and rehearse it. Maybe I'll get the saxophone to play the melody. If it doesn't sound right, I may make a few changes. I'll do the same thing with the bass, and then rehearse the trio. The song grows from there."

"I would really like to get away from the normal format of chart, solo, choruses and chart again. I don't really like that," Motian said. "But, once I've written a tune and worked it with the band I don't play it on the piano after that. Right now, I have maybe seven or eight things that I'm working on that I'm not satisfied with. I may scrap it all, I don't know."

Motian was kind enough to oblige my request that he play the piano. The tune was reminiscent of his writing on the *Byeblue* Keith Jarrett album. "That's it," Paul said when he had finished. "I'll give that to Keith and he'll play the shit out of it." I told him that one of the qualities I admired most in his compositions was his use of space. Other than the melody line it is often difficult to separate what is spontaneous and what is arranged.

"Last year a woman in Canada wrote me and said she liked my albums because she didn't hear any aggression in them. I don't know if that's good, though," Paul laughed. "I can remember being angry and playing. Usually, the melody and some harmonies are written. I like to keep it spontaneous so that I can make changes. So that I can play a piece of music one time and play it differently another time. The melody will be the same, but the playing part can change."

Because of the time spent on composing and leading his band, Motian has no desire or time to teach. He has done clinics and formed definite ideas about how he would teach drums. "I always had a thing about that," he said. "If I ever teach, I'm not going to teach on a practice pad. To me, that doesn't really have too much to do with the drumset. The drumset is your instrument, not the practice pad!"

Motian recently toured Europe with his trio and told me about a couple of weeks he spent teaching at a school in Denmark. "I was there for two weeks with two, one hour classes a day. I took a private student everyday for a half hour lesson. I had to come up with something new each day and that was a challenge."

"The first day I had them tune the drums," Paul remembered. "There was a set of drums there that sounded terrible. I got the idea to have each drummer tune them to whatever he heard. By the end of the two weeks that was the best sounding drumset in that school," Paul beamed.

"Mostly, I talked about music and the musicality of the drumset. What is the sound? People will listen to drummers and sometimes they don't listen to the right thing." Motian leaned forward in his chair. What is the sound of that drummer? What kind of sound is he getting? Each drummer has his own sound.

"All musicians should check out the tradition of their instruments. There were so many really great drummers. I'd like to bring that heart of drum playing back. People now don't know about Shadow Wilson, Denzil Best, Kenny Clarke, Dave Tough, Chick Webb, Jimmy Crawford! And Baby Dodds! Some great drummers. Drummers today don't know about how or what they played," Paul said, shaking his head.

Motian explained that the styles of the really great drummers would never be obsolete. "Their type of playing is connected with the way people are playing today. It really is. Whether it's used or not is another story. But, I think there's a certain art to playing the drums that is missing today."

When asked what he felt his function in a group was, Motian stated simply. "Adding to the music I love to play time," he elaborated. "It depends on what kind of music it is! I think that's great. It's a happy thing just to play time and having that feeling in your body, bringing it to other people."

"I don't know if that's contradictory to what I said earlier about playing time. How can you listen to the Charlie Parker Quartet with Max Roach and say that's not good or that's not fun? That's beautiful music!"

Would Motian agree that the best 'free' drummers were also exceptional timekeepers? "Well, that comes back to the tradition of drums. I don't think a drummer or anyone else can just start playing what's known as 'free'. Somebody said that the only 'free' music is when you don't get paid. You can't just start playing that way. It comes from a tradition and there's a lot involved there."

When asked whether he still practices, Motian replied, "I try to play a little bit each day. Sometimes I make a mental note and sometimes I'll even write down: 'Play at least ten minutes a day on the drum set.' I have to really feel like I want to do it. I don't force myself. When I sit down and try to think about working something out, I'm never really happy. If I sit down and play the drums, like I'm playing in front of people, I'll get into it more. Then I can play for awhile."

On the floor tom I noticed a piece of paper with triplet exercises written on it. Paul sat down at the kit, picked up the paper and started to play what was written. Then he stopped. "That sounded good this morning, but now it doesn't sound so good." He tossed the paper aside and went into a second solo to demonstrate the sound of his drums.

"This is an old Slingerland set," Paul explained. "I've had it for years."

The snare was an old chrome Slingerland, the tom-toms were 9X13 and 16X16. For a second mounted tom-tom, Motian had an old wood 5X14 Ludwig snare with the strainer and snares off.

"I have another snare drum that I like a lot," Paul said. "It's a deep wooden snare with ten lugs. I used that for a few years and then I switched to this metal one. I may go back to the wooden one."

"People ask me about my cymbals," Paul said as he tapped a sizzle cymbal. "That's another thing that just sort of happened. Through the years you go through different cymbals until you get the sound that you like. I must have had my rivet cymbal for 20 years. It's an old A. Zildjian."

The second ride on the left was an old K. Zildjian. "I've got a Paiste ripple cymbal on the bottom of the hi-hat, and a K. Zildjian on top. I have a Paiste Chinese type cymbal that I use a lot. That's what I use pretty regularly now." Paul told me that this was the same set he'd used on his recordings and his pet drum seemed to be the 18" bass.



"I think it's deeper than most. This one gets a bigger sound than a normal 18". I tune them until it's satisfactory to my ear. I'll tune them until it sounds good to me; until there's some kind of interval between the drums and it sounds pleasant to my ears. But, I don't say I have to tune a fourth here and a third there. I don't get into that. Sometimes I might as an ear training exercise, I'll play the drums and then go over to the piano to see what it actually is. But it's hard for me to find out because I like the overtones in the drums. They hate me in recording studios for that. There's no mufflers on the drums. Everything is wide open. It's loud and there's a lot of overtones. It's hard to tune to specific notes because of that. Most of the time the studio engineer has me take off the head or put some damper on it, because it really raises havoc with their needles.

"I'm still not completely satisfied with recording," Motian admitted. "ECM does a really fantastic job but I wonder if it's possible to hear drums on a record the way I hear them when I'm sitting behind them? In a hall with bad acoustics I can't play too loud or I'll wipe everybody else out."

Does he consider himself a loud drummer? "No," Motian said. "But I've had people tell me that I was too loud. Sometimes it's interesting to hear other players in a bad hall. I learn a lot. Once I went to a concert where the drummer was playing well but you couldn't hear the piano. I kept thinking, 'I wish the drummer would just stop for two measures.' He never did. He just played constantly and wiped out the piano. I don't want people thinking that way about me."

Remo Ambassador heads are on all of Motian's drums except on the snare which was calfskin. It isn't that he is so particular about a specific head as he is, again, about the sound. "On this last tour of Europe, Sonor Drums provided a set for me. I just took my trap case and cymbals. The drums seemed good but what I didn't like about them was that they had clear plastic heads on them. That starts to mess with my sound. I changed a couple of heads and got a better sound.

"I don't like heads when they're real thick. I think plastic heads are made in three or four different thicknesses and each company is a little different. I like the heads that are on my drums now. It's surprising that the calfskin head seems to stay in tune. It's nice for brushes but the plastic heads are nice for brushes, too. Those clear ones aren't very good though."

Besides his regular drum kit, Motian plays some of the most inspiring percussion on various instruments. He is a master at using mallets in addition to brushes and sticks on the drum kit.

"I've got a couple of boxes of percussion things I've collected over the years that I take around with me," he said. "It's just like colors to add to the music.

"I like the concept of Indian music," Paul said. "Where you have an Indian playing an instrument like a violin or a sarod with the tamboura and drum. I think there's a way of connecting that with what I'm doing. You have a melody instrument, the tamboura and a bass or a drum! You can do a lot in music with that.

"A lot of different music is coming together, which was inevitable. I had an idea to play all kinds of music. I don't see why you have to be restricted. I'd like to play a piece by Charles Ives and then a standard. Then one of my compositions. Jazz fusion, music of the world like African, Indian, Asian, the Middle Eastern, rock & roll, country and western, rhythm & blues, bring it all together!"

Despite critical acclaim for performing and recording, the role of bandleader has been an uphill climb for Motian. In spite of the fact that he's still on the ascent, there is much more than a spark of optimism in his soul.

"Managers can't do anything with me because I don't command \$5,000 a performance and their commission isn't going to be great. That's the reality of it," he said.

"My concerts have done very well. I've gotten very good reviews. It bothers me that I'm not playing as much as I would like to. I get calls for gigs with other people that I turn down. So far, it hasn't been too bad. We've done two European tours, a few concerts in New York, and a couple of workshops and college concerts. Once I actually get to play," he smiled, "it's fantastic."

FRED BEGUN: Timpani Virtuoso

by Harold Howland

Photos by Robert Stiles

Fred Begun is that rare sort of percussionist whose musicianship parallels that of a fine concert violinist. He possesses the ability to translate into complete music the rough and primitive instincts of aggression which a less sensitive person may bring untempered to that most easily abused of instruments, the drum. In the world of classical music, rich with tradition, where a player's cultivation of superb technique, tone, and historical understanding is by necessity regarded as a given factor. Fred stands out as uniquely total master of his instrument.

Born in Brooklyn on August 30, 1928. Fred moved with his family to Washington, D.C. when he was eight years old. At age eleven he began his percussion studies, to which he applied himself with effort sufficient to gain his entrance to the Juilliard School of Music in New York in 1946. For the next five years Fred studied the timpani under the firm and artful hand of Saul Goodman, whose uncompromising musical approach he absorbed completely. The technical and aesthetic awareness which Fred gained during his studies under this Horowitz of timpanists prepared him well for the symphony orchestra and formed the basis for his own personal and intensely musical style.

One is impressed and enchanted immediately by Fred's big, clear sound and by his courtly demeanor onstage, where he makes graceful and musically effective use of his body to enhance and personify every tonal and stylistic detail of his part. During the reading of a given composition one actually may imagine that Fred is the pious and decorated baron of eighteenth-century Germany, or the swashbuckling mounted general of Napoleon's army. Fred once said, "I mime the music. When I play Don Juan, I identify with the lover."

The true romantic. Fred will always offer to a conductor or to a student at least two ways in which to perform practically any passage: an unbiased, "correct" translation of the page, and a vital, expansive interpretation which at once pays deference to history and explores the realm of inspiration.

HH: What motivated you to study music, and what was your early training like?

FB: I started lessons when I was 11. The big attraction at that time was, of course, jazz, and the drumset was the only thing in the world. I hadn't had much contact at all with symphonic music. In fact, I was totally unaware of it.

It all started because one day a kid brought a pair of sticks and four or five tin cans mounted on a board to school. It was pretty neat, and I asked him to make me a set, which he did. I turned on the radio and played along, making quite a racket and driving my folks crazy. I finally persuaded them to get me started taking lessons.

In those days the big thing the teacher laid on the parents was, 'He doesn't have to make a lot of noise, so get him a little rubber practice pad.' As you know, that way the student learns how to play the pad, not the drum. I finally got a real drum set with a snare drum, a little Chinese tom-tom, a woodblock, and a blue light in the bass drum. It was one of those very early Baby Dodds-type outfits. I didn't have a hi-hat until later because that didn't come with the set.

I started playing with little groups in school. It was getting near the end of high school, and even though I was doing well on the legitimate studies, I read well, and I did my rudiments, the thing I really wanted to do was play jazz. I had to decide where I would attend college. I got into a real subterfuge plan to convince my folks to let me try out for Juilliard. I wanted to go to Juilliard to be near 52nd Street. I made Juilliard, and started my studies with Saul Goodman on timpani, which I had not played much at all prior to that. I found it interesting, but the big thing was to try to get into sessions and sit in. Needless to say, I didn't stop traffic on 52nd Street, much to my dismay.

I was in about the tenth orchestra in school, and it came time for us to play our first concert. The first thing I ever played on timpani in a concert was the Schubert *Unfinished*. There was something about the concert that I liked: the

public's response, a certain elegance to the setting, something that appealed to an aesthetic that I hadn't really looked at. From that point on, I started getting into the studies more ardently. During my second year in school I decided that I was going to be the next great timpanist in the world. I'm still trying.

HH: Was it the absence of improvisation as a main feature that made classical music easier to pursue than jazz?

FB: Well, we do have to adhere to the written page when we play with an orchestra, but there are areas of interpretation on timpani where you have a chance to use a certain amount of artistic license. You're not necessarily changing notes from what is written, but you have latitude for a personal interpretation provided it's tasteful and doesn't get in the way. I was able to find out about this fairly early on.

HH: Does that freedom result simply from the fact that, unlike the section string player, the timpanist has his part all to himself?

FB: Well, you are often part of a percussion section, even though your thing is usually individualized. In the classic literature, you are alone, and within the framework you can project the note a certain way. Tone, length, quality, the enhancement of other sections of the orchestra, those various details can make your interpretive role more interesting.

HH: What criteria helped you to determine when to alter slightly an older part which probably would have been written differently had the composer had access to more mechanically efficient timpani?

FB: It depends on who's conducting and where you're playing. If it's a nerd of a conductor, all of the extra notes in the world aren't going to help. If it's a better conductor, then I consult with him prior to a rehearsal as to what I have in mind, and if he has that in mind, fine.

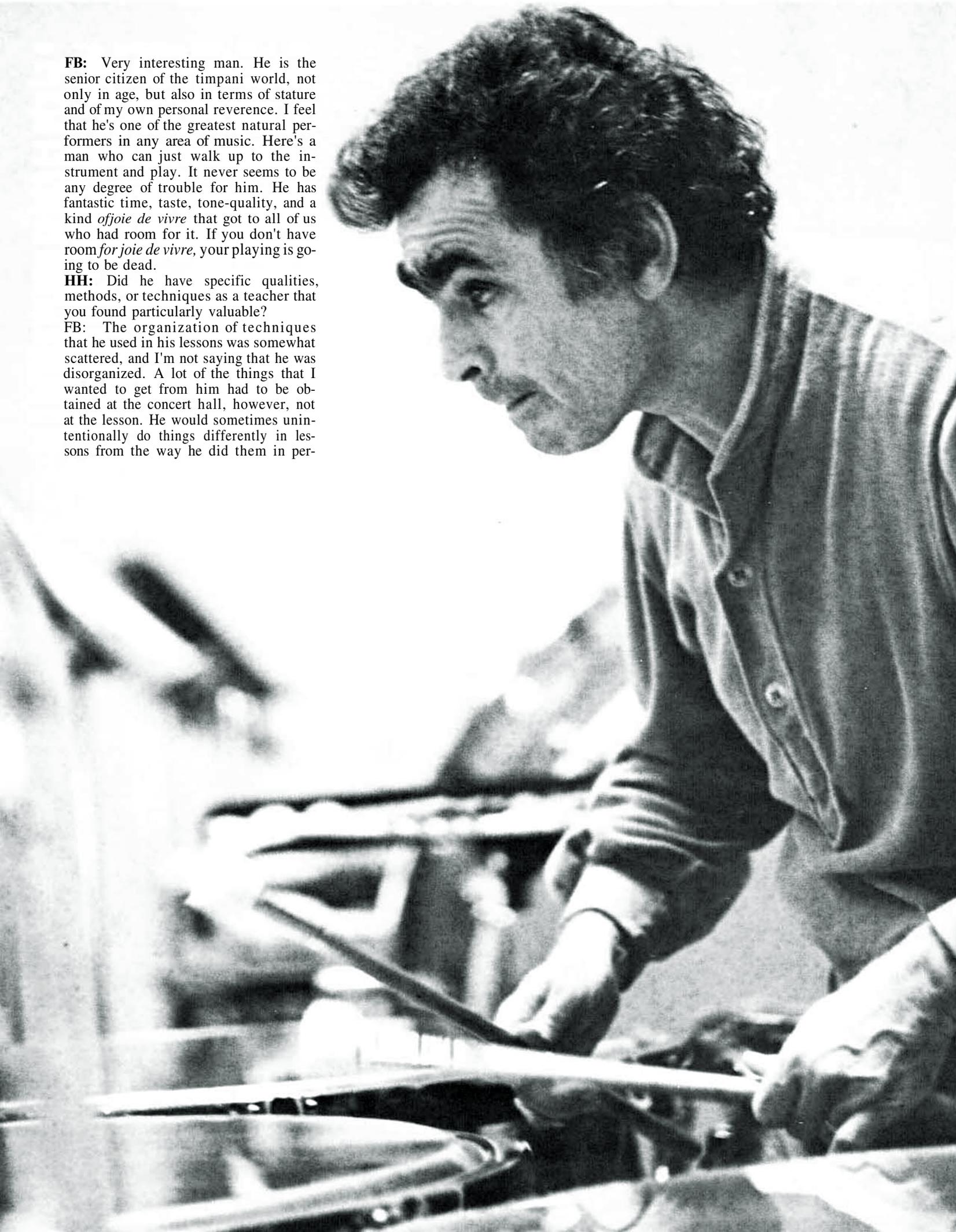
I feel that there is validity in some of the notes that have filtered on through the ages, specifically through Toscanini. He added many interesting notes to the Beethoven symphonies.

HH: Going back: Tell me something about Goodman as a man, a player, a teacher, an inventor.

FB: Very interesting man. He is the senior citizen of the timpani world, not only in age, but also in terms of stature and of my own personal reverence. I feel that he's one of the greatest natural performers in any area of music. Here's a man who can just walk up to the instrument and play. It never seems to be any degree of trouble for him. He has fantastic time, taste, tone-quality, and a kind *offjoie de vivre* that got to all of us who had room for it. If you don't have room for *joie de vivre*, your playing is going to be dead.

HH: Did he have specific qualities, methods, or techniques as a teacher that you found particularly valuable?

FB: The organization of techniques that he used in his lessons was somewhat scattered, and I'm not saying that he was disorganized. A lot of the things that I wanted to get from him had to be obtained at the concert hall, however, not at the lesson. He would sometimes unintentionally do things differently in lessons from the way he did them in per-



formance. What I was interested in seeing was what he really did in the Brahms *Fourth*, why he made the ending of the Beethoven *Ninth* sound so great. This may not happen in a lesson setting, but it will in the fevered pitch of a performance.

When I started teaching I decided to try to show as faithfully as I could what I do onstage. That's what it's about. If a person is taking the trouble to come and study with me, I feel that he should get it all, choreography and everything.

HH: You joined the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) right out of school. Tell me about that.

FB: I graduated Juilliard in June 1951, and the opening in this orchestra came about. The summer before I was one of the timpani players in a performance of the Berlioz *Requiem*. Somebody spotted and remembered me, so I got called to audition for Howard Mitchell, who was then music director. He signed me to my first contract. I've been here ever since.

HH: With the NSO you've given the world premiere performances of three timpani concerti. What can you say about these as compositions and about the timpani as a solo instrument?

FB: The timpani in a solo concerto setting can be very effective or very ineffective. In the three works that I've done, I've seen it go both ways and in between. The first and best of the three is the piece that Robert Parris wrote for me (1958). He found a successful setting, and I feel that as far as interest is concerned, it's a far better piece than either the Jorge Sarmientos (1965) or the Blas Atehortua (1968).

HH: It seems that so much percussion-centered music is written more with an eye towards liberating percussionists from the back of the bus than towards creating lasting works of art.

FB: That's one of my objections to the percussion ensemble literature in general. Not that it's all junk, but enough of it is to make it all seem like a circus trick. Here they are, the clowns are jumping around again. I don't find this very musical, and I would say that most percussion ensemble music turns me off.

HH: How did your book of etudes evolve? How do you view it as composition, and what are your aspirations as a writer?

FB: The book came about sporadically, an exercise here, an exercise there, and in each piece I would try to think in terms of a motive that I might develop. The pieces have some kind of form and logic. It was not just technical histrionics, although some of it is quite difficult. It was my attempt to write music. I feel that this is the approach that is missing from some of the material that we have to work with. The technical vehicles that we practice are written as exercises, not

as music, and consequently they are played that way. This is something that we can all think about in our daily practice. Take, for example, those very first couple of exercises in the Goodman book. You can make them sound like a string of notes, or you can make those two pages sound highly musical. If you do, you have a good start as to what you're going to do with the instrument.

HH: Do you have other books planned?

FB: I have a couple of books going around in my head. It's going to be very hard to write a better beginning book than the Goodman. Therefore, I



wouldn't even think in those terms. I might think of another set of approaches to complement that book, but I feel that Goodman is the prime method, that it says it all. I can't envision my ever using another beginning book for my students.

As far as writing is concerned, I'm more involved now in the written word than in music.

I've started a group of anecdotes about the symphonic repertoire, my feelings about certain pieces. I'm going to do about fifty or seventy-five, and I've already done work on *Le Sucre du Prince*, Bartok's *Concerto for Orchestra*, and the Tchaikovsky *Fourth*. These are thoughts about a specific performance or a specific work through the years. I did one called *Farewell to the Goodman Drums* when we sold his instruments.

I also want to write a good biography of Saul Goodman. That is something I

can't think about too much currently because of the research time involved. But the idea appeals to me, both from the standpoint of his being a chronicle of playing in the twentieth century and how he evolved.

HH: Returning to your role and orientation as a teacher: You must have younger students who, as you once were, are more interested in jazz, rock, or other forms than in classical music. How do you relate to and direct their values?

FB: Well, I stay with the drumset. I can't consider myself a Steve Gadd, but I don't think my head's back in 1940. As far as reconciling the pursuit of the student is concerned, we as players and teachers are more and more in a multiple capacity: you're not going to train just a timpanist, a mallet player, a snare drummer, a drum set player. The demands are much greater all the time. The contemporary player, if he is to be successful, not just monetarily but also in his role as a percussionist, must do it all.

HH: Are you currently as interested in jazz as you were before Juilliard?

HH: I can't say that I devote so many hours each week to listening to records or radio programs, but if there's something that I've been reading about or that people have been talking about, I'll make it a point to hear or see it or both.

HH: Who are a few of your favorite jazz or rock drummers?

FB: Well, I think that Steve Gadd is probably one of the biggest talents that I've heard, a fantastic player. I like Billy Cobham and Ginger Baker. Buddy always fascinates me. One of the most tasteful players of all time is Shelly Manne. There's another guy I'll never forget, Gene Krupa. When I was a young fledgling, Gene represented the epitome of what a big-time drummer should be. There was a great mystique about him, a certain class, a certain elegance—he had style, there's no doubt about it.

HH: What long-range plan would you suggest to the aspiring orchestral player for learning the repertoire and confronting auditions?

FB: There are resources for learning audition techniques. Some people from the New York Philharmonic have advertised themselves as Audition Associates, and Artie Press in Boston as well, to counsel players on auditioning. Now a person can become an audition specialist the way an applicant to a corporation would go someplace to learn to write a good resume. This is all well and good, but it is liable to become a perverse element of our field if the player does not learn to conduct himself onstage once he gets a job. It's conceivably computer-proof to learn the techniques, strategic parts, and solos needed to give an audition, but the player must make sure

that he's equipped also to perform a Haydn symphony tastefully. It's gratifying to know that this audition counseling exists, but I hope that the people who are rendering the service do it all the way so that the applicant has the wherewithal to do what his credentials announce.

Regarding the repertoire. I devote the first extended period of time to Beethoven, then Brahms and Tchaikovsky. In the meantime. I deal with certain other idiomatic styles such as a lighter Mozart, the relationship between Haydn and the Beethoven sound, and so on. In these different textures it's not all the same forte. It seems that the average student today is exposed to contemporary music more quickly than to the classic standards, so I sometimes find it difficult to transmit the classical style.

When I was in school we didn't have community youth orchestras or other great outlets of learning the repertoire. I used to have to go out and play in these Sunday morning orchestras on the East Side, like the Czechoslovakian Society Orchestra of America, with eleven and a half people in it, and we'd saw through a Brahms symphony. People would be singing parts. You learn how to play the music that way, because there's an awful lot that doesn't happen. I got to Juilliard and had no real orchestral experience. Today the kids are learning the repertoire in their youth orchestras, and it's wonderful.

HM: Many American percussion students today take up the serious study of classical music about the same time you did, late high school and college. Do you think, given the competition out there now and in the future, that's too late?

FB: It depends on how early the player really gets started. I've had students seven and eight years old, and unless there's something tremendously compelling about them, nothing really happens for a couple of years. You're babysitting most of the time. If I were to choose an average good starting age, I would say eleven.

You can't be too patronizing with a young person, though. I feel that to get into the "Mary Had a Little Lamb" routine rather than to go for substance is a mistake. You have to start with good principles.

HH: You recently presented your first timpani clinic. How did it feel, and what are your thoughts in this area?

FB: I found it very enjoyable. I was able actually to feel the temperature of the group for which I performed. You have to do that immediately so that you know where to shift gears. Are they predominately players? Teachers? Non-percussion people? What I had planned worked. I want, however, to put together four or five individual programs so

that within these I have a possible twenty or thirty combinations of shifting gears whenever it's needed.

HH: At the clinic you demonstrated the "Danse Sacrale" from *Le Sacre* by playing along with a phonograph record. How do you think that worked out?

FB: It's something that goes back to my early repertoire studies with Saul. We'd play along with records, and we'd learn to do this sort of dubbing pretty well. That piece, of course, is hard enough to do with a conductor. I knew the record well enough to time it beyond the beat, and it worked out fine. I feel that it was a very effective ending to the show.

HH: When you play you don't use a strict French or German grip as espoused by various authors and teachers, but rather you hold the sticks differently from time to time. Does a good grip evolve subconsciously?

FB: It's a variable thing. I feel that within certain boundaries there is no totally incorrect way. What I'm doing is letting the stick be an extension of me rather than adhering to a hoisting and manipulating action that is going to take away from what I want to come out. I want the stick to be a natural appendage. I would say that consequently, I have perhaps a half dozen positions that all can take place within thirty-two bars, depending upon where the music is going. What are the combinations between dynamic extremes, and what do I have to do to make my appendage transmit the music? I try to control the stick rather than let it control me.

I think that by not dwelling on stick grips the way a rudimental snare drum teacher might, I'm appealing to the intelligence of the player. We know the different categories of sound and we know that we must have a more legitimately neat and correct grip for a crisp, staccato articulation, the thumbs and fingers being just so, than for legato. My idea of legato, as you know, is as little tension or pressure as possible to agitate the tone. Less cartilage, more fat of the hand, more cushions of the fingers. Whatever you can do to transmit the softer parts of the grip enhances the sound of legato.

When you're playing a very articulate passage, especially softly, getting a bit further towards the center of the head will help to dry out some of the extra resonance.

HH: You use plastic heads exclusively. How do you feel about plastic as compared with calfskin?

FB: Let's put it this way: I've had happy and less than happy experiences with plastic heads.

I feel that the industry is not making as good a product as they could be making.

It's probably true that the timpani and the players in the top orchestras make up a very small percentage of their total sales, but they have not come out with any kind of improvement to help the setting of the timpani head, and they have not improved the materials. I feel that some of the plastic heads that I had years ago are better than some of the ones that I'm getting today. In recent times, I've had to reject more heads than I've accepted.

HH: Do you detect variances in thickness within a head or from one head to another?

FB: Generally the material within a head is pretty even, but they do vary. When it's too thick it sounds too thuddy, and when it's too thin it lacks body.

It's Russian Roulette when you put on a plastic head. There seems to be more than a fifty percent chance that it's not going to sound good. It shouldn't be that troublesome.

HH: What made you switch to plastic in the first place?

FB: Availability, for one thing. It's hard to get really good skin heads. Also we now are playing in much more modern concert halls with sophisticated lighting systems which tend to dry out the skin heads. In the wintertime, you really need to have a good irrigation system of sponges in the bottom of the drum. Conversely, in the summertime, especially if you're playing outdoors, you may as well hang the skin heads up on the clothesline, they'll be so soggy. The drawbacks of skin heads are the climatic extremes, which I find more inconvenient than a plastic head that doesn't quite suit me.

HH: Would you say that under optimum environmental conditions the calf heads sound better?

FB: There is a specific warmth that the calf has that the plastic doesn't.

HH: Do you think that the industry should make a head that would possess the warmth and feel of calf as well as the practicality of plastic?

FB: I think it can be done.

HH: Do you have specific suggestions for improving plastic heads?

FB: What's needed is a head that would vibrate when you first put it on, that would go on much more evenly so that you wouldn't have to iron out wrinkles and make distortions in the amount of torque that you use on each rod; a head that would go on the way a skin head goes on when it's wet, adhering to the shape of the drum. On a Ringer drum you have eight rods to be concerned with, and a manufacturer should be able to make a head that you put on and torque the same amount at each rod, getting a beautiful sound instead of the

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INSIDE REMO

by David Levine

Photos by Phillip Neiman

The modern manufacturing plant that Remo, Inc. occupies in North Hollywood, California, is made up of four buildings, totalling over 54,000 square feet. One building has been set aside to produce practice pads, practice sets, and Roto-toms. Within the other three structures, 1/7r of the world's drum heads are made. Many of the heads will be used as original equipment on Rogers, Slingerland, Pearl, Tama, Gretsch, Sonor, Yamaha, Orange, Milestone, CB-700, and most other new drums (except Ludwig and Premier). The remainder of the heads will find their way to music stores throughout the world to be sold as replacement heads for banjos, bass drums, bongos, snare drums, timpani, and tomtoms.

The Pro-Mark Corporation was acquired as a subsidiary of Remo in 1975. Based in Houston, Texas, Pro-Mark has built its reputation on the Pro-Mark and *Good Times* oak drum sticks. These sticks are made exclusively for Pro-Mark and imported from Japan. Additionally, *Hands Hickory* sticks, soon to be made in the United States, are available.

When Remo introduced the *Weatherking* drum head in 1957, it was acclaimed and accepted by the percussion world. Since then, *SoundMaster*, *CS*, *Fiberskyn*, and *Pinstripe* heads, along with tunable practice pads, practice sets, and *Roto-toms* have been successfully developed and marketed. Lloyd McCausland, Remo's national sales manager, conducted our tour through the plant, giving us an inside look at the manufacturing process.



Left to right, Lloyd McCausland (sales manager), Remo, and Pro-Mark president Herb Broclistein in front of the Remo plant in North Hollywood, California.

1A



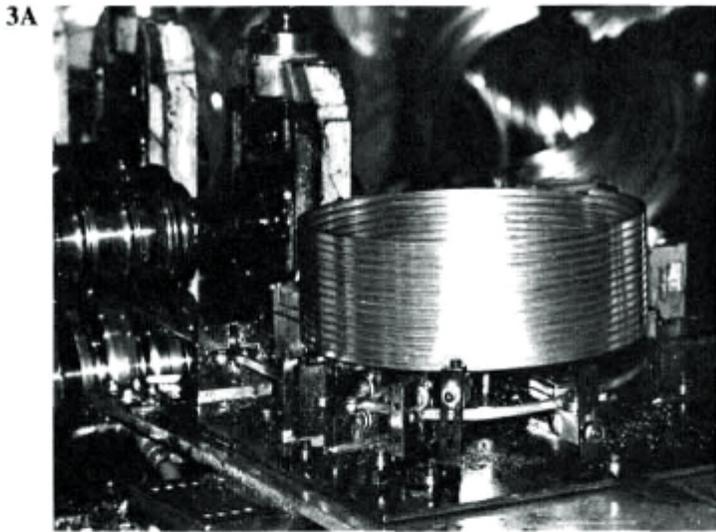
After each roll of Mylar has been tested for consistency of sound and durability it is cut, first in rectangular sheets, then, into circles (1A). Around the edge of the circles small holes are punched. These holes will help anchor the plastic film in the hoop. Then, by use of heat and pressure, the collar is formed (1B).

2A

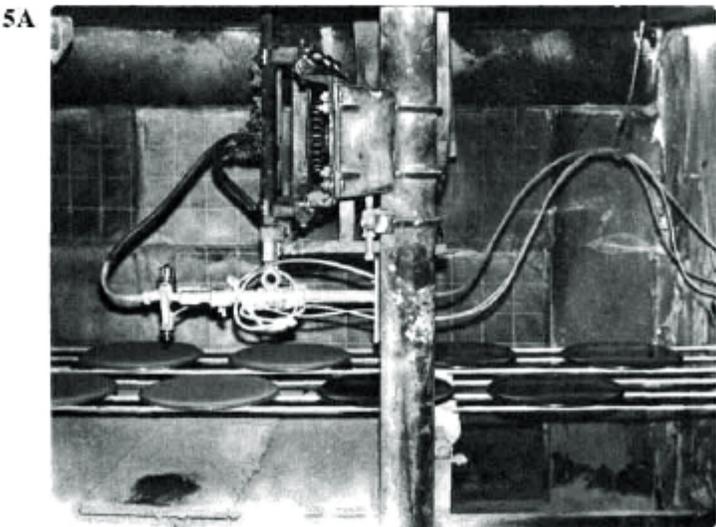
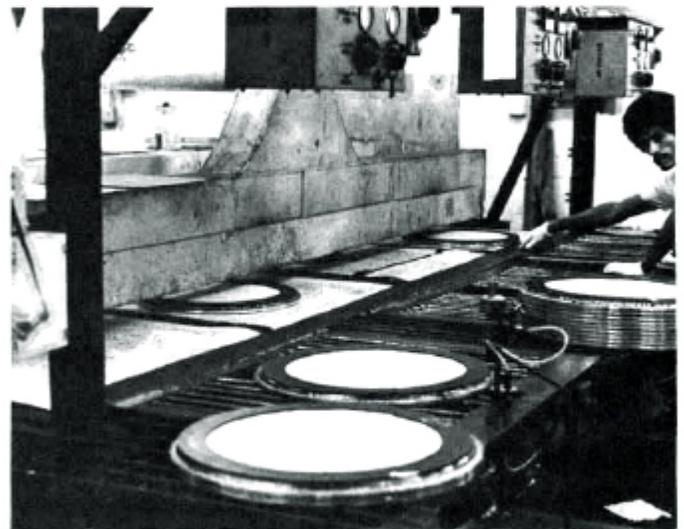
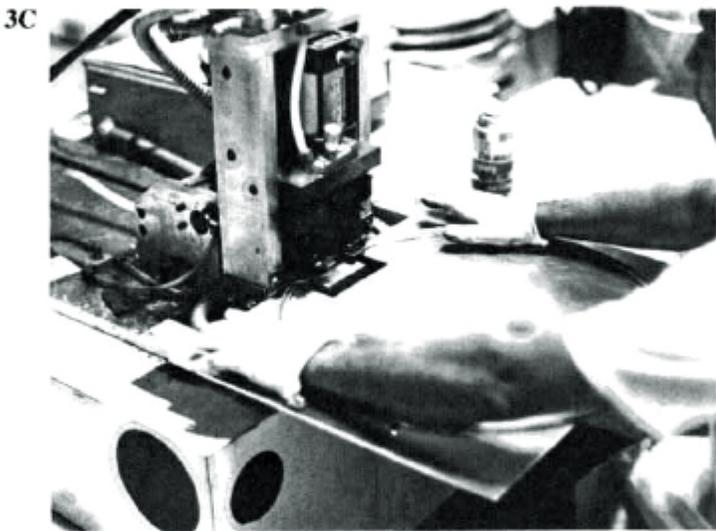
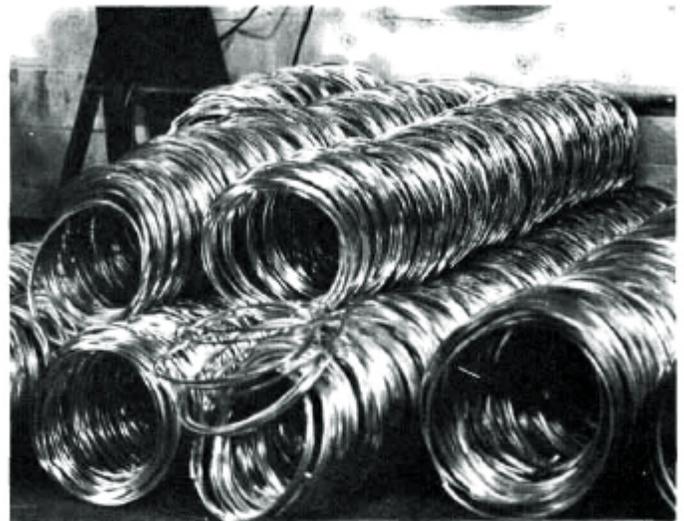


1B

For some heads, unique processes are used. *Fiberskyn* heads are made by laminating a synthetic material to the Mylar. *Pinstripe* heads have an adhesive applied between 2 layers of Mylar. On *CS* heads the center dot is firmly adhered to the plastic by a press (2A).



To make the hoops, an aluminum strip is bent into a channel and forms a coil (3A). This coil is then cut into individual hoops (3B), which are subsequently welded together (3C).

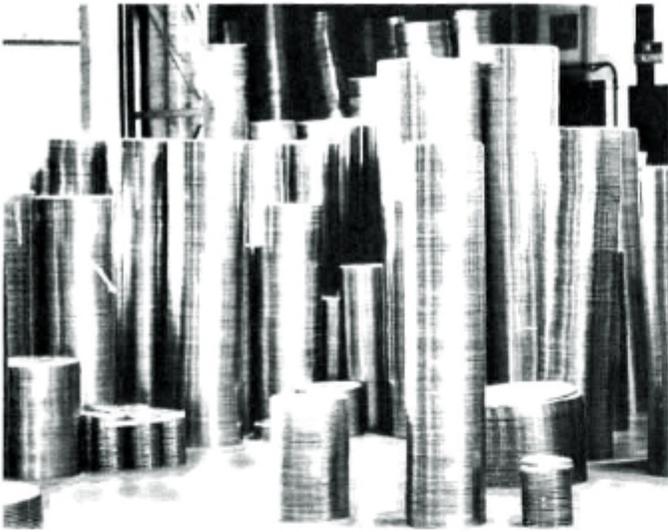


Following assembly, coated heads are sprayed with a brush surface (5A), and black pinstripes are painted on *Pinstripe* heads (5B). These, and other completed heads, are then put into stock (5C).

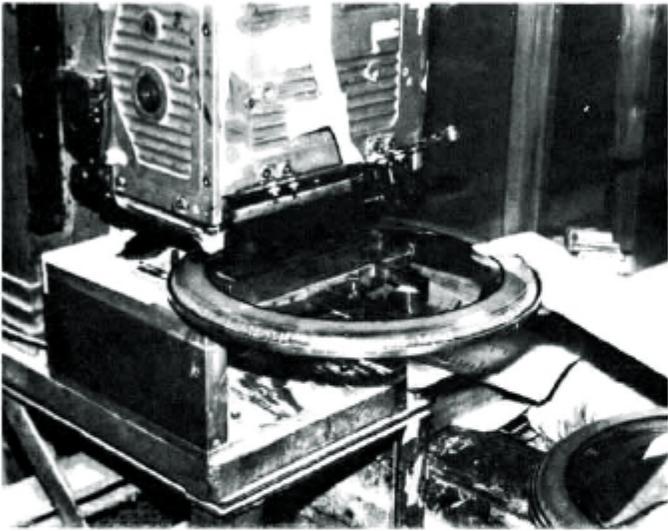
At this point the hoop and the head are united. A measured amount of epoxy is injected into the hoop (foreground 4A). The epoxy flows through the small holes in the plastic and securely bonds the film to the hoop. This bond is strengthened by "curing" the head during its 20 minute trip through the oven (background 4A).



5C



6A



As orders are prepared for shipping, each head is stamped with the Remo emblem, head type, and weight (6A). Finally, the drum heads are packed for shipping (6B).

6B



By Dave Levine

This interview took place in conjunction with Modern Drummer's tour of the Remo plant. Present were both Remo Belli, president and founder, and Lloyd McCausland, sales manager.

DL: Please discuss the history of the plastic head; how and why it was developed, and how it was received.

RB: In 1957, while working to create a display at Drum City, in Hollywood, which I owned with Roy Hart, we went to the C. D. LaMore Company and bought some plastic material. (I had first become acquainted with Mylar after a visit with Bud Slingerland, of the Slingerland Drum Company). We simply took this material and stapled it to a (wooden) hoop and put it on the drum. You could play on it immediately.

Within this same time frame Chick Evans, in Sante Fe, New Mexico, had a drumhead that he was using tacks to put on. The Dupont company, in those days, had also presented Mylar to Ludwig. Bill Ludwig and I met in May of 1957 in Enid, Oklahoma. I realized then and there that the Ludwig company would develop a plastic head, but they were not pursuing it with any great need.

By virtue of a combination of chemical knowledge, in the person of Sam Muchnick, and my knowledge of what a drum head had to do, we were able to develop a system whereby we secured the Mylar into an aluminum channel by the use of an epoxy. We've never said that we made the first synthetic head; we've claimed to have developed the *Weatherking* drum head. We've laid claim to developing the first successful (plastic) drum head.

At the time the heads were received with caution. But, both Roy Hart and myself were more or less in the game. We had proven ourselves through the different (performing) work we had done. Also, I was personally acquainted with every manufacturer of drums and with all the other drum shops in the United States, because of ours being in Hollywood. The credibility gap was not that wide. If I sent a head to somebody they would normally take a chance and try it. When touring musicians would come into our shop we would ask them to try a drum head. It really doesn't take too long to introduce something. There was a lot of believability, and it carried its own momentum.

That first head (for the display) was in March of 1957. In April, I met with Sam Muchnick, and June 1, 1957, we opened up Remo, Inc. That's how fast it happened. Our sales curve for the first six months was straight up a vertical line.

We had the good fortune to enter the industry at a time when drum sales were just beginning to take off. There was a large market for drumheads and calf was becoming scarce. Actually, people in the industry doubt very much whether it could have occurred had it not been for a plastic head. Not necessarily in terms of our head, but whoever would have developed it. I'm not talking of a brand name, but the existence of a unit that allowed itself to be produced in such volume that it could accommodate the expansion that took place. Had they had to depend on animal skins, at that time, it (large drum sales) would not have occurred and the music industry that we know today would not have developed. I wouldn't know how to calculate the millions of dollars that are involved internationally as a result.

DL: In the music industry there are more and more companies that are being run by non-musicians. Has your background as a player had a positive influence on your success?

RB: I feel very seriously that it did help a lot. It had a great deal to do with our success because we have had empathy with the performers that we serve. I have never attempted to run the business from the business point of view. That's done by my associate, Sid Gerwin, because that's where his mind is. We

complement one another. I agree to whatever he says relative to a solid business decision. But, he does not interfere with me when I say, "That sound just doesn't make it."

We run our own store, and within our organization we don't have a mechanic trying to make a sound judgement. We have a percussionist, a guy who identifies with it. Just like we don't let the percussionist try to tell the machinist how to engineer the product.

It's important. That's where the music business started. Historically, the music business began with musicians who in turn made instruments. Of course, you had musicians that made great instruments and were terrible businessmen. As a result they were not successful. There are relationships that do have to occur.

DL: What makes Remo heads different from others on the market?

RB: The basic difference is that we buy a polyester film called Mylar, made by the Dupont Company. We buy this film under an exclusive customer specification number. We discovered a long time ago, when working with timpani heads, that one head was not sounding like another head. If we had six rolls of Mylar we literally could have three or four different sounding heads. Two would sound alike and the other four would all be totally different.

At this point, we began to realize that there were differences within Mylar. Lloyd and I even took a trip to Ohio to watch them make Mylar. We began to realize that until we were able to have more control over the basic ingredient we were never going to have something that was consistent. There was a lot of technology that went into the making of Mylar that we had to work out with Dupont.

We also realized that there were certain Mylars that were more adaptive to making drum heads than other Mylars. It was like picking a good calf-skin head. You didn't just go out and buy a calf-skin head; you went out and bought a calf-skin head that had particular qualities to it.

There is a big difference between Mylar, Alumilar (made in Japan), and Mellanex (made in England). They all sound different. That's why we continue to stick with Dupont Mylar, particularly since Dupont was able to work with us. That's the main difference.

LM: Two things that Remo heads have always stood for are sound and feel. Two of the main ingredients that make them sound and feel different are raw materials and method of manufacture. We're the only people in the world that continue to make a drumhead the way we do. There are other methods, other ways that we could use, but we find that ours is most successful.

DL: There seems to be a trend towards specialized, rather than general purpose, drumheads. How did it start, where is it going, and in what way is Remo involved?

LM: Rather than this specialization creating a need, it's serving a need. What can you do to a violin or trumpet, to change the tonal colors, that hasn't already been done? With percussion the surface has merely been scratched. The changes come about by developing new materials and changing the film and the skin.

Percussion is the last family of established instruments to be explored. The number of percussion instruments being used in an ensemble has grown to be a large percentage of the total number. The innovations that we've brought to drumheads go right along with that trend of developing the last family of acoustic instruments to be explored.

RB: If we were to have introduced the *Pinstripe* head in 1957, we would have never gotten off the ground. It was not the type of sound people were interested in. No way would they have purchased it. It's just that sounds continue to change, especially in the percussion business.

I think this trend is just one of the situations that occur. You can compare that with any evolution. There are some basic in-

struments in the field of music that haven't changed. I don't see that they will be allowed to change. Up to now, the basic drum hasn't changed much.

The percussion business is one of the segments of the music business that is under constant change. It's one of the areas that they will allow to change, and it demands change. The basic drum sound is what people want to alter. It's the chosen sound for alteration. I'm not talking in terms of timpani, where there's a pitch involved with the quality of sound. People go out of their way to change the sound of a tom-tom, a bass drum, a snare drum; to get another sound. It will continue to change within the narrow field of percussion.

LM: We listen. A lot of input comes from the marketplace. We happen to be geographically and strategically located in Los Angeles, where a wealth of creative talent is located. We take advantage of that.

RB: What we have tried to do, here, is to accommodate all the different environments that the artists seem to be putting themselves into. Not only by their own choice, but by the choice of so many different factors that enter into the world of music. It goes back to the necessity of being flexible enough and interested enough to accommodate a certain degree of change without trying to dictate what it should be. To try to make something that fits into the conditions that are developing. The trends in music are being dictated by so many factors.

Speaking for myself, I don't see an end in sight. Between the different "flavors" that we make, and the different ones offered by other manufacturers, I would say that right now you have the choice of a dozen (different) heads. I don't see that changing.

DL: What new innovations will Remo be introducing in the near future?

RB: The most significant development that we've got going on here, is the development that is now under way towards the introduction of *Fiberskyn 2*. *Fiberskyn 2* is a refinement of the concept that we developed in producing the original *Fiberskyn*. With the early heads, we realized that the amount of coating we put on a drum head dramatically affected the sound. So we've known for quite some time that anything you add to a polyester film is going to alter its sound.

We have always tended to make a drum head whose sound values are, in a musical sense, complementary to all the other sounds that are going on orchestrally. Interestingly enough, the market has always accepted the sound of a drum head that has a degree of warmth to it.

LM: We never really move too far off center, do we? If leather (calf-skin) was the mainstream here we are, 22 years later, still hanging on to the mainstream. Still using that as the focal point. Isn't it interesting that we still go for that leather-skin kind of sound?

RB: Several years ago. I began laminating fiberglass to polyester film to get some of the rounder sounds that some people felt they would like to have from their instruments. We developed the *Fiberskyn* drumhead knowing that its mass market was not too large. We wanted to accommodate all segments of the market. We're not just interested in the guys that play rock. We try to furnish the smaller markets, knowing that this is important to the musician. But, after we introduced it, we were surprised by the number of people in the different segments of the music business that went for *Fiberskyn*.

Unfortunately for us, we had some technical problems where the marriage between the fiberglass and the polyester, and the adhesive that we used to bond them, was not at all times compatible. It had nothing to do with sound. Now we have developed another marriage of materials in producing the *Fiberskyn 2* that is, in my opinion, the most significant thing that we have done since the introduction of the original *Weatherking* heads.

Fiberskyn 2 has the quality of sound, durability, and values that are going to be very interesting to the general market.

DL: What about the Roto-tom foot pedal?

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A Day In Las Vegas:

An MD Special Report on the Louie Bellson National Drum Contest Finals.

Story and photos by Laura Deni

In 1941, one of the most outstanding careers in drumming began when Louie Bellson won the Slingerland/Gene Krupa National Drum Contest. The contest was discontinued because of World War II. Thirty-eight years later Bellson, ever mindful of who afforded him his first break, asked Slingerland to revive the event, transforming it into the Slingerland/Louie Bellson National Drum Contest.

The Slingerland/Bellson National Drum Contest culminated in Las Vegas, Nevada when 13 of the brightest, and most talented teenagers competed in hopes of receiving \$20,000 in college scholarships, and an appearance on the Johnny Carson *Tonight Show*.

THE SETTING

For a year, amateur drummers across the nation competed in local and regional drum contests. Over 1,000 aspirants competed and the 13 semi-finalists were flown by Slingerland to Las Vegas along with both parents and an instructor. They were provided rooms at the Ambassador Inn and given \$40 per person per day for food.

Catalyst for the day long event was Bellson, whose vitality and devotion to young talent sparked enthusiasm from the students and genuine admiration from the viewing audience. He was aided by his sweatshirt clad wife, Pearl Bailey, who cheered equally for all the contestants.

Bellson emphasized repeatedly that this was to be an educational, learning event. In a town noted for its 24 hour glitter, the semi-finalists competed in the teacher education wing located at the University of Nevada.

THE JUDGING

The semi-finalists were judged on their musical presentation as well as quality of performance. The total possible score of 100 reflected the utilization of all elements to bring maximum effectiveness and control to the musical presentation.

"The judges are people that I've respected for many years," stressed Bellson about the seven judges. "The man who knows more about cymbals than anybody, except maybe Zildjian, is Di-

Muzio," continued Bellson about judge Leonard DiMuzio, merchandising manager for the Avedis Zildjian Company. One of the most respected drum experts in the industry, DiMuzio attended both the New England Conservatory and the Berklee College of Music.

"Erskine is a young man who has everything to offer," added Bellson about judge Peter Erskine, who has played for Maynard Ferguson and Stan Kenton and is currently with Weather Report. His numerous recordings include the latest albums of Michel Columbier and Joni Mitchell.

"Papa is a gigantic drummer," stressed Bellson about judge Tony Papa, executive vice president in charge of motion pictures and TV for the Associated Booking Corporation. In addition to having had his own jazz band, he also played in the late Artie Shaw Band.

"It's important to have different judges; percussion players as well as drummers," elaborated Bellson. "For the past 35 years Foster has done everything."

Dr. William P. Foster is Chairman of the Music Department and Director of Bands at Florida A & M University. Dr. Foster has appeared as an educator, conductor, clinician, lecturer and consultant in over thirty states and thirty-five colleges and universities.

"I've done clinics for Fowler in the Denver area," said Bellson about judge Dr. William Fowler, Professor of Music at the University of Colorado at Denver. Besides leading university bands and combos, he is an arranger and composer of ballets, symphonies and jazz and pop music.

"He's forgotten more drums than we'll ever know. He's a master percussionist," said Bellson about judge George Gaber. Currently the Professor of Music at Indiana University, Gaber's professional background as a timpanist and percussionist includes the Ballet Russe Orchestra in Pittsburgh, and the NBC, ABC, and CBS Symphony Orchestras.

"When you have to introduce someone and all you need to do is say his name, the credibility is there. We've played together with Tommy Dorsey and

on the *Tonight Show*. And what Doc Severinsen can do with a symphony orchestra, that's heavy, man. He's a dedicated artist," Bellson said.

For the semi-finals the judges were seated along the first three center aisle vertical rows, allowing them the optimum in viewing and hearing.

THE CONTEST

Each semi-finalist was required to sight read from music originally written by Bellson. Each contestant had 30 seconds to look at the sight reading and then give the judges his tempo before beginning.

The sight reading involved playing eight bars. The judges considered style change, rhythmic accuracy, meter change, tempo control, volume control and professionalism, for a total of 10 possible points. The sight reading requirement caused the major point differences between the contestants.

Sight reading was immediately followed by quartet drumming, involving the playing of three required selections, totaling three minutes, for a total of 30 possible points.

Following quartet drumming was the Big Band drumming section. Each contestant selected one out of three, three-minute selections with the possibility of picking up another 30 points. The judges considered: enhancement of music, interpretation, implement control, tempo control, musicianship and originality.

This was followed by the solo performance, which was to last between four and five minutes, with a 59 second leeway. An excess of six minutes constituted disqualification. For another possible 30 points, the judges ranked the semi-finalists on variety and difficulty, implement control, imagination, sequence, continuity and showmanship.

THE CONTESTANTS

Barry "Joe" McCreary of Anderson, Indiana was the semi-finalist representing the South Eastern region. Prior to his regional victory, McCreary won the local competition at the Anderson Music Center in his home town.

He is currently attending the University of Miami School of Music on a music



Semi-finalist Joe Pulice, Jr.

scholarship, and recently performed in Japan with the University Band. He is aiming for a career as a professional performer.

"I like vibes as much as drums," McCreary told me after completing his semi-final round. "I'm taking music theory. I've written drum charts, for high school drum lines, and I've written vibraphone solos.

"A studio percussionist is a hot job, but you really have to be good," said the 18-year-old. "I'm really going to try to work at it all and be a total percussionist."

Ken French of Calimesa, California was the Southern California regional winner. He has been involved in concert, marching and jazz bands, and for four years performed and recorded with the Hallelujah Gospel Group.

He also toured five European countries with the American Youth Symphony Band last June. Additional honors French has earned include repeated awards from the National Association of Jazz Educators, and Outstanding Drummer of the Hemet Jazz Festival.

French is currently attending Crafton Hills College in Yacaiapa, California and plans to become a professional musician.

Scott B. Johnson of Albuquerque, New Mexico was the semi-finalist representing the Rocky Mountain Region, Johnson was a local winner at Luchetti Drum and Guitar, Inc. in Albuquerque.

Besides his performances in the Eldorado High School marching band, stage band and symphony orchestra, Johnson played in the New Mexico All-State Band. As a graduating senior, he received both the Music Student of the Year Award, and the John Phillip Sousa Band Award.

Johnson is now attending the University of New Mexico on a presidential academic scholarship as a pre-med student.



Semi-finalist John Mosemann

"I like drumming. I've always been fascinated by it. When parades went by I always looked at the drummers. Mostly I wanted to keep drumming for my own enjoyment. It's a hobby rather than a profession," he said. Johnson reported that drumming not only helps relieve tension from school but "it helps relieve tension from everywhere. It's a good form of escape."

Stephen S. Johns of Natick, Massachusetts was the winner of the New England Regional competition. Johns was a local winner at Pampalone Music School in Boston.

He is currently a member of the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra and recently represented the state of Massachusetts in the McDonald's All American High School Band appearing on the Jerry Lewis Telethon which originated out of the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas.

Among Johns' numerous plaudits is his award as Most Outstanding Musician from the University of New Hampshire. He plans to become a professional performer.

Kurt Snider of St. Petersburg, Florida was the first winner of the local competition held at Bring Music Co. in St. Petersburg. He went on to win the Southern regional. Snider has played drums in his high school stage band, percussion ensemble and the Sylistics Drum and Bugle Corps.

He was awarded the All-County Stage Band, Outstanding Award and the Harry Breckinridge Award. Snider is presently attending St. Petersburg, Jr. College.

"From just this contest I got a job," Kurt happily related. "Tarkhill Firepower, a local band, heard I won and asked me to play with them."

As to the future, Snider likes the big band sound. "I'd love to go to New York," he said.

Joe Pulice, Jr. of Racine, Wisconsin was the Northern Midwest regional win-



Master of Ceremonies for the Semi-finals wax contest coordinator, Sam Geati of Slingerland.

ner. Pulice has played in concert band, dance band and jazz ensemble, plus three years each with the Kiltie Kadets and the Racine Kilties who presented him an Award of Merit in 1975.

Other awards include: Outstanding Drummer for Horlick High Jazz Band and Outstanding Musicianship from the National Association of Jazz Educators for his performance at the University of Whitewater Jazz Festival in February 1979.

Pulice has placed first in state competition for the past four years and now is enrolled at the University of Minnesota, with plans to become a professional musician.

John Mosemann of Emmaus, Pennsylvania was the Eastern regional semi-finalist after scoring a winning victory locally at the Drum Shop in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Along with his participation in the marching band, concert band and jazz band at Emmaus High School, John has substituted in local jazz groups.

His honors include the John Philip Sousa Award, Outstanding soloist at the Monmouth College Invitational Concert, and a certificate of nomination to McDonald's All-American High School Band.

Mosemann is currently in his senior year at Emmaus High School and would like to attend Philadelphia College of Performing Arts to prepare for a professional career in music.

Chris Crockarell of Denton, Texas became a semi-finalist after winning the Southwest regional competition. He is currently a member of the North Texas State University Percussion Ensemble and participates in the university concert band.

Crockarell has received awards for his participation in the Tennessee All-State Band and, for the past three years, has won honors in the orchestra and jazz band. He wants to complete his education at North Texas State University in preparation for a career as a musician/composer, and drum corps instructor.



4th place winner in the finals was Rick R. Porello

His solo performance was a selection which he had composed, making him the only semi-finalist to perform his own work.

Brian Dunn of Beaverton, Oregon was the Northwest regional winner. He is currently involved in the wind ensemble, stage band and vocal jazz ensemble at Mt. Hood Community College.

Dunn has also participated in the Portland Junior Symphony, the Oregon All-State Concert and the Music in May Honor Band. He was the 1977-78 Oregon state champion on rudimental snare.

Other recognitions include the John Philip Sousa Band Award, a Distinguished Musicians Award from the Marine Corps Youth Foundation, and a listing in Who's Who in American High School Students. Dunn plans to continue in the field of music.

The morning event concluded with the playing of each of the 13 Regional winners. The competition was narrowed down still further leaving only four young drummers to compete in the afternoon finals for first place.

THE FINALS

Curly haired Rick F. Porello comes from a long line of trained, professional musicians. His brother, Ray, Jr. is the drummer for Sammy Davis, Jr. His father Ray, Sr. is an officer in the Cleveland Musician's Union.

The 17-year-old emphasized he's his own man. "I don't follow my father's or my brother's style. I follow my own style. I follow some of their things and then I add my own stuff. I like jazz. It's what I'm oriented towards and always have been."

Although his brother had appeared many times in Las Vegas with Sammy Davis, for Porello this contest afforded him his first visit to the 24-hour entertainment mecca. "It's a fairyland," he grinned.

Gum chewing, in an open neck blue shirt, his blue eyes flashed as he headed into his semi final solo, selecting the big band selection Number One "because of its jazz beat."

Porello, the Mid Eastern regional champion, had previously won the local contest at DAL Drum Studio in Erie, Pennsylvania. He has performed with the Cleveland Heights High School sym-



3rd place winner in the finals, Jim McCarty.

phony orchestra, the wind ensemble, marching band and jazz ensemble. He received special recognition for his participation in instrumental music at Cleveland Heights High School in 1978 and 1979.

He plans to combine his enjoyment of music with his interest in electronics by preparing for a career as a music/electronics technician.

Brown eyed finalist Jim McCarty, 18, has been playing drums since he was seven years old.

"I first started when my parents rented me a set of drums and bought my sister a guitar. They thought I was the quitter of the two, renting my drums. I showed them," exclaimed the third place winner. "She quit after three months and I kept going.

"I'd practice every morning in the third and fourth grade at 7 o'clock for 40 minutes. Then, after school, I'd practice. I would love to get into recording as a studio musician or anything to do with television. There are some good drummers on the TV shows," he observed.

"I play in all of the local groups," he related before the finals. "I have a different feel with the jazz band at school than I do with a disco band. I don't mind playing disco. I don't mind playing anything.

"I'm the only one of the four finalists who selected the Big Band, Number Three selection. I feel a little more relaxed with it. It's funky with a groove, and a lot of feel. I could feel that best," he explained.

McCarty finished in first place at the Central California regional. While he was a member of the Bullard High School Jazz Band, the band placed second in the Reedley City College Jazz Festival.

He has also played with local rock and jazz groups, one of which ranked first runner-up in the battle of the bands at



2nd place finalist, Todd Strait.

Fresno State College. McCarty is currently playing drums with the Fresno City College "A" Jazz Band.

"That's my brother," screamed Todd Strait's 15-year-old sister as his name was called as a finalist. Eight-year old sister Amy grinned and applauded. The Topeka, Kansas family is extremely supportive of Strait's musical ability, although they conceded his practicing used to drive them crazy.

At 17, Strait has been taking formal lessons for the last eight years, often practicing until one in the morning.

"He plays for all of the groups and tries to get out of Topeka as much as possible and get with other groups," explained his sister.

Strait was the local winner at Mission Music in Lenexa, Kansas going on to place first in the Middle West regional.

Todd has performed with the Topeka Jazz Workshop, and Civic Symphony, in five local dance bands, and two performances with Johnny Desmond's back-up band.

His recognitions include three years of first ratings at the State Music Festival and Outstanding Musicianship high school award. Todd is also listed in the 1979 Who's Who in American High School Students.

Besides music, his interests include photography, nature and creative writing. Strait is currently a senior at Seaman High School in Topeka. Following graduation he plans to study music privately before attending college.

THE WINNER

With his eyes closed and nose wrinkled, Henry "Hank" Guaglianone sufficiently impressed the judges to capture the first place trophy in the contest.

During the semi-finals, Hank, wearing an open necked, yellow shirt and blue suit asked for the sound to be put up. He



The four finalists: (l-r) Rick Porello, Jim McCarty, Hunk Guaglianone, and Todd Strait.

kept his eyes closed and nose wrinkled while playing Big Band selection Number One. For his solo spot he took off his jacket, wadded it into a ball and tossed it on the floor.

Guaglianone was two weeks away from final exams at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb campus, when he came to Las Vegas for the drum competition.

"I'm so excited I'm sick to my stomach," confided Hank's father immediately after his son had been declared the winner.

The young Guaglianone says music has been an important part of his family life ever since he can remember, but the main musical thrust is from his mother's side, as his maternal grandfather was a composer and clarinetist in Italy. An uncle, trumpet player Bob Perna, leads an eight-piece contemporary jazz group in Chicago, and was an important influence.

Though there are family snapshots showing Hank banging on toy drums at the age of four, it wasn't until six years ago that Hank seriously took up drumming.

"I used to watch my uncle's band rehearse and perform in concerts. I knew then I wanted to play music, but it wasn't until I saw Stan Kenton in concert that I got started. I said, 'I've got to do that sometime. I've got to have something sound like that.'"

Not only did he start practicing with Kenton-Peter Erskine albums, Guaglianone also joined his Rolling Meadows High School marching band, in which he spent a year on cymbals, a year on bass drum, and two years on snare as percussion section chief.

He was also in the concert band, the symphonic band playing timpani, marimbas and snares, the pit orchestra for school musicals, and the Rolling Meadows Jazz Band under director Len King, which has been recognized nationally as one of the top high school bands.

By the end of his sophomore year, Guaglianone began private lessons from Jake Jerger who teaches part-time at Oakton Community College in Morton Grove, Illinois.

The progression to the national title began early in 1979 when Guaglianone won the local contest at the Wheeling



Contest winner Hank Guaglianone, performing with Louie Bellson's band. Explosion. (Photo courtesy of Slingerland Drum Company)

Holiday Inn sponsored by Karnes Music Store in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. Later, Guaglianone moved on to win the five-state regionals held at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois.

Last June, he was awarded the John Philip Sousa Award and was one of forty students invited to join a jazz band comprised of students from various schools across America to tour Europe as part of Jazz Abroad.

In addition to numerous musical awards, Guaglianone has earned plaudits in science, art and citizenship. After he completes his education he intends to play professionally.

"My real dream was to play with Stan Kenton. I looked to him like a father in music. I met him once before he died. He treated everybody the same. He didn't act like a big star," he recalled.

"Right now, I'm not going to look at anything very differently because I won a contest. I still have the same objectives. I'm still setting goals for myself. I feel a good all-around background in music is important.

"But whenever I get a chance to give advice to other younger drummers I tell them to work on the fundamentals, the basics. I need a lot more of that myself, too.

"I never even thought I'd make the nationals. There were so many really good players out there. I play more for the music than just trying to play fast. I thought I'd get blown out, that they'd be looking for just chops."

THE WIND-UP

As promised, on December 12, 1979 Guaglianone performed with Louie Bellson on the Johnny Carson *Tonight Show*. Hank was also awarded his choice of a Slingerland drum outfit, an \$8000 scholarship or \$4000 in cash.

Second place winner Todd Strait received a \$6000 scholarship or \$3000 cash; Third place winner Jim McCarty received a \$4000 scholarship or \$2000



Larry Linkin, President of Slingerland, (left) welcomes Wayne Newton, Master of Ceremonies for the contest finals. (Photo courtesy of Slingerland Drum Company)

and fourth place Rick Porello is eligible for a \$2000 scholarship or \$1000 in cash.

Master of Ceremonies for the finals was Las Vegas entertainer Wayne Newton, who affords local university talent the opportunity to sit in with his orchestra when he stars at the Sands hotel.

"We see a lot of young people come through our orchestra," explained Newton. "They don't get a chance to rehearse. They have to read the book cold, no matter who the artist. They do an incredible job."

After hearing the four finalists Newton commented, "Obviously there are four winners. To pick the top, one, two, three, four is more difficult than you can imagine. This is the kind of talent that will help the music business tremendously." 



Louie Bellson congratulates Guaglianone on his victory. (Photo courtesy of Slingerland Drum Company)

Odd Rock

by David Garibaldi



Experimentation with new ideas and concepts brings growth. There is always a way to incorporate new ideas into your personal musical situation. Many times it has taken me months or even years to successfully incorporate new concepts into my playing in a practical, usable way.

What and how we think determines our successes and failures. The thing we can do with rhythm and meter are inexhaustible. Rhythm is mathematical and math is infinite. Therefore, we can (if we so desire) put together infinite rhythmic combinations.

An exciting concept is the playing of odd meters within the common meters (2/4, 4/4, etc.). I've chosen two examples of this: 7/8 over 4/4, and 17/16 over 4/4.

Take any 7/8 pattern:

Ex. 1, a.

Ex. 1, b.

Play this over a quarter note pulse which can be set with your left foot on the hi-hat, or with a metronome at first. I recommend turning the metronome off after you've become comfortable with the pattern. This now begins a cycle of 7 bars within the 4/4. On the eighth bar of the 4/4, the cycle of 7 bars begins again. The 7/8 pattern moves within the 4/4. One bar of 4/4 contains 8, eighth notes, so as the 7/8 moves through the 4/4, its first beats shifts *ahead* one eighth note per bar of 4/4. Write it out if you don't believe me!

Now take a basic one bar pattern in 4/4 that has a 'half-time' feel:

Ex..2.

$\bullet = 60 - 72$

Ex. 3.

Then add one sixteenth note which will now make the 4/4 pattern a bar of 17/16.

After you're comfortable with this, play it over a quarter note pulse (4/4). This begins a cycle of seventeen bars within the quarter note pulse. On the eighteenth bar of 4/4, the cycle of seventeen bars begins again. One bar of 4/4 contains 16, sixteenth notes, so as the 17/16 moves through the 4/4, its first beats shifts *hack* one sixteenth note per bar of 4/4. Repeat this until you can count 4/4 (1-e-and-a, 2-e-and-a, etc.), while playing the 17/16 and do the same with the 7/8 over 4/4. The counting will help you to coordinate your mind and limbs. Try this one:

Ex. 4.

You'll notice this is the same 17/16 pattern but with the 'addition of some thirty-second notes. Don't let the thirty-second notes intimidate you. It's easier to play than it looks. 4/4 equals $8/8.8/8 + 9/8 = 17/8$. . . still a pulse of 17, but easier to read.

Ex. 5.

$\bullet = 120 - 144$

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Photo by Scott Kevin Fish

Double Time Coordination

by Ed Soph

Often a soloist will play over the rhythm section in either half or double the tempo of the section. Sometimes it is musically effective if the drummer complements the rhythmic direction of the soloist by playing part of the set in the original tempo and part in either the double or half-time of the soloist.

Following are some basic examples which may be expanded through the use of your imagination. As well as pertinent to complementing a soloist, this concept is interesting for the drummer's own solo development. It is also valuable coordination practice. Keep in mind that in previous articles, we talked about a unity of rhythmic interpretation based upon a consistency of either triple or duple notes in all four appendages. Now our unity comes from the consistency of the original, or foundation tempo phrased in eighth-note triplets over which is superimposed the double-time which is phrased in straight eighths.

The foundation pattern is:

Example I:

Next, continue the eighths of the ride and hi-hat and fill in the triplets on the snare or bass.

The next step is to turn the straight eighths of the ride into a basic ride pattern:

Written, the patterns would now be:

A comfortable tempo at which to start when practicing this is MM = 138. Play the eighth-note triplets at this tempo and play the ride and hi-hat twice as fast.

Some of the problems that you might encounter are:

- 1) Maintaining the flowing triplet pattern in the snare or bass while playing the eighths of the double-time ride. Don't try to figure out how the two "go together." Don't think of them separately. Instead, relate them to the common 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 of the original tempo. This is the first step towards learning how to feel and play two rhythmic interpretations at once. Remember, the tempos are different but the meter is the same.
- 2) Making sure that the hi-hat falls on the strict "ands" of the beats and not on the third note of the eighth-note triplets. A way to overcome that is to play only the hi-hat in double-time while playing the ride and snare/bass figures in the original tempo.

Example III:

Perhaps the ride pattern will try to change to a dotted eighth and sixteenth note. To overcome that try this:

Example IV:

continued on following page

When this is accomplished return to the original ride pattern. You will find many ways to practice your double-time technique in any book which has exercises composed of triplet patterns or eighth-note patterns which may be phrased as triplets. I strongly recommend both Jim Chapin's Volume I, and Ted Reed's *Syncopation*. Remember, play all the snare figures on the bass drum, too.

In closing, some basic variations of the double-time concept are: 1) Double-time ride pattern with snare/bass and hi-hat in the original tempo. 2) Ride and hi-hat in half-time with snare/bass patterns in the original tempo. Another way of saying this is double the snare/bass patterns. In this case, we will be playing triplets with all four appendages at one time or another, depending upon how we move the patterns around the set. But putting an eighth-note triplet ride pattern with sixteenth-note triplet snare/bass figures can be gruesome!

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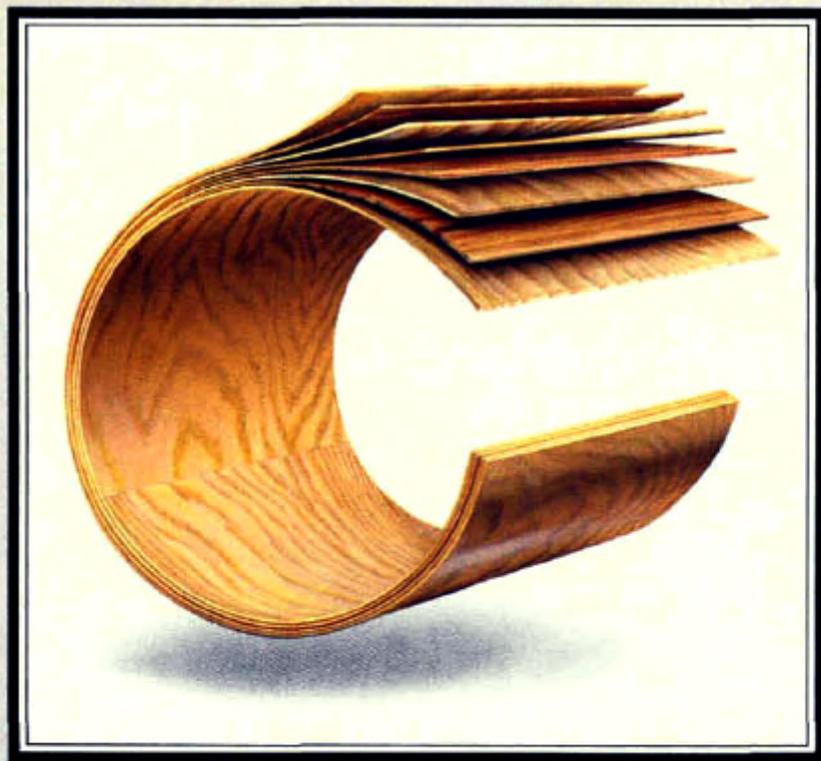
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Simple Percussion Modifications

by David Ernst

In this column, we will look at various methods by which percussion instruments may be modified via electronic devices, including synthesizers. Emphasis will be on practical applications, geared to live performance situations rather than to recording studio procedures. Of course, everything that we describe can be done in a recording studio, but you will also be able to perform these modifications in concert situations.

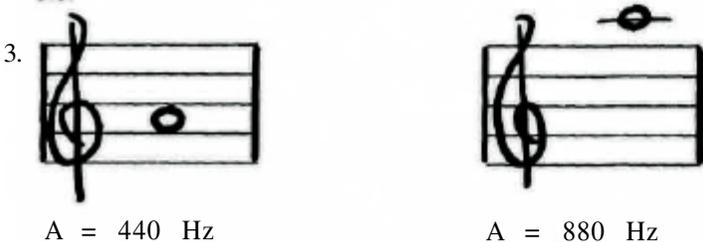
Since we are going to modify percussion sonorities you will need to set-up a microphone network as shown in Figure 1. The microphone may be either a transducer or a highly directional mike. For the type of work that we will be doing I suggest the transducer, such as the Barcus-Berry guitar transducer, because it is easily attached to the instrument and you do not have to be concerned with picking up extraneous sounds. Each microphone will need an individual pre-amplifier, which is then connected to a traditional instrument amplifier/loudspeaker. This is a basic amplification network, and all of our work will be based upon this system.



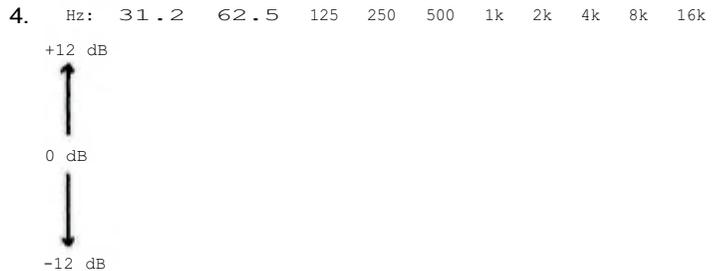
Referring to Figure 1, any modification of percussion instruments must take place between the pre-amplifier's output and the input to the instrument amplifier. And until we discuss the use of control voltages and automated systems it will be necessary to work with an assistant—one who will control manually the electronic devices that we will now cover. Perhaps the most standard timbral modification is equalization, and like all electronic devices, an equalizer consists of an audio input and output. Figure 2 illustrates how the equalizer fits into the basic amplification network.



The function of an equalizer is twofold—to boost and/or attenuate the amplitude of frequencies within predetermined frequency ranges. Equalizers are divided into octave ranges, and the frequencies (i.e. pitches) are defined as cycles-per-second (cps); the modern terminology for cps is Hertz (Hz). Therefore, the pitch concert "A" may be defined as 440 Hz, and the "A" one octave higher is 880 Hz (440×2). Figure 3 shows two ways of describing these pitches. Since equalizers consist of predetermined frequency ranges they usually cover a wide portion of the audio range, and a typical format is given in Figure 4. This is a 10-band octave equalizer. Notice that the letter "k" is used to denote multiplication by 1000, e.g. 1k = 1000, 2k = 2000 etc.



The amplitude (i.e. loudness) of the frequencies within these octave ranges is calibrated in decibels (dB), where +dB signifies boosting specific frequency ranges and -dB signifies attenuating specific frequency ranges (see Figure 4). Each octave has an individual control for amplitude to allow rather precise control over the resulting timbre. Although equalizers are standard equipment in a professional recording studio they offer many advantages in live performance situations. Again, remember that an assistant will be needed to operate the equalizer while you are playing, but you will be able to obtain many interesting effects that normally would be possible only in a recording studio.



As an 'electrified' percussionist you must now experiment with various equalization settings, and any percussion instrument may be equalized via microphone and pre-amplifier to alter its inherent timbre. At first it is best to work with individual instrumental families—skin, wood, and metal, and you will find that each instrument responds best within a few select frequency ranges. Some standard recording studio equalization settings are as follows:

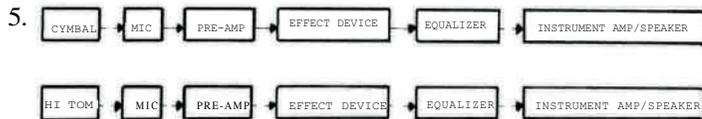
1. Bass drum—Boost between 1k and 3k to add more 'punch'.
2. Snare drum—Boost at 100 and at 10k to give a 'fatter' sound.
3. Toms—Boost at 5k for a better attack.

These are standard equalization settings used for most rock and disco recordings, and you may want to play around with these to 'improve' the sound of your drums. But if you have an assistant controlling the equalizer while you play, many more effects are possible. For instance, consider the standard hi-hat cymbal part in disco—a succession of eighth notes. By sending the hi-hat into an equalizer (see Figure 2) your assistant will be able to change the cymbal's timbre simply by moving the amplitude controls of the high frequency ranges. Many 'space' effects are obtained in this manner, and specific equalization settings may be worked out and rehearsed for individual tunes. Of course, these techniques may be applied to any style of music, but the most important aspect is to experiment with simple schemes and to document those that sound best.

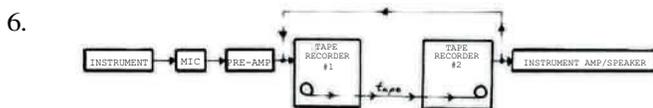
Many effects-devices for guitar, piano, etc. are commercially available, and all of these are applicable to percussion if you set-up the appropriate microphone-amplification network. Since percussion instruments provide such a vast range of timbres it will be necessary to experiment with individual instruments at first, and soon you will be able to hear which type of instruments provide the most useful sounds for specific situations. Metallic and wood sonorities, for instance, tend to result in clearly articulated modifications; high-pitched drums react in a similar fashion. On the other hand, bass drum and related instruments may produce thick, muddled sonorities upon modification, so that some compensatory equalization will be necessary. Echo and chorusing effects work well with all percussion instruments, but those with slower attack (response) times are not suited for rapid successions of repetitions. They often produce undesirable feedback oscillations.

If you decide to employ effects-devices it is wise to include a separate equalizer for each device. With the aid of a single assistant it should be possible to control a simple percussion mod-

ification system as illustrated in Figure 5. In this configuration the equalizers not only help to emphasize particular registers, but they also provide the opportunity to alter the cymbal and/or tom-tom timbres quite easily. Also, the simplicity of such an arrangement should eliminate the hazard of overpowering electronic textures. Finally, use these techniques discriminately.



Each musical style requires individual attention, and for the most part we have been speaking of percussion effects. Although some of your instruments may be electrified this does not cancel their normal acoustic properties. In other words, a listener at a concert will hear both the natural and modified sonorities. It is the responsibility of your assistant to mix (blend) these diverse timbres to produce an appropriate musical effect.



The techniques that we have spoken about so far are suitable both for solo and ensemble situations, but there is growing interest in solo music, especially with electronic modifications. One such method involves two tape recorders and utilizes the technique of feedback. Originally employed by the German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen in his piece "Solo" (1965-66), the idea of using multiple playback heads to repeat previously recorded music has been popularized recently by composer Brian Eno and guitarist Robert Fripp, i.e. "Frippertronics." The basic plan is outlined in Figure 6. The first tape recorder is set in record mode, and the second recorder in playback mode. In place of standard audio cables to connect the output of the first recorder to the input of the second, a tape is threaded from the supply reel of the first recorder to the take-up reel of the second recorder, making sure that the tape passes across both sets of record/play heads. Tape recorder #1 records what is played, but this is not heard because there is no amplifier-loudspeaker connected to the tape output; the material is simply stored on tape. The distance between both tape recorders determines the time delay between recording and playback. For example, recording at 7 1/2 ips will produce a two-second delay if the recorders are 15" apart. As the recorded material passes across the playback head of recorder #2 it is simultaneously played via the amplifier-loudspeaker system, and re-recorded on recorder #1. Such a feedback loop network allows the performer to 'play against' that which was played previously, in addition to giving the impression of an ensemble rather than a solo performer.

An assistant is also required for this feedback-delay configuration, and his function is to control the record and playback levels. Since this should not be too difficult a task it is reasonable to have the assistant also control a simple modification device for one of the percussion instruments. Yet another possibility afforded by a feedback-delay system is to play the entire recorded tape as part of another composition. Many alternatives are possible, and they can add much variety to a small ensemble. Experimentation is the key to working with such systems. After the novelty of these 'new' sonorities wears off you will be in a better position to be discriminate in your use of modified percussion timbres. In the next issue we will begin to consider percussion interfaces with synthesizers and other instruments.

Regal Tip, Magadini & chops.

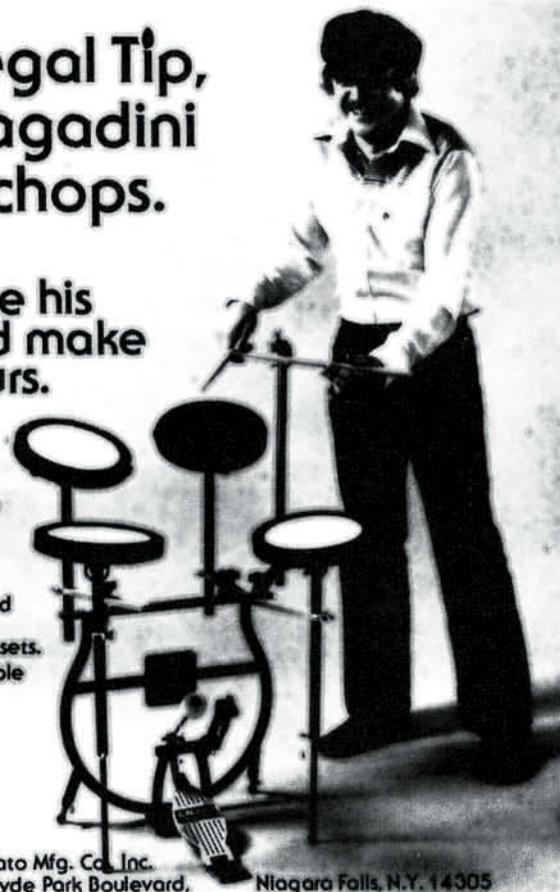
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A New Approach Towards Improving Your Reading

by Danny Pucillo

Some musicians seem to have an innate capacity for permanently recording music in their memory after hearing it only once or twice. Most of us, however, are not so blessed and must acquire this skill by a painstaking process called "music dictation". Since personal guidance and instruction is indispensable in this area of study, the best I can hope to accomplish is to point to the right direction and recommend a practical approach to mastering this art. The following suggestions might prove helpful:

- (1) Always use a tape recorder when practicing. It is a valuable aid to ear training and music dictation.
- (2) Begin by singing the time values of simple melodies and then write down what you hear in music notation. Start with the easiest tunes (i.e., nursery rhymes, etc.) and progress to the more difficult melodies and rhythmic patterns. Gradually work your way up to figures of increasing complexity with regard to tempo, durations, rests, accents, syncopation, quantity and form of attacks, metric groupings, etc. Always write down accurately what you hear from the play-backs. Make this your first project. Make it a daily routine. If you persevere, the results will surprise you.
- (3) Select one or more of your study books. Choose a few appropriate exercises, play them on your practice pad or snare drum, recording as you go. Then close the book, listen to the play-back and write what you hear. Compare your notation with the printed notation. Do this daily, too.
- (4) Repeat the above procedure with another drummer. Let him play

and record exercises of his choice while you take the dictation off of the play-back. Then you choose and record the exercises while he writes out the notation. Finally, the both of you can play exercises and take dictation, comparing your notations. Note the similarities and differences between your notations and the printed text. If this project is carried out faithfully, fixing your full attention on the work, you will experience a progressively increasing awareness-level. Soon you'll learn to hear and visualize musical patterns of various degrees of difficulty.

- (5) Listen to some of your favorite recording artists and take the dictation of their figures, phrases, solos, etc. Be sure you write out the music faithfully; be accurate and thorough. This procedure will help you to instinctively develop your repertoire, to make a precise analysis of some of the best recorded music and to combine the visual, auditory and tactile associations so necessary to building well-rounded musicianship. The written music actually played by many top recording artists has been published and is available in song-book form. Usually, the same title appears on the publication as on the album. The advantages of using these books should be obvious by now: listen to the record, take the dictation and compare your written notation with the published version. Soon you'll acquire the subtle art of taking dictation without having to write it down.
- (6) The practical application of your

music dictation studies will be perfected in actual on the job situations. I've come across some drum parts which were so uniform that any musical conception of the chart would have been impossible if I didn't apply dictation automatically. Automatic dictation is indispensable on the majority of record dates, TV shows, etc., where budgets and deadlines are the rule. Musical directors, producers, contractors, etc., know precisely the sound they hope to get and have learned to appreciate those musicians who can get it for them with a minimum of effort and expense. The ability to take dictation is a labor-saving device and musicians skilled in its use will be rewarded with steady requests for their services.

- (7) Playing with a rehearsal band will also improve your drumming skills. Here you'll find that most big band charts have a definite motif. Once you've dictated the main theme you'll find that the highlights of the arrangement are easily analyzed. Usually, they will consist of reoccurrences of the thematic material with minor variations designed to exploit the motif. This is accomplished by introducing variety into unity in beautiful proportions; such highlights can readily be dictated once you've spotted the main ideas. If you play with rehearsal bands regularly you'll soon find that all of your woodshedding will pay off. You'll discover, by simply doing what now comes naturally, that playing with big bands can be a great experience.

(8) Jamming is one situation where your dictation skills will reach their highest level. This requires trigger-like mentality since the musical patterns are flowing spontaneously among the musicians and the intensity of concentration at times approaches telepathy. Jam all you can with the best musicians you can find. The toil of developing your dictating skills will at last come to fruition in the jazz situation. What once required diligent practice on your part may now become unconscious and effortless. This should come as no surprise since it is self-evident that optimum performance is achieved with no apparent effort on the part of the musician. At this point, you may find the final reward for the drudgery of practicing music dictation.

Knowledge and experience go hand in hand; one invigorates, the other matures. I must emphasize again that personal instruction from a fine teacher/player is a must. In the end, however, the responsibility for success rests with you.

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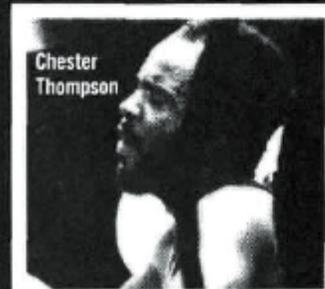
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Key No. MD4/580

by Charlie Perry

Teaching Jazz Drumming

The novice jazz drummer invariably attempts to improve his craft by going through the voluminous mass of instructional material that is available. Before very long, however, the high expectations with which he set out begin to wane. Somehow, the mass of "knowledge" he has gulped down has done little if anything to improve his drumming. He finds himself faced with diverse and seemingly unrelated bits and pieces of theories which lack the structural cohesiveness, purpose, and direction that are absolutely necessary to form a coherent whole.

What does he do then? He decides to study. But studying drumming does not guarantee a solution to this common dilemma. Many teachers are confronted with the same problem as students when selecting and applying instructional materials to their teaching. They too lack a comprehensive plan for teaching jazz drumming (the essential elements and principles arranged in a rational order of connection and dependence).

This article, the first in a series on jazz drumming and its allied forms, will help to provide such a plan. It deals with the way the jazz drummer interacts with members of the group, both collectively and individually, in the preconceived as well as the improvised segments of jazz.

ABOUT IMPROVISATION

In jazz, the drummer's favorite musical ideas and devices form part of his style. These ideas and devices are sometimes reproduced exactly; at other times they are altered or extended.

When the drummer responds suddenly to a given musical stimulus provided by the other performers, or, at times, by himself, he responds with either preconceived or spontaneous rhythmic and tonal punctuations, figures and phrases.

What the drummer plays is not always brand new and may have been played in one form or another, either by himself or another drummer, at some time or other. It is often a matter of the familiar being shaped differently, occurring in different places or in a different sequence. But even familiar ideas, when used in improvisation, occur spontaneously as a response to a given musical stimulus or as counter rhythms played independently of what the other musicians might play.

Although the jazz drummer might play a given piece or arrangement numerous times, he will never play it exactly the same way twice. When playing an arranged piece, he may play sections, the same, or nearly the same, each time. But this occurs only in highly structured, fixed arrangements. Even then, however, he will almost invariably make some changes in what he plays. And during the improvised sections, when he is involved in spontaneous musical exchanges between himself and other musicians, he will never play the same punctuations, figures and phrases in the same order twice. The entire group will adhere to a basic form, but they are free to improvise within that form. In true free-form music, anything can happen at any

time: tempo changes, key changes, meter changes and so forth, all taking place spontaneously. Such improvisation is entirely unpredictable since it has no guidelines to give it a predetermined direction.

Underlying the drummer's improvisation is a fundamental concept, a specific approach—the elements of style. And from this base he explores, seeking new directions and formats.

DRUMS-BAND INTERACTION & IMPROVISATION

What the drummer plays relates to what the other members of the group play. In addition to generating and establishing time, the drummer interacts with soloists, sections (rhythm, brass, reeds) and ensemble.

At various points throughout the music the drummer's punctuations, figures and phrases coincide with, echo, or answer the punctuations, figures and phrases of the soloist, sections or ensemble. At other times, however, the drummer's rhythms do not interact in these ways with the soloist or band. Rather, they take place *independent* of the other musicians' musical contributions. These independent rhythms take the form of poly-rhythms (counter rhythms played against harmonic and rhythmic contributions of the other members of the group).

Listen to Tony Williams on the tune "Straight Ahead" from the Kenny Durham album, *Una Mas* (Blue Note 8412). Note how Tony echoes the rhythm at the end of the trumpet solo some 2 1/2 bars later. There are many examples of drums-band interaction on this tune.

When the interaction between the drummer and the soloist is expertly done, the contributions of the drummer can become so conjoined with those of the soloist that there emerges a solo partnership: a single solo which is the work of two musicians. The drums then are more than merely supporting or complementary. Rather, the drummer is in conversation with the soloist, in part providing responses in musical conversation, in part leading the conversation. Usually, but not always, the soloist remains the dominant member of the solo partnership. Elvin Jones' playing on "Sometimes Joie" from *The Ultimate Elvin Jones* (Blue Note BST 84305) is an excellent example of the solo partnership.

The extent to which the drummer interacts (coincides, echoes, answers or is independent) depends on his style, the style of the band and the music itself. There is less complex interaction in swing oriented bands, for example, than there is in avant-garde jazz groups. In avant-garde jazz, such complex drums-band interaction is heaviest and the drummer is busiest: Miles Davis, Chick Corea, McCoy Tyner, Joe Farrell, Herbie Hancock, Elvin Jones, Roy Haynes Hip Ensemble, Sorcery, etc.

EXAMPLES OF DRUMS-BAND INTERACTION

The drum rhythms coincide with the rhythms of the band when the drummer plays the same rhythm as played by the band or the soloist at the same time:

1.

Soloist or Band: 

Drums: 

The drum rhythms echo the rhythms of the soloist or band when they are played shortly afterward in the form of an echo.

2.

Soloist or Band: 

Drums: 

On his album, *Keep the Customers Happy*, Liberty records LST 11006—tune of the same name—Buddy Rich "echoes" the eighth-note triplets of the trombonist (on the trombone solo). The drum rhythms answer the rhythms of the soloist or band, as in conversation, with a different rhythm. Note: The echo and the answer can come under the heading of "fills."

3.

Soloist or Band: 

Drums: 

The drum rhythms are independent of the rhythms of the soloist or band: what the drummer plays does not coincide, echo or answer. Rather they are played independent of rhythms of the soloist or band, creating a counter rhythm effect.

continued on page 62

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to name a few. Not to mention the most up to date information available on new books, records, live action and drumming equipment.

That's just a sampling of some of the topics and artists we've covered in *Modern Drummer Magazine*. If you missed any of it, we've got a great deal more lined up, so why risk missing another single issue? If you're serious about your drumming, just fill in the attached card and join up with thousands of drummers worldwide who read us. A world of drumming awaits you. **SUBSCRIBE TODAY!**

MODERN DRUMMER



Begun: *continued from page 23*
 sound of a garbage can. There's no reason why our multi-million dollar industry can't serve the player a little bit better.

HH: Did you see changes in the Ringer drum when Ludwig bought the company?

FB: Ludwig copied everything faithfully, absolutely, to the final degree, including the things that needed to be corrected. I say this in the most complementary terms.

On a subsequent trip to Europe I happened to see one of the last sets of drums that Ringer made, and it had the same problem with the suspension of the bowl that two of mine did. The bowl should be suspended in the frame to fit exactly over the spider; the top of the spider and the air hole in the bottom of the bowl should be in perfect alignment, provided everything else is in perfect alignment. If it's not aligned, whatever you do, the head that you're using is going to pull to one side. This was happening. Ringer told Ludwig about this problem that he himself had never solved, and Ludwig made the correction to my drums. Consequently, this has become a procedure in all subsequent Ludwig Ringer instruments.

I feel that they've done a fantastic job. In many ways my drums work better than some of the older German-made Ringers that I've played.

continued on page 66

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Kenwood Dennard

Peart: *continued from page 15*

CI: Why do you use the same size double bass drums instead of two different size drums to achieve two different bass voices?

NP: I don't know. I can't see the point of it really. I'm not looking for different sounds. I don't use bass drums for beats or anything like that. My double bass drums are basically for use with fills. I don't like them to be used in rhythms. I like them to spice up a fill or create a certain accent. Many drummers say anything you can do with two feet, can be achieved with one. That just isn't true. I can anticipate a beat with both bass drums. That is something I learned from Tommy Aldridge of the Pat Travers Band. He has a really neat style with the bass drums. Instead of doing triplets with his tom toms first and then the bass drums, which is the conventional way, he learned how to do it the other way, so that the bass drums are anticipated.

CI: Giving it a flam affect?

NP: In a sense. It has an up sort of feel. You could just be playing along in an ordinary 4 beats to the bar ride and all of a sudden stick that in. It just sets that apart. When you listen to it on the track, it sounds strange. It really works well and it's handy in the fills. You can be in the middle of a triplet fill and all of a sudden you can leave your feet out for a beat and bring them back in on the beat. It's really exciting. And I like to interpose two bass drums against the hi-hat too. There are a few different things I do where I throw in a quick triplet or a quadruplet using the bass pedals and then get right over to the hi-hat. I'll complete my triplet and by the time my hand gets over to the hat my foot is already there. So you'll hear almost consecutive left bass drum and hi-hat notes. If you want a really powerful roll, there's nothing more powerful than triplets with two bass drums. I could certainly get along without two bass drums for 99% of my playing. But I would miss them for some important little things.

CI: Did you go to the Zildjian factory to select your cymbals?

NP: No, I must admit I've cracked so many cymbals, that would be futile. I just know the weights that I want to get and if I have one that's terribly bad, I'll take it back. I go through an awful lot of crash cymbals. I hit them hard and they crack. Especially my 16" crash which is my mainstay, and my 18" crash.

CI: Where do you buy your cymbals?

NP: From the Percussion Center. I actually haven't seen their store in many years. Most of our business is done by them shipping the merchandise out to us, or Neil Graham comes out from the store. He brought me my new drums a couple of weeks ago. I know he has a lot

continued on page 56

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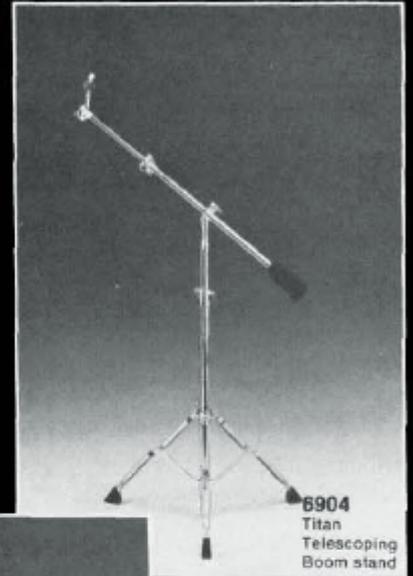
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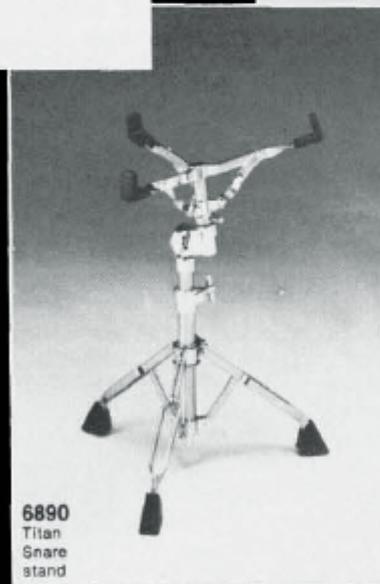
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The Art Of Entertainment

by Rick Van Horn

Rick Van Horn has been drumming professionally since the age of thirteen. His experience in the club scene has ranged from rock bands and lounge trios, to stage bands and nightclub showbands. Rick has also played with the national tour of the "Bonnie & Clyde Show," a Las Vegas style floor show and has a degree from the University of California in Theatre Arts. Currently drummer with Summerwine, a top act in the southern California area, Rick Van Horn brings with him over fifteen years of expertise in the club date field.

Columns and interviews elsewhere in this magazine feature tips by drummers performing in specialty areas: rock, big-band, jazz, etc. But a large number of professional drummers are not fortunate enough to perform music of their own personal preference, but instead make a living playing in the most grueling and demanding of all musical occupations, the club scene. No studio musician, no recording artist, not even a drummer on the toughest concert tour is expected to play high-quality music in a multitude of styles for five hours a night five or six nights a week.

Let's start by defining terms. When I talk about the club scene, I'm not talking about a jazz club, supper club, or any type of cabaret situation where a drummer will be specializing in one style of music for an audience who've come to hear that music. I'm talking about the typical hotel or restaurant/cocktail lounge featuring live music and dancing as an attraction to drinking customers. The band's job in this situation is to play popular, familiar tunes in order to fill the room with people, keep them dancing and most important, keep them buying drinks. A manager will judge a band's success by the bar total at the end of each night.

In the club, the band does not have the psychological advantage that a show group or concert act enjoys. People have not paid admission to see them. They have not listened to their music at home on records. They are not prepared in advance to enjoy the show. In fact, quite often the opposite is true. At times the club band is faced with an audience coldly staring, as if to challenge: "Okay, here I am, now entertain me!" Often the clientele is largely local: "regulars" who get to know a band's material almost as well as they do. The fact that a band may be booked in one club for several weeks adds to the difficulty of sustaining audience interest. And no other type of musical act.

be it recording, concert or show, is faced with the responsibility of holding an audience that has only to walk to the next club down the street if they are dissatisfied with the music.

Even on busy nights, with a lively crowd, it's likely that most of them came to dance, not to watch or listen to the band. It's a sad side-effect of the discos that audiences have been conditioned against responding to the music with applause. Live bands are often treated as nothing more than human jukeboxes.

Musically, the demands made on the club drummer are extensive. He must play well in all popular styles. He must be solid and steady in order to give support to the dancers. He must be delicate with a ballad, and dynamic with a hard rock tune. He must be ready to field requests from a wide variety of areas. You may get a polka-crazy party one night. More often than not, club bands are small in number and the drummer is required to add to the vocals. This can be a major problem in itself, as many drummers find it difficult to keep steady time while concentrating on song lyrics and melodies.

The club group has to remember that they are asking people to stay and watch them for several hours. They must therefore be visually interesting, or showy, and the drummer must do his part. In my next article, I'll give some ideas on how the drummer can contribute to the performance of his group in other than musical ways.

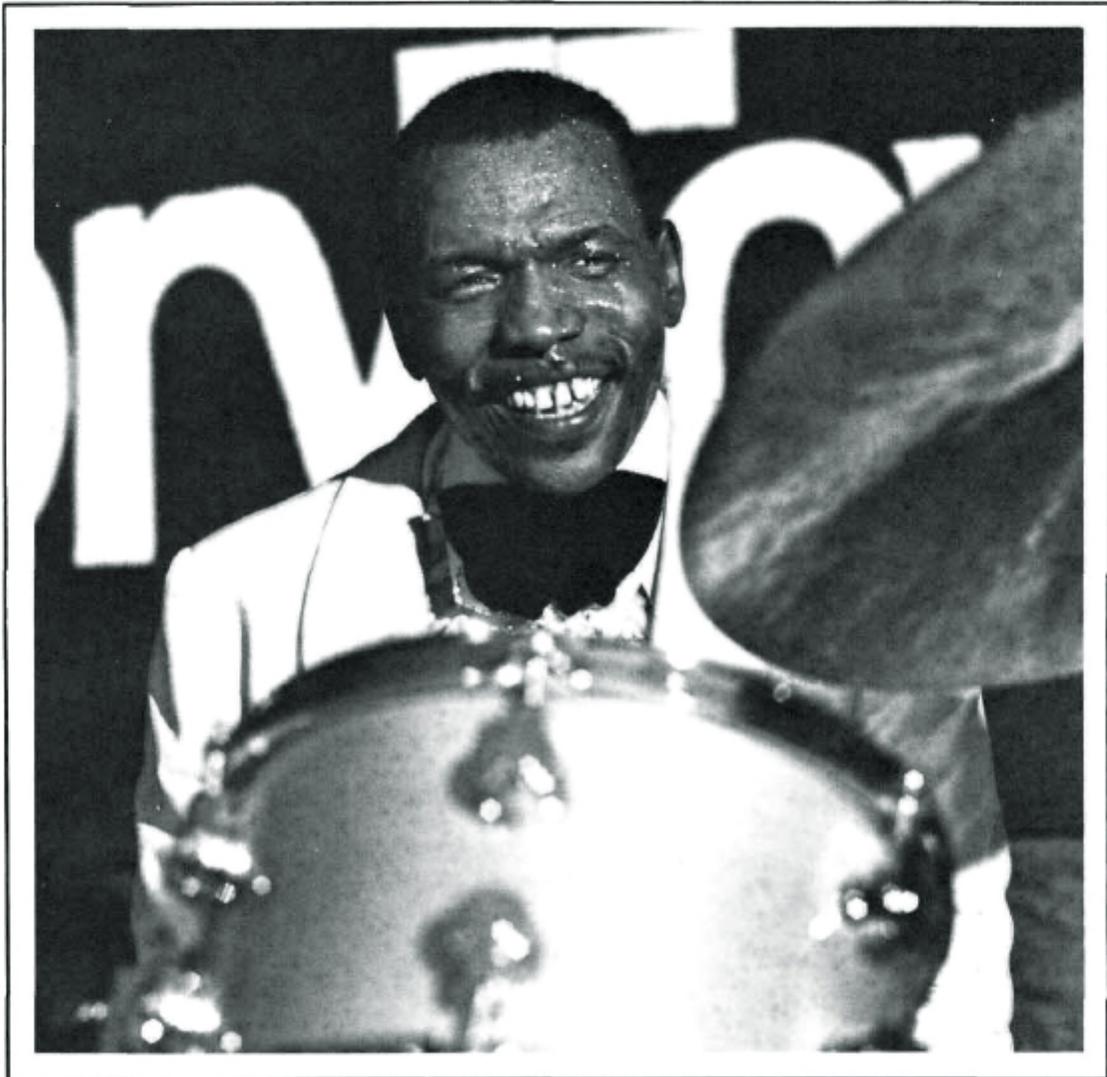
With all these things in mind, the club drummer's responsibilities include the following:

1. Be totally versatile. Competent in all musical styles, from disco to C&W, hard rock to tasty ballads. You never know what the next request will be.
2. Be professional. This means being able to play the same repertoire night after night and make it fresh and exciting each time, for yourself as well as the audience.
3. Be dedicated. You've got to be able to survive slow nights and apathetic audiences and still want to come back and play the next night.
4. Be entertaining. You have to make your audience want to stay, watch and listen. They haven't invested more than the price of a drink in you, and unless you catch their interest, they'll go bar-hopping down the street.

In subsequent articles, I'll focus on these and other special problems faced by the club drummer, and give some suggestions and ideas that I've found helpful in over fifteen years in the club scene.



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The Technically Proficient Player

by Paul Meyer

The making of a well-rounded, technically proficient drummer. What does it take? Along with years of practice and determination, it takes a complete understanding of each important phase of technical development. Each area should be fully understood and a program to advance in each area should be started at the early stages of development.

A well developed technique is evident in most of the top players of today, yet the young student rarely understands how the elements of technical proficiency ultimately come together to produce a polished professional. A good technique is the foundation upon which all future playing is built, enabling one to execute with accuracy and facility, not only difficult reading material, but improvisational ideas as well.

Technical development can be broken into six basic categories: 1) Good basic position. 2) Execution and control. 3) Strength. 4) Touch. 5) Speed. 6) Endurance. Let's take a look at each area individually.

GOOD BASIC POSITION

Establishing and maintaining a good stick position is important, especially at the early stages of development. Trumpet players spend years developing an embouchure; classical guitarists consider hand position of the greatest importance; pianists take great pains to achieve correct wrist and finger action. Why should we be any less concerned?

Good position also relates to correct posture, and accurate wrist and arm action. A good teacher will take great pains to see to it that his students are conscious of position, not only at the early stages, but throughout their study. The good student, in turn, will help the cause by being constantly aware of the importance of developing good initial habits which have a lasting effect.

EXECUTION AND CONTROL

I'll define stick control as the ability of the hands to control the message being sent from the brain. The hands must be trained through constant repetition to react as a team, rather than a left and right hand separate from each other. Every drummer can surely recall his first encounter with the double stroke roll or the single paradiddle. The fumbling was not caused because they were difficult to understand, but because they were difficult to control, especially at increasing speeds. Another perfect example is the George Lawrence Stone book, *Stick Control*, where sticking patterns and notations are relatively easy to understand, yet playing them with facility becomes a totally different matter. Developing stick control calls for more time and hard work than any other area. Getting the sticks to do what you want them to do requires a great deal of patience and hours of practice with correct study materials, all under the direction of a competent instructor.

STRENGTH

All things considered, drumming is perhaps the most physically demanding of all music endeavors. The contemporary drummer is at a definite loss if he is not physically prepared to meet the demands of hard playing situations. Note any of the top players in the country today for an example of muscular strength and dexterity. Buddy Rich, Billy Cobham and Steve Gadd are perhaps three of the finest examples of drummers possessing strength. They obviously could not perform at high energy levels without it. When we refer to strength, keep in mind that we are not talking about muscle bound limbs developed through weight lifting programs, but strength applied to the instrument in accordance with the requirements of the music we may have to perform.

Strength is especially important for the player with aspirations of entering the hard rock or big band field where high

degrees of power are absolutely essential. Any player who has experienced pushing a six or seven piece rock group, fighting amplifiers all the way, or driving an 18 piece big band will attest to the importance of strength.

TOUCH

Touch can simply be defined as the quality of sound the drummer produces from his instrument. A good touch will produce a pleasing and clean tone from the drum at all volume levels. Drum manufacturers go to great lengths designing and producing instruments that are capable of producing resonant tonal quality and yet, so many young players totally overlook this area of technical development. The most perfectly constructed drum in the world cannot produce a truly professional sound if the drummer has not cultivated his ability to produce a good tone. Contrary to popular belief, a top quality drum does not cover up shortcomings in this area, but rather, amplifies them!

Listen to the sound of the players you admire. Experiment during practice sessions with your sound through the use of tape recording. Listen *to your* sound and *your* touch. What *you* hear on that tape, is what *they* hear.

SPEED

Though the ability to play fast can be a great asset, this author has noted after years of teaching experience that one of the most common faults of young students is their desire to attempt to play too fast, too soon. It must be understood that speed without clean execution, finesse and control is virtually useless. What sense does it make to execute exceptionally fast patterns around the drum set without control?

Speed for the sake of speed equals nothing. Speed is an outgrowth of the other areas in the technical development of a good drummer. As muscular dexterity becomes more refined, speed will naturally evolve.

A careful program of development through the use of a metronome is an excellent means to gauge progress on a daily or weekly basis. There are any one of a hundred ways of incorporating a speed development program and each teacher has his own individual views on this subject.

At the advanced stages, a fast pair of hands cannot be undervalued. Power in reserve can be a great asset in every phase of playing. However, the student must become aware of its importance at the right stage in his development.

It is also important to point out that though speed and power are important for various musical forms, it is only a means to an end. To overemphasize in this area is to overlook the many other elements essential in the development of a well-rounded player such as time, conception, taste, musicality, etc.

ENDURANCE

The final area in our discussion of technical development, is endurance. Endurance can be viewed as the maintaining of one's control, touch, strength, speed and clean execution after hours of strenuous playing. If the drummer's endurance level is not developed sufficiently he can easily find himself at a great loss in many ways. As muscles fatigue, hand speed begins to slow down, control wavers and strength diminishes. Execution may begin to get sloppy. The drummer can only avoid this by building his endurance level to a point where any strenuous playing situation will have no direct bearing on his overall performance. He must develop a "margin of endurance" (a reserve of stamina) much the same as a sprinter with that little extra going into the final lap. The endurance level should ultimately be brought to a point over and above that which one can reasonably expect to find in his individual musical situation.

Take note of some of the top drummers today and you will readily see that their speed and control is virtually unaffected by strenuous playing. Their playing level remains as polished at the conclusion of an evening's performance as it was at the onset. They have developed a "margin of endurance".

It is important to understand that each element discussed here eventually comes together after years of painstaking effort; each factor plays an equally important role, and each works with the other resulting in a polished and refined technique. Technical facility, of course, must continue to be looked at as merely a means to an end. The ultimate aim of all serious drummers must remain in the end itself, in essence, becoming a well-rounded and musically sensitive musician.

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Drums And Drummers: An Impression

by Rich Baccaro

The music world, as interpreted by some, is densely populated with realists and modernists. In that world, one species scientifically and emotionally classified as "The Drummer" endures as the constant impressionist. Besides the drummer's obvious rhythmic duties, he is required to convey the mood of the composition to the listener. And he must do this by striking objects made of wood, plastic and metal with other objects made of similar materials.

Limited by his imperfect tools, the drummer's role and purpose is to subjectively support the statements of the composer. Those musical statements, either melodic or verbal, are more than mere sound. They are organized emotions, that tell stories; paint pictures; express happiness; sadness, freedom, disgust, and contempt. The drummer supports and encourages these emotions with dabs and strokes of percussive color, just as an impressionistic artist does with paints; creating images recognizable enough by eye (or ear) alone, while setting a mood, allowing the viewer's (or listener's) imagination some intellectual exercise.

A cymbal is an impressionistic instrument. Its bell can portray comedy or uncertainty, its ride area when played at full-throttle represents confidence, while its outer circumference is temperamental, sometimes scary. When crashed, a cymbal depicts the surprise of a summer storm. When played with a brush, it becomes a breeze. And when rolled upon, a cymbal is a reminder of the complex power of an ocean. There is certainly more to a cymbal than superficial bashing.

While backing a vocal composition, especially in a jazz oriented format, the drummer/impressionist has an emotional field day. In this context, the music is ornamented with words, which the drummer is free to punctuate. The snare drum dances around the lyrics, sometimes teasing, sometimes coaxing, but always enhancing their meaning. If the words are hot, the snare roars with approval, intensifying the mood of sheer elation found in those situations. Conversely, sadder lyrics bring darker, more sympathetic colors out of the snare drum; the vibrant roars are gone. The snare drum empathetically transmits the feeling of rejection and insecurity by accenting all the key works with a shading here and a quiet obscure buzz there. The general darkness of this style of music seems to inspire the use of simple, but tastefully placed snare drum notes, with the spaces of time between these notes being equally as effective.

Tom Toms. Now these are really versatile items. They are primitive. They are sophisticated. They are impressionistic essentials. At last count, there were seven million different mod-

els available: in every definable size and shape. The tom toms are the instruments which blend the colors into some type of logical finished product. Their own individual sound transforms a musical blur into recognizable shapes. They complement and fit all musical styles. The drummer/impressionist would be nearly colorless without them.

The patriarch of the drum set family is the old reliable bass drum. The bass drum is the oldest, wisest elephant in the jungle. In the impressionistic approach to drumming, its voice may not be constant, but speaks loudly and clearly. The bass drum generates excitement and intensity as it calls the listener's attention to critical segments of the composition being played on the other instruments of the set. Sometimes without warning or anticipation, the bass drum acts as an additional hand, augmenting the music, adding tension, totally involving the drummer and listener in the performance.

The drum set alone is a mere machine. The drummer is the person in charge. A drummer is a creature who is often misunderstood, occasionally misbehaved, and sometimes mistreated (the use of his trap case as the band's waste-basket proves that). But seriously, for the drummer to more than adequately perform impressionistically, he himself becomes part of the music. All commercial and materialistic pressures vanish. An impressionistic drummer assumes the psychological attitude of the music to be played; the musicians, the audience and all immediate surroundings become vital factors in the total picture. These sensory impressions act as the background for the musical subject. An artistically alert drummer allows all these surrounding images to influence and motivate his playing. The reactions of the listeners are felt, interpreted and re-channeled to them in new colors. The general appearance of the room and its lighting emerges as a picture in itself, and the drummer states his opinion of what he sees. If the performance is outdoors, perhaps the patterns of sunlight on the trees and the odorless fragrance of clear air will trigger some hidden "shot" of sensitivity, thus giving the drummer's renderings that much more character. By remembering and expanding upon what he has already played, the drummer's musical picture gains insight and depth, and maybe even a pinch of profundity.

There is no published method book covering impressionism in drumming. There can't be. There shouldn't be. There is no need. There is no means of teaching it. There is no teacher who can teach it. There is no student who can learn it. The truth is that we all possess impressionistic abilities, and we all can use them if we don't view the world too realistically.

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Peart: *continued from page 46*
of imagination; if I want something crazy, he'll come up with it. If I want crotales on top of the tubular bells, or a temple block mounted on top of my percussion, he can do it. When you present him with an idea, he thinks of a way to achieve it. He never let me down in that respect. He built my gong stand. The gong stand mounts on the tympani and is attached to the mallet stand.

CI: With the extensive set-up that you use, I'm wondering why you do not use electronic percussive devices.

NP: It's a matter of temperament really. I don't feel comfortable with wires and electronic things. It's not a thing for which I have a natural empathy. It's not that I don't think that they're interesting or that there aren't a lot of possibilities. But personally, I'm satisfied with traditional percussion. I have distrust for electronic and mechanical things. I've got enough to keep me busy, really. When I look at my drums, the five piece set up is the basis of what I have. I might have hundreds of toys, but for me most of my patterns and most of my thinking revolves around snare drum, bass drum, hi-hat, and a couple of tom toms. But there's more to it than that. I can add a lot more. I don't understand the people who are purists or fundamentalists, who would look at my drum kit and say, 'All you need is four drums.' That makes me as mad as looking down on someone who has only four drums. I'm not afraid to play on only four drums, but there's more that I can contribute to this band as a percussionist. I'm certainly not a keyboard percussion virtuoso by any means, nor do I expect to be. I just want to be a good drummer at this point in my life. Having eight tom toms to me is excellent, because I can do that many more variations of sounds. So you're not hearing the same fill all the time, or the same sort of patterns. There are different notes, different perspectives of percussion. To me it sounds like a natural evolution. I couldn't understand anyone who would look at it with bitterness, or reproach, because I don't neglect my

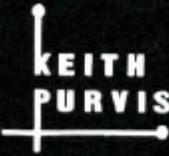
drumming because of that. When I'm not busy drumming, I have something else to do. And the guys show me the notes to play and I play them. I know Carl Palmer spends a lot of time on keyboard percussion and I admire him for that. He's getting quite proficient. Bill Bruford's getting amazing on keyboard percussion, because he's devoted the time and the energy that it takes to become a proper keyboard percussionist. I admire that to no end. I spend a lot of time thinking about composition, and drumming has to be the prime musical force. I spend a lot of time working with words. I look at that as a simultaneous education while I'm refining my drumming skills.

CI: Do you use lyrics as a guide to your drumming?

NP: Not after the fact. Once we have agreed on the musical structure and arrangement, it then becomes a purely musical thing. Obviously, if there's a problem in phrasing I might have to rewrite the structure. But for the most part I forget about the lyrics and listen to the vocals. Getty's interpretation is really when it becomes an instrument, so there's a way I can punctuate the vocals or frame the vocals somehow musically.

CI: What are some of your thoughts on drum soloing?

NP: I guess there are mixed feelings. How musical it is depends on the drummer. I find it very satisfying. I guess a lot of drummers do improvise all the way through their solo. I have a framework that I deal with every night, so I have some sort of standard where it will be consistent. And if I don't feel especially creative or strong, I can just play my framework and know it will be good. But certain areas of my solo are left open for improvisation. If I feel especially hot, or if I have an idea which comes to me spontaneously, I have plenty of room to experiment. I try to structure the solo like a song, or piece of music. I'll work from the introduction, and go through various movements, and bring in some comic relief. Then build up to a crescendo and end naturally. I can't be objective. Subjectively, I enjoy doing it and



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like listening to it. It's a good solo. Non-drummers have told me it's a nice drum solo to listen to.

CI: Do you have any advice for the young drummers with aspirations of someday playing in a musical situation similar to your own?

NP: I used to try to give people advice but the more I learned, the more I realized that my advice could only be based on both my values and my experiences. Neither of which are going to be shared by very many people. I would say to them, 'Go for what you're after.' I can't get much more complicated than that. I don't feel comfortable telling people what to do.

CI: Have you ever taught private students'?

NP: No, I haven't. I've been asked to do clinics which I'm interested in, but fearful of. But I would like to get into doing that, relating to people on that level. I like to talk about drums. I like to talk about things I'm interested in. For me to talk about things I'm honestly interested in, and obviously drums is one of them, is foremost.

CI: What are your thoughts on interviews?

NP: I won't do an interview for a promotional reason. I do them because I like to get my ideas out. Sometimes, I can talk about something in an interview and realize that I was totally wrong. And I'll have had the opportunity to air those thoughts out which most people don't. You don't have conversations with your friends about metaphysics, the fundamentals of music, and the fundamentals of yourself really. When I do an interview, I look for an ideal. I'm looking for an interview that's going to be stimulating, and I'll get right into it. Just sit for hours and relate. That's an ideal, like an ideal show. It doesn't happen that often.

CI: Before setting up your kit, your roadie Larry Allen cleaned and polished each cymbal to a high gloss and cleaned all the chrome. Does he take this great care as per your instruction, or is this something Larry does on his own?

NP: That's a reflection of Larry's care. He takes a lot of pride in having the set sparkle and the cymbals shining. On his side I relate to that, but it doesn't affect me really one way or the other.

CI: Do you hear a difference in the brilliance of the sound when your cymbals are clean instead of tarnished?

NP: No, not really. It's hard to justify really. To me a good cymbal sounds good, and a bad cymbal doesn't sound good. That's the way I feel about it. My 20" crash has a very warm, rich sound with a lot of good decay. I don't think dirt would improve that.

CI: Some drummers feel that as the cymbal is played, gets dirty, and gets tarnished, it takes on a certain character all

continued on page 58

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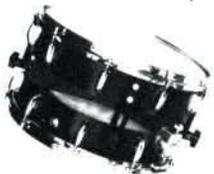
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Peart: continued from page 57

its own. Do you think it is really the aging process which is the factor?

NP: Yes, I think age has something to do with that. But the cymbal is metal, how can dirt make it sound better? If you don't want the decay, stick a piece of tape on it. It'll do the same thing dirt will do. It may be true that dirt is a factor. But it won't give it a warmer sound by definition, because the note of the cymbal is still the note of the cymbal.

CI: The dirt will only affect the sustain.
NP: Exactly. So if you want a shorter sustain, get it dirty. My cymbals are chosen for the length of decay that I want. And a certain frequency range. The amount of decay is especially crucial.

CI: Tell me about that Chinese cymbal you're using. It sounds great!

NP: I had an awful time trying to get into China cymbals. I bought an 18" pang, just looking for the Chinese sound. It had a good sound and I found myself using it for different effects. But it's almost a whispery, electronic sound. When I listen to its sound in the studio, or on a tape it sounds like a phaser. It has a warm sort of sound, but it didn't have the attack I was looking for. So I got the Zildjian China type which had that, but also a lot of sustain. Larry picked this one up at Frank's Drum Shop. It was made in China. It's a 20" with a little more bottom end to its sound.

CI: For the size of your set up I was somewhat surprised to see you using 13" hi-hats. Why 13V?

NP: I've always used 13's. I use a certain hi-hat punctuation that doesn't work with any other size. I've tried 14's, and everytime we go into the studio our co-producer Terry Brown, wants me to use 14" hi-hat cymbals. I've tried them. I'm an open-minded guy. But it just doesn't happen for me.

CI: Are they just conventional hats?

NP: Just conventional, regular old hi-hats. We work with a band a lot called Max Webster, and their drummer and I work very closely, listening to each other's drums. Webster told me not to change that hi-hat, because for any open hat work or any choke work, it's so quick and clean. It just wouldn't work with 14's. The decay is too slow.

CI: Are you talking about that particular pair of 13's or any 13's?

NP: Well any 13's for me. I've gone through about three sets of 13's in the last 8 or 9 years. And they've all sounded good. When I found myself to be one of the only drummers around using 13's, I tried others, but either my style developed with 13" cymbals or the 13" cymbals were an important part of my style.

CI: You are using Evans heads on your toms.

NP: Yes. The Evans heads have a nice

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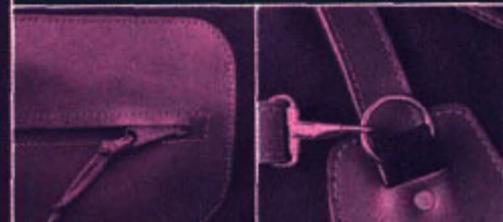
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attack which gives a good bite from the drums. At the same time you never lose the note. I play with a lot of open drums, open concert toms. But my front toms and my floor toms are all closed with heads on the bottom. I never lose the note on account of that. With certain types of acoustical surroundings, open drums just lose everything, all you hear is a smack. I get that with my concert toms. I hear that with other drummers. If you're in a particularly flat hall, or if the stage area is particularly dead, it kills the note of the drums. I think it's easier to get a good sound with open drums. I've been talking to people about this lately, and developing a theory. I think that perhaps, especially with miking, it's easier to get a good sound with open drums. But I think that a better sound can be achieved with closed drums. A more consistent sound. I think that over a range of hundreds of different acoustical surroundings, closed drums have a better chance of sounding good more often. That's just a theory. It depends on a number of things of course. I open up my bass drums in the studio, but I leave the toms closed.

CI: Yet for your live performance, I see you have left both heads on the bass drums. Why?

NP: I think I get a rounder note, and a more consistent bass drum sound. And our sound man's happy with both heads on. We just have a small hole in the front head and a microphone right inside.

CI: I noticed you use a microphone under your snare drum.

NP: Yes, I use an under snare mike for the monitors only. Which Ian doesn't use out front. I don't use the over snare mike in the monitors, because I'm getting all of the middle I need out of the drum itself. It's the high end that gets lost in the ambient sound of the rest of the band. The high end gets lost first.

CI: What about in the studio?

NP: In the studio sometimes both, but usually the top.

CI: In the studio, do you use one mike to catch the snare and the hi-hat or is that done separately?

NP: Just one mike on the snare alone, and the hi-hat has a separate mike. It's a logistical thing. We have to go for close miking. Just about everything is individually miked. There are three overheads to cover the cymbals, one separate overhead for the China-type. I have a certain set of long, tubular wind chimes that have to be heard at a particular point so they have a mike. There's a mike for the tympani, there's two mikes for the orchestra chimes and they also pick up the crotales. There's also a separate mike for the glockenspiel. If I want to try to inject that much subtlety into our music, the

glockenspiel has to be miked closely or it won't exist. It's crucial. Miking is a science that I can't talk about with much conviction. I don't know a lot about it other than a few bits of theory I picked up in the studio. As far as live miking goes, I'm pretty ignorant I must admit. I'm just trying to get my drums to sound good to me, and then it's up to the sound man to make them sound good in the house.

CI: Could you tell me a little about your recent album?

NP: There's quite a variety of things this time. We didn't have any big ideas to work on so it's a collection of small ideas. Individual musical statements. We got into some interesting things, and some interesting constructions too. We built a whole song around a picture. We wanted to build a song around the phenomena called Jacob's ladder, where the rays break through the clouds. I came up with a couple of short pieces of lyrics to set the musical parts up. And we built it all musically trying to describe it cinematically. As if our music were a film. We have a luminous sky happening and the whole stormy, gloomy atmosphere, and all of a sudden these shafts of brilliance come bursting through and we try to create that musically. There's another song called "The Spirit Of Radio." It's not about a radio station or anything, it's really about the spirit of music when it comes down to the basic theme of it. It's about musical integrity. We wanted to get across the idea of a radio station playing a wide variety of music. For instance the "Spirit Of Radio" comes from the radio station at home called CFMY and that's their slogan. They play all great music from reggae to R&B, to jazz to New Wave, everything that's good or interesting. It's a very satisfying radio station to me. They have introduced me to a lot of new music. There are bits of

reggae in the song and one of the verses has a New Wave feel to it. We tried to get across all the different forms of music. There are no divisions there. The choruses are very electronic. It's just a digital sequencer with a glockenspiel and a counter guitar riff. The verse is a standard straight ahead Rush verse. One is a new wave, a couple reggae verses, and some standard heavy riffing, and as much as we could possibly get in there without getting redundant. Another song that we also did in there, "Free Will" is a new thing for us in terms of time signatures. I mentioned before that we experiment a lot with time signatures. I get a lot of satisfaction out of working different rhythms and learning to feel comfortable.

CI: What time signatures are you using during this tune?

NP: We work in nearly everyone that I know of that's legitimate. All of the 5's, 7's, 9's, 11's, 13's, and combinations thereof. There were things on the last album that were 21 beat bars by the time they were actually completed. Because they had a 7 and a 6; a 5 and a 4; or 7. 6, 7, 6, 7, 6, 5. I get a tremendous amount of satisfaction making them feel good. I don't think that you have to play in 4/4 to feel comfortable.

CI: How did you develop your understanding of those odd meters?

NP: I remember figuring out some of Genesis' things. That was my first understanding of how time signatures were created. And I'd hear people talking about 7, and 5 and if they played it for me I could usually play along. But I didn't understand. I finally got to understand the principle of the common denominator. Once I understood it numerically I found it really easy to pick up the rhythm. Then you take on something just as a challenge, and turn it into a guitar solo in 13/8, and find a way to play that comfortably and make changes. As I would change dynamically through a 4/4 section. There would be certain ways that I would move it, try to apply those same elements to a complicated concept. I think Patrick Moraz put it best. He

said, "All the technique you have in the world is still only a method of translating your emotions." So we're coming back with that acquired technique. There's a lot of truth in Moraz's statement because now we're finding out as we have gone through all those, some of them honestly were technical exercises. You have to say that sometimes you get excited about playing something just because it is a difficult thing. And certain times we would get into the technical side of it, but become bored with it. Now we're finding out how to bring those technical ideas back and put them into an exciting framework. We have a song that's almost all in 7 and has some alternating bars of 8 and the chorus that goes into it again is in 4. It's all very natural to play. I can play through the whole song and I don't count once. The only thing I count are pauses. If I'm stopping for 8 beats or something I'll count that off with my foot. But when I'm playing I just don't count, unless I have to, for meter reasons.

This is probably a common experience, but slower things for me are the most difficult to keep in meter. If I'm playing really slow straight 4's, I count that, but if I'm playing really fast in 13, I don't dare count, I just play it. We were talking earlier about music taking patterns as a musician. I think it does that. I have a program in my head that represents the rhythmic pattern for a 13, or a 7, or a 5. And I can bring those out almost on command, having spent a lot of time getting familiar with them. It's so exciting when you start to get it right the first few times and you're putting everything you have into it. That's the ultimate joy of creating. That joy is such a short lived thing, most of the time you don't have time to enjoy it. Most times when I write a song the moment of satisfaction is literally a matter of a few seconds. All of a sudden you see it's going to work and you're going to be happy with it, and then bang you're back into working it again. You're thinking how am I going to do this? Whether it's lyrically or musically, the moment of satisfaction is very fleeting.

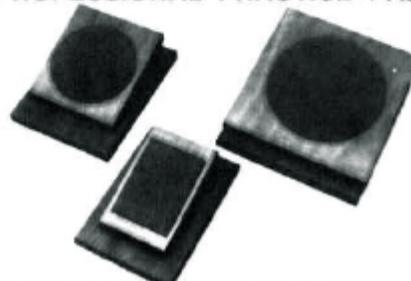
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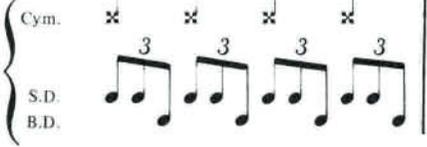
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continued on following page



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Begun: continued from page 45

HH: So you feel that the Ringer represents the state of the art?

FB: It's the Stradivarius. I've played on everything, and for me it's the best.

HH: Who have been some of your favorite conductors over the years?

FB: That's going to be sort of ticklish to answer. Every player has certain positive vibes about the permanent music director of the orchestra, so that figure should be a given quantity. Rostropovich is a living legend, and I can't add anything to it. As far as others who conduct our orchestra are concerned, some with whom I specifically enjoy working are Rafael Frubeck de Burgos, Erich Leinsdorf, Max Rudolf, Leonard Bernstein, and Lorin Maazel.

HH: Do you find it more or less rewarding to perform a given work when the composer himself conducts it?

FB: It's an interesting thing. Sometimes composers do things with their own music that are far different, both good and bad than what you would expect. It's curious to see what comes from the horse's mouth.

Stravinsky was noted for being a somewhat unusual conductor of his music. He would do things differently from what we would call "accepted" interpretations. He was very surprising in some of his deviations of tempo and rhythmic intensity. Sometimes, it wasn't the total intensity that you would expect from the man who did it all.

HH: When did you last work with Stravinsky?

FB: I guess it was during the 60s. I recorded *Le Rossignol* and *Oedipus Rex* with him.

He could really hear the inner voices and was thoroughly involved. He was a joy, and it was one of the highlights of my life to perform with him.

HH: How about favorite pieces through the years?

FB: Well, I have to say, hands down, *Le Sacre* is the one. It's not just my favorite work in the repertoire—it's certainly a landmark timpani part—but there's something significant about it to me. It seems to be an important force in my life, a source of nourishment. There's a certain source in the music for which I feel an affinity.

HH: Are you recorded on albums other than those of the NSO which evoke especially fond memories for you?

FB: Years ago I was on a recording of Varese's *Ionisation* with a group of guys who were at school at the time, like Buster Bailey, Artie Press, Morris Lang, it's quite an illustrious group of youngsters!

I'm not too fond of recording. In many ways, recording is a distortive process for the timpani. I have to do things on recordings that I don't really like to do regarding mallet selection and tone pro-

continued on page 68

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jection. I'm not happy that the million-dollar equipment these people have is supposed to make a good record but can't capture my sound.

HH: That seems to be a problem with recording percussion instruments in general, that all sorts of undesirable alterations must be made in order not to "overload" the electronics with resonance. The musical content often becomes secondary to the recording process itself.

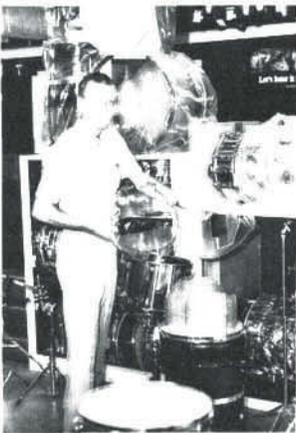
FB: It drives you up a wall, the things you have to do on a record and how alien they are to the music you want to produce.

HH: Do you have any unfulfilled dreams in music?

FB: Well, if I had it all to do over again, I would have studied conducting and forgotten all about drums. From the beginning, I feel that I've been able to do the kind of playing I want to do and, many times, the way I want to do it. But, if I were to have changed anything in my musical life I would have done it all differently, knowing what I do about the closeness between conducting and playing the timpani, the creative control, the fact that as a timpanist so much of the time you're carrying the conductor on your back.

How that would have worked out I don't know: maybe in my next reincarnation I'll find out.

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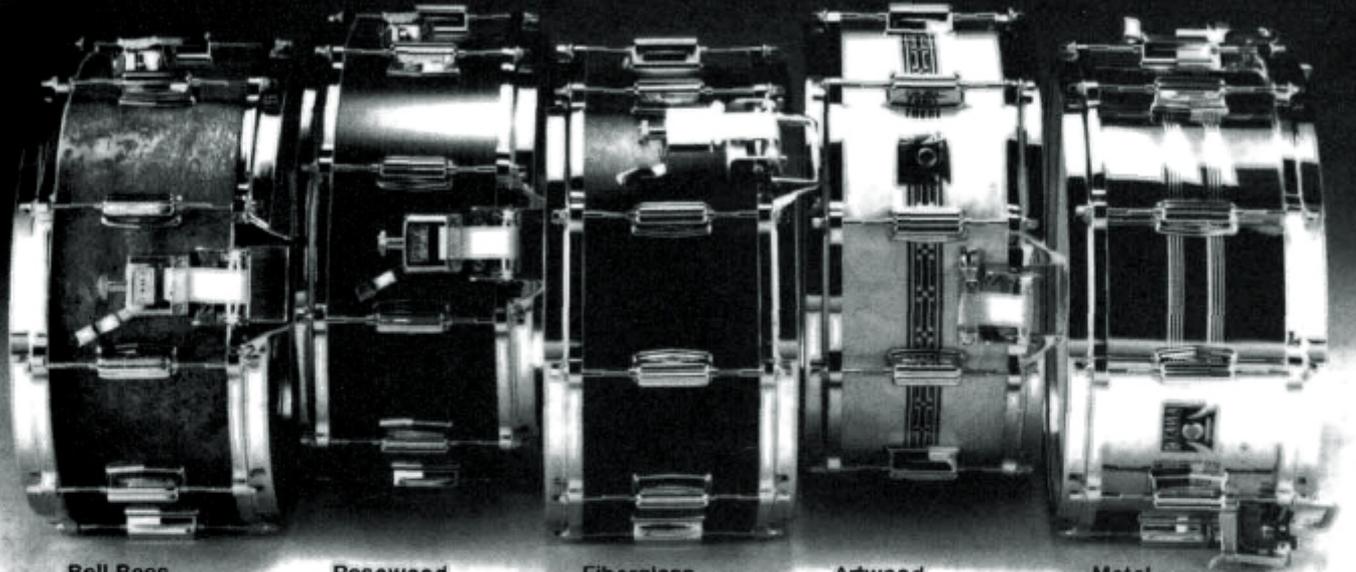
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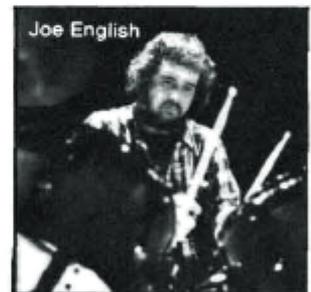
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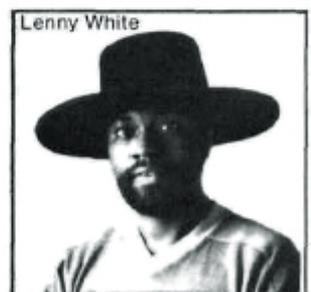
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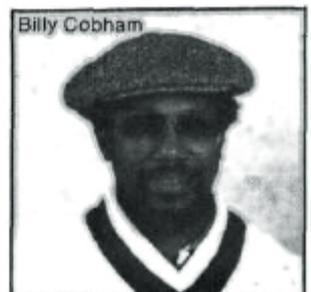
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INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

FIRTH COMPANY SELECTS REMO/PRO-MARK FOR QUANTITY MARKETING

Remo, Inc. has been appointed to distribute Vic Firth custom drum sticks and mallets internationally in a move to augment marketing of the Firth line.

Firth custom sticks will be available to all Remo and Pro-Mark dealers on a direct basis only in prepackaged quantities of 6 pairs of any model of timpani sticks or 12 pairs of any model of mallets or drum sticks.

Lesser quantities and other Firth accessories will continue to be available only through Vic Firth Incorporated, headquartered in Dover, Massachusetts.

Firth will continue to market its entire line on a dealer direct basis, as in the past.

The Firth mallets and sticks to be sold through the Remo/Pro-Mark organization complement the Pro-Mark line and will carry the same guarantees and assurances as those marketed by their manufacturer.

Vic Firth (left) and Remo Belli, of Remo, Inc.



LES DEMERLE JOINS SLINGERLAND

Jazz-rock drummer Les DeMerle is now endorsing Slingerland Drums after a 5 year relationship with Pearl Drums.

A European tour was recently completed and a duo clinic with Peter Erskine presented at DeMerle's Cellar Theatre in Los Angeles. Future plans for a DeMerle/Slingerland clinic album are being negotiated.



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HEEEERE'S EDDIE!

Ed Shaughnessy, drummer for Johnny Carson's *Tonight Show* and *Modern Drummer Magazine* Advisory Board member, recently participated in a clinic sponsored by the Russ Moy Drum Studio of Elizabeth, New Jersey.

After the clinic, Shaughnessy and members of the *Modern Drummer* editorial and administrative staff met

for dinner and a discussion of the history of jazz drumming, a subject on which Shaughnessy is well versed.

Pictured are, left to right: Cheech Iero, Associate Editor; Leo Spagnardi, Circulation Manager; Ed Shaughnessy; Ron Spagnardi, Editor-in-Chief; Isabel Spagnardi; Karen Larcombe, Features Editor; and Ann Lambariello, Assistant Administrative Manager.



SCHOOL OFFERS RECORDING STUDIO PROGRAM

New York Recording Musicians is now accepting students for their program.

The purpose of the school is to introduce developing musicians to recording and prepare them to function competently within a professional environment.

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SUCCESSFUL JAPANESE TOUR FOR LP JAZZ ENSEMBLE

The Latin Percussion Jazz Ensemble performed for enthusiastic audiences in cities throughout Japan (Tokyo, Sendai, Sapporo and Osaka) on a tour jointly sponsored by Latin Percussion, Inc. and Yamaha.

The stars of the LPJE are Tito Puente and Carlos "Patato" Valdez, assisted by Eddie Martinez, piano; Johnny Rodriguez, bongos; and Andy Gonzalez, bass.

The clinics were attended by both local pros as well as beginners and, according to Tito Puente, the newcomers demonstrated superior coordination and took beautifully to the Latin rhythms that made up the foundation of the musical performances.



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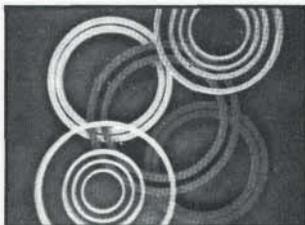
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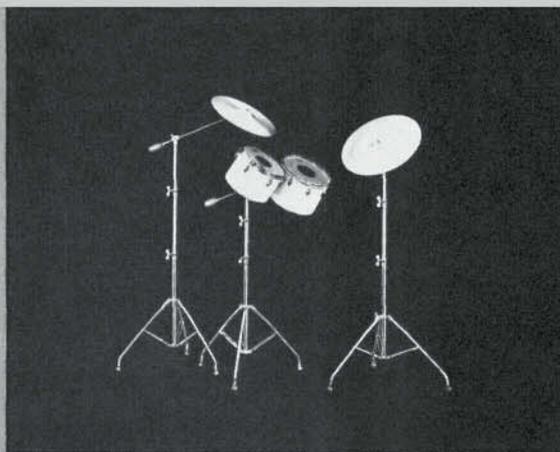


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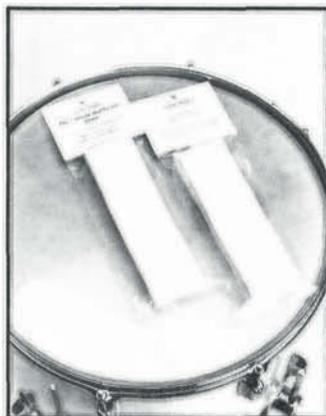
Elek-Trek, U.S.A., a firm that designs and builds specialized microphones and mixers, has introduced their felt muffler stripping.

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