

# MODERN DRUMMER®

The World's First International Magazine For Drummers



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## BUDDY RICH

A Special Tribute

Journey's

## MIKE BAIRD

## TOM BRECHTLEIN

## 1987 READERS POLL RESULTS



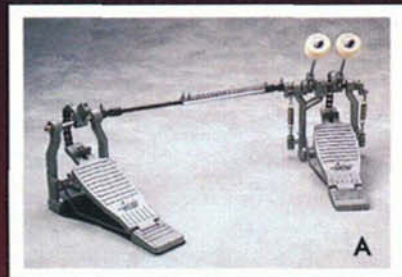
Plus: Rod Morgenstein On Style  
Peter Donald On Teaching  
Simmons MTX-9 Expander  
Chad Wackerman Transcription

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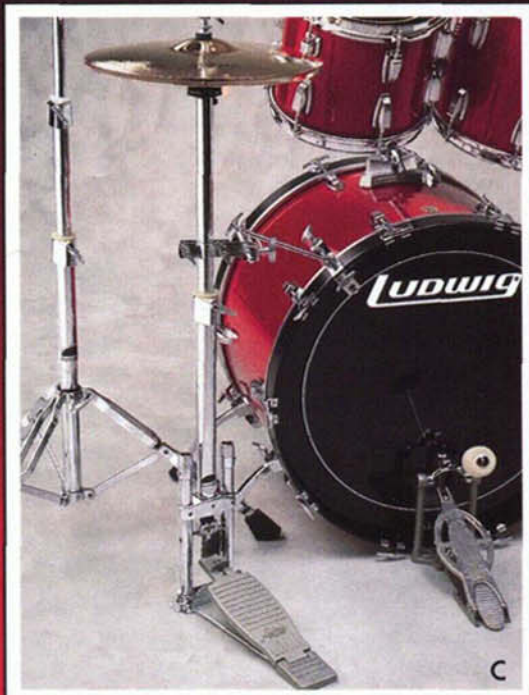
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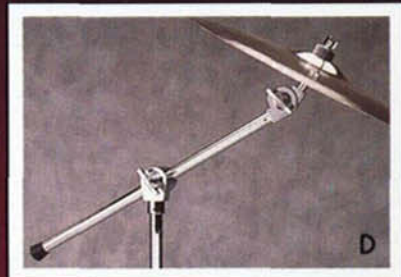
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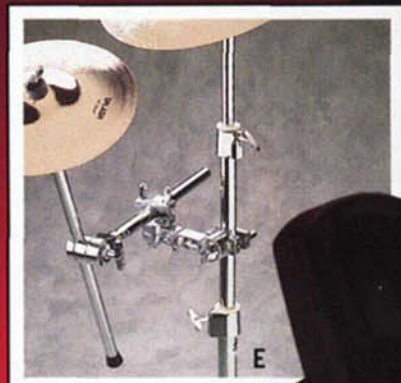
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# Features

Cover Photos by Rick Malkin

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## MIKE BAIRD

His recording work with such artists as the Manhattan Transfer and Eddie Money, and his live work with Rick Springfield had already established Mike Baird as one of L.A.'s top drummers. But it was last summer's infamous Journey auditions that brought Mike's name into the spotlight, and here he tells what really went on during that time.

by Robyn Flans ..... 16

## BUDDY RICH REMEMBERED

When Buddy Rich died on April 2, it was definitely the end of an era. In this special tribute to "the world's greatest drummer," we recall the highlights of Buddy's career, hear what his friends and colleagues say about him, and talk to the man who restored Buddy's classic *Radio King* drumset.

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## TOM BRECHTLEIN

While his seven years with Chick Corea and his recent work with Wayne Shorter have brought Tom Brechtlein to the public's attention, it was his relationship with the late Joe Farrell that perhaps had the biggest effect on Tom himself.

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# EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



## Buddy...

On April 2, 1987, the drumming world lost perhaps the greatest drummer of our time. I doubt that any drummer who followed Buddy Rich's career would question the validity of that statement.

What can one say about Buddy's playing that hasn't been said before by a world of admiring drummers? Buddy was the embodiment of natural drumming talent, which included that very special combination of incredible speed, power, endurance, imagination, musical sensitivity, and good taste. Buddy could send your head reeling with drumming that would, at times, defy human capability. He was truly one of those once-in-a-lifetime musical phenomenons. As far as total technical mastery of the instrument goes, no one came any closer than Buddy, and it's doubtful whether we'll ever again see the likes of such remarkable, innate ability.

As a person, Buddy was often accused of being arrogant and demanding. And yes, he could be those things at times. However, one must understand that Buddy was an extremely intense individual, with very strong beliefs and high performance standards. He had no tolerance for insincerity in people or music, and expected a great deal from those with whom he worked. The man spoke his mind, no doubt about it. But the abrasive side of Buddy was the image he seemed to like to project. Beneath that hard-nosed exterior was a man who cared deeply about music, high standards in drumming, and the state of the music industry as he viewed it. Oftentimes, he was less than thrilled with what he saw, and he made no bones about it. Buddy had very little patience for bad music and

poor musicianship.

Music critic George Simon once said, 'To some, he is cocky, overbearing, at times unnecessarily arrogant. But calm Buddy down, show him that he doesn't have to spark every gathering the way he sparks a band, and you've got the warmest, most sensitive gentleman you'll ever meet.'

Of all the memories I personally have of Buddy, there's one I'll always treasure. It's a story very few people know, and one I'd like to share with you.

Late in 1976, I and a few devoted supporters were crammed into a measly 300 square feet of basement office space, mapping out the first issue of a magazine we planned to call *Modern Drummer*. We were about ready to go, with one rather serious exception. We had everything except a solid cover story. Back then, *MD* was completely unknown and little more than a very good, but very under-capitalized, idea. Well, despite all that, it was Buddy Rich who came to our rescue by consenting to be *MD's* very first cover story. That interview was conducted in a small dressing room between sets of a one-nighter in St. Louis.

Buddy felt good about what we were trying to do with *Modern Drummer*. And obviously, having him on the cover of the January '77 issue gave us the impetus we really needed to get the magazine off the ground. It was a genuine act of caring and kindness—one that I'm not likely to forget. I like to think it also says something about just what kind of person Buddy *really* was. That's the man I'll always remember. Yes, we've certainly lost a true giant with the passing of Buddy Rich. Surely, he'll be missed much more than most of us can say.

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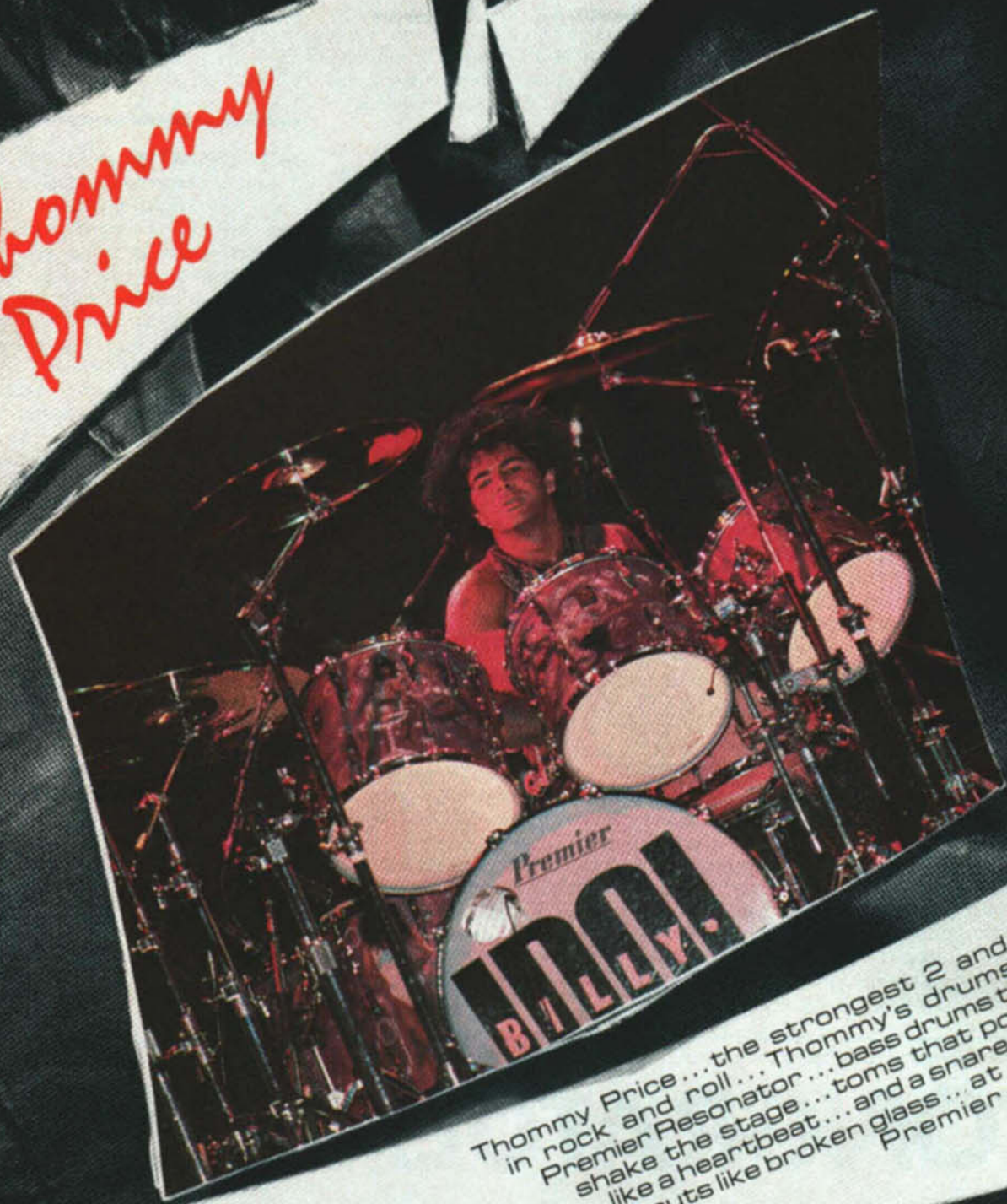
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**PREMIER**

**VINNIE COLAIUTA**

I just finished reading the Vinnie Colaiuta interview [May '87 MD], and it's the best yet. I also enjoyed the sidebar, "Vinnie's Stuff"; it helped me find out what sort of drums Vinnie enjoys having. Thank you, Mr. Colaiuta, Robyn Flans, and, of course, MD for the great interview.

Jeff Dudzienski  
Valparaiso, IN

**PIECES OF EIGHT**

Thanks for the *Sound Supplement* with Neil Peart in the May issue. I've enjoyed all of the *Supplements*, but this one is special. Neil, you never cease to amaze me. Every time I turn around, there you are reminding me of why, to me, you are the best! I wish I could have been at Larry Yager's farmhouse, just to sit and watch!

Freddy Trumbower  
Bloomington, IL

I'd like to say "thanks" to Mr. Peart for putting his time and efforts into *Pieces Of Eight*. It is one of the most tasteful and inspirational solos I've heard in a long time. It's a pleasure to listen to!

Sgt. David Racine  
Pittsburgh Air Force Base, NY

I've been wondering for years about Neil Peart (the many articles, the Readers Poll results, etc.). Now I am really confused! The *Sound Supplement* in your May, 1987 issue was very puzzling, to say the least. Now, I'm not going to go off with the predictable array of "what I would do's" or "I'd do better" ka-ka; that's totally irrelevant. But, if I'm not mistaken, it seems this *Supplement* was to let us get a taste of Mr. Peart's newly acquired drums. What it seems Mr. Peart delivered was a testimony to the KAT unit. The marimba part is nothing but arpeggios. (This man won per-

cussionist categories above the likes of Ed Mann?) And, if all the production was stripped away and the KAT unit gone, there would be two dance grooves and a couple of fills. A drum solo? Technically, yes, there are drums and percussion, but hardly what most musicians would call a "solo." Come on!

Ironically enough, in the credits, the piece is copyrighted. What is there to copyright? I'm positively convinced that this letter will receive mega-gobs of hate mail, but the point is that people in *Modern Drummer-land* shouldn't blindly accept everything that is thrown at them. Lastly, to Mr. Peart: Take more time to think through your ideas; never let time dictate a finished product. Although I'm not a great fan of Rush, I usually find your performances a harvest of creativity and fine execution. A fine drummer and a fine magazine should always critique themselves to the Nth degree. Let's all go practice!

James Leblock  
East Texas, PA

**TOURING EUROPE**

I thoroughly enjoyed Sandy Gennaro's witty and informative article on touring Europe. [May '87 MD] As one who has been fortunate enough to live and perform in Europe and in the Middle East, I can vouch for most of what Sandy and his colleagues have to say. I might recommend another eminently readable source for anyone planning to travel abroad (as well as here in the U.S.): Gary Burton's comprehensive *Musician's Guide To The Road* (New York: Billboard Books, 1981), \$7.95 in paperback and available everywhere. An opportunity to see the world and to promote peace and goodwill among our foreign brothers and sisters is one of the most valuable privileges of being an artist.

Speaking of touring, I'm looking for an agent-manager for my jazz quartet. Anyone want an unenviable job?

Harold Howland  
The Howland Ensemble  
Washington, D.C.

**MD'S DRUM FESTIVAL '87**

I want to congratulate *Modern Drummer* for a very successful *Drum Festival '87*. I can't believe that anyone walked away dissatisfied, since so many different styles were demonstrated. I was into Dave Weckl, a friend was into Rod Morgenstein, and another friend was into Alan Dawson. (That last friend was blown away—as was I—by Dawson's demonstration of rudiments using brushes.) The sound was good, the transitions between drummers were smooth, the guest appearances were a nice surprise (alright Anton!), and the giveaways were a nice touch. I hope that this will be an annual event. (Twice a year would be even better.) Thanks to you, the performers, and the sponsors for making this a very special day.

Scott Hopkins  
Levittown, PA

**PROFESSIONALISM**

I'm writing to comment on Roy Burns' well-written "Professionalism" article in your May issue. All of Roy's words were very well put. Reading the article really inspired me to work a lot harder at performing. Roy, keep up the good work; you give a lot of valuable advice, and you tell it like it is.

Paul Viens  
Winooski, VT

*continued on page 101*

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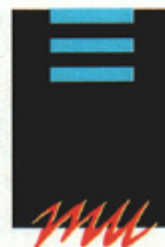
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**Applied Magic**



Photo by Rick Van Horn

It's been an active year for **Bill Bruford**, who has been busy with a new band, and who's also found time to record with other artists. One recording that he found especially enjoyable was on ECM with guitarist David Torn. "It could have just been a record if it hadn't worked out great," Bill says, "but I think it's going to be an ongoing project. I like Tom's company a lot. I find him a very refreshing guitarist. I've always played with refreshing guitarists, actually, and Tom's another one. He has an individual approach to the instrument, which stems from his ability with processing devices, among other things."

Apart from that, Bill's primary focus has been the launching of his new group, *Earthworks*, which features saxophonist Iain Ballamy,

bassist Mick Hutton, and keyboardist/tenor horn player/trumpeter Django Bates. "I must be a jazz musician if I'm playing with a saxophone player," Bill laughs. "The British jazz scene has changed quite a bit. When Americans hear the term 'British jazz,' they think of no one. British jazz never exported itself to the States, the way American jazz transported itself to England."

"But I'm here to put that right. I consider myself to be in an educational capacity. I realize that jazz grew up in America, but in England now, and Europe in general, we consider jazz to be sufficiently mature to be an international art form, which we can all make contributions to. In the past, we always felt inferior to the visiting American jazz musicians, but the new crop of jazz players are not quite so much in awe of the Americans. They see that there's a British way of doing things."

"We feel that *Earthworks* is a very British jazz album. To be more specific, there are things that Americans do that we wouldn't. Americans tend to have this terrible fusion problem. The original good idea of *Bitches Brew* and so on has long since faded into a morass of awfulness, with people playing Lydian scales at 9,000 miles per hour. A signifi-

cant fact is that, in England, we have no jazz education at all and people aren't that highly trained. So jazz is more of a street music. And yet a lot of the young musicians have really good technical ability. Nobody knows where they got it, because they don't have the educational facilities like you do in the States. But the good thing is that their technique is subordinated to their ideas. The form, texture, sound, and instrumentation are all more important than Lydian scales at a very high speed.

"*Earthworks* has to be called jazz, but there is more amplification on stage than the average rock group. We play loud. The album was recorded by Dave Stewart, my old partner from the Bruford group, and he is a technological wiz and a sampling expert. On the first track, my drumset is composed of samples of sheetmetal, of doors slamming, of gas blasts—this is rock technology. This has more to do with Foreigner than with jazz, but we see no problem at all in using those types of things underneath a jazz saxophone solo. So there's no doubt that the two types of music are filtering together."

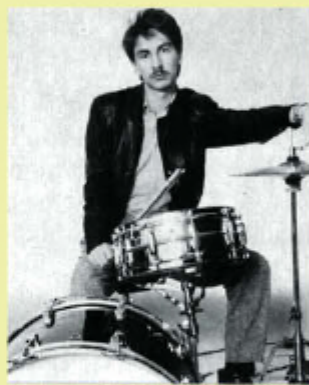
Bill recently released a "greatest hits" album called *Master Strokes*, and he also recently completed writing a

drum book with transcriptions from various pieces he has recorded throughout his career. Does he see those projects as representing the end of a chapter, and his recent jazz projects as the beginning of something new? "Yeah, I do feel that," he admits. "I feel that, in rock 'n' roll, it's pretty impossible to have any dignity as a drummer past a certain age. It's a kid's sport. There's nothing wrong with that at all, and I enjoyed it when I was a kid, but eventually you're not a kid anymore. I can't get any enjoyment from straight-ahead rock anymore, so if I were to play it, I would be playing it as a charlatan. That doesn't make it, because the music deserves better than that. But jazz has great dignity. Some of the elder statesmen, such as Philly Joe, Max, Elvin, Art Blakey, and so forth, set a terrific standard in terms of how to grow old gracefully. At my age, and with my ability and experience, I refuse to have my playing given a yes or no by some accountant at a record company. So I prefer to work at the small to medium level with a variety of interesting, self-contained, self-profitable projects where I can be my own man and do what I want."

— Rick Mattingly

**Mark Presley** spent a good deal of '86 on the road with country artist John Conlee. They did Farm Aid and the Volunteer Jam, two big country events, during their 200 days on the road. While Mark isn't complaining, it certainly does restrict the possibilities of getting into the Nashville studio scene. "I want to have a mixture of live and studio work," Mark explains. "Ideally, I would love to do John's live stuff and his album."

Being on the road so much, there's not too much time to do anything in town. "And we expect to have even more dates this year. We're doing some new things in the show. John's new album has horns on it, so we've pulled the horn and hi-hat tracks off the master.



We're going to run the horn tracks to the house and the hi-hat tracks will run into my headphones. It will be like playing with a click, live. That will synch us up to the horn tracks. That shouldn't be too much of a problem for me, because last year, we were

playing with a slide show. I had a click in my monitor in about three or four tunes that synched us up to the slides.

"I don't think I would like to do the whole show with a click, but since it's only a few tunes, I don't mind. It's actually good preparation for the studio. John's music mostly requires time. It's definitely changed the way I play. I was trained in jazz and funk, and when I moved here, I was overplaying like crazy. John's is definitely a groove gig. It's putting it in the pocket, and fortunately, I have a good bass player to work with. He lays it right in there, so it makes life real easy for me. And the click has helped me lock in even more. I've really started to concentrate on my time in the

last couple of years, and I try to play the music like I would hear it on the radio. I try to pretend I'm playing on a record every time I play the song. Consistency is something I go for more than playing licks.

"I was never expressly told to play like the record; I think that's something I've gone for on my own. When I auditioned for the job, I intentionally charted out every tune on all the records I was supposed to learn, down to the fills, to have a foundation to go by. Once I have the tunes locked in that way, maybe I'll change a fill from night to night to hold my interest, but there's enough pressure just to keep the groove locked in."

—Robyn Flans



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In October 1985, **Bobby Rock**, who lives in Houston, made a decision: "The clubs were basically going to be history for me; I wanted to go for the big deal. I can actually remember the day I decided that. What's funny is that, just a couple of weeks later, I heard through another Texas band that [bassist] Dana Strum was looking for a drummer on the West Coast for Vinnie Vincent. I literally called the cat up on his answering machine and said, 'This is Bob Rock. I'm calling from Houston, Texas. Call me collect.' You can imagine the kind of rap I had to lay on him just to get a shot, but I was so hungry and ready

that I knew, if they heard me, I would get the gig. I was so psyched. I said, 'Listen, man, give me a shot. Once you hear me, I know you're going to hire me.' He said they'd check me out, so I packed up my van with my drums and drove out there. I had zero money at the time, so I had to turn to my parents and say, 'Just one more time. This is the big one.' They covered me, and I went out to audition. I'll never forget that day, October 1, 1985. It was such a joyous experience for me, and I was hired on the spot."

Six to eight weeks later, they began preproduction and then recorded the *Vinnie Vincent*

*Invasion* album. "We actually cut the drums in this vacant theater that was in the basement of the studio," Bobby recalls. "They had this big wooden stage, and they set the drums up in there with everything wide open, except for the kick drums."

Bobby enjoyed the recording, but it was really the touring he was looking forward to. "That's when I began to live through all those boyhood fantasies of getting on a major tour. We went out with Alice Cooper first for four or five months, and he was one of the figures that inspired me to want to be a rock star when I was 10 or 11. To see him hang-

ing out backstage was really a cool experience for me. When we switched over to Iron Maiden, we played the Summit, which is the big arena in Houston. Over the years, I'd always gone there to see the concerts and fantasized what it would be like to be on the stage. I imagined my parents being there, after all they put up with, and I imagined getting to do the solo at the end of the show. The day of the show was like I was actually walking through everything I had dreamed over the years. Needless to say, it's been a very fulfilling year."

—Robyn Flans

**Alvino M. Bennett** had a dream come true in June of last year. "I was sitting at home one day, making my regular telephone calls, and I talked to a bass player friend of mine who said that Tony Patler, Chaka Khan's musical director, was looking for me. I called Tony, but his phone machine was on, so I figured I missed him and he was out of town. About five minutes later, Tony called and said, 'We're looking for a drummer.' I asked when the auditions were, and he said in a couple of hours. He told me the names of the tunes I should learn and said I should come down later that evening. I didn't get to play until close to 8:00 or 9:00 that night. Another friend of mine, James Jamerson, Jr., was playing bass, so I thought,

'This is going to be real comfortable.' I got there a little early, heard the tail end of the other drummer, went in, set my stuff up, got comfortable, and started playing. It felt good immediately. It just locked. We went over three or four songs, and Tony said he would call me the next day. At 2:00 that morning, I was half asleep when I got a phone call and Tony said, 'Alvino, I've got bad news for you. You got the gig.' I asked when we started rehearsing and he said, 'Tomorrow.' As soon as I hung up, my wife and I jumped for joy."

He didn't meet Chaka until his first gig with her in Canada. "I thought she would be there when I auditioned, and I was biting my nails about it, but she wasn't there. I had met her

in Chicago years ago, when we did a commercial together. She came in and did some vocal overdubs after I laid down my part, and I didn't see her anymore until I got the job with her. We rehearsed everything without her and then flew to Canada. I met her during soundcheck. We were still going through the song when we were introducing ourselves to one another. The show came off great, and we've been having a lot of fun."

He enjoys what the music requires of him: "I have to be very tasty, first of all, and be able to play different colors, different types of music—jazz, R&B, pop, and rock 'n' roll—because we never know what we're going to play. We used to have a set list, but we stopped going by it because we

never knew what mood she was going to be in. One night, we might do 'Night In Tunisia,' which is a jazz tune, and the next night, we might do some rock 'n' roll tune instead. It's a lot of fun to play, and there are a lot of breaks and drum parts for me to play. The music is challenging, and it's not your everyday pop/R&B type music. You really can't classify her music, because you never know what she's going to do. We may be doing some funk tune, and she may sing some jazz lick over that. You don't get that all the time. She's very innovative, and a very bright and articulate young lady." Currently, they are on a summer tour of the States, to be followed by a European tour in the fall.

—Robyn Flans

**Gregg Field** has been working with Ella Fitzgerald. **Marc Droubay** in the midst of a world tour with Survivor. **Tony Coleman** working with Silent Partners in Northern California. **Norman Roberts** is working with The Mizii Link. **Tommy Wells** recorded with Almost Brothers and The Girls Next Door. **Bob Gullotti** has been touring with The Fringe, which has also resulted in a live recording entitled *The Raging Bulls*, which was released during the spring. **Peter Clemente** recording with Michael Monroe, former lead singer for Hanoi Rocks. He is currently

in the midst of a tour of Scandinavia, Europe, and Japan. **Steve Houghton** on Scott Henderson's new album out this month. **Jonathan Mover** is currently working on a new album with GTR. He is also producing and playing on a project by Paul Julian. **Eddie Bayers** has been recording with Alabama, Sweethearts of the Rodeo, Tanya Tucker, Terri Gibbs, Charlie Pride, Kenny Rogers, and jingles for Burger King and Coca-Cola. **Marvin Kanarek** has been working on jingles for such products as Chevy S-10, Chevy Trucks, Volkswagen, Nissan Trucks,

Tone Soap, and the Lottery Pick 3, as well as projects with the Bone Daddies and Janey Street, and tracks for the soundtrack *Tape Heads*. **Mike Baird** in the studio with Russell Hitchcock. **Eric Singer** is with the Gary Moore Band. Recently in Argentina for a week of clinics were **Casey Scheuerell**, **Emil Richards**, **Steve Houghton**, **Efrain Toro**, and **Joe Porcaro**. **Herb Shucher** is touring with Leon Russell as well as working with Edgar Winter. **Keith Edwards** is touring with Gary Chapman. **Michael Mason** worked on such film scores as *Five Cor-*

*ners*, *Campus Man* and *Russkies*, as well as working on Ted Nugent's upcoming album. **Glenn Symmonds** of the Eddie Money Band recently returned from a series of dates in South America and Europe. Congratulations to **Ricky Lawson** on winning a Grammy for Best R&B Instrumental for his composition, "And You Know That" off the Yellowjackets *Shades* LP. **Ricky Sebastian** recently on a three-month tour with Bushrock. He is currently beginning work on a solo album.

—Robyn Flans



# A CUT ABOVE...

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Steve Ferrone - Duran Duran



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Mike Baird - Journey

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# IT'S QUESTIONABLE

**Q.** I am the owner of a four-year-old Pearl *Export* drumkit with a beautiful green flash finish. I'd like to add another 22" bass drum and an 18" tom, but I can't find the green flash finish in any of my catalogs or in my local music stores. Can you please tell me if Pearl still makes drums with this finish and, if so, how I could obtain them?

J.R.  
Batavia, NY

**A.** According to a spokesman for Pearl, the company has discontinued the green flash finish. However, it may be possible that some drums exist in leftover inventory. You should ask your authorized Pearl dealer to contact the factory to see if the drums might be special-ordered for you.

**Q.** I have a pair of Zildjian *Quick Beat* hi-hat cymbals, which have holes in the bottom cymbal to eliminate the problem of air-lock. However, I still seem to get air-lock about 50% of the time, and the rest of the time, I get a very loose sound. I've tried every adjustment possible but can't manage to get a tight "chick" sound. Could the problem be the cymbals . . . the hi-hat stand . . . my left-foot technique?

S.K.  
Las Vegas, NV

**A.** We passed your question on to Zildjian's Lennie DiMuzio, who offered the following suggestions. "Try the cymbals on several different hi-hats to determine if the same problem exists. If it doesn't, then the problem is likely with your hi-hat stand. If the problem does exist, it might be that the cymbals aren't seating properly. In that case, return the cymbals directly to the Zildjian factory, describing the situation to our Return Goods Department. That way, they can take a look at the cymbals, determine what could be the cause of the problem, and take appropriate action to solve it."

**Q.** I have a seven-piece Sonor drumkit and a set of student-quality cymbals. My problem is that, although the cymbals are perfectly adequate for practicing, my band wants to start playing some gigs. What would you suggest?

T.D.  
Toledo, OH

**A.** When it comes time to start playing professionally, you naturally need to examine your equipment to see if it will meet the requirements of the gig. With this in mind, you really only have two options.

If you are unhappy with the sound of your current cymbals and you have the money to upgrade, then you should probably do so. You can reasonably expect that, as your band starts to play more frequently, you'll earn the money back. In this sense, the cymbals are an investment, and you'll recoup that investment along with gaining the satisfaction of playing with high-quality cymbals. It might even be possible to borrow the money from some source, and to pay it back out of band earnings.

If you do not have—and cannot borrow—the money necessary to buy new cymbals right away, then the only alternative is to go ahead and play out with the cymbals you have now, in order to earn the money necessary to pay for better ones. It's sometimes a painful experience if your cymbals are really poor-sounding, but there is really nothing else to do. You certainly don't want to refuse to play paying jobs on the basis of your equipment, because that's self-defeating.

The main thing is to get out into the musical marketplace as a performer. Take a look at your financial situation and decide what option is open to you with regard to cymbals. Then take that option, and start playing!

**Q.** I am a left-handed drummer and have been playing for about three years. My problem is that, when I originally started playing drums, I learned on a right-handed setup. I am still playing with the kit set up this way. Should I continue playing it set up like it is and "train" my right hand and foot to keep up with my left hand and foot, or should I rearrange my set and "retrain" both hands and both feet to play left-handed?

G.L.  
Kenai, AK

**A.** If you're already used to playing on a right-handed kit, you might want to continue with it, while at the same time experimenting with a left-handed setup to see how it feels. In a way, you have an advantage over some other players. With your experience on a right-handed kit, along with the strength and skill you probably possess in a left-handed approach, you're in a great position to develop an ambidextrous style, enabling you to lead with either hand and possibly to play excellent double bass drums (if you're interested). The main thing is to find the setup with which you are the most comfortable. Try both left- and right-handed setups; your body will quickly tell you which feels more natural.

**Q.** I have a 1964 Ludwig wood snare drum. The beige paint-like substance used inside the shell to protect it from moisture is beginning to peel off. How can I remove it without damaging the drum? What can I replace it with?

K.D.  
Brooklyn, NY

**A.** We checked with several drum repair specialists, and the gist of their advice is that you should remove the old interior finish with paint remover, and then clean the area thoroughly with thinner. When this has dried, prepare the new surface for refinishing by sanding by hand. It is essential to remove all the old finish before applying the new finish. Repaint or stain and varnish the interior of the shell. For more detailed information, refer to David Creamer's Shop Talk column, entitled "Refinishing Your Drums," in the December '84 MD.

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Photo by Neil Zlozower.

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# MIKE



*MIKE Baird relaxes on his couch inside his North Hollywood home. He*

# B A I R D



by Robyn Flans

Photo by Rick Malkin

*deserves to relax. It's his first week off the road with Journey, and it is*



Photo by Denise Marie Luko

obvious that it has been a rough one.'

Sometimes we carry around the misconception that successful musicians are immune to hassles and insecurity—that if they've had hits, they're always treated like gold and no one messes with them. It isn't so. Even someone with Mike's list of credits must deal with difficult situations. Having worked with such people as Rick Springfield, Donna Summer, Manhattan Transfer, Melissa Manchester, Joe Cocker, El DeBarge, Olivia Newton-John, Kenny Rogers, the Pointer Sisters, Natalie Cole, Peter Cetera, Eddie Money, and Journey does not make it any easier on him.

It's been trials and tribulations since day one. On his first recording session with a Swedish artist, Flemming Rasmussen, Mike allowed the producer to alter his sound so much that "the sound I was used to getting was completely blown out the window and I was totally freaked out." Mike worked with Rasmussen for a couple of years until hooking up with the Friends of Distinction. Eventually, their backup band, H.P. Riot, broke off onto its own, and Mike traveled with them for a couple of years. Upon returning to L.A., however, he received a phone call from a production company that was creating two late-night T. V. pilots. They had gotten Mike's name from someone he had briefly met while traveling, and they wanted him to audition for the part of "Bruce," who was a member of a band.

"It was a major acting role, and they went on to tell me that he was a tall, dark, handsome, Vic Tanny type. I said, 'Look, first of all, I'm not tall and dark. I'm not exactly handsome and I don't have a Vic Tanny body, so you're talking to the wrong cat.' They wanted me to go down there and audition anyway. I was completely insecure at that point, not knowing what I was going to do, and all of a sudden, I was supposed to be an actor."

He went for the audition anyway, and they liked him so much that they changed the role to cater to Mike and his personality. Nothing happened with the T. V. pilots, but it began an association that was to change his life.

**MB:** The musical director was David Foster. David Foster was the new kid in town, playing live in the *Rocky Horror Show* at

the Roxy. We did two tracks at A&M Studios and David started saying, "You should be doing dates." The next thing I knew, I got a call from David for a demo session for Brian and Brenda Russell. I went down to the small room at Village Recorders, set my stuff up, and the snares broke on my snare drum. I totally freaked. The producer taped the snares and said, "We'll get through it, no problem." The tune came out incredible. I went back into the room for the playback and I said, "Who's the bass player? He's pretty good," The room went deadly silent. They said, "You don't know who that is? That's Lee Sklar." I said, "Who's Lee Sklar?" They said, "Where have you been?" I felt like a total jerk when I said, "Look, I came from Southgate," and they said, "Southgate? Where's that?" I said, "Just before the earth drops off." They wound up keeping that track because they tried to redo it, but they couldn't get it to feel like the original track. So I wound up being on the album with Jeff Porcaro, who played on the rest of the songs—great company for the first album out!

**RF:** What was your goal at this point? Had you decided to be a session guy?

**MB:** Right out of high school, I didn't really know what I wanted to do. I also wanted to be a commercial artist and a cartoonist. I did some work for Hanna Barbera years and years ago and thought that was what I wanted to do, but I was torn between the two. I finally decided I didn't want to be stuck in a room with no window and a drafting board for the rest of my life, so I pursued being a drummer. And my goal was to be a studio musician, which happened, thanks to some people in the business like David Foster, Lee Sklar, Jay Graydon, and a lot of different people.

**"WHEN YOU START OUT IN THE BUSINESS, YOU, AS THE DRUMMER, ARE ALWAYS WRONG."**

Photo by Rick Malkin

**RF:** You have told me that a studio player must have something unique to offer. What do you feel is your unique point?

**MB:** Just what I think differentiates anybody in that situation. It's a feel. It's the interpretation of what kind of fill to play where and how it's played. Even though Jeff Porcaro and I have two different styles, we're very similar. Feel-wise we're a little different, though. I play more towards the center, if not back, and Jeff plays more on top. We can still work together, though. If someone wanted us to play the same fill, the way that fill would be played, how it would be accented, and how it would feel would be totally different. Both would be correct, but it comes down to what's right for the situation and what the producer wants to hear. Does the producer want to hear the way Jeff interprets it or the way Mike interprets it?

**RF:** Where do you think your style came from?

**MB:** A big influence in my early years was Nigel Olsson. I loved his playing. I also loved Jim Gordon and John Bonham. I always thought Bonham was an unbelievable innovator over any other drummer I could name from that period. I don't know that his style necessarily carries over to mine, but in those days, when I was first starting out doing dates, you got categorized. Who do you hire for a pop tune? You hire this guy, because that's all he can play. Even though everybody could play everything, if you played on a record, everyone said, "Oh, that's his niche," which was not necessarily the case. I got classified for a while as a ballad player. You want a ballad, you call Baird; you want a pop tune, you call Jeff.

**RF:** Do you think your work with Rick Springfield helped change that misconception?

**MB:** Yes, and during that period, everybody said, "Oh, he's a rock player. Don't call him for pop; don't call him for ballads." When there used to be contractors, that's what they'd do.

**RF:** What happened after that first demo session?

**MB:** I started doing more dates with David Foster, and Lee Sklar and I really hit it off. It was like a match made in heaven. I love the guy dearly, and he's a brilliant musician. I think he told David Anderle, who was a staff producer at A&M, about me. David was producing Rita Coolidge, and she needed a hit record. Lee said, "I know this new kid in town. You've got to use him," and he talked David into using me. I was on drums, Lee Sklar was on bass, Dean Parks was on guitar, and Booker T. Jones was on Hammond B3. We did the tune "Higher And Higher," which was when the disco thing first came in. I remember saying, "Where do you want the tempo of this tune to be?" David Anderle said, "You listen to the radio and go to these clubs, so you pick the tempo." I picked the tempo, and I remember doing the tune in three takes. It wound up being a number-one single for Rita. The date was three or four days, and a lot of the tunes were real magical. We did the Boz Scaggs tune "We're All Alone," which was also a hit for her. From there, my career just kind of snowballed, and my name started getting around town.

**RF:** You were already established in town when you got a call to work for this unknown bubblegummer, Rick Springfield.

**MB:** Right. Keith Olson had to produce two tunes on him. It was Neil Geraldo—Pat Benatar's guitar player—and I. The bass player didn't show up. Rick and Neil played guitar, and we went in and did this thing, "Jesse's Girl," which was only semi-arranged. That was a huge hit for him, and during that period, while that was being finished, I was also working with Jay Graydon with the Manhattan Transfer—we did "Boy From New York City"—and with Mike Post, doing *Rockford Files* and *Hill Street Blues*. When Rick's tune hit, those other tunes also hit, and I had three tunes on the Top Ten. I was totally jazzed.

**RF:** You did all of Rick's records at the time, and finally you went out on the road with him, which was your first big road gig.

**MB:** Yes. That was 1984.



**RF:** So you were suddenly a rock player.

**MB:** Right. My whole premise was, "Now I can show people that I can play rock 'n' roll," even though it was more pop than rock. I learned a lot from that tour. The one thing about being in the studio is that you don't get the feedback from an audience, and I realized that I missed that. You get an instant reaction that you don't get from producers, even if they jump up and down and say you're the best thing to ever hit the planet. It's still not the same as having a whole crowd of people respond.

**RF:** Most producers don't do that anyway.

**MB:** True, they give you a handshake.

**RF:** So what did you learn?

**MB:** I learned that there is a huge difference between live and the studio. First of all, you realize that, if you just sit there and play, you're not only cheating yourself, but



Photo by Denise Marie Luko



you're cheating the people who spent the money. Granted, they're not there to see me—they're there to see Rick or whomever—but the more I interact, the better it comes off and the more energy that can develop. Feel is a real important thing, and live, tempos can get real carried away. That was a hard tour, too. There were a lot of things where they had a two-track rolling that had special sound effects, background voices, extra synth parts, and stuff like that. I had to play to a click track, but the click track was never laid down to begin with, so what wound up happening was Rick put a click track on it. He took a wooden ruler and a plastic ashtray, and made a homemade click track to this stuff. There were spots where the thing was all over the place. The guys in the band had to listen to me because they didn't have headphones. There was one tune, "Taxi Dancing," which Rick co-sang with Randy Crawford, and every night, right in the middle of this big fill in the tune, the tempo would go way up and then drop like half of a beat, so I'd have to find the middle ground and just barrel right through the center of it. That was a trip, but it was a challenge.

**RF:** You mentioned before that you were fanatical about tuning drums. How does it differ from studio to live?

**MB:** I tune things a lot higher live than in the studio. What winds up happening is, live, the lower you make things, the more you start getting in the range of the bass and the synthesized keyboards, so it's going to get lost. All you're going to get is basically the attack. Also, it depends on what the sound mixer and monitor mixer want. With Rick, I left my drums pretty much wide open

*Mike with his drum tech, Peter Moshay*



with no padding, except a little bit to eliminate the ring. With Journey, the toms sounded good, but they were pretty dead. The type of PA you use makes a difference—what kind of speakers, what kind of amps. Having a tom that rang real long would have gotten so boomy in all the halls that it would have been this giant feedback wash. So they were very tight and the pitch was kind of high, but not real high—maybe a half again higher than normally in the studio.

**RF:** In the studio, sometimes it takes minutes to get a good drum sound, and other times it can take days. Why the difference in time? What goes on?

**MB:** When you start out in the business, you, as the drummer, are always wrong no matter what happens. The engineer is buddies with the producer, and if he isn't, he's trying to be, so you already have two strikes against you going in. You wind up doing a lot of things you don't want to do, and if it doesn't

sound happening, the engineer goes to the producer and says, "Hey, man, these drums sound like shit." As you get older and become more experienced, you can say, "Look, I need to talk to you. You come out here and listen to it." I've always been the kind of person to work my fingers to the bone to help a guy out as long as his attitude is cool. The basic difference is engineers. It can also be the room. Maybe I've gotten a good sound at Sunset Sound, and maybe I go into Studio 55 and the engineer isn't that familiar, so it is different. But generally, it should sound the same. Any good engineer can walk into any studio anywhere, and get a good drum sound without taking hours and hours and hours.

**RF:** How do you approach it initially?

**MB:** I usually go in and make sure everything is tuned to the way I hear it. Then I ask what kind of attitude we're looking for. Are we looking at a ballad? Is it a rock tune? What are we doing? Then I take the appropriate snare drum out.

**RF:** What do you use for what application?

**MB:** On almost everything, I use a 5 1/2 Ludwig bronze, although, sometimes I use a 6 1/2 for ballads. That's a great all-purpose snare drum, and it works in just about any situation. The thing I like about it versus a Ludwig *Black Beauty* or a regular chrome snare is that it still has the bite, but it seems to have less overtones to deal with. You can get a nice, fat, crisp sound out of it. You can tune it up, you can tune it down, and in all applications, it works well, within the middle ground, so to speak. Then I'll work with the engineer on it. He'll say, "I need more top end," or "I've got this ring," so I'll adjust the tape and the padding accordingly. I always keep my bottom heads tight on the snare drum, which is one thing some drummers don't do. That works in most situations—the middle ground—as long as you're not working in extremes or looking for a really different sound. Then I tune the top head accordingly. If it's a pop tune, I'll usually tune it to a middle C or to a D. I shouldn't give away all my trade secrets.

**RF:** Didn't you say earlier that it's the way each

individual plays that makes him or her unique?

**MB:** That's true. I've heard the saying, "He can play on trash cans and make them sound good." It's all how you hit it. I just did a session in Texas, where the group had a drummer they were going to allow to play on two tracks. I went in that day and played two tracks. He used the exact same drums that I did, and they spent all night changing snare heads, this, that, and the other thing. They couldn't figure it out. They tore their hair out trying to figure what the deal was, but it's how you hit the drum.

**RF:** Back to the tuning.

**MB:** I make sure all the lugs are pretty even, and then I go from there. I also check my snare heads. When I buy a head, I pick it up and lightly tap it. If it has a nice, resonant tone, it's a good head. If it just goes dead immediately, it's not going to have enough top end. It's not going to resonate. I remember tearing my hair out on sessions, replacing snare drum head after snare drum head, strainers, bottom heads, and everything. I'd get a great sound but the producer would say, "Okay, but we're losing the top end. We need two more takes." I'd change the drumhead, and it would be like I picked some drum out of Sears & Roebuck and threw it up there. It was a nightmare, and it was all on the drumhead. I never picked the heads. I just took them off the shelf. That's important for toms as well. Live, it is not that critical.

Getting back to your initial question, I think it's the engineer. Some engineers can get a decent sound in ten minutes, some take an hour, and some take days. It's just their approach. It also depends on the situation. Maybe it's a project where they can afford to take a day and do nothing but drums. Maybe the producer is looking for something that is very unique—not commonplace. Then it takes time.

**RF:** Do you feel that electronics have helped facilitate getting a sound quicker?

**MB:** Definitely. You really don't have to spend that much time. The sound is what it is, and it's right up in front. There are no variances. A snare drum can vary; a tom-tom can vary. Every time you hit it, it's going to sound different. But a sample is always going to be exactly the same. So that has made it a lot quicker, and that's why a lot of people use machines. Also, I've done dates where I've played, and then later they've used my track to trigger the sounds they want. They're not concerned with getting sounds, because they know it's going to take time. "Let's just carve the track; let's get a signal . . .," but the problem with that is then you have to deal with, "What's the drummer going to listen to in the meantime to become inspired?" If it's something that sounds like a glass tabletop for a tom-tom, how's the drummer going to get into it? A lot of times, they'll add samples to trigger off of your sound, so they can feed you a combination of both. They can adjust it later.

**RF:** How do you feel about the wave of electronics?

**MB:** There's a part of me that's very excited about it. I think it is very creative. Another part of me is saddened to see acoustic instruments taking a backseat. I don't care how something is sampled. It will never be the same as somebody actually striking it.

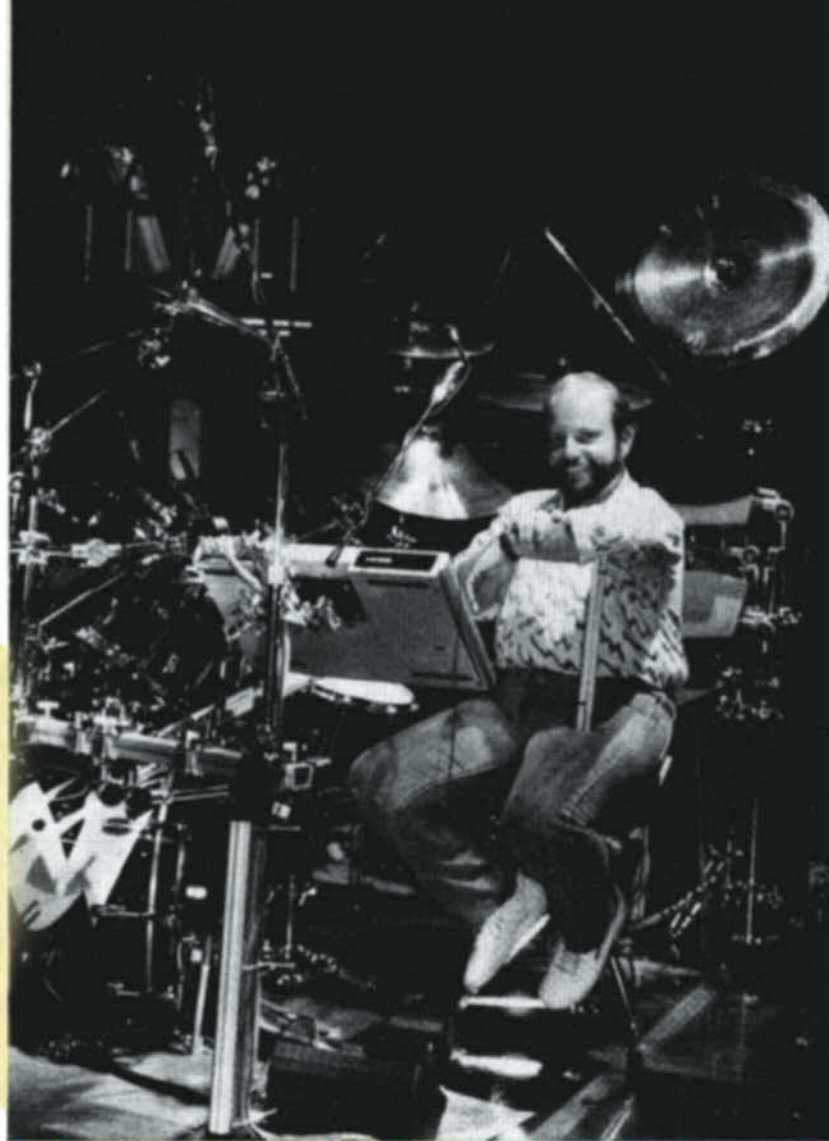


Photo by Denise Marie Luko

**'THE IMPORTANT THING IS  
WHAT IT FEELS LIKE. DRUM  
MACHINES ARE PERFECT,  
BUT WHERE'S THE  
IDENTITY?'**

**RF:** You used the word "creative" when talking about electronics, whereas a lot of people feel it takes away their creativity.

**MB:** I think electronics is like anything; you can make whatever you want to make of it. You can go to a store and buy everything known to man—the hippest things on the face of the planet—but if you use all the stock sounds, what does that have to do with being creative? The creative aspect, to me, is finding what sounds I can combine with other sounds. How can I change something to make a unique sound? Sure, you can have the most amazing library of sounds, but for a drummer,

it's still going to be the style. Who's going to trigger it? Everyone has everyone's sound anyway. The only thing these sounds don't have is the individual personality, and that's basically the key. My work, in the last few years, has become 99% overdubs.

**RF:** Let's talk about the realities of replacing machines and overdubbing. How is that for a drummer? Let's take it from the beginning: You get a call . . .

**MB:** And they tell me what they want over the phone. They say, "I've got a track that we cut with a machine, and I don't like it. I want to replace it." I ask, "How much do you want to

replace? Do you want all of it replaced? Do you want cymbal overdubs? Do you want tom overdubs, snare drum overdubs, or what?" I've replaced anything from one thing on the drumkit to everything and every combination thereof. "I want just a hi-hat and a snare drum." "I want a cymbal crash and no ride." "I want a tom-tom and a hi-hat," or whatever.

Let's say I go in with the premise that we're going to replace every-

# B U D D Y

## BUDDY RICH 1917-1987

by Burt Korall

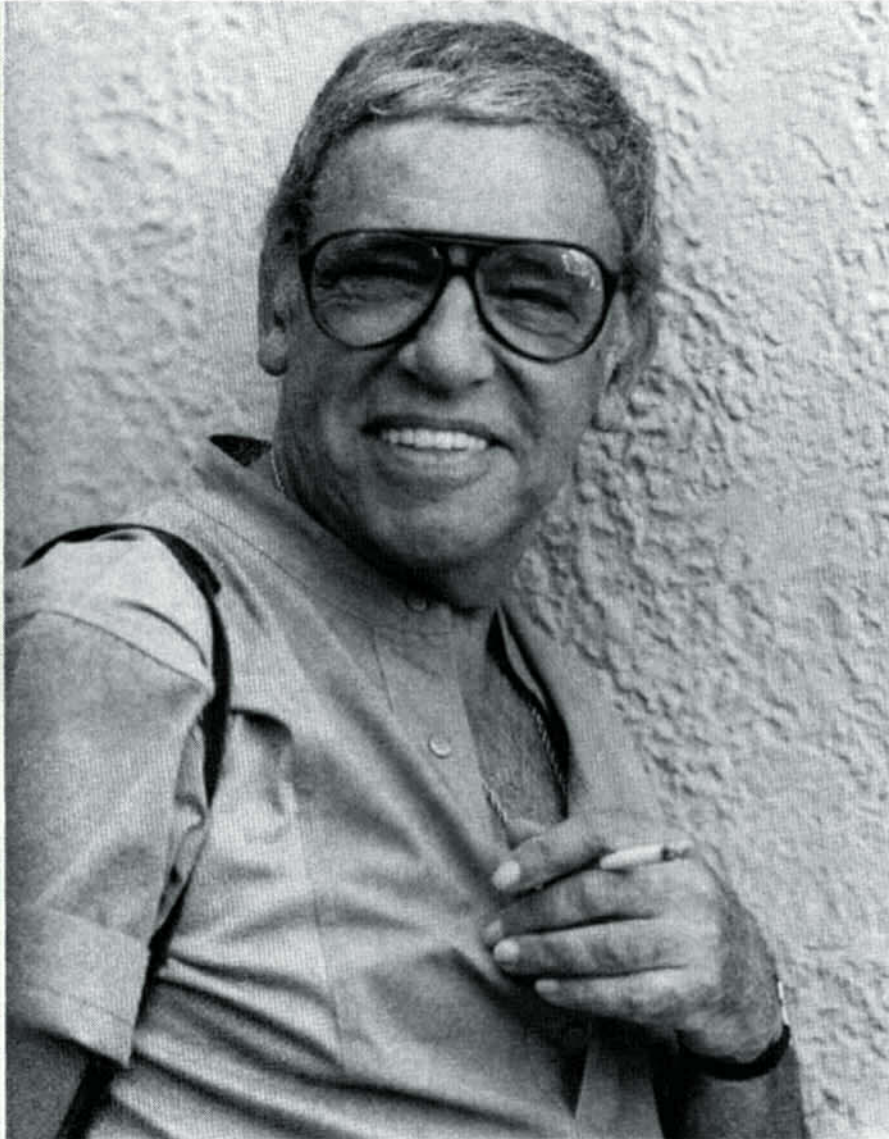


Photo by Veryl Oakland

never be mistaken for your everyday hail-fellow-well-met individual. Very simply, he was a genius and was allowed the latitude given to those who are unique.

Gene Krupa, a close mutual friend, spoke of Buddy in terms reserved for those cut from very singular cloth. He repeatedly insisted that Buddy was a drum phenomenon. "Another like him is not even a possibility," Gene asserted.

Mel Torme, who knew Buddy for over 40 years, told me, "I've heard him in every circumstance. And of all the drummers I've seen and heard over the years, Buddy was the one—the consummate genius. He was like Tazio Nuovolari was with the racing car. He had complete control."

Stanley Kay, Buddy's former manager and the drummer who stepped in for the leader in the first Buddy Rich Big Band in the mid-'40s, went to the heart of the matter. He said, "The man was put on earth to play drums."

Doing the unusual and playing well were so easy for Buddy that he didn't understand how difficult performing could be for others. A hard, often impossible taskmaster, he kept at his band, frequently losing his temper when things didn't go the way he thought they should. But this was nothing new; it had always been that way—in the Artie Shaw band, with Tommy Dorsey, indeed in any musical situation in which he found himself directly involved. Buddy fought and screamed, threw sticks, and even physically got into it with those who disagreed with him. Because he loved music so much and because he felt so strongly about his instincts, he insisted that things should go down only one way: his way. Often he was right.

When I told him several years ago that I had been playing again after decades away from drumming, he merely smiled and said, "Just play; have fun; it'll all come back." It didn't, really; too much time had passed. I stopped playing after a period of time, realizing that Buddy was talking

*continued on page 94*

**B**UDDY Rich was a *star* in every sense of the word. The ace drummer remained in the foreground from childhood until his death on April 2. He knew he was special; he couldn't help but be aware that what he was capable of doing was freakish, impossible—beyond all oth-

ers. The key fact when considering Buddy Rich is that he was not like most people. He couldn't be expected to behave as the majority of us do. A man of temperament—a perfectionist whose behavior varied, depending on his mood—he could

# R E M E M B E R



# Y



A very young Buddy Rich began his nearly 70-year career as "Traps, The Drum Wonder," on the 1920s RKO vaudeville circuit.

### Henry Adler

Many people don't know it, but to those of us who knew him well, Buddy was a marvelous guy. He was a great family man, first and foremost. As a player, we'll never see anything like him again. No drummer could play the way Buddy played. I don't think any of us will ever forget Buddy. He was the boss.

### Roy Burns

Buddy Rich probably influenced every drummer, to some degree, since 1940. He showed all of us what the instrument could do. He pushed back the inherent limits of the drumset and took it to new heights. Even if you were not a fan of Buddy's, you had to respect his ability, his drive, and his dedication to the art of drumming. He was one of a kind, and we will miss him.

### Remo Belli

It was my good fortune to have been able to know and understand, to some degree, Buddy Rich during the many different phases of his illustrious career. Buddy Rich's contribution in elevating the drumset player to an acceptable social, artistic, and musical position should be remembered forever by those of us who depend on such leadership as a constant source of inspiration. The world will surely miss Buddy Rich, but we must be grateful for the time he did spend with us.

### Louie Bellson

I cannot express in words what I feel about the passing of my dear friend, Buddy Rich. All I can say is that I'm sad, but then I realize that, when God can give us one or two days of happiness with a person, that should be enough, and I had over 40 years of wonderful times with this great man. He was like a dear brother to me, and he inspired me so much as a player. People like Buddy, Gene Krupa, Shelly Manne, Jo Jones, and Chick Webb were the select few players that God gave all this extra talent to. All drummers should look up to Buddy and say, "Thanks Buddy for a great life and showing us how." This next year, I'm dedicating all my concerts to this great man.

I just can't get it into my mind that he's gone. Of course, to me he's always going to be there, because every time I sit down to play, I'm going to be thinking about him, Jo Jones, Chick Webb, and all these beautiful guys.

# R E D



Buddy in his 20's behind an early set of Slingerland Radio Kings.

Jim Chapin

Back in early June, 1937, I had just begun to play drums. In the previous six months, I had marveled at Gene, Cozy, Chick, Lionel, the two Rays—Bauduc and McKinley—Davey, O'Neill, etc. One night, after leaving the Savoy about 3:00 A.M., I decided to try another Harlem spot called Dickie Wells'. I walked down the stairs into madness. A vibes player was playing a very fast tempo. It seemed as if he were riding a whirlwind created by a human dynamo who was playing effortlessly on a set of inadequate drums. It was Buddy Rich—all 19 years of him. He was well known uptown; he'd already been a star in show biz for 17 of those years. On this particular night, he was just sitting in. His epic commitment to jazz started the next winter at the Hickory House.

For all of us who grew up in the swing era, he was the ultimate paragon of skill. Styles have come and gone, but to many, Buddy remained the incomparable delineator of what was good in drumming—always on top of any worthy advance in the art. Who will fill his shoes? No one can, but if we just heed his example and fill our own shoes, maybe we will work wonders.

#### Alan Dawson

One of the most pleasant experiences I had with Buddy was several years ago, when I was called by Joe Williams to come down to Pittsburgh to perform along with the Buddy Rich band. It was a thrill for me, but also the source of a little bit of apprehension because I was wondering about what the drum scene would be if I was using Buddy's drums. It turned out that Buddy was very courteous and very cooperative. He said, "Hey, look, adjust anything you want any way you want it. I'll play them any way they're set up." Throughout the whole afternoon of rehearsal and performance, he was the soul of congeniality with me, with Joe, and with the members of the band.

My next time was a few years later when I was playing for a Cape Cod jazz society performance. I was playing with a band ahead of his band. When I came down, he said, "That was some hip shit you played." I said, "I'm just warming up the crowd for you." Well, he went up and played "Love For Sale." I had done a little bass drum thing. He came up and played a whole ensemble type of thing with a bass drum. It was just incredible. There are a whole lot of different ways of playing the drums, and his was not necessarily the approach I used, but I always thought of him as a kind of beacon for everybody, so that whatever it is one does style-wise, one should seek to do as well as he did.

#### Lennie DiMuzio

Armand and I were with Buddy the day before he died. I personally found him to be one of the most courageous, strongest people that I ever met in my life. He had been through 14 days of chemotherapy and cobalt treatment, which was really very hard on him. He was paralyzed on his left side, but there was a very slow, gradual increase in strength that was coming daily. He was in a lot of pain, but he was still trying, and he was showing us how he could move his fingers and toes a little bit.

The fight was still there to the very end. That's what intrigued me so much. Most people would have never lasted that long after what he had been through. He was tough in spirit and in attitude. His whole life was just dedicated to the drums. Right up to the very last moment, he was talking about going back out on the road. I consider it to be probably the saddest, but most wonderful, moment in my life to have been with Buddy at the end and to have witnessed the absolute, incredible strength in attitude that he had right up to the final day. I admired his attitude and his inspiration. He showed us how to live as musicians, and then he showed us how to die. He went out with a lot of dignity and with a lot of pride.

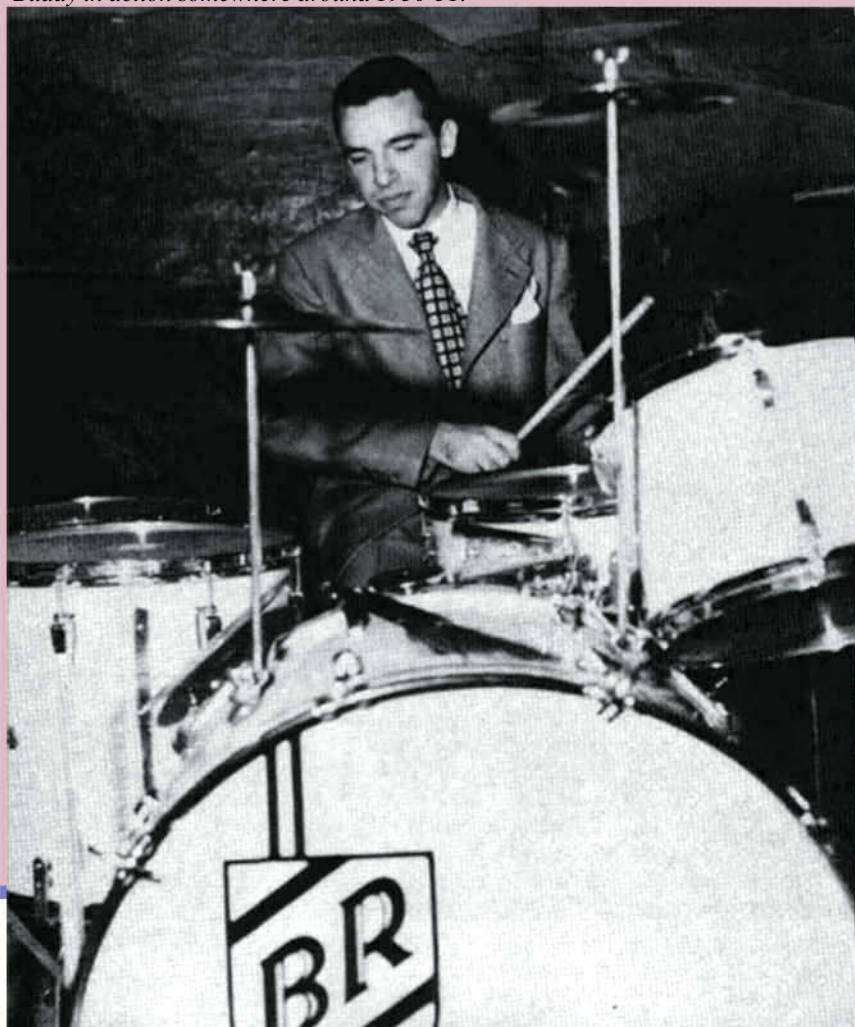


*On the movie set of Ship Ahoy in 1942, with Tommy Dorsey & His Orchestra featuring Buddy and Frank Sinatra (far right).*

### **Fred Gruber**

As far as the twentieth century goes, the best of what we are is represented in people like Babe Ruth, Joe Louis, Albert Einstein, and Buddy Rich. The contributions that people like these made will always be with us. Buddy was a total artist, the likes of which we will never see again. And personally, with his passing, I lost the best friend I ever had. I miss him.

*Buddy in action somewhere around 1950-51.*



### **Bobby Columbly**

For some reason—I'm not exactly sure why, because I never had that much faith in my own abilities as a drummer—he always complimented me, and he had been known as someone who never said anything good about another drummer. But I found out that I was one of the drummers he liked, although my playing was real different. Eventually I met him and thanked him for all the nice stuff he had said. I had heard these terrible things about Buddy Rich—that he was real nasty and all this stuff. When I first met him, I sure didn't experience any of that. I could see in his eyes that he was a tremendously warm person.

Soon after that, he called me and asked if I wanted to go to a dinner, and warned me that it would be a rather unusual dinner. Upon finding out that Gene Krupa had leukemia, Buddy had decided that, rather than let his friend die without paying homage to him, he would throw a good-bye party for Gene Krupa. He invited people from Zildjian cymbals, Slingerland drums, Frank's Drum Shop in Chicago, Manny's in New York, and drummers like Joe Morello, Zutty Singleton, Jo Jones, Sonny Igoe—I apologize to those I've forgotten. He asked me to be the representative of the young drummers. We each made a toast to Gene and thanked him for all of his contributions as a drummer. We were all crying. The only one in that room who looked good was Gene, and he looked fantastic.

For Buddy to pay tribute on this very personal level to a person, without waiting until after Gene was dead to do it—this was the most incredible evening I've ever spent in my life. He did it because he loved Gene, and he wanted to say good-bye the right way. The pity is that we didn't get a chance to do this for Buddy, because if anyone deserved it, he did.

*Norman Granz's famed Jazz At The Philharmonic tours of the early to mid-'50s featured both Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich in their now historic "Drum Battles."*

#### **Peter Erskine**

About 11 years ago, Buddy's band and Maynard Ferguson's band were playing on the same bill at an amusement park in Ohio. It was summer, and it was hot. During his drum solo in "West Side Story," Buddy played the most magnificent single-stroke roll in the history of the world. The sound, the control, the stick height—everything was perfect. And in that unlikely place, it was like seeing the *Pieta* or something. You could certainly compare Buddy to Heifetz, Horowitz, or any of the great instrumental masters of music. I was so moved that, after his set, I went back to his dressing room and got down on one knee in front of him to shake his hand and express my complete admiration. He could see that my gesture was sincere, and he didn't think that it was too corny or dramatic of me. I've always appreciated that.

Buddy was the greatest drummer ever to pick up a pair of sticks. His bands always sounded so good. He was also the best brush player there ever was. Somehow, I thought he'd always be there for us.



*Buddy as he appeared on MD's very first cover in January 1977,*



#### **Sonny Igooe**

I first saw Buddy play when I was about 16 years old. He's always been a great influence on me, like he's been on so many other drummers over the years. Nobody could play in a band like Buddy. He was the only drummer I know of who would amaze you every time you heard him play. In a world where there have been very few real drumming "stars," you could honestly say that Buddy was a star in the true sense of the word. There's never been anyone like him. If there is anyone like him out there, well, I certainly haven't seen him yet.

#### **Stan Levey**

No one has ever played the way Buddy did, and I don't think we will ever see anyone equal his natural ability. I've known Buddy since 1939, when he was with Artie Shaw, and we stayed close until the day he died. The amazing thing about Buddy was that, through the years, his playing kept getting better. He influenced, either directly or indirectly, anyone who has ever been *near* a drum. I can relate Buddy to a Rembrandt or an Einstein—one of a kind.

#### **Larrie Londin**

As controversial as Buddy was, the people I've met who really knew him loved him a great deal. There had to be quite a large heart inside the man, even with all that facade in front of it. I know all the players that I've worked and practiced with were strongly influenced by Buddy. We've lost another legend, and he's going to be deeply missed.

## Mel Lewis

Buddy and I once did a benefit at Hastings High School to raise money for the stage band. We had each played, and then we were going to do a thing together. My daughter Donna said, "Oh my God. What's Buddy going to do to my dad when they get up there?" Buddy overheard her and laughed. I had this little, tiny set of Asba drums, with a 10 x 18 bass drum, a snare drum, and a couple of small cymbals. Buddy had this big, full set with the big bass drum, three tom-toms, and all that. So when we got out on stage, I turned to Buddy and said, "Okay, look, you're bigger than I am, so take it easy." That got a big laugh out of the audience. We sat down and had fun. Everything was real simple. There was no cutting—just simple and very musical. Generally, every time he was on the stage with another drummer, it always turned out to be a big battle. He always had to sort of wipe the guy out because the guy was proceeding to try to wipe him out, which was an impossibility. But we just kept it simple. He told me afterwards, "Man, why can't guys just do things like that all the time?" There was such a warmth.

We lost the one drummer that I think everybody had some respect for—either a ton of it or a little of it, but something. I've always said that there's no such thing as the best drummer. Everybody is different from everybody else. You strive to be as good as you can at what you are. But I always separated Buddy from the rest of the pack. He was so special.

Buddy's death is a major loss. I lost that and I lost a friend. It was a friendship that was always getting stronger. His philosophy is instilled in me. He played to the end, and he wanted to play even more. It should encourage everybody. I know it encouraged me to keep going, no matter what.

## Carl Palmer

For me, the man was everything. He was the reason for me to start playing, and he was the reason for me to carry on playing. From a very early age, I was influenced by him. Just four months ago, he invited me to sit in with his band in London at Ronnie Scott's club. The warmth from Buddy to me was always something quite unique. I'm sure a lot of other people have experienced that, but for me, it was something very special. He was an unbelievable person—I think misread by many people—a very sincere man, and just one of the greatest really. One of the few times I've cried in my life was when he died. He meant a lot to me and so did his family. As an individual, he was just so real. As Frank Sinatra said, "He was a genius, and he didn't even know it."

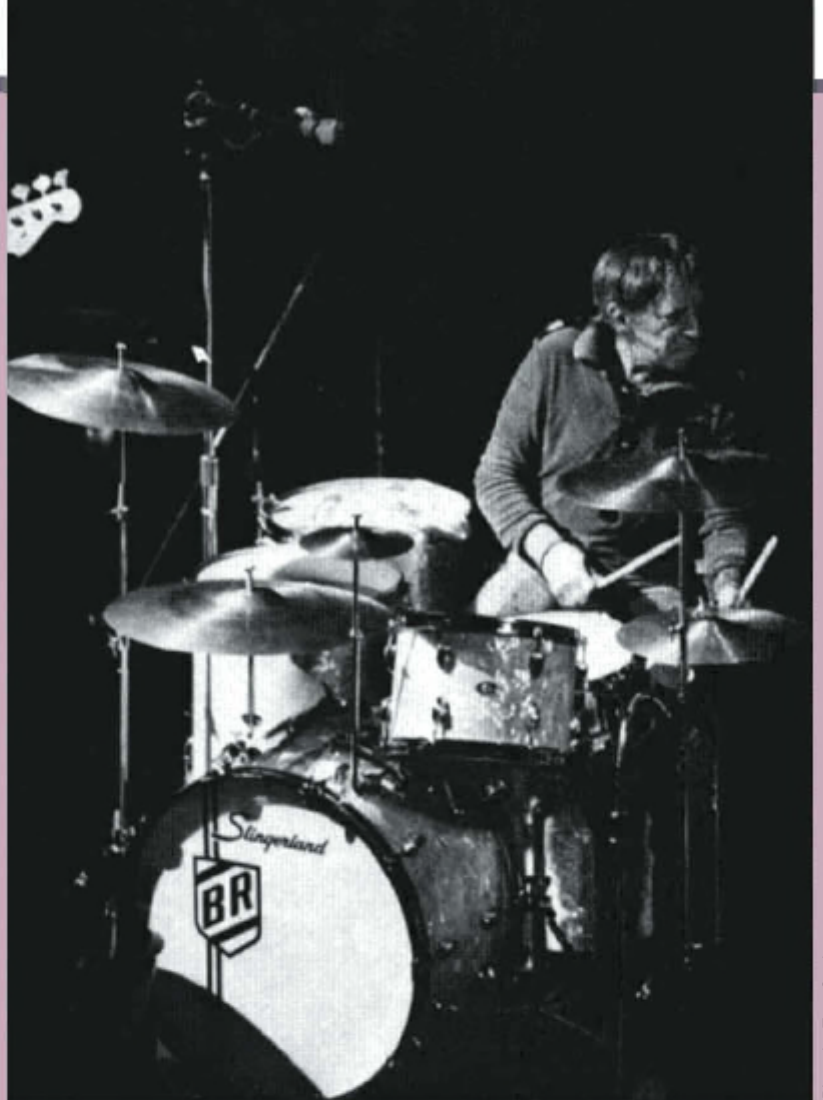


Photo by Tom Copi

*On the stand with the big band Buddy formed in 1966, and continued to front until his illness in early '87.*

## Ed Shaughnessy

One night in the early '60s, I was on my way to hear Buddy Rich play with Harry James at Carnegie Hall. I thought I'd go backstage first to say hello. As my wife and I approached the stage door, we saw Buddy leaning against the wall. As we got closer, he said, "Hey 'Shawn,' that record of *Walk On The Wild Side* [w/Jimmy Smith and Oliver Nelson] is a bitch! That's the way drums should be played."

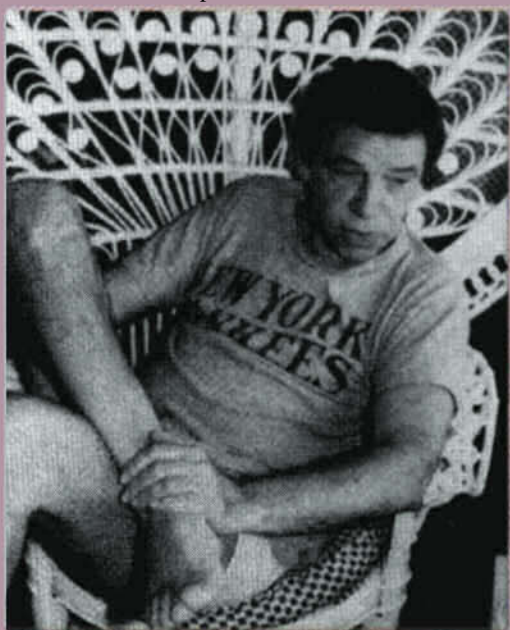
Man, if you don't believe that I felt ten feet tall, then you won't believe *nothin'*—especially if you know how seldom compliments flowed out of Buddy. He made me *feel good*, as he had some years before when he was playing at Birdland. After his set, he joined me at my table and we talked. He said, "Shawn, I like it that you say you feel inspired when you hear me play. I *don't* like it when people say, 'Jeez Buddy, you make me feel like giving up.' That's not the compliment I want. But if I help inspire a drummer to be better—even a little bit—that makes me feel good." I can truly say that Buddy always inspired me—and thousands of others, too—to be better and strive for more.

### Joe Morello

Without question, the man was a genius. For that particular style of drum solos and big band playing, no one will ever equal him. He had so much energy and so much confidence. It was not only the technical facility that the man possessed; it was the way he put it together. He had such a powerful sound, and he played with such conviction. There are a lot of drummers who have great technique, but they're sort of light and flighty. A lot of big band drummers do drum solos that are all premeditated, whereas Buddy always played spontaneously.

In 1966, the Brubeck group was doing Newport in July. My wife and I rented a car, but we didn't realize how long it would take us to get there. The traffic was horrendous. We were supposed to hit at 9:00, and we didn't get there until a quarter to ten. This is before they had the bridge at Newport. We had to take the ferry boat. I called George Wein from the dock and told him we would be a little late. We finally got there and drove backstage. I heard this voice yelling, "Hurry up. You're late." It was Buddy. He had set my drums up for me, and he was going to play with the quartet if I didn't get there in time. He stood in the wings while we played. The man was always a gentleman to me, and I really had a very warm feeling for him.

I know that he could be rough with his band sometimes, but I think it was because he demanded the perfection that he was trying to put out. I think he got that from the old Tommy Dorsey days. Tommy was that way. If you could play—never a word—but if you started goofing off, he got on your case so heavy, because everybody tried to put out 100% in those days. So I think that's where that came from. But all in all, I'll miss him terribly, not only as an inspiration, but also as a friend.



*A casual Buddy Rich relaxes in his New York apartment during MD's Buddy Revisited interview in 1981.*



*Photo by Veryl Oakland*

*Refusing to accept retirement, Buddy stayed on the road and at the helm of his youthful band for more than 20 years, until age 69.*

### Max Weinberg

Buddy Rich's death is the end of an era. He was the history of the drums: What a legacy he leaves us. I was fortunate to see Buddy play New York for the last time, at the Blue Note. He was hot. He seemed to push the band and himself harder and harder—never letting up for a second. You know, that might have been the best time I'd ever seen him play. Certainly now, it is the most poignant.

I have a huge poster of Buddy hanging in my drum room. I keep it there to remind myself of just what is possible, because Buddy Rich was more than simply a musician; he was an artist. It's real hard to think of a world without Buddy Rich, but what memories we have . . . .

### Armand Zildjian

During all of my life in this business, there was always Buddy Rich. He gave me the best musical experiences of my life. He had talent, musicianship, and natural ability with that drive behind it. You could recognize his playing 100 miles away. I don't know how to explain it except to say that he just knew how music should sound. He'll forever be a legend. The world is going to miss that fire he had in his drumming.

Shortly after Buddy Rich passed away, a number of MD readers wrote in to express their thoughts about this great man. A sampling of these letters follows.

The music world has lost yet another genius. He will be truly missed, but never forgotten, for he left everyone who ever saw him perform with a sense of awe for his professionalism and honesty in his music. He loved playing and we loved listening.

The Buddy Rich Fan Club was founded in 1984 to honor Mr. Rich for his brilliant playing. The legendary Buddy Rich is gone, but our club will help continue to keep the memory of Mr. Rich alive.

Charles Braun  
The Buddy Rich Fan Club  
P.O. Box 2014  
Warminster, PA 18974

I picked up my first pair of drumsticks at age 16, listening and learning all of the rock and pop stuff. One evening while I was watching TV, there he was, playing the greatest things I'd ever heard. He was no rocker, and he was older than any of the drummers I was into. I asked my mom about him, and she said, "You've never heard of Buddy Rich?" Well, maybe I hadn't, but from that moment on, he was the king, and he continued to be well into my present mid-30's. Whenever my musical career was at a lull and I started to slack off, seeing or hearing Buddy play would send me back to the books and practice set. And after a lot of my favorite bands were history, Buddy was still up there on the bandstand leading the way.

Bill Lettang  
Chicopee, MA

While getting ready to leave for a gig on April 2, I heard that Buddy Rich had passed away earlier that day. It had been four months to the day since I had seen him perform at the Blue Note. As always, the man's drumming ability had me floored. As Buddy walked to his bus, I said to him, "Buddy, you've done it again!" He replied, "I'm going to do it until I get it right." God bless you, Buddy.

Rob Eastlund  
Suffern, NY

Several years ago, I was speaking with Nick Fatool, the fine drummer who was playing with Pete Fountain at the time. When asked his opinion of Buddy Rich, Nick said, "Buddy is a freak . . . He's incredible. There won't be another one like him for a hundred years." Buddy set the standards. Now it is up to us to live up to, and hopefully someday surpass, the musical standards that Buddy Rich held high throughout a lifetime of playing and giving. Buddy would have wanted that.

David Norman  
Ocala, FL  
*continued on page 100*

# BUDDY'S CLASSIC RADIO KINGS

by Joe MacSweeney



Photo by Bruce Allen

*Joe MacSweeney is owner of the Eames drumshell company.*

I first started following Buddy in July of '69—just a fan who was very interested in drumming following him around like a puppy. I never even spoke to him until '79, after reading an interview that he did with Mel Torme, where he said there weren't any craftsmen anymore in drum making. He expressed dissatisfaction that he had let go of his old *Radio Kings*, and he didn't know why he ever did, because they really were very comfortable to him and really got the sound that he wanted. So I approached him and spoke to him about that. He just reiterated what he had said—that there weren't any craftsmen anymore. He wasn't really referring to custom work. He always played stock drums, pretty much right out of the factory. He just requested that there be no muffling in them. I think he really wanted a company employee he could talk to who would help him get the sound he wanted to hear.

I took those remarks about craftsmanship as a little challenge to myself in my own work, never dreaming that I would one day get to apply it to drums for him. In the summer of '82 we talked again, and he said that the perfect wood snare drum for him was a 5 1/2 x 14 *Radio King*. I said that I didn't see any reason why I couldn't find an old one and rework it for him, just in appreciation for all the inspiration he had given me. Six weeks later, he had his quadruple bypass surgery, and no one was sure if he was going to play again. But I made

sure that I got the drum ready. He made an amazing recovery, of course, and was soon playing again. A short time later, I presented the drum to him. He was very excited about it—almost like a young kid getting his first drum. He had been playing metal snare drums in the last few years previous to this, and he was excited about trying the wood drum again with calfskin heads. He was so excited that he asked if there was any chance of finding the rest of the set that would go with it.

We talked a little about what he thought a drumset should be. He actually referred to his style as being simple, and he thought that the set should be a basic, simple instrument. He was mainly concerned with the snare drum; the other drums were just tonal effects, and whatever you could do

*continued on page 100*



*Joe MacSweeney presenting the Radio King snare drum to Buddy.*

# HIGH PRIORITIES

"**H**E always affects a band he plays in with his unreserved exuberance. Tommy could truthfully take the names of 'The Spirit of Music' or 'The Joy of Creating.' He's one of my favorite musicians."—Chick Corea

A successful musician is liable to gain many things. The first that comes to mind for most is money to buy a nice house, fancy car, lots of clothes, jewelry, and tons of equipment, in addition to getting product endorsements. Then there are the throngs of adoring fans who will scream, cry, faint, and throw their underwear up on the stage. They will drool all over you while they nervously ask for your autograph, and write you love letters. Then there are all the vices your money can buy with a single snap of your finger or a quick phone call. Then come the important things. It is said that, when musicians gain the respect of their peers, they have truly made it. As evidenced by the above quote, Tom Brechtlein has truly made it.

In the past few months, I have had the privilege of seeing Tom play live many, many times. The settings have ranged from mainstream jazz, to electric fusion, to acoustic-trio music, to kick-it-out rock. Each time, I saw a gifted musician who had the taste, versatility, technique, and sensitivity to create an endless variety of moods. This energy poured from him at such an intense level that it infected each person in the room. Every musician he played with, at one time or another during the course of each set, would look his way in admiration and delight for the excitement he was creating: Some were even shaking their heads in disbelief, but they would always accompany it with a smile.

To use an old, overworked, but appropriate cliché, Tom Brechtlein burns! Tell him that, and his modesty will allow him to sheepishly smile and say, "Thanks." He'll just say he was having fun (oh, to have such fun)! To Tom, playing music is a joyous experience—one to be shared. In his eyes, the success of a gig is not gauged by how well you play, how many people are in the audience, or how many times you "wowed" them, but by how much fun and enjoyment everyone had. His ongoing goal is to help people feel good about themselves, a goal that he achieves through his warmth, honesty, and a genuine positive, forward-moving attitude.

Getting Tom to do this interview wasn't very hard. I basically just had to ask him. But getting him to talk about himself was another story. His whole life has been filled with people who have taught him things, some musical, some personal. Tom would rather talk about the things he learned than of the things he's done. His deep respect for music, people, and life was most evident during the time we spent together. We talked about a lot of things, but I noticed the subjects most dear to him were the people and experiences he had learned from. They included some grade school teachers, his wife, Chick Corea, and Wayne Shorter. But the most profound experience came from some difficult and painful memories of his close relationship with the late Joe Farrell.

Yes, Tom Brechtlein has a nice placet to live, two cars, a Yamaha endorsement, and a Zildjian endorsement. But those are just the peripherals. His real concerns are life and music.

**TS:** Your musical beginnings were very solid in the sense that basics were heavily stressed and good foundations were laid out for

you.

**TB:** Yes, I was pretty lucky. My first private teacher, John O'Reilly, gave me the basics in all areas: snare drum, reading, drumset, timpani, and mallets. He stressed getting a good foundation of basic skills and techniques, so that more advanced things could be discovered by building upon these basics. Books are good for basics. I studied from Joel Rothman's *Rockin Bass Drum*, Jim Chapin's *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer*, a Joe Cusatis book, and some others. Listening to records is one of the best tools I can remember using. Overall, the person taking the lessons really has to want it. Beyond books and basics, there should be a point where the emphasis must be placed on getting out and using that stuff as part of your vocabulary. I don't mean playing page 34, fill number 14, or great lick #7! Forget about all the amazing chops things that you know; keep that stuff on the back burner. Practice grooves and playing fills within the groove. Once you get a clear understanding of where 1 is and an overall sense of where the time is, then do some experimentation. This will teach you what things fit in with different types of music. From there, it's all a matter of listening. Some people think the book is God! They're really good players, but for some reason, they're afraid of something, so they bury their noses in books. They have to throw away that stuff, and just go out and play. Whatever they're afraid of, they have to jump in there head first. Take your lumps. That's all a part of it. Not everybody's going to like the way you play, but there will be some who will love it.

There are also some basic study techniques that have helped me greatly in my own playing and that I have learned through my involvement with Scientology. It's really been great. Through it, I've learned to help other people and have gotten a lot less self-conscious. The thing is to look at things for what they are and not have preconceived notions. In this way, you can handle things a lot better.

**TS:** I've heard that a prerequisite for playing with Chick Corea is to be a Scientologist.

**TB:** That is completely untrue. People have thought that of me, but that is their own problem. I had to audition twice for Chick, and if I wasn't right for the gig *musically*, I wouldn't have gotten it. One study idea that has really helped me in my playing relates to basics. For instance, I was having trouble with this one technique that had quite an involved independence thing happening. For some reason, it just wasn't laying in there right. I went back and broke it down, and discovered that, in my feet, there was a basic technique that I failed to get down before adding the other parts. So I corrected the basic, and bam—the other parts just fell in there perfectly. Most of the time, when people have trouble with a certain technique, groove, or lick, it's because they haven't mastered the technique that must come *before* the one they're learning. It's like trying to get from point A to point C, while trying to skip around point B.

**TS:** Let's back up a little to point A. You went to a public high school that had quite a unique music program.

**TB:** Oh, yeah, East Meadow High on Long Island. The head guy was named Bill Katz. There were three jazz ensembles, three choirs, a wind ensemble, B and C Band, percussion ensemble,

by Tim Smith

# Tom Brechtlein





Photo by Tom Copf



improvisation group, voice classes, Theory I & II, modern arranging, and independent study. I mean, these teachers were really into preparing people, you know? Each of the main ensembles would record every year and the jazz ensemble did little tours. It was great! Usually fourth period was jazz improvisation, which was lunch. So everyone would give up eating and just play tunes! The music department had a wall-to-wall library of records—King Crimson, Miles, Emerson, Lake & Palmer, Art Blakey, Return to Forever, big band stuff, everything. There was such a well of influence and information there. It was also a place where I was given good basics. In the jazz ensemble, they used to bring in guys from New York City to rehearse us as if we were a professional band, instead of treating us as if we were just kids. They used to pick great material like Woody Herman, Quincy Jones, and Thad Jones/Mel Lewis for us to play.

**TS:** You had your first recording experience with that jazz band, right?



Photo by Tom Copi

**TB:** Yeah, it was great! I was 16. We went to Echo Sound Studios in New York. I think it was 16 tracks, maybe more. They made me take all my bottom heads off, but still miked on top. I really didn't know the difference, but it was the first time I had ever seen anyone put tape on a head before.

**TS:** Did that bug you?

**TB:** No! I thought it was cool! They even put tape on the cymbals to cut some of the overtones. I really got into it. After the session, I left all the tape on and tried some live gigs with it, but I didn't like the sound. I only had a four-piece set and two cymbals, so I needed all the sound and resonance I could get.

**TS:** Once you got out of high school, did you dive right into the live gigging routine?

**TB:** I did play out a lot, but I also went to Nassau Community College for two years. I hooked up with a teacher there by the name of Ronnie Gould. He taught me a lot about snare drum and timpani technique, a lot of which I incorporate into my set playing. That was really helpful, because he showed me how to throw the stick to get it to rebound and keep the hands level with the snare drum, which is essential for control and getting optimum sound from the drum. He taught me a lot. Sometimes when you study from a legit percussionist, you get a different approach to what you're doing. You get people who are real rudimental, and they're kind of regimented and everything, but there's something about the people who are in orchestras or percussion ensembles. They have a different kind of form and outlook that's really nice.

I was raised basically playing rock 'n' roll—you know, Led Zepelin, Yes, Cream, King Crimson, Genesis. Then Chicago, Blood, Sweat & Tears, and Cold Blood came out. This was really a new thing for those of us who played rock. From there, a lot of the jazz influences started filtering through. I got into Elvin and Tony. I started listening to big band as well as small group stuff. Then Steve Gadd, Chris Parker, and Rick Marotta came on the scene, and a whole other world opened up! I suddenly had a new set of idols. I was 18 and I loved Elvin, Tony, and DeJohnette, but now there were all these new guys—Dave Garibaldi, Harvey Mason, Bernard Purdie. I can't forget Bernard. He wiggled me out. I remember I had just gotten home from a band rehearsal, and I turned on the *Midnight Special* and Cat Stevens was on. They had two drummers. One drummer—I think his name was Jerry Conway—was really good, but all of a sudden, this black guy got up on this Ludwig kit and started groovin'. He wasn't doing anything else—no fills, no crashes—just groove. I was dancing in my seat! I thought, "Holy shit, this guy is burning!" I knew right there that that was it. After that show, I kind of Aretha Franklin'd out. Soon after that, a friend turned me on to Tower of Power and Garibaldi. I almost died the first time I heard "Squibb Cakes" and "Oakland Stroke"! I used to go to New York City to see Gadd and Chris Parker play with Stuff. Then I'd go across the Street to Sweet Basil's to listen to Al Foster. All that sort of rekindled getting the bebop and the straight-ahead stuff together. Then I sort of melded it. I started putting the rock stuff into the bop and the bop stuff into the funk. At the time, it was kind of confusing, because I had all this stuff inside but didn't know how or when to use it. When I finally got into Chick Corea's band, it started to file, not in the sense of this is this style and this is that style, but how and when to pick and choose—put that stuff in there, that other thing here. I started to meld styles and influences together so it would come out sounding like me.

**TS:** How did you first hook up with Chick Corea?

**TB:** That was while I was still in college. During the time I was there, I always wanted to get out, but I didn't want to just up and quit. Some of my friends were going to North Texas, and some were going to Berklee. They were all trying to get me to go somewhere. I said, "No, no, I'm going to stay near the City and try to get a gig." So here I was playing around town and studying music education. I had been doing weddings, bar mitzvahs, and private parties, plus playing with this R&B band, and not getting much sleep or study time. I finally realized I wanted to be a player. If you're going to college, you've got to know what you're going for.

I mean, there's nothing bad about it, but for me, I shouldn't have been going. It didn't offer anything that I wanted. So on February 10, Chick called up and wanted me to go on the road with him. This was after my second audition. Needless to say, I dropped out of school the next day. A couple of weeks later, I was on my first plane ride ever, heading out to California.

The day I got in, I went to S.I.R. to prepare for rehearsal. I set up and began practicing. After a while, Chick came in and I stopped playing. Tucked under his arm was this flatride cymbal. He said, "Here, try this." It was the cymbal used by Roy Haynes on *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs* and Airtio on *Return To Forever*. I guess it was the first flat cymbal made by Paiste. It first belonged to Roy, who gave it to Chick, or something like that. So we sat down and played, and he was teaching me little pointers about playing outside. He showed me something he called the Grand Pulse. It's like where once I counted 1, 2, 3, 4 and listened for spaces like half and whole notes, I learned to listen and count by the chord changes. We would start with this little vamp, and go round robin and trade. In about 20 minutes, we were flat out blowing—inside, outside, sideways, smokin'! But no matter which way it went, I knew where I was all the time. Chick taught me a lot about playing in a rhythm section.

**TS:** You were just a kid. What sort of things did he like about you?

**TB:** Well, I used to take a lot of chances, and I think that's one of the things Chick liked. I was young but pretty wide open. He taught me about what he called "leaving corners for a soloist." It was like, to really be basic, when you are playing a groove, you might do a fill after every four or eight bars as sort of a lead-in to the next section of the tune. A corner was similar, in that, instead of a fill, you'd be playing a pop or tail end of a rhythm that might be in the melody in that part of the tune. It's kind of sneaky, but that's when you *know* where you are in the tune and in the time. When you know where the corners are in a tune, you can go as far out as you want, for as long as you want. It doesn't matter what style of music you're playing. It applies to everything. The first recording I heard that really emphasized this concept was the first *Standards* album with Keith Jarrett and Jack DeJohnette. Jack was playing this brushes thing and using the hi-hat for accentuations. It wasn't just *in* time; it was the time! The brushes and hi-hat made the music ebb and flow so much with the changes that it was like there was no 1, 2, 3, 4; the changes became the pulse! The music flowed in waves! It's a pretty basic idea but very strong in application.

Anyway, I stayed with Chick on and off for about seven years. I did three albums with him: *Secret Agent* [Polydor], *Tap Step* [Warner Bros.], and *Again And Again* [Elektra Musician]. So that was nice. The last tour I did with him was in 1982.

**TS:** With Chick, you played in a variety of group sizes and settings, right?

**TB:** Yes. The first band was really kind of a big band—13 pieces. The second band was in 1980. It was a quartet, which turned into a



quintet, which turned into a septet. With the septet, I got to play with Don Alias. I learned a lot from just watching Don play. He gave me a lot of my Latin and Afro-Cuban stuff. Don and Airtio really helped me get that stuff down. Don didn't join the band at first. We were on the road after the *Tap Step* album was done, and he sat in one night. I was really scared. I said to myself, "Oh my God, this is Don Alias. He's played with Miles and with Elvin! He's such a monster!" But we got up on stage, and it clicked! It's like we became this percussion section. It was pretty wild, and it was more fun than I could ever remember. From there, he stayed on with the band. Sometimes Don had to go play gigs with Jaco and the Word of Mouth band, so Laudir DeOliveira would fill in. It was like I just started opening my ears. I'd be listening to Don play, and I'd be an extension of what he played and vice versa. It wouldn't sound like drums and percussion. It started to sound like one instrument. It was so hip! Every night was such a new learning experience for me. We did two tours in 1982, and Don was on both of them.

After the second tour, near the end of '82, I was asked to sub in Christopher Cross' band. So I played with him, and he asked me to stay on. I did a small tour with him and a couple of *Solid Gold* TV shows. I didn't record much with him, but I really had fun. We did a live recording at the Universal Amphitheatre for the *King Biscuit Flour Hour*. During a rehearsal, I was messing around on some Latin stuff with the percussionist James Finner, and Chris came up and suggested that we do a little thing up front before one of the tunes, like an intro. Of course I said, "Sure," so I got to use some of my Latin stuff. It fit real well with the music and wasn't this weird offbeat thing that the audience couldn't relate to. It was a solo for us, and everybody went nuts!

**TS:** Tell me about your relationship with Joe Farrell.

**TB:** I met Joe when we did the first tour with Chick's 13-piece

*continued on page 108*

## Tom's Grooves



Transcribed by Tom Brechtlein

"The Slide," Chick Corea: *Tap Step* (Warner Bros.)



"Again And Again," Chick Corea: *Again And Again* (Elektra Musician)



# 87 READERS

## HONOR ROLL

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

### **GARY BURTON**

*Mallet Percussion*

### **AIRTO**

*Latin American  
and Latin/Brazilian Percussion*

### **VIC FIRTH**

*Classical Percussion*

### **STEVE GADD**

*All Around Drummer;  
Studio Drummer*

### **NEIL PEART**

*Rock Drummer;  
Multi-Percussionist*

### **DAVID GARIBALDI**

*R&B/Funk Drummer*

### **BUDDY RICH**

*Big Band Drummer*

## HALL OF FAME



Photo by Lissa Wales

# 1987 BILLY COBHAM

- 1986: Tony Williams
- 1985: Louie Bellson
- 1984: Steve Gadd
- 1983: Neil Peart
- 1982: Keith Moon
- 1981: John Bonham
- 1980: Buddy Rich
- 1979: Gene Krupa

# POLL RESULTS

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## ALL AROUND

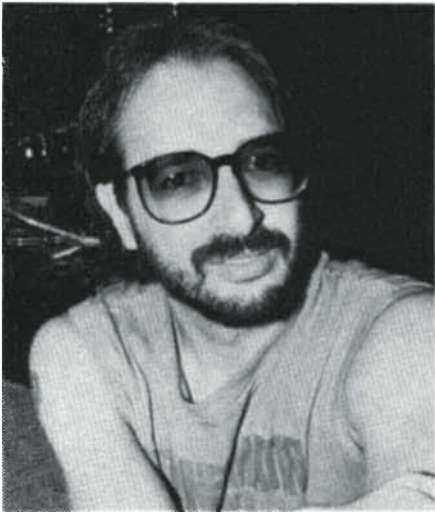


Photo by Rick Malkin

### STEVE SMITH

2. Simon Phillips
  3. Omar Hakim
  4. Stewart Copeland
  5. Vinnie Colaiuta
- 

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## STUDIO



Photo by Annie Colbeck

### SIMON PHILLIPS

2. Jeff Porcaro
  3. Larrie Londin
  4. Anton Fig
  5. Vinnie Colaiuta  
John "J.R." Robinson
- 

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## BIG BAND



Photo by Paul Jonason

### LOUIE BELLSON

2. Ed Shaughnessy
  3. Mel Lewis
  4. Butch Miles
  5. Terry Clarke
-

---

## MALLETS



# DAVE SAMUELS

2. Ed Mann
  3. Lionel Hampton
  4. Mike Mainieri
  5. Bobby Hutcherson  
Milt Jackson  
Leigh Howard Stevens
- 

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## LATIN BRASS



# ALEX ACUNA

2. Tito Puente
  3. Nana Vasconcelos
  4. Manolo Badrena  
Ralph MacDonald
- 

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## FUNK



# STEVE JORDAN

2. Tony Thompson
  3. Steve Gadd
  4. Harvey Mason  
Dave Weckl
- 

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## CLASSICAL

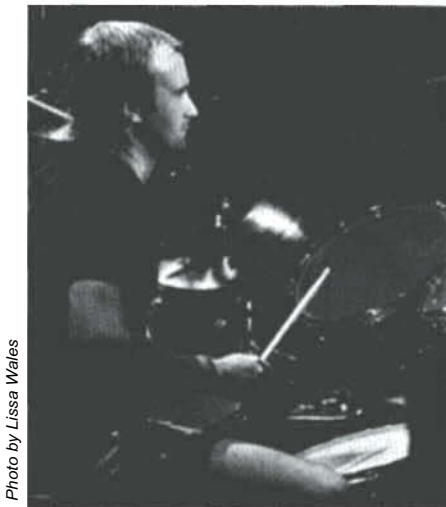


# ANTHONY J. CIRONE

2. Arthur Press
  3. Al Payson
  4. Fred Begun
  5. Fred Hinger  
Ed Mann
-

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## POP MAINSTREAM ROCK



# PHIL COLLINS

2. Bill Gibson  
Jeff Porcaro
  4. Kenny Aronoff
  5. John "J.R." Robinson
- 

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## HARD ROCK METAL



# ALEX VAN HALEN

2. Gregg Bissonette  
Tommy Lee
  4. Nicko McBrain
  5. Tommy Aldridge
- 

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## PROGRESSIVE ROCK



# ROD MORGENSTEIN

2. Terry Bozzio
  3. Steve Smith
  4. Simon Phillips
  5. Bill Bruford
-

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## MULTI-PERCUSSIONIST



Photo by Paul Naitkin/Photo Reserve

## STEWART COPELAND

2. Ed Mann
  3. Airto
  4. Ray Cooper  
Alannah Currie  
Emil Richards
- 

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## UP AND SOARING



Photo by Rick Malkin

## GREGG BISSONETTE

(David Lee Roth)

2. Fred Coury  
(Cinderella)
  3. Jonathan Mover  
(GTR)
  4. Scott Rockenfield  
(Queensryche)  
Joe Smyth  
(Sawyer Brown)
- 

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## COUNTRY



Photo by Douglas Richardson

## JOHN STACEY

2. Larrie Londin
  3. Mark Herndon
  4. Joe Smyth
  5. Jimmy Fadden  
Jack Gavin  
Randy Wright
-



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## MAINSTREAM JAZZ



Photo by Veryl Oakland

# TONY WILLIAMS

2. Alan Dawson
3. Jeff Watts
4. Art Blakey  
Jack DeJohnette  
Elvin Jones

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## ELECTRIC JAZZ



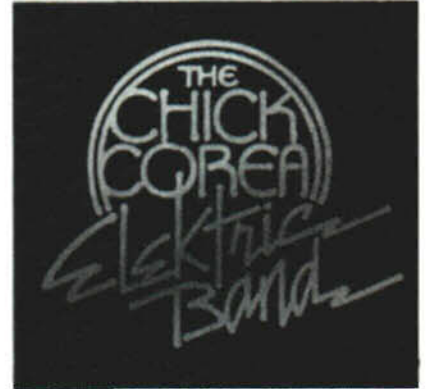
Photo by Jaeger Kotos

# DAVE WECKL

2. Billy Cobham
3. Steve Smith
4. Danny Gottlieb
5. Peter Erskine

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## RECORDED PERFORMANCE



# DAVE WECKL

CHICK COREA:  
*THE CHICK COREA  
ELEKTRIC BAND*

2. Alex Van Halen—  
Van Halen:  
*5150*
3. Gregg Bissonette—  
David Lee Roth:  
*Eat 'Em And Smile*  
Phil Collins—  
Genesis:  
*Invisible Touch*
5. Nicko McBrain—  
Iron Maiden:  
*Somewhere In Time*

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



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Our **Tuxedo** padded cymbal bags have been designed not to wear out. The bottom of our cymbal bag is completely reinforced to insure that your cymbals will not cut through the bottom of the bag. There is a huge outside pocket which can actually hold any size stock bag or any size mallets that you wish it to accommodate. The bag comes completely equipped with carrying handles and a heavy duty shoulder strap with non-slip shoulder pad. Truly a handsome functional, needed piece of equipment to transport your valuable cymbals.



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TX521	Up to 16"	45.00	TX523	Up to 24"	71.95
TX522	Up to 18"	55.00	TX524	Up to 26"	73.95
TX525	Up to 20"	60.00			

All cymbal bags include shoulder straps

**Padded Drum Bags**

See following page for partial listing

H&B Catalog Number	Drum Shell Size Height x Diameter	Retail List
TX422	3 x 13	19.50
TX455	4 x 14	19.75
TX421	5 x 14	26.95
TX456	5 1/2 x 6	19.95
TX457	5 1/2 x 8	19.95
TX474	5 1/2 x 14	29.90
TX493	6 x 8	19.95
TX475	6 x 14	27.95
TX477	6 x 15	28.00
TX453	6 x 18	34.00
TX448	6 x 26	49.95
TX449	6 x 28	54.00
TX458	6 1/2 x 10	23.95
TX478	6 1/2 x 14	29.95
TX479	6 1/2 x 15	29.95
TX487	7 x 10	22.95
TX426	7 x 14	29.95
TX423	7 x 15	30.25
TX482	7 x 16	31.95
TX578	8 x 6	21.95
TX488	8 x 8	22.95
TX489	8 x 10	24.95
TX454	8 x 11	25.95
TX425	8 x 12	28.95
TX560	8 x 14	29.95
TX483	8 x 15	30.50
TX554	8 x 22	52.90
TX501	8 x 26	54.90
TX452	8 x 28	58.90
TX640	9 x 6	22.95
TX641	9 x 8	23.95
TX642	9 x 10	25.95
TX536	9 x 12	28.95
TX427	9 x 13	31.95
TX537	9 x 14	32.50
TX538	9 x 15	32.95
TX612	10 x 6	23.95
TX613	10 x 8	24.95
TX451	10 x 10	26.50
TX614	10 x 12	29.95
TX615	10 x 13	32.00
TX431	10 x 14	32.95
TX490	10 x 15	33.95
TX494	10 x 26	56.90
TX495	10 x 28	60.90
TX506	10 x 30	62.00
TX643	11 x 12	32.95
TX616	11 x 13	34.95
TX617	11 x 14	35.50
TX618	11 x 15	35.95
TX528	12 x 12	33.95
TX644	12 x 13	34.50
TX428	12 x 14	34.95
TX432	12 x 15	34.50
TX491	12 x 16	34.95
TX433	12 x 17	35.00
TX446	12 x 18	35.50
TX577	12 x 19	35.95
TX499	12 x 20	53.95
TX510	12 x 22	59.95
TX447	12 x 24	63.00
TX539	12 x 26	64.00
TX500	12 x 28	70.00
TX531	13 x 13	35.95
TX645	13 x 14	36.00

H&B Catalog Number	Drum Shell Size Height x Diameter	Retail List
TX529	13 x 15	36.50
TX579	14 x 12	34.95
TX503	14 x 14	36.95
TX646	14 x 15	37.50
TX607	14 x 16	38.95
TX 507	14 x 18	47.50
TX434	14 x 20	55.95
TX435	14 x 22	59.95
TX436	14 x 24	61.00
TX437	14 x 26	67.95
TX438	14 x 28	69.95
TX439	14 x 30	71.50
TX530	15 x 15	36.95
TX647	15 x 16	37.00
TX575	15 x 18	37.50
TX574	16 x 14	37.75
TX429	16 x 16	39.00
TX492	16 x 18	39.95
TX508	16 x 20	57.00
TX583	16 x 22	62.00
TX584	16 x 24	66.95
TX585	16 x 26	68.95
TX533	16 x 28	71.00
TX444	16 x 30	73.00
TX440	16 x 32	77.95
TX496	16 x 34	78.95
TX497	16 x 36	79.95
TX557	17 x 15	36.95
TX558	17 x 16	37.00
TX559	18 x 16	38.50
TX581	18 x 18	39.95
TX445	18 x 20	42.50
TX498	18 x 22	62.50
TX551	18 x 24	68.95
TX552	18 x 28	72.00
TX553	18 x 36	85.00
TX502	18 x 40	89.95
TX571	19 x 18	40.50
TX509	20 x 20	42.95
TX580	22 x 18	59.00
TX450	24 x 16	61.00
TX582	24 x 22	70.50

H&B Catalog Number	Drum Shell Size Height x Diameter	Retail List
<b>Round Conga &amp; Bongo Bags</b>		
TX603A		55.95
TX603B		59.95
TX603C		65.00
TX601 Bongo		39.60
<b>Electronic Drum Bags</b>		
TXSD5-1 Programmable Pad		49.95
TXSD5-5 Electronic Control Panel		49.95
TXSD5-7 Electronic Control Panel		49.95
TXSD5-8 Electronic Control Panel		49.95
TXSD5-9 Electronic Control Panel		49.95
TXSIM1 Single Pad		42.50
TXSIM2 Double Pad		54.00
TXSIM4 Quad Pad		74.00
TXSIMB Bass Pad		60.00

H&B Catalog Number	Drum Shell Size Height x Diameter	Retail List
<b>Full Drop Padded Timpani Covers</b>		
TX511	23"	51.95
TX517	26"	52.95
TX518	29"	54.95
TX515	32"	56.95

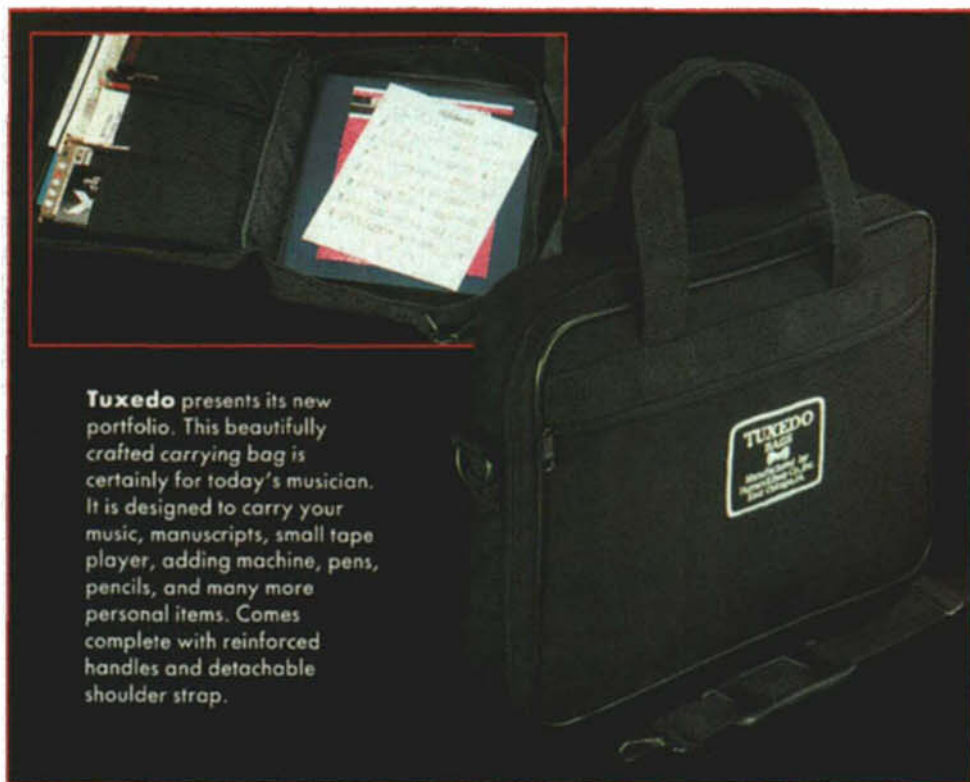
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# Mental Techniques In Drumming: Part 2

I once had a Kung Fu instructor tell me there were masters who no longer needed to practice physically but did their practicing in their minds. That sounds pretty far-fetched, right? But consider this. Charles Garfield, a researcher and expert in optimal human performance, reports a study in his book *Peak Performance*, which involved several groups of world-class athletes. Various training methods were utilized, and the groups were tested prior to the 1980 Olympic games. The top group had used a combination of 25% physical and 75% mental training! Maybe there's something to this mental thing after all. Maybe we drummers can better learn to tap our *own* mental powers.

Mental attitude has long been cited as the deciding factor between champions and the rest of the pack. Gold medal decathlon champion Bruce Jenner has said, "I always felt that my greatest asset was not my physical ability; it was my mental ability." As far back as 1899, experts of the day were debating whether gymnasts could improve by practicing in their heads. Interest in the inner side of sports really began to mushroom in the 1960s. Today, findings and applications have spilled over into many other areas as well. Research on the mental component in such diverse fields as health care, business, sports, and the arts continues to grow. Biofeedback has proven that our thoughts, words, and inner images affect virtually every cell of the body. This relatively new knowledge has an important impact on drummers. The mental barriers that inhibit musicians are the same as those faced by performers in other disciplines. We can apply what they have learned!

One of the major mental techniques is called visualization, or mental rehearsal. It's been referred to as practicing in the mind's eye, creating movies of the mind, and projecting onto your own mental screen. Golfing legend Jack Nicklaus believes that his success is due to three major factors: 10% to his setup, 40% to his stance, and 50% to the mental imagery he practices before every shot. The concept is not entirely new to musicians. Drummer Herb Lovelle stated in an *MD* interview, "I practice every day. I practice mentally, which is something Max [Roach] implanted in my head. If you don't have the opportunity to physically practice, then

mental exercises are necessary. You can think of what you want to play and how you're going to do it."

James Loehr, in his book *Mental Toughness Training For Sports*, refers to visualization as "one of the most powerful mental training strategies available." Garfield calls it "the master skill," and stresses that it can strengthen our present skill level, as well as help us develop new skills. He feels the term visualization is misleading as it implies using only the sense of sight. He's found that musicians often report *hearing* in their imagery. So it's important to use all the senses—sight, smell, taste, hearing, and touch—to get a complete mental picture.

Why and how does mental practice work? In 1960, Dr. Maxwell Maltz published a remarkable book called *Psycho-cybernetics*, in which he wrote, "The brain and nervous system cannot tell the difference between an actual event and one that is vividly imagined." There were many skeptics at the time, but research since then has systematically confirmed the truth of his ideas. (As an aside, I heartily recommend this book! Charley Perry and Jack DeJohnette discussed it in an article several years ago. One college football coach thought it was so good that he gave every member of his team a copy.) New York City movement therapist Irene Dowd explains that there are two parts in learning any movement skill: physical conditioning for the muscles, and neurological patterning or the sequence of a move. According to Irene, "You have to learn the complex patterns or nerve signals that are needed to produce movement." Repetition of the movement is one way to learn the skill; using imagery is another.

In a series of experiments, monitoring instruments were attached to downhill skiers during their mental practices. It was found that the nerve and muscle fibers used in the various movements actually fired up. It was like a scaled down version of a real run down the slopes—"proof," says Dorothy Harris, Ph.D., director of a graduate program in sports psychology, "that, when you imagine something, there's more going on than just between the ears." "According to researchers," writes Garfield, "we enhance and accelerate our physical learning process by combining mental imagery and physical training."

Visualization is now an essential component for many programs and performers. Its applications are most observable in sports but are equally dramatic in other fields. In the last Winter Olympics, U.S. downhill skier Phil Mayer was seen by millions as he mentally rehearsed his race prior to winning the gold medal. Concert cellist Pablo Casals mentally practices and memorizes a new piece of music before ever sitting down to play it. Use the following as a basis for developing your own mental training routines.

## Guidelines

1. The starting point for effective visualization is becoming physically relaxed. Use a method of your choice, or simply sit quietly in a comfortable position, close your eyes, and take several deep, slow breaths. As you exhale, imagine yourself releasing all tension, worry, and negativity. With each inhalation, you are bringing in positive energy, peace, lightness, and relaxation.

2. Experiment with using a still shot, a slide show, or a full-length movie to see what works best for you. Some evidence suggests that using action or motion in your images is very important.

3. Use both *external* and *internal* imagery. External imagery is taking the role of a spectator by watching yourself playing the drums, as if you were in the audience. You might think of yourself as a cameraman employing various shots and angles to get the best shot. Internal imagery involves assuming the role of the performer and experiencing the attitudes, feelings, and sensations that accompany that role.

4. Remember that this is a *learned* skill. The more you practice, the better you get. Use both long and short training sessions. You don't have to go into a deep trance. It's important to use longer periods at first, maybe five to ten minutes, to get the hang of it. Shorter sessions will then reinforce your previous work. A number of short sessions is more effective than one or two long ones. A frequently seen pattern is that, after practice, a single word or image will trigger the entire sequence, and one can get the benefits in a fraction of the time.

5. Think of everything as happening *right now*, even when reviewing past per-

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performances or previewing future ones. This is very important. Think of immediate results.

6. Use all your senses. The goal is to make your imagery as detailed, vivid, and realistic as possible. Some people report that they just don't see pictures in their head. If this applies to you, just focus on your other senses and imagine in your own style. This will not decrease the effectiveness of the exercises.

7. Give yourself permission to imagine and fantasize. This came naturally as a child, but you may have to recapture it. With some success, you'll be motivated to continue.

8. Let the process happen instead of try-

*ing hard.* Gently guide your images instead of forcing them. If your mind wanders—and it surely will—simply accept this and go back to the task.

9. Use both an active and passive approach—active being when you act to direct the process in a structured way, passive being a more unstructured approach in which you just kind of sit back and watch to see what happens.

#### Review For Improvement

This is an exercise similar to reviewing game films in sports. Basketball hall of famer Pete Marovitch would mentally relive every game to determine his mistakes and reprogram himself to play better in the

future.

Close your eyes, breathe deeply, and relax. Pick a recent performance, and mentally review it. You can stop action, use slow motion, rewind, and replay. Did you make any major or minor mistakes? How was your tempo? What do you think of your interpretation of the tunes? Were you synchronized with the rest of the band? How were your dynamics? Did your ideas flow freely? What attitudes, thoughts, or feelings did you have? Did they enhance or detract from your playing? How would you rate your performance?

Note any aspects of your playing that you want to change or improve. Rewind and play through those sections, editing in your modifications. Repeat the improved version several times. Get a detailed, crystal-clear image of this enhanced performance. Forget the mistakes, and remember the corrections. Focus on what you *want*, not what you don't want.

#### Review For Inspiration

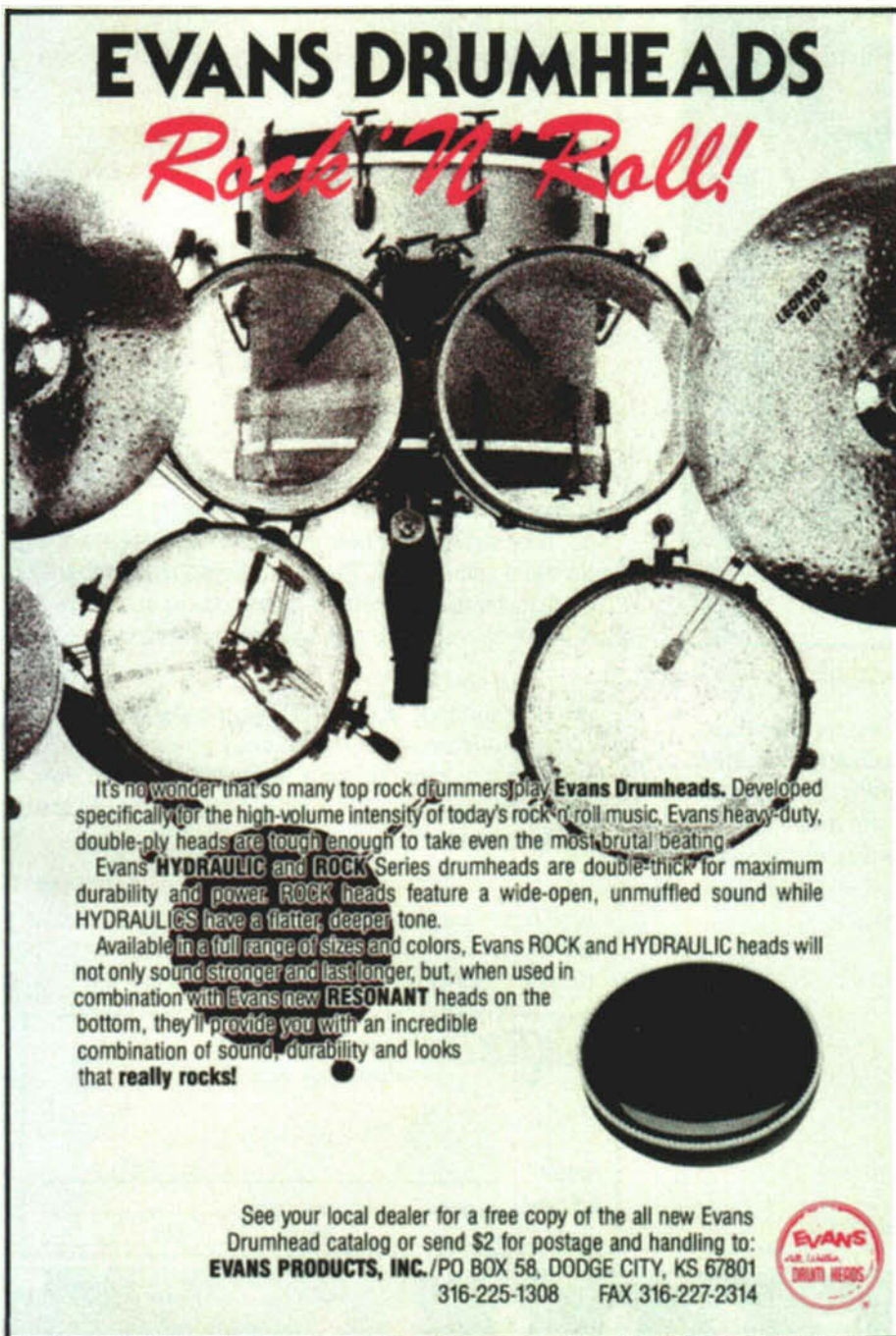
Close your eyes and relax. Mentally review some of the high points of your playing career—those times that you really feel good about. Did you get positive feedback from others? What were you wearing? Were other people involved? What impresses you most about these events? Mentally fill in such details as temperature, sound, color, and lighting. Recapture the richness of your own special moments, and re-experience them as fully as you can. Replay your highlight film often. It's a good confidence booster and will inspire your continued development.

#### Becoming Fully Focused

The human mind is a perpetual motion machine. It's been referred to as "a drunken monkey" and as a chariot drawn by a team of wild horses with no driver. Our challenge is to keep it fully focused on what we choose.

The martial arts have long recognized the importance of tuning out extraneous material and paying complete attention to the present moment. This instruction was given to a medieval student: "You must concentrate upon and consecrate yourself wholly to each day, as though a fire were raging in your hair." The samurai used the term "mokuteki hon'i" to emphasize this concept. It translates as "focus on your purpose!" Buddy Rich displayed this attitude. He said that, whenever he sat down to play, he put aside all his problems, personal or business. His sole concern was giving his utmost at that particular point in time.

Here are some techniques you can use to increase your focus. One is to imagine how you would look if you were being filmed. What if the camera were overhead, underneath your drums, to the sides, far off, or up close? Another is to find a key image



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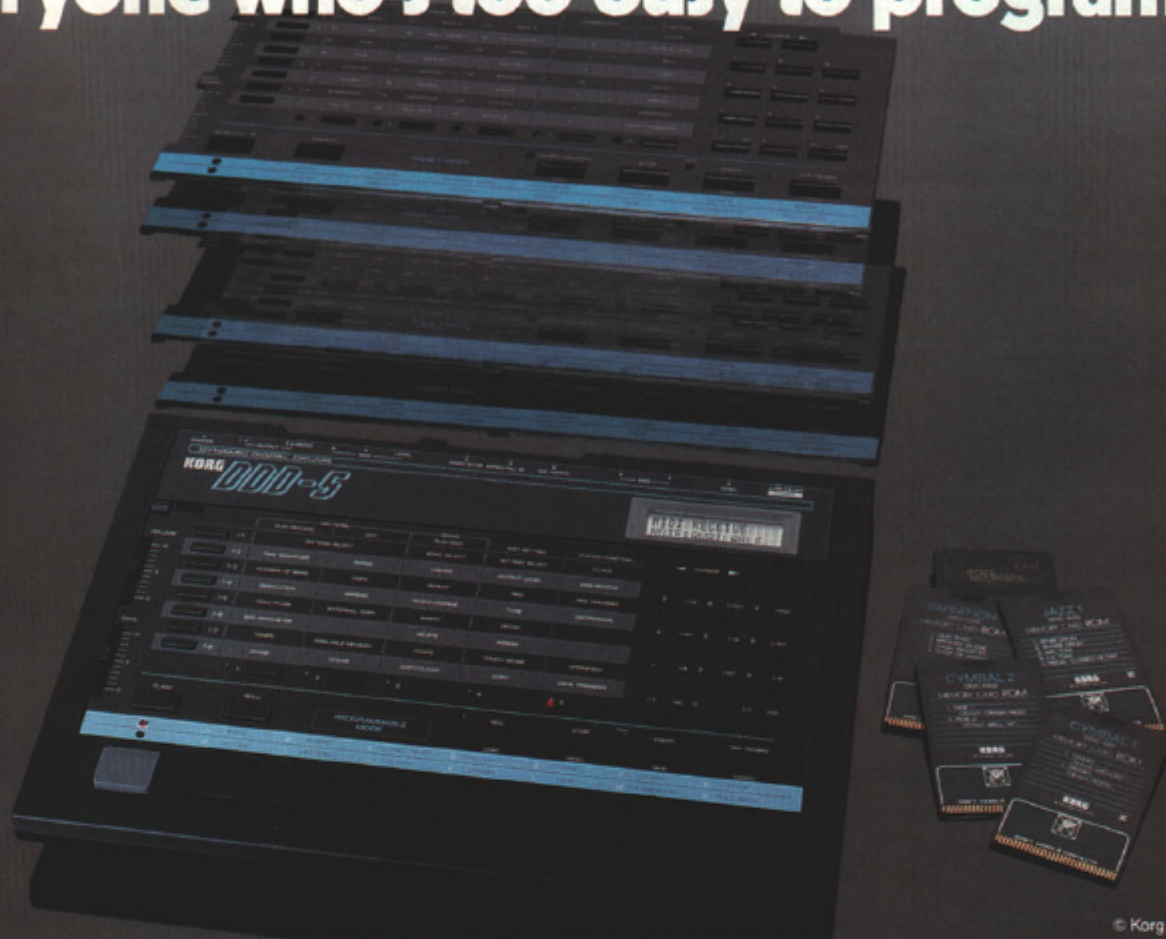
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that symbolizes your progress, goals, or ideals. Arnold Schwarzenegger visualizes improvement by thinking of his biceps as mountains that fill up the whole room. Swimmers think of themselves as a ship's bow slicing through the water. Dancers see themselves floating through their steps! Sprinters and high jumpers imagine their legs as powerful springs that propel them. Some athletes identify themselves with an animal—perhaps a leopard, cheetah, or gazelle—that represents qualities they wish to express. What meaningful image can you think of? Give this some thought. Steve Gadd uses the image of Airto to inspire him when playing samba patterns. He says, "I'm just trying to be like him."

Use these focusing strategies during both practice and performance. In practice, you might pause periodically to sing the patterns to yourself and imagine executing them flawlessly in your mind. While playing, you can flash your key images on your mental screen—the images that represent the ideal you are striving for.

### Previewing

Our mental pictures write the scripts for our futures. Dr. Emerson Fostick wrote, "Hold a picture of yourself long and steadily enough in your mind's eye, and you will be drawn toward it . . . Great living starts with a picture held in your imagination of what you would like to do

or be." Basketball great Larry Bird projects himself into the future in preparation for upcoming games. During the 1986 playoffs, his coach said, "You can almost see the movie projector go off in his head," as Bird would dribble the ball and then utilize one of the many options he'd mentally rehearsed numerous times.

The following exercise will help you to program yourself for peak performance in future situations. Close your eyes and relax. Review your previous exercises, your improvements, and your high points. Scan your own history, and recapture those times of increased mind-body integration—times when everything clicked and just seemed to flow. Dwell on these images.

Now project yourself into a future event. This could be the wedding reception next weekend, or playing in concert for 20,000 screaming fans. How would things be if everything were as you wanted it to be? What do you need to add to make the scene more detailed and real?

Take the role of an observer. See yourself now—your facial expressions, your clothes, your equipment. See yourself behind your drums. How does that performer project himself or herself? What spirit does he or she radiate? What does he or she play, and how does he or she play it? What do you notice most? In your mind's eye, see yourself as the confident, creative, poised, and talented person you aspire to be. These qualities are now yours.



Now become that drummer. Feel your body sensations—the tingle of excitement, the heat of the lights. Sense the energy in your muscles and the focused power of that energy. Feel the sticks in your hands and the pedals beneath your feet. What are you thinking and feeling? What do you notice most about playing your best? You may want to rehearse the moves you want to make or the ideas you want to express, or you might prefer to focus on the mood, the atmosphere, and the positive feedback from yourself and an appreciative audience. Dwell on this experience, and live it fully. *Know* the exhilaration of having performed your best. Let go, and trust that this exercise has positively influenced you for future excellence.

Will visualization work for you? No, not unless you do some work yourself. "Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do," wrote Goethe. Make a game of these exercises and have fun with them, but don't underestimate their power. Expand and modify them in your own individual way. The proper images, rightly used, have the power to stimulate, inspire, motivate, and improve us, and can have a profound and sustained impact on our drumming skills. Our mental pictures are the blueprints for future performances, so keep them *positive*.



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**KAMAN**

by Tom Stephenson

# Cyndi Lauper's Sterling Campbell



Photo by Laura Friedman

*"Introducing on drums: Sterling Campbell . . . You should be reading about him soon; he's that good."—Cyndi Lauper*

*Sterling Campbell has come a long way in his 21 years. Already he has one of the more prestigious touring jobs around: Cyndi Lauper. Besides that job, he has several other bands vying for his time when he is off the road.*

*In person, Sterling is surprisingly quiet and almost shy. He in no way has developed the ego that might easily come with such elite territory acquired at so young an age. In fact, he is almost self-effacingly humble.*

*His approach to playing has been very personal and natural. He has spent less time than most with the rudiments and on the training grounds, and much more time listening to his own inner musical senses and his own imagination. Possibly there is a lesson in that for other aspiring drummers: Listen to what your own musical instincts have to say, and then play from these inspirations. This may be the road to a natural and unique style that will separate you from the crowd.*

**TS:** Let's start with your background. Where did you start playing, and how did you get to this point so fast?

**SC:** Well, I grew up in Manhattan. I first started getting into the drums in junior high school. Then I went to the High School for the Performing Arts. Omar Hakim, Billy Cobham, Steve Jordan—they all went there. I studied with Justin DiCiccio, the drum teacher there. It was pretty much a scene rather than a formal learning situation. After high school, I decided not to go to college, because I knew that playing was what I wanted to do. I joined this band called the Pedantics. We were playing around and became sort of a big local act. I started playing with a lot of local bands. Another band was Urban Blight. Then I got to play with heavier players like Percy Jones, and Daryl Jones from Sting's band, so I started building up a name playing the local scene. That's one of the good things about New

**York:** Lots of people go out to clubs and see the bands.

**TS:** What was next?

**SC:** Things started to get better. The Pedantics was signed to Elektra for a couple of months, but that didn't work out too well. But I continued with the band because I believed in it. Then I got a call from this guy named Scott from an Australian band called Kids In The Kitchen. They are really big down in Australia. I did a concert with them for the New Music Seminar in New York, and it ended up being a TV production. They ended up asking me to come down to Australia with them.

**TS:** So did you go to Australia?

**SC:** Yeah, with Cyndi! A week before I was supposed to go to Australia, I was doing a gig with Kit Haines, and Cyndi's bass player came into the club. A group of my friends told him about me because Cyndi was looking for a drummer. At first, I told him I wasn't interested, because I was so set on going to Australia. But the next day he called me up again, so I said, "The hell with it. I'll go for this gig." If I didn't get the gig, it wouldn't have mattered because I already had a good one. My attitude was confident, so I just went in and played. The next thing I knew, they came out and said, "Cyndi really likes you. You got the gig." I was shocked!

**TS:** How many auditions had you done up until then?

**SC:** About three or so.

**TS:** On an audition, do you try to play exactly what's on the tape or just what you feel?

**SC:** I usually try to balance it out. I try to keep it in the artist's medium but put some of myself into it at the same time. I mean, I do listen to the tape and try to get the parts down.

**TS:** Do you write the parts out?

**SC:** No, I could never do stuff like that. I think that it would take away from my own personal playing. Whatever I do, it's really not a knowledgeable approach—which I wouldn't mind having. But I sort of like to have the naive approach—the natural approach.

**TS:** Besides high school, what kind of training did you have?

**SC:** I was fortunate in that I studied with a couple of teachers, such as Sticks Evans, a percussionist who played with a lot of people in the old days. I was fortunate to have teachers who more or less said, "This is the way you play," and then let me play. They talked more about life and the music business, and just taught me the basic things. I studied with Michael Carvin, too. He definitely made it fun. I went to some teachers who just made it boring; they didn't have any fun with it. But Michael actually made it fun, and I could incorporate it into what I was doing.

**TS:** How did he do that?

**SC:** He would just let me play a groove, and then he would write out a pattern and say, "Now add this to what you were playing." He'd have me play naturally, and then he'd add little things to it. The thing that made it fun was that he let me be myself.

**TS:** Did he work mainly with jazz?

**SC:** No, he would let me play anything. He was a Motown drummer, too. Now, Kenwood Dennard . . .

**TS:** Did you study with him also?

**SC:** I went to see him only two times. But I had started getting distorted. I didn't know what I wanted to do on drums. I didn't know what I wanted to be. I knew I wanted to be myself; I didn't want to be Omar or anybody. I love those guys, but I wanted to be myself. So I went to Kenwood. I always had a problem in terms of stamina. I've learned how to pace myself now that I'm playing the larger venues, but that's what I went to Kenwood for. He was teaching me all of these different breathing techniques and finger exercises, like making your fingers crawl up and down the stick. It looks like nothing until you do it a few times. He was saying some stuff that I understood, but it was so heavy that it is really hard to explain.

**TS:** How much do you practice, and what do you play?

**SC:** I don't practice very much. At one point I was in five bands, so I would just go from one rehearsal to another. I was playing all of the time. Then, before a job, I would practice on a pad just to warm up.

**TS:** What do you play when you warm up?  
**SC:** Double strokes or maybe something

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from the Buddy Rich book: maybe flam-paradiddles. I'm not a really schooled player.

**TS:** Did you ever woodshed a lot?

**SC:** One summer—I think it was 1980—I definitely practiced two to three hours every day. I played the Buddy Rich and Chapin books a bit, and played to records.

**TS:** What styles?

**SC:** In 1980, I was really into jazz-rock fusion styles and some pop stuff. Then my whole direction changed. By 1982, I was into a lot of European rock and pop, and art rock like Roxy Music, Japan, late Bowie, Crimson, and XTC. I was into a lot of unconventional drummers. Peter Gabriel was a big influence. Gabriel really

changed my whole approach.

**TS:** What records in particular?

**SC:** *Gabriel 3* and *Security* really changed me. Jerry Marotta and Phil Collins played on 3. I was into Genesis and a lot of those bands also.

**TS:** What other drummers influenced you?

**SC:** I guess the first drummers that I really listened to were Nigel Olsen, Elton John's drummer, and Bonham. And I was always into the Motown drummers. Then I got into a lot of rock and funk, like Sly Stone, and other popular music. Then, in the late '70s, I was really into fusion: Gerry Brown, Steve Gadd, Billy Cobham, Dennis Davis. There were so many influences, but Dennis Davis was definitely one. He

lived in my building, and he was doing Bowie. He took me to a Bowie show with him in the late '70s. I was blown away. Then I got into the European thing with Marotta, Gabriel, Mel Gaynor from Simple Minds, Robert Fripp, Andy Newmark, and Bill Bruford.

**TS:** Let's talk about time. Did you ever practice with a metronome?

**SC:** I played with records. I really concentrate on time. I try to pull the beat back slightly on fast tunes. I really don't know how to explain it. I just feel it. I don't know what it is. I listened to a lot of records. I listened to the drummers, and I listened really carefully. If I know the record, I know all of the parts: guitar, bass, keyboards, little subliminal percussion noises.

**TS:** When you're playing live, do you listen the same way to all of the details?

**SC:** It's subliminal. I hear it all. I can't say that I directly listen to it, but it's there. Sometimes it's hard. You're on stage and you just have drums, and the rest is "wahhhhhh." I concentrate on time, and I try to set up fills. For time, I also try to listen to the overall thing. If Cyndi starts to speed up a little, I'll go with her, but I try not to be obvious. I sort of work into it.

**TS:** When you constructed a part for Cyndi, what did you do? David Rosenthal [Cyndi's keyboard player] told me that she really wanted his parts to be just like the record.

**SC:** Well, she was kind of demanding at one point, but later I just started playing. I did listen to the records once or twice—especially the new album. It's mostly drum machine, and I'm very much into real drums. I mean, I like drum machines. Gabriel is very creative with drum machines and the counterrhythms that he comes up with.

**TS:** Did you get to work with Jimmy Bralower?

**SC:** Yes, he was the music director of the show. He did the record, and he knew all of the stuff. I really like Jimmy.

**TS:** Did he talk to you about parts?

**SC:** Yeah, he did. He helped me out with little things that I didn't hear on the record, like adding an open hi-hat after the fourth bar or something. It was stuff that he programmed. He was there all of the time at the initial rehearsals, and we would listen to the record together.

**TS:** How much did you rehearse with the band before you went on the road?

**SC:** We rehearsed every day for a month. We were there for a long time, but they weren't grueling rehearsals.

**TS:** Do you get to hear the gig tapes to see how the show is progressing?

**SC:** Yeah, I finally got to hear the Japan concerts. They were okay, but I wasn't really satisfied with my own playing until Australia. That's when it really started to sound professional. I don't care if the licks are happening or not, as long as the time is

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**TS:** Have you done much work in the studio?

**SC:** I have, but not in a day-by-day type of situation. Probably the most interesting thing that I've done was with Percy Jones. His music is very unorthodox. We would go into the studio with just an idea of what the song was supposed to be like. He let me do my stuff. I came up with a lot of parts and then did some drum overdubs. It was great.

**TS:** Did you work with a click?

**SC:** Yeah, on all of it. It surprised me that I could use the click with all of the stuff. It was weird. I didn't really listen to it; it was just part of the music. Live, I've worked with a lot of machines. The Pedantics wasn't a great band musically, but in terms of our ideas, that's where I started getting into creating stuff and just using my imagination. I was the first kid on my block to use Simmons. After Bruford had them, I was the first local guy to have them. But I never thought of Simmons as drums. I always thought of them as sound effects. I already had drums. I just started using my imagination. I never had a lot of money, so I would get just some Roland *Boss* effects and MXR effects, and start altering the sound. The thing with Percy was great. There was time to be creative. Usually, the budget doesn't give you much time to try new things. Percy's thing was definitely a creative outlet. He just let me go. It was

mostly real drums.

**TS:** Are you using machines live on this tour? [At this moment, Sterling's drum technician, JW (John Walsh), entered the dressing room and added a few comments.]

**SC:** Yeah, but manually, just with triggering and no actual machine programs. The kick and snare are triggering a Simmons *SDS 1000*. Am I correct JW? Does it have a gate into the Yamaha *Rev 7*?

**JW:** We're using the Marc *Expert* unit to trigger it, and Barcus-Berry pickups on the kick and snare.

**SC:** And we use the Octapad with the E-mu *SP-12*. We use sampled sounds from the album for "True Colors."

**JW:** We tape the pickups on with cloth duct tape and change it every day. It works very well—no problems.

**SC:** But everything is manual—no programs. With Cyndi, you can only go so far or she cuts you off. Even the percussionist, Sue [Hadjopoulos], uses the *LinnDrum*, but she plays it manually.

**JW:** They wanted to get away from click tracks, playing to tapes, and such. It's a live band. They sampled things and so on, but people are actually playing the machines, rather than playing along with them.

**SC:** We use two patches, one for "True Colors" and another for the rest of the set. JW reminds me if I forget to change it!

**TS:** What about your equipment?

**SC:** I have a Pearl kit, with 10", 12", and 13" toms, a 15" floor tom—they're all power toms—a 22" bass drum, and 5 1/2" chrome and 6 1/2" maple snares. For cymbals I'm using Zildjian: two 16" *K Brilliant*s, a 20" *K Brilliant* ride, and a 20" *K China Boy*. The hi-hats—the ones that everybody seems to be using these days—are a 13" *Z* bottom and a 13" *K* top. They really sound incredible. I've also got an 18" *K China Boy*. I'm also using the Roland *Octapads*, and I will probably start using the Pearl *Syncoussion* electronic drums. I also use the Pearl double-bass pedal with two beaters on one drum. I only use it for some fills. I'm not really a double-bass player, but I add it in there occasionally. I use *Emperor* heads on the top and *Ambassadors* on the bottom of my toms, all clear, and an *Emperor* on the bass drum, with *Ambassadors* on the snare. I muffle with a bit of napkin and duct tape. I went from skinny sticks to heavy sticks. I guess the harder the gigs got, the heavier the sticks got. I don't really have great gripping technique. If I get too tired, the stick can end up at the tip of my finger. I have a bad right hand. I had an accident in 1975 when I first started playing. It almost paralyzed my hand, so it's kind of weak.

**TS:** Have you had to work harder because of it?

**SC:** Yeah, I have. It's still a problem. Playing live is all psychological. There are times I can just play for hours, and it's just a matter of going up there with the attitude that it's just another gig as opposed to thinking, "There are all of these people out there, and I can't screw up," which sometimes gets to you, and you start getting tense. There are times when I play for hours. Some gigs go for two and a half hours.

**TS:** Playing a strong 2 and 4 seems to be a constant in the rock world. How can you get around that?

**SC:** I play 2 and 4, but I just do things over it as opposed to constantly playing the hi-hat. That's what I used the Simmons for. I used different parts of it for the hi-hat or the cymbals. At that time, I was doing some pretty unique stuff. A lot of those things had a lot of character to them. I always experiment. I like drummers who are more into total colors and textures as opposed to total chops. This world needs more drummers with imagination as opposed to technique. There are not too many out there, and hopefully, I can be the next one.

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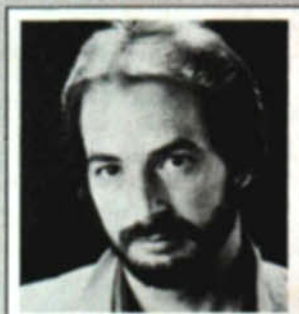
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# Jim Salamone

*Usually, the only musical instrument anyone associates with Philadelphia is the cracked Liberty Bell. But actually Philadelphia is having a resurgence of its musical life. Especially in the recording industry, Philadelphia has become a hotbed of record making to easily rival the place it carved in R&B years ago in the heyday of Gamble and Huff, Thom Bell, and Philly International Records. And at the center of this rebirth is one of the most talented, but least heralded, drum programmers on record today: Jim Salamone. His album programming credits include artists such as Sheena Easton, Bon Jovi, Billy Preston, Grover Washington, Stephanie Mills, Gladys Knight, the O'Jays, Sister Sledge, Lou Rawls, Rose Royce, Robert Hazard, Bricklin, Pretty Poison, and Bonnie Pointer, many English albums with artists including Helena Springs, Charms School, Loose Ends, and Ian Foster, and producers including Nick Martinelli, Neil Dorfsman, Bobby Eli, Dexter Wansel, Thorn Bell, and Ken Gamble. He has also backed live artists from Chuck Berry to Barbara McNair to Tiny Tim. Sitting together in his home, we talked about what it's like to program records and what really makes a studio musician successful in today's high-tech world.*

**TS:** How did you make the transition from acoustic work to machine programming?

**JS:** In 1978, I started doing some jingle work at Morning Star Recording. Over the years, I started to hear about drum machines. One day, I found out that some work that could have come my way had been taken away by an Oberheim DMX drum machine. I guess it was the early '80s. At that point, I became slightly concerned, so I figured that I should research the situation. Eventually, I made the decision to buy a *LinnDrum*. I didn't buy it for the sole purpose of earning a livelihood from it or replacing drumming. I bought it more as a tool for songwriting. But about then, I began to smell the onslaught of the high-tech invasion of drum land, so I figured that I'd better be prepared. About four months later, it began to turn around, and I started to use it a lot.

**TS:** Did you start using it to make money?

**JS:** Well, when I first bought the Linn, I could hardly afford it. I had to take out a loan, but within about seven or eight months, I ended up paying the machine off. At the time, I tried to rationalize my purchase by thinking that it might help me get through some doors that I might not have gotten into by just being a drummer.

**TS:** How much live playing were you doing in the studio at that time?

**JS:** To make a living, I had to play in clubs and go on the road a lot with bands. Studio work was a treat and not a staple. Then the *LinnDrum* came along, and slowly but surely it started to switch over. At first, people didn't even know what a *LinnDrum* was. So I set up a sort of educational tour. I went around to every recording studio, and let them know who I was, what the machine was, and how it was capable of coming up with all of these sounds that, in the studio, might take a long time to achieve. One of the first things that I also did was tell people that they could have their drum charts done by mail. I advertised to have people send me a drum chart, and I would program the parts. Then I could meet them in the studio and cut the parts. At first, I got a lot of guitar players who wanted to practice with drums, or I got drummers who would mail John Bonham charts to me so that they could hear them and learn them. It was a modest fee at the time. But that was what I did at first.

The term "preproduction" became a part of my new career. That was a big come-on: showing people that they could save a lot of studio time and a lot of money by getting the drum tracks together in advance.

**TS:** This was all pre-MIDI?

**JS:** Yes, it was pre-MIDI. I would plug the *LinnDrum* into the clock-in and get a pulse. All you would get was an 8th-note pulse, but at that time, with the way pop music was, that was a really big deal. It was very limited, but it was fun. It was like blazing new paths.

**TS:** What was the next step?

**JS:** I met the guy who became my partner,

Randy Cantor, and I began to get into more sophisticated syncing with the keyboards. The next step with the *LinnDrum* was buying all of the different sound chips. And then came MIDI, triggering boxes, and Garfield's *Dr. Click*, and syncing up the Linn with a Garfield *Mini Doc* and an *MSQ100* or *700*. Eventually, I got the Linn 9000 and the Fairlight.

**TS:** What kind of pressure do you feel to keep buying stuff?

**JS:** Well, I think that I still need to. Basically, as technology changes, I gauge what producers are asking me to do, what is coming out in the field, and what people need. It's like riding the stock market. Sometimes you make an investment, and it doesn't work out quite the way that you hoped it would. As for pressure, I think that I have enough equipment to handle most jobs thrown my way. But there's always a little bit of pressure to keep up with the latest. I certainly can't sit back and say, "Well, I've got it all," because I would be out of business in six months.

**TS:** How did you first decide to get a Fairlight?

**JS:** When I first got into the high-tech world, the Fairlight was the king of the mountain. I had always been very impressed with the sounds and the moods that the Fairlight was able to create. The Fairlight seemed to be the perfect culmination of everything all in one. It's a computer, a sequencer, and a sampler. Also, at one time, if you had a *LinnDrum*, you were the only kid on the block to have one, and that set you apart. But then, shortly after, everybody had one. This forced you to buy the next machine, because nobody else had it. Eventually, it all comes down to who is best. I mean, the person who invented the drums got all of the calls when somebody wanted a drummer. After a period of time, everyone had drums, and then what set people apart was who was better.

**TS:** Why is the programming of one drummer better than someone else's, or better than a keyboard player's programming?

**JS:** If you play drums, you will have a drummer's perspective. Getting the

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sounds is part of it, but having the right playing attitude and knowledge is another. Most keyboard players won't necessarily have the knowledge of what the left foot is doing on the hi-hat at any particular time. On the other hand, keyboard players can pick up a drum machine and—maybe due to their ignorance of the concepts of drumming—come up with amazing things. So it's not a steadfast thing. I would just have to say that, in general, drummers have a better sense of what to do with drums than keyboard players do. I have a lot of keyboards and I can program sounds, but I would never pretend to be a keyboard player. If somebody called me up and wanted keyboard sounds, I would recommend a keyboard player. And I would hope that a keyboard player would do the same with drums.

**TS:** When you are programming, how close is that experience to playing? Are you thinking as if you were playing, or do you think more individually about the parts?

**JS:** I'm thinking more as an arranger than as a drummer. But during that whole process, I picture myself playing the parts as a drummer. Often, the drum program can have a strong influence on the arranging of a tune. So arranging and drumming are very close together nowadays.

**TS:** So you think compositionally with the parts?

**JS:** Sure. Usually when I hear a tune, the clients or artists will give me some ideas on how they want the song to go. They tell me the mood. The first thing that I will concern myself with is the groove. Almost hand in hand with that is the choosing of the sound—the colors. After the groove and the colors are picked, everything follows. But I usually find that choosing sounds is the most difficult thing when starting. What is the right snare sound? What odd sound do you want to use here? Can you take a regular sound and use it differently? Can you take a piece of metal and use it instead of a tom-tom, or use a door slamming for a hand clap?

**TS:** What equipment are you working with now?

**JS:** I have a couple of Linn 9000s that Bruce Forat customized for me, and I still have my trusty *LinnDrum*, although I don't use it that often. My Simmons don't get as much use as they did in the past. I have an *SDS5*, *SDS7* and *SDS9*, but I don't use them as much, mainly because any sound that I might have used on them I now have sampled in the Linn.

**TS:** How many samples do you have?

**JS:** Hundreds. I've never counted. On literally every session that I do, even if I'm using the same snare drum that I used the day before, if the engineer EQs it a bit differently or uses different reverb and I like it, I'll sample it.

**TS:** Do you find that engineers or artists are possessive about the sounds you have created for them?

**JS:** Yeah, sometimes. A few years ago, when I was doing a lot of rap records and all I had was a *LinnDrum*, I was limited as to the amount of sounds that were available. You could burn your own chips, which I did, but it was a lengthy process to get a new sound, so whenever you got a new sound, the first thing that you wanted to do was let everyone know that you had it. Then, after a month or so, everybody started to hear that snare sound and would say, "Hey, what are you doing using my snare sound on his record?"

I still run into the same problem. If I work for the same group of producers over and over again, it becomes just that much more work to come up with unique sounds for them, so that they don't think it's just the same sound that everyone else is getting. There's pressure to always come up with new sounds. I'll spend hours coming up with a new tom sound. I'll sit there with the board, reverb, and all sorts of strange things, and combine samples to try to come up with new sounds.

**TS:** Do you have the leisure to do that in the studio during sessions, or do you do that in preproduction time?

**JS:** I try to do most of the sound building in preproduction. A little of it always takes place in the sessions, but you do the best you can in advance.

**TS:** As a drummer, how much of an engineer do you have to be? Do you have to know effects units really well? Do you have to know EQ—where to boost and cut?

**JS:** Yes, it definitely helps. When you go from one studio to the next, you know your own sounds, and you know that taking the upper mids out of this sound works. If the engineer is having trouble, rather than waste time in the studio—especially when the producer is sitting there thinking that it's your sample that is no good—you can help the engineer out by telling him what to do. It's funny, but programming and music have gotten to the point where the categories in the studio have gotten very fuzzy. It's difficult to say, "I'm a drummer" because I don't always hit drums. Sometimes I program drums, and that entails a bit of arranging, a little bit of production, and a little bit of being an engineer.

**TS:** What do you do to make a part sound like it is being played?

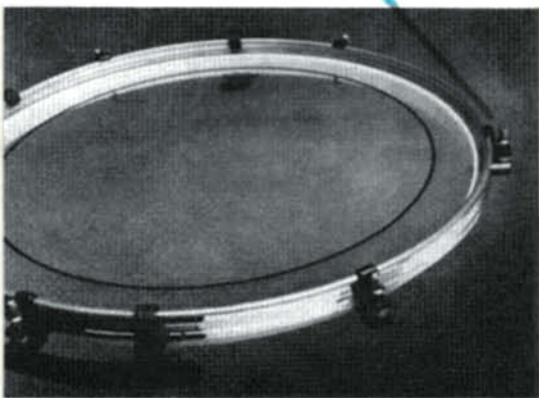
**JS:** There are all sorts of tricks that you can use. Sometimes you take the quantizing off for some of the parts. If the band is pushing it a bit and it sounds like the bass drum is stuck in the mud, you take the quantize off and play it in by hand, so that it feels right. I'll do that with fills a lot. If you want the snare to lay back a bit, it's the same. The nice thing is that you can do it in a two-bar pattern, and then every time you loop it, you get that same snare drum feel. Occasionally, I put it in a slight shuffle mode to give it a different feel. But you have to be very careful when you do stuff

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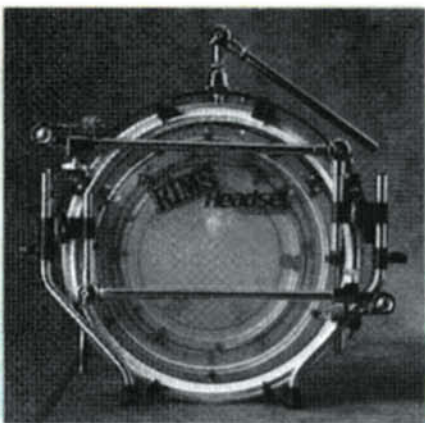


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like that, because whenever live musicians are playing to a drum machine, there could be trouble. You have to gauge that to the caliber of musicians that will be playing.

**TS:** One consideration in live playing has always been playing ahead of the beat or behind the beat, and locking with other players. Now that the machine's clock is determining the placement of the beats, do you still have to think about that at all? Do you ever try to push the tempo going into a section or pull the snare drums back? Or is it pretty much straight ahead?

**JS:** Most of the time, it is pretty much straight ahead, and any feel changes will be generated by the musicians who do the overdubs. The 9000 will take tempo changes down to a tenth of a beat, but I don't do it often because it is time-consuming to get the feel exactly right. There have been times that I have programmed in slight tempo changes. More often, I have pulled the quantize off and altered the snare feel as we talked about before. With the Fairlight, if you don't like the way the sample is sitting, you can just move it around the beat so that it affects the feel. With the Linn 9000, you can only get accurate to a 32nd-note triplet, and after that, you have to take the quantize off. Then you get pretty much your own feel. Also, samples can be a little funny to begin with; they might be a little late or early.

**TS:** What I've often noticed about keyboard players' drum parts is that they tend to stick with exactly one part for the verse and another for the chorus. I think a trademark of your programming is that you put in interesting and unexpected parts that flavor the main parts without disrupting them, in a way that would be difficult for a non-drummer to imagine. Are there any generalizations that you can make about how you construct the parts and their variations?

**JS:** I always try to make the song build, so maybe in the introduction, the instruments introduce themselves until they are playing in full, and then the first verse comes in and it breaks down. The second verse might be different from the first. And every fill is different. A lot of times, people come in and say that they want the same beat, but it's very difficult for me to do that, because as a drummer, I would never play that way. Pop music has to be fairly consistent, and I'm aware of that, but I always try to make sure that I program as if I were playing drums.

**TS:** What do you have to watch out for?

**JS:** You don't want to crush the vocal; that's the biggest thing. Or if it's instrumental, you don't want to step on the lead instrument. Normally, the vocal is the main thing, and you can't be so busy that you detract from the vocals. It's purely a question of taste, and it's subjective, but the artist will usually be the first to let you know if you overstep your bounds.

**TS:** Do you usually work with a rough

vocal?

**JS:** No. Generally speaking, we get a rough demo from the writers. We'll chart it out, and then we will sit down with the producer and talk out the arrangement.

**TS:** When you chart the song out, how specific do you get with your maps? Are they measure by measure?

**JS:** I'm not quite that specific. I try to stay as spontaneous as possible and let the machine do the remembering. Some of our best tracks have been done by putting the sequencer part in record, letting the keyboard players play for 100 bars or more over the grooves, and then creating the final parts out of what we get. The music almost always goes down with the drums. It's very rare that I do drums by themselves. The fills come last.

**TS:** Have you ever tried triggering the Linn with drums?

**JS:** No, I've never done that. I have a set of SDS9s that have the capability to do that, but I've never actually done it. When I'm working in preproduction, I may be working seven days a week, two or three sessions a day, and sometimes I am up around the clock. If I have two keyboard players who are jamming, I don't want to say, "Wait, let me get this right." Basically, I'll put up the basic groove and let them jam into the machine. Then I'll go back after the music is done. If it was my own material and I had the time to do it, I would. I consider that to be something that I would do if I had leisure time.

**TS:** Do you often end up playing in fills from pads?

**JS:** I don't play into the machine, but a lot of times, I'll play fills live over the machine onto tape. Or I may take the quantize off the Linn and play the pads into it in real time.

**TS:** In what percentage of the sessions that you do now do you actually use sticks?

**JS:** You mean those primitive wooden things? [laughs] Well, I would say that in 40% of the sessions I might use sticks for something, even if it's only cymbal or bell tree overdubs. But maybe only 10% of the sessions involve playing with real drums. It's funny, because I view myself as almost two people: There's the real drummer in there, and there's the drum programmer. The better I do with the drum programming, the more I almost put myself out of a job as a real drummer, because people will say, "Why bother? It sounds like a real drumset, it's quicker, and it's less aggravation." With programming, you're convincing people to let you use the drum machine, and then you have to turn around and almost beg them to let you use real drums. Man is striving to make the computer sound more like man. It's very ironic.

**TS:** You mentioned that occasionally some artists have asked you to play the parts live. When does that happen?

**JS:** Usually on ballads. I think that most



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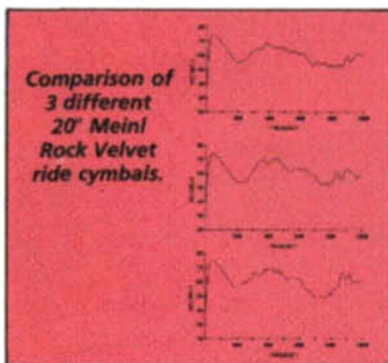


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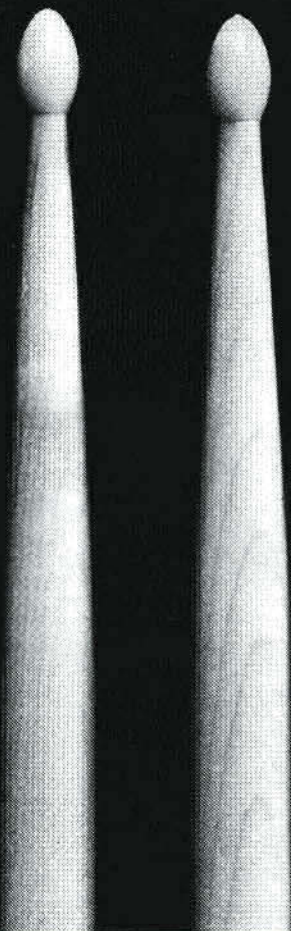


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producers and artists still feel that, on ballads, you need the feel that you just don't get out of the machine. That's a generalization, because certainly you can use a drum machine on a ballad. But, for example, a lot of the reason that Anita Baker's album sounds as warm as it does is because there is a lot of live playing on it. I don't think that you will ever get rid of acoustic drums. Drum machines and sequencers are all tools. During any new move in technology, there tends to be a lot of abuse at first. People always say, "Let's get back to real this or that." I don't view it as getting back. It has never gone away. People have to learn to stop polarizing everything and just consider the drum machine as another tool of expression.

**TS:** Do you think that there has been an overreaction to the machine? What do you see in the future?

**JS:** I see the equipment becoming more and more sophisticated and, at the same time, more user-friendly. I don't think that drum machines are ever going to go away, because laying drums in the studio is probably one of the most difficult and time-consuming parts of the recording process, and drum machines are really allowing people to get on with the creative process. As a drummer, I love to play, but I don't feel that I am being stifled by using a machine on most of my jobs.

**TS:** If you were talking to young drummers who wanted advice on what to learn that would help them in the studio, what advice would you give them? Would you tell them to learn to play real drums or just to learn to program? Is it important that you did all of that live playing?

**JS:** Yes, sure it is. Every experience counts. It's like the English language. By playing live, every little experience becomes part of that language. Those skills help you become proficient at communicating. So I would say, "Be a drummer, but also, besides going to 'Drums 101,' don't forget 'Electronics 102,' because it helps."

**TS:** How would you define the difference between the people who are making it in the studio and those who aren't?

**JS:** Certainly, you have to have a talent at your specific craft. Also you need taste, you have to be very flexible, and hopefully, you can maintain a unique style to separate you from everyone else. You need ambition and aggression, without being over-opinionated. You need a great sense of humor—that's for sure—and a lot of patience. There's an awful lot of luck involved. You also need equipment. But, you know, when somebody is really into it—the people who don't care about the money . . . . When my partner and I got into this, we never thought that we would make a whole lot of money or work with the people that we are working with now. We were just two kids who hadn't grown up, and we had these expensive toys that replaced our toy soldiers and trucks.

That's really all it is. They're just toys. But somehow we were able to fuse our playing with toys with our musical career. I think that people can sense that zeal. I think producers and clients like to be around people who are really into what they are doing and are confident. It instills confidence in them.

There is one thing that I would like to say. A lot of people think that, because it's a machine and there is a button that says "on" and a button that says "off," anybody can be an expert. This definitely isn't true. It's like saying, "Here's a drum, and here's a stick; hit the drum, and you're a drummer." That also is not true. There are lots of people with drum machines, but that doesn't automatically mean they can create great music. The level of sophistication is progressing rapidly. As I said, when I bought my first *LinnDrum*, being the only one on the block helped me get started. Now, everybody has drum machines, and it's definitely the musician that makes the machine. I'm personally very adamant about this electronics versus real stuff. The same way that I had to educate people about the *LinnDrum*, now I want to grab them and say, "It's still *me* doing the job, either way." When the *DMX* was taking my work away, I was afraid of it. But now that I've worked with machines, they have become my friends, and not my enemies. And I know what they can't do, as well as what they can do. I sleep a lot better at night, because I know they can't do everything.

**TS:** How do you train to be a great programmer?

**JS:** I don't think that it's a conscious effort. I think it's the enthusiasm you have when you buy something new and you can't go to sleep that night because you have to sit with it. You're so amazed at what it can do that you can't put it down. You have a relationship with your instruments. Each machine has its own personality. You need to become very proficient at relating to the machine's personality. When I first got the *Linn 9000*, it seemed so awkward. I thought that I would never become proficient with it. And now I can't see working on any other machine. But basically, success stems from enthusiasm and the feeling that you're into it. You just can't keep away from it.



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Photo by Rick Malkin

# Maynard Ferguson's Ray Brinker

exactly is "alloy rock"? Enthusiasm fills Ray's face as he explains. "The term 'alloy' is a metallurgical term meaning a mixture of metals, or in our case, music. We use that term, because we're looking for the energy of heavy metal without its ponderous quality. Our music is more of a heavy metal with a pop hook and danceability."

The band was actually begun in 1978, when Ray met fellow freshman and bass player Steve Bailey at North Texas State. "We played together for the first time at a jam session in the dormitory," recalls Ray, "and there was an instant rapport between us. From that point on, we wanted to put a band together." However, their paths soon separated when Steve moved to Miami. While Ray was playing with Maynard Ferguson, Steve was enjoying success with Dizzy Gillespie and Paquito D'Rivera. The opportunity to put Brinker together arose when they received financial backing from Hit-Ray Productions, a production company formed by Ray Brinker and his partner Ray Shiding, who is the executive producer of the band's current album.

Ray continues, "When I left the road, I went to Miami to start rehearsing with Steve. There I met a friend of his, Andy Timmons, who is a great guitar player. The three of us began rehearsing together with the intention of writing tunes and recording an album. After a month and a half, we moved to Denton so that we could use the recording facilities in Dallas and Las Colinas. While rehearsing in Denton, we happened upon Mark Pyburn, who joined our band as a vocalist."

Following several months of rehearsal, Brinker recorded its debut album at Castle Audio in Dallas and mixed it at TeleImage in Las Colinas. Most of the music on the album was co-written by all four band members. Ray elaborates, "It's interesting how someone will bring an idea for a tune to rehearsal and how we mold the tune to the band. Everyone has input to every tune that we play. That's the neat thing about having a band and writing music specifically for us: We feel an attachment to every tune we play."

It is a little bit unusual for a drummer to

be the leader of a rock 'n' roll band. Does this create any special problems for Ray? "The main problem," he explains, "is that logistically I am not out in front of the band. Mark, as the vocalist, is the most visual part of this band. Therefore, on stage, he is the center of attention for most of the show, and it's up to him to pace the show and establish a rapport with the audience. As a drummer, it's hard to front a band in the sense of talking to an audience. Aside from that, there are really no other problems."

Besides the musical aspects of leading a band, there is a whole other world that exists off stage—the business aspect. Ray learned a lot about dealing with people in the music business from watching Maynard Ferguson. "You have to be very professional in approaching business people," Ray explains. "Musicians are usually stereotyped as animalistic, wild, and crazy, and also ignorant and irresponsible businesswise. While that may be true of some musicians, it is an obstacle to overcome, even for musicians who are not like that. When dealing with business people, they're automatically hesitant to talk to you in any kind of intelligent fashion. Being a 'rock 'n' roller' immediately classifies you in their eyes, and being a drummer opens you up to even more stereotyped classifications. I've found that I have to prove myself immediately. You have to let them know that you are an intelligent human being who has an idea of what is going on, and that you're able to take care of business in a professional and intelligent manner."

"I think this is one thing that young musicians need to become aware of: They are going to *have* to deal with business. You cannot just be an artist and expect someone else to handle that for you. You've got to be on the ball for yourself. It's not all the glamour and glitter of what happens on stage; there is quite a lot of footwork underneath."

Endorsements fall under the subject of business, and Ray uses and endorses several lines of products. With Brinker, his drumkit is an eight-piece *Recording Custom* set by Yamaha. It consists of various combinations of 8", 10", 12", 13", 14",

Once upon a time, there was a young boy growing up in a small town who fell in love with drumming. Through perseverance and practice, he slowly perfected his craft of making music. One day, he left his hometown to further his musical education at a school in the Lone Star state known for its hourly rehearsals of its famous lab bands. This boy, who by now had become a young man, was becoming quite good on his drumset and had the opportunity to realize one of his childhood dreams by playing with one of the top jazz musicians. His creative talent was soon enveloping him, and he left the band of his dreams to create his very own dream band.

This "fairy tale" story did come true for the young man—a man named Ray Brinker. Following a very musical high school career, Ray studied at North Texas State University. After a stint in the drum chair of the well-known One O'Clock Lab Band, he joined forces with Maynard Ferguson and his band. But even though so many dreams had come true, there was still one more.

What made Ray change the direction of a successful drum career? "I decided to leave Maynard after the opportunity to start my own band arose," he replies. "It was an idea I had thrown around for quite some time—the idea of being able to go into a studio and record an album of music written especially for me and my band. Fortunately, I left Maynard's band on very good terms. I'll always love Maynard for what he is and what he did for me, but I just felt the need to go on."

And on he went to form his own band, called Brinker, which performs a type of music called "alloy rock." Just what

by Lauren Vogel

15", 16", and 18" power toms, and two 22" bass drums. He uses an 8 x 14 snare drum. Ray explains, "I just prefer the sound of a deep wood snare. You get a lot more low end and still retain a lot of the high-end response. This particular drum mikes real well and sounds great in the studio." He uses a Remo coated *Ambassador* on the snare drum, and Remo *Pinstripes* as the toms' batter heads and *clear Ambassadors* on the bottom, although sometimes he will use *clear Ambassadors* on both the top and bottom, depending on the musical situation. Ray doesn't tune the toms to particular pitches, but, rather, finds the most resonance for each drum and works from there. To complement his drums, Ray uses all Zildjian cymbals. His setup varies but includes a 22" K ride cymbal, an 18" A medium crash, a 17" A medium-thin crash, a 16" K dark crash, a pair of 14" *Quick Beat* hi-hats, and a 22" *China Boy* High cymbal. For jazz gigs, he switches to all K cymbals—13" hi-hats, 22" and 20" rides, and 16" and 15" dark crashes. For some situations, he switches to an entire setup of Z series Zildjians. Ray uses Pro-Mark *Texas Hickory 5B* wood-tip drumsticks. To complete his setup, there is *Power Grip* stick tape, Purecussion *RIMS*, *May EA* Miking Systems, and Humes & Berg cases.

So how did Ray get started in music? During a demonstration of musical instruments for the fifth grade class at Annville Elementary School in Annville, Pennsylvania, Ray was "just awestruck" with the drumming. "It was the most fascinating thing I had ever seen," he states. "I knew immediately that was what I wanted to do, and there was never any question in my mind." Soon Ray was taking drum lessons from Max Hunsicker, his first private instructor and one of two major teaching influences in his career. Ray remembers, "Max drove home the fact that it *has* to feel good for it to work. If it feels good, you can count on the fact that it sounds good."

Ray began his professional career at the early age of 14 with the Lee Moyer Trio. "I was the youngest person in the group," he says, "so it was quite an eye-opening experience for me coming right out of high

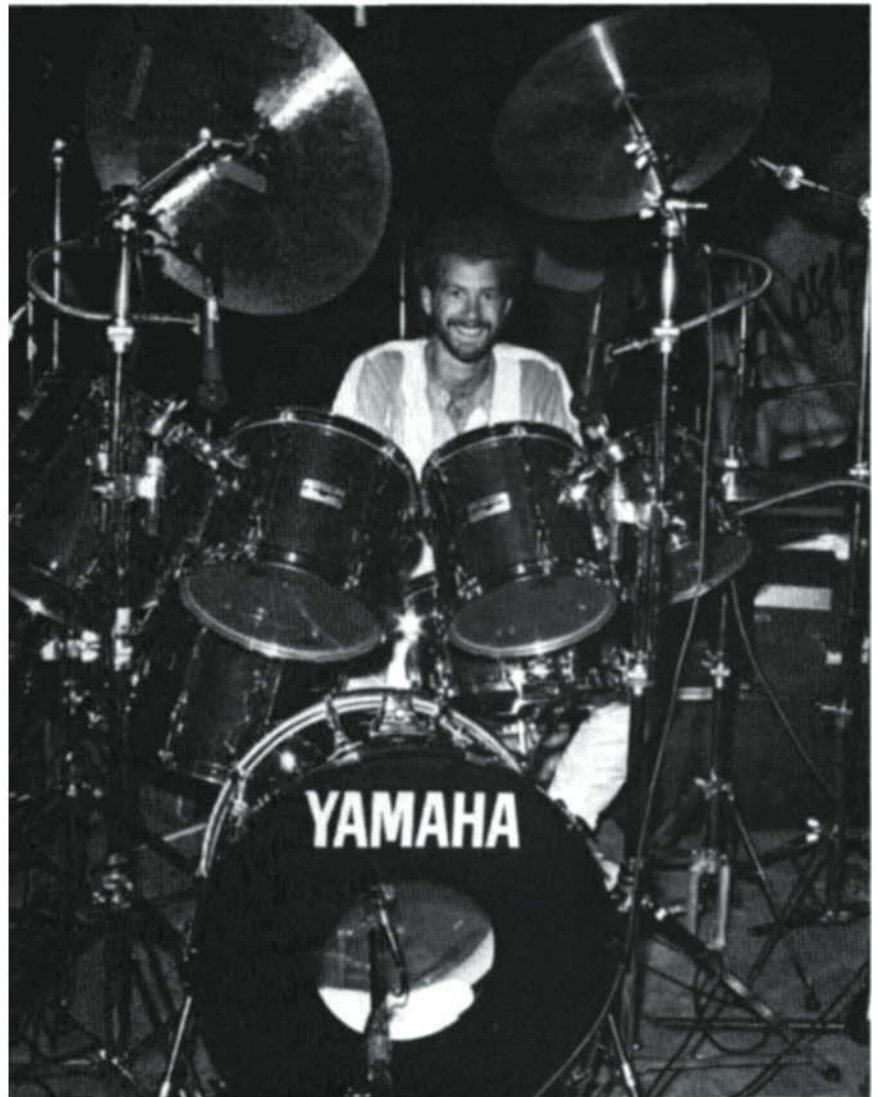


Photo by Rick Malkin

school into that whole bar scene. I think I grew up real fast because of that! We played all the old standards—everything from 'Tie A Yellow Ribbon' to 'Proud Mary.' But it was good in the sense that I was out playing professionally, and I got a real sense of what it was like to run a band."

During high school, Ray was intrigued by the things most young drummers are intrigued by: technique and speed. Some of his favorite drummers included Terry Bozzio, Jerry Marotta, Phil Collins, Bill Bruford, Simon Phillips, and Billy Cobham. Ray continues, "Somehow, I fell into an interest in the whole jazz scene at an early age—Buddy Rich, Maynard Ferguson. In fact, it was one of my high school dreams to play in Maynard Ferguson's band! Later, my influences really expanded and I started listening to some more eclectic players, and really delved into Tony Williams and Elvin Jones." In addition to his normal high school classes, he was taking music theory courses at Leb-

anon Valley College, and he was playing in the college jazz band.

Following his graduation in 1978, Ray decided to leave Pennsylvania in search of a more flourishing musical atmosphere. After reading an article in *Modern Drummer* on Louie Bellson, in which Louie mentioned several music schools, including North Texas State University, Ray traveled to Denton for orientation and fell in love with the school. He loaded his van full of drums and stereo equipment, and drove to Texas.

"My main influence at North Texas was Henry Okstel," Ray says. "He approaches a student as an entire person, not as a musician or a drummer. He made me realize that your spiritual thinking about yourself really parallels your musicianship. We spent a lot of time in lessons talking about the whole mental process of being a musician and making music—what you're thinking about when you're playing and how you're transferring the ideas you hear in your head through your body to the

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drums through the drumsticks. All musicians have a few blocks, if you want to call them that, between the ideas they're hearing in their head and what is coming out in their playing. Henry tries to eliminate those blocks one at a time, which allows the music to come out more unadulterated and less contrived. He's been very successful at doing that with a wide variety of people, including his former students Steve Houghton, Gregg Bissonette, and Ed Soph."

One of the first technical aspects that Ray concentrated on at North Texas State was switching from traditional grip to matched grip. It took a while to adjust to, but now he prefers it. "Conventional grip just seems to be such a dinosaur at this point. The approach to drumming today is such that you're sitting behind a large set and all of your limbs are being used equally. Matched grip is really kind of a move to being ambidextrous and to having full control over your left hand to do all the things that your right hand does. I think playing brushes is the only situation in which there may be an advantage to using traditional grip—to get that left-hand circular swish happening. But I would highly recommend matched grip to anyone for playing any style of music, regardless of what other drummers say. I would have to disagree with some of the purists who believe that it's impossible to swing using matched grip. I think that swing is something that comes from within you, and any way that you can get it out of you is fine."

North Texas State University is world renowned for its lab band department. What are some of the other "pros" of the music school? "Musically, you are saturated at North Texas and have to absorb as much as you can from all that's going on around you. So I learned a lot real fast during my stay at North Texas. If I had to pick one thing that helped me the most, I would have to say it was just being surrounded by so many tremendous players. Dr. Robert Schietroma also deserves a lot of credit for maintaining an excellent percussion department.

"One thing the school really emphasizes is your reading ability. Any student who comes out of the One O'clock Lab Band can read just about any chart in existence in the world. Another benefit of playing with the One O'clock was a two-week tour of the West Coast, where we played for different schools and jazz festivals. The tour gave everyone an insight as to what it's like to be on the road with a big band and all that entails.

"One of the idiosyncrasies of North Texas State, however, is that it tends to concentrate heavily on jazz and classical forms of music. There is only a little recognition of the whole pop or rock world, although this is changing. Some students who come out of North Texas are a little bit deluded in the sense that they think they should be able to come out with a degree playing bebop, and be able to survive as a


musician. That usually is not the case. There are very few people in the world right now who are making a living playing bebop. Realistically, you're going to have to play McDonald's jingles in the studio, you're going to have to play pop acts, and you're going to have to play commercial music. I would also like to see the school incorporate some music business and music law courses into its degree programs, in order to better prepare the students for the real-life conditions of the music business today."

Ray took one semester off from school to tour with the Ice Capades. He remembers those five months as a good experience. "It was an easy tour, since we spent about two or three weeks in every major city in the country. It helped me to adjust to the whole way of life on the road."

During college, in addition to playing in numerous bands in the Dallas area, Ray "cut his teeth" in the recording studio. However, he attributes his first studio gig to recording a jingle for Fashion Bug Clothing Outfits when he was only 12 years old! His father, who was in the advertising business, was a friend of the drummer, who offered to let Ray sit in. As it turned out, the track they used was the one Ray was playing on! He continues, "Recording was all quite new to me. You play differently in the studio than you do live. In the studio, you have to be more precise and you have to be aware of what sounds good on tape, which is the hardest thing to learn. You can't play a tune in the studio the same way you would play it live, because there are certain things that just don't make it on tape. Certain fills really have to be simplified. A real fast, intricate fill that is impressive live may not come off on tape."

In late September 1983, Ray had the opportunity to join Maynard Ferguson's band. A friend of his from North Texas State and his predecessor in the One O'clock Lab Band, Gregg Bissonette, had been touring with Maynard. When Gregg left the band, he recommended Ray. Ray recalls his first meeting with Maynard: "I was with Gregg and his father in Georgetown, for what I thought would be an audition. We were walking down the street, and Maynard was walking in the opposite direction. He walked up and Gregg introduced me. Maynard said, 'So this is my new drummer,' and he shook my hand. That was my audition! Maynard just looked at me, shook my hand, and kept walking the other way. I was floored.

"The main thing I learned with Maynard," explains Ray, "was that it's important to be able to play any style of music. During the course of one show, we would play a rock tune, a funk tune, an up-Latin tune, a ballad, and a bebop medley. The gig is good in that it forces you to play convincingly in every style. Maynard himself is just wonderful to work with. He knows what he wants and can convey his ideas to a band very easily. He always maintains a



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great rapport with the musicians, which is something I really respect him for.

"He loves the music. From that standpoint, I think it's easy to convey what you're feeling. Maynard is a very spiritual person, which he also conveys in his music. I think he's searching for an honesty in music, which is something that I'm personally searching for in my music. His music appeals to a vast number of people. He's very concerned with keeping up to date musically, as well as remembering his roots. I respect him for being able to change with the music without sacrificing his integrity."

Life on the road with Maynard Ferguson is interesting and demanding. It is not unusual for the band to do several "hit and runs" in one week. This means that, after a show, the band packs up, gets on the bus, and drives during the night to the next city—sometimes several hundred miles away. When the band arrives the next afternoon, the musicians grab a few hours of sleep in a hotel before their evening performance. Then the schedule repeats itself, sometimes for days in a row. "You begin to lose all concept of reality," Ray confides. "You don't know what city you're in or what day it is! The band travels a lot, and it amazes me that Maynard is still on the road and loves it as much as he does."

"We covered the whole United States and parts of Canada. I remember doing one particular show in a hotel in the Bos-

ton area. We were playing a double bill with the Buddy Rich band. There was a huge crowd, including Armand Zildjian in the front row along with the entire Zildjian factory! The two bands were set up on stages next to each other, and Buddy had just played a phenomenal show. During his second show, Maynard decided it would be great to have both bands play together!" Ray laughs at the memory before continuing. "We managed to get both bands through different arrangements of 'Birdland,' during the course of which I got to trade fours with Buddy Rich, which was one of the biggest and scariest thrills of my life!"

"There are some other performances that I remember, too. We did a Kool Jazz Festival in New Haven, Connecticut, before an audience of about 35,000 people. That's probably the biggest crowd I've played for so far. I also remember that Maynard was invited to play at a tribute to Miles Davis at Radio City Music Hall in New York. The entire band got to go to the concert, and the whole night was just a 'Who's Who' of jazz. We were invited to a black-tie party afterwards at the Red Parrot. I can remember standing at the party next to Maynard, and he was introducing me to people like Philly Joe Jones, George Benson, Tony Williams, Ron Carter, and Max Roach. The entire party was wall-to-wall jazz greats, and I just stood back and watched for hours. They're all very won-

derful, down-to-earth people. They treat you like you're part of the family.

"Maynard is real down-to-earth, too. His energy has always amazed me. He approaches every show the same; he gives 100%. He's there for the people who are there for him, and he'll do anything in his power to make them feel a part of what's going on on stage. So many performers today make it almost a point to ostracize themselves from an audience and to place themselves on some kind of pedestal. Maynard develops a real good rapport with an audience, because he wants them to feel like they are partying with the band."

During the first six months of this year, Ray rejoined Maynard on the road. This time, the tour was the debut for Maynard's new electronic band called High Voltage. The new format consists of two horns and a rhythm section of five players. In keeping with the new style, Ray plays all electronic drums. His equipment includes a Yamaha electronic drumset—a *PMC-1* brain, *TX816* module—two *SPX-90* effects, *RX-5* drum machine, and various reverb, delay, and triggering units.

"This was a good opportunity for me," explains Ray, "not only to play this type of music, but also to record an album with Maynard." The band recorded its new album (called *High Voltage*) at Chick Corea's studio, The Mad Hatter. The album is on the Intima Record label, distributed by Capitol Records. The music ranges from straight-ahead acoustic jazz to very electric fusion. "Everyone in the band has space to stretch out and be creative."

While Ray is on the road again, the Brinker group is temporarily on hold, but not forgotten. Looking towards the future, he pauses a moment before responding, "I just want to continue playing music that I love, hopefully with my band Brinker. We've recorded the album on Hit-Ray Records, but we're shopping the tapes to record companies now. We're anxious to be on the road, hopefully opening up for major acts. I also hope to be able to play an occasional jazz gig on the side. I'd love to be able to do all types of music because I tend to stagnate after playing too much of one concept." Ray thoughtfully adds, "There are a lot of wonderful people who have helped all of us in this band get to where we are. I especially want to thank my parents and family, who have always been behind me 100%."

"I suppose I'm searching for a type of truth or honesty in music, because I'm looking for that in my life right now. So much of this business is fake, artificial, and plastic. I don't ever want that to invade my music. I want to have my own unique personality. I think that's what we're searching for with this band. That was the reason for creating the term 'alloy rock'—to set ourselves off in our own category. I think honesty is the biggest factor in any musical element. You have to truly believe in what you're doing."

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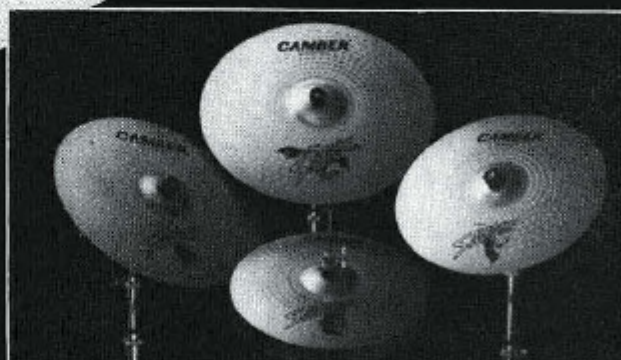
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*Baird continued from page 21*

thing. We're assuming that everybody has played to the machine, but, alas, on a lot of sessions, people haven't. A lot of times, they put them on at different times. They had one guitar player play this way, they had this keyboard player interpret it this way, and when you erase the machine, you've got anywhere from two to five people with their interpretations of where the machine is playing the downbeat. The drummer has to walk in and say, "Okay, where can I go in the middle without making all the other musicians sound like they don't know what's going on and without

stepping all over myself while I play something creative?" It's a big challenge.


**RF:** How do you approach that?

**MB:** I find out exactly what it's going to entail. I come up with a part that the producer likes and that I think is right. I listen to it a few times and make some notes of where a particular fill might go. Maybe I like something that was programmed on the machine, but I want to enhance it. I'm willing to steal anybody's idea. If it's a good idea, I'm the first one to admit it. I figure out where the lulls are and where the peaks are, and maybe make a notation "in these bars through these bars on the chart, the time is a little Squirrely, so listen to the first guitar," so it's like a little road map. After I play it down a couple of times, I get an idea of where to go with it. When there are different interpretations of where the time is, it can be very difficult. Maybe I wind up not being able to get it in one pass. I maybe get halfway through it, and then I have to punch in somewhere. Maybe then I'll only get another eight bars and have to punch in again, depending on how bad it is.

There are advantages and disadvantages to the whole thing. The disadvantage is that I'm not playing with other players live, so the interaction between players is not there. Also, we're talking financial considerations. We're talking about a project that would normally take a rhythm section five days, whereas, by overdubbing, I can do the whole album maybe in one or two days, depending on how many tunes they want me to do. Therefore, we're talking about less money for the time involved. But another topic it brings up is creativity. If it were a normal situation with a rhythm section, I would never hear the final product. I don't know how many projects I've done where I've heard the final product and said, "If I'd known that they were going to play that string line or that horn lick, or that the vocal was going to do this, I would have played this." But when I'm hearing a final product in the overdub situation, I can work off of everybody's ideas, which is a big advantage.

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**RF:** You had mentioned to me that the Eddie Money record was difficult because you didn't know quite what to play with his vocal.

**MB:** He and I actually worked together on the type of fills he wanted that would work with his vocal. There were a couple of tunes where he was real adamant about certain fills he had heard. None of the tunes I played on had a vocal. I told him when I got there that it was senseless for me to play without having some kind of reference of what he was going to sing. I didn't want to be stepping all over his vocal. So he threw a rough vocal down, and he made changes in the vocal; "I'm going to sing this in this part . . .," I'd say, "Okay, fine." There were times when it was very, very easy and times when it was very, very tough. We might literally spend an hour on how he would want one fill played. "No, don't play that one; play this kind of a fill. No, play that kind of a fill"—back and forth, back and forth.

**RF:** Can you be a little more specific?

**MB:** It would be a very simple fill. We're talking about a half a beat fill—lead in. It was kind of the blind leading the blind. That was difficult, but only on a couple of tunes. Mostly it was Richie [producer Zito], Eddie, and I, and Richie would put his foot down and say, "Let's go for this." If I were producing it, I might not agree with something, but it's their money and you have to give them what they want. Hopefully, you're going to give them more than what they expected. That's the idea. So the next time they say, "Who do you call?" It's not Ghostbusters; it's Mike Baird.

**RF:** Dealing with different levels of communication must be difficult. Everyone communicates differently anyway, so it's a whole deciphering process.

**MB:** Especially if there's a language barrier. I did dates with Julio Iglesias where Julio wasn't there, but his coproducer Tony Ramos was. Getting him to express what he wanted was interesting. He'd go from one gamut to the other. He had Carlos Rios, the guitar player, going from a crank Marshall sound to a wah-wah pedal. He didn't know what he was looking for, and that can become difficult. That makes it frustrating for the player. They don't tell the player, "I really don't know what I want, so just give me a bunch of things to choose from." Then the player can say, "I've got this; I can do this; I can do that." If they're saying, "Play it more like . . .," the player has to hone in on the one thing they're saying. When that doesn't work, they get frustrated. Any player asks, "What kind of tune is it? What kind of a snare drum is needed? What are you looking for?" The producer says, "I want kind of a ballady thing, or something that's a little bit harder," so you start out with one thing. "Here's this


snare drum. What do you think?" "I like the top end," the producer says, "but I don't like the way the bottom end is. I want something with a little more crack—a little more bite." So maybe you go to the other extreme and try a piccolo snare drum. Maybe it was a radical departure from what you had, but sometimes it works if you give them the extremes and then go somewhere in between that. It takes time and experience. It also depends on how the engineers miked it, what kind of console it is, and what kind of monitors there are. Maybe you never worked with this engineer before, so you have no idea until you go into the booth of what they're hearing. Maybe this great, deep snare drum that sounds as big as a house in the studio sounds like you're tapping on the top of a tin can in the booth.

**'RF:** We talked about your doing the Springfield gig. I assume that kind of live situation is a release for a session player. Did you plan on doing more live work?

**MB:** I had thought about it, just from the standpoint that, as hard as the road is, I do like playing live. I would like to make it a combination of both. I love the studio, and studio work is one of those things where the longer you're gone, the more people are apt to think you're not coming back, so they get used to someone else. That definitely happens in this business.

**RF:** How did the Journey gig come about?

**MB:** I had heard they were going to start looking for drummers, and I knew Steve Smith, having talked to him a couple of times. I didn't know the particulars, but I had called Jonathan Cain, because I had played on an album he produced. I told him that, if they were going to hold auditions, I would audition. I usually don't do auditions. I'll tell somebody, "Go get this record, and tell me what you think." But I auditioned. It was Neal Schon on guitar, Jonathan Cain on keyboards, and Randy Jackson on bass. They had sent me a tape of about eight tunes and said to learn them. I really hadn't had a chance to listen to it because I had been working so much, so I basically listened to it on the flight over. I hadn't been playing live. They were set up in a rehearsal room, and there were major racks of gear. It looked like the stage of the Van Halen show, in a tiny room. Here I was, playing with these little pencils for sticks, beating myself to death. They said, "Man, you sounded good. We'll give you a call." That was during the time I was doing Eddie Money. I came home after a week with Eddie, and they

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called me and asked if I would come back up. Steve Perry was going to come in. I think there were something like 70 drummers, and they taped every one of them. They had like three or four guys a day. So I went up and auditioned again. They said, "Okay, don't call us; we'll call you." I went home. The next week, I went up and did some more work with Eddie Money, and the week after that, it was, "Mike, can you come back up one more time?" By now, there were rumors all over town. Everybody who had gone up there practically thought he had the Journey gig. Who had been back how many times? "You've

been back three times? Then you've got the gig." It had become this unbelievable scene. "Chad Wackerman has it." "No, Omar Hakim has it." "No, Mike Baird has it." There were 20 drummers who thought they had the gig.

**RF:** What were they looking for?

**MB:** The perfect drummer, which doesn't exist. Neal Schon was looking for an unbelievable fusionist, Steve Perry wanted an unbelievable R&B drummer, and Jonathan Cain wanted a pop drum-machine timekeeper. Sorry, it doesn't exist. It will probably never exist. It's too extreme. This was my analysis of the situation. I went up

a third time, and when they said, "Don't call us; we'll call you," I said, "Look guys, I'm not coming back up here again. Tell me now. Either I have it, or I don't have it. I love playing with you and you're nice guys, but you're not paying my bills." They said, "You're right; you're right. We'll make a decision." I came home, and the next day was my birthday. The phone rang. It was Steve Perry, and he said, "Man, you've got the gig. Everybody agrees, hands down, that you're the guy. When can you be up here?" "I'll be up on Monday." "Great." Everybody at the party here at my house was going, "Great, you've got the gig!"

I flew up and rehearsed with them. After about three or four days, the vibe wasn't right, and I knew something was going on. Nobody would be truthful with me. Jonathan and I were hanging out, and the next thing I knew, Neal said, "I need to talk to you for a minute." He took me in this room where they all were, and he said, "You know Mike, you're great, but you're just not what we're looking for." I said, "Wait a minute. You hired me for the gig, and now you're firing me?" I freaked out, called them every name in the book, and told them, "You guys don't know what you're looking for. That's the problem. You're looking for something that doesn't exist. What you need is to get Steve Smith back. There's only one Steve Smith. Sorry. If that's what you want, then that's the only person you're going to be happy with. You're going to have to suffer somewhere, somehow." It was basically Neal who said I wasn't what he wanted, and he was the original member in the band, so they played along with him. Needless to say, the tour was being pushed back further and further and further. I split. A couple of months went by, and I heard they had this young kid, Atma. Next thing I knew, I got a phone call from Jonathan Cain. "Mike, how are you doing? What's happening?" After about ten minutes, there was dead silence and he said, "Is the door still open?" I said, "Open for what?" He said, "Steve's not happy. He's freaking out. I'm not sure if this guy is going to work out. Would you think about coming back?" I said, "I don't know. I'll have to think about it." Over the course of the next few weeks, they called me every week, asking how I felt about it. I said, "When you guys make up your mind that this guy is not happening and you're serious, we'll talk." He called and asked for a decision. I said yes, but I wanted everything worked out before I got up there.

I was up in about three days, and I rehearsed with them. On the fourth day, I went to Jonathan and said, "Man, I'm still not feeling the vibe here. What is the problem?" It was not like, "Yeah, I'm excited this is happening." It was more like, "We're still not sure we've made the right decision," and I thought, "I'm not going

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to deal with this anymore." He said, "Just play, Mike." I said, "What do you mean, just play? I *am* playing." I got so pissed off that I thought, "You know, I'm going to go back in there, and I'm going to shove this beat so far up these assholes' butts that they're going to choke to death." I went in there with the attitude of, "This is the Mike Baird Show. Either follow it or you're out." That's what I did, and they all looked at me like "Where did this guy come from?" I figured that's what they wanted. They wanted somebody to say, "This is my show." I was the ringleader. If I fell apart, everybody fell apart. If Neal played something he hated or had a bad night or whatever, I still had to be there.

Every night for a two-hour show, I beat the hell out of my drums. I have never in my life played as hard. During rehearsals, I went to every stick company, because I was breaking two or three pairs of sticks on each tune. I was using the heaviest cymbals Sabian makes and literally pounding on everything, turning all my drumheads into English muffins. Forget sound quality; just pound. Pro-Mark was real nice and developed a brand-new stick [the Maxxum 412], which saved me about half a million dollars. It was a prototype stick, and it worked out great. I was breaking things constantly on the tour. It was a hard gig. It was the hardest gig and the most effort I've put towards anything I've ever done in my life as far as physical and mental exertion went. It was four-and-a-half months of that, every night.

**RF:** When you enter a situation like that where you're replacing a very good player who has a very identifiable sound and someone who was very much a part of that unit, do you walk in trying to fill his shoes or do you walk in with the attitude of giving them who you are?

**MB:** Basically, Steve Smith molded himself to that band. He is a great player, and now he's playing with his band. From what I understand, he's playing better than ever because there are no restrictions. Usually, fusion drummers don't make good ballad or pop drummers, because they're too busy and they play too much, but for that band, he curbed and added just enough of

his own flair so people said, "Oh, he has that kind of a background." He definitely bridged that gap. I didn't come from a fusion background, and as much as I am impressed with Steve Smith, Vinnie Colaiuta, Simon Phillips, and all those guys for their chops, it's never impressed me enough to want to learn how to do it. I don't know why, but it just never has. I think, for myself, there are other aspects that are important. They knew right off the bat that I'm not a fusion drummer, but they liked the overall spectrum of the gamut. There is such a wide gamut of material in that band. One minute you play "Open Arms," a ballad type of thing, and the next minute, it's a crank-your-brains-out tune. We'd do "Oh Sherry," which is a pop tune with an R&B feel. That has nothing to do with the feel of "Keep On Running," or one of their older tunes. It's finding that medium ground. They had found extremes, but they had never found that middle area—that medium. That's why I said they'd never find anybody. The only person who could fill that void was the person who created that void, Steve Smith. I basically said, "This is me. This is what I do. You either like it, or you don't like it." It's a very intimidating thing when you're thinking of getting involved with a group that has been together and very successful. All the eyes are on the drummer. [Bassist] Randy Jackson had already been playing with them three months prior to my being involved. So the drum seat was the hot seat, and everybody knew it.

Once they were committed, I had about ten days to learn 25 tunes for the first gig. That's where I think my studio application came in. In the studio, you do one tune one minute and another tune the next. They run it down a couple of times, and you have to know what you're doing. I think that was a big advantage, but it was definitely a very intimidating situation. Before I went back up there, I said to Neal, "Look, I want to know right now if you are going to be happy because you're the person I have to please now." He said, "Yeah, I'm going to be happy." After the first gig, Neal came to me and said, "I realize how big of a mistake I made. You were



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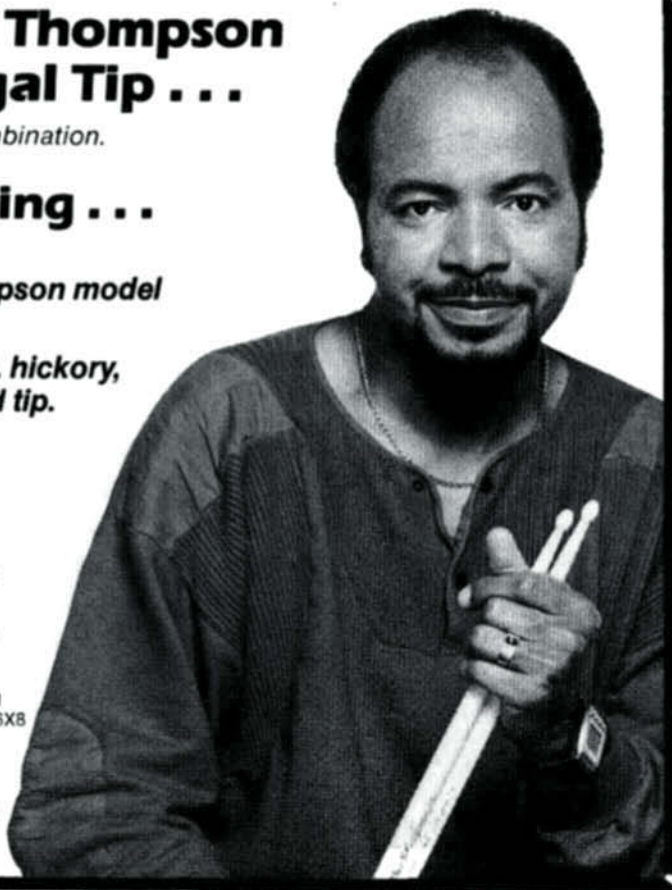
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definitely the cat right from the beginning, and I was so far gone that I just couldn't see it." That really meant a lot to me. The shows got better and better.

**RF:** Which songs did you enjoy playing?

**MB:** That's a tough one, because I liked playing all the tunes. Things like "Open Arms" are unique because you can really work with Steve. On most of the tunes, I worked off of Steve's vocal, because he's the main focal point, anyway. He likes the band to be up here, and he wants to sing back and stretch his vocal out. He sings long notes, not short, little spurts, so he loves to be way back. If you really listen to him, you'll start to go back with him, and the whole thing will just go down to the floor. You have to keep the pocket so it feels good but still on the edge, so he can play with it and go back and forth. That was a real big challenge. Randy Jackson is a studio player, but Jonathan and Neal aren't, and when you're dealing with non-studio players who don't have great time—not that their time is bad, but it's not *studio* time—you have to learn how to deal with that live mentality. Do I pull here? Do I push here? How do I find that medium ground, so we all stay within the same balance?

Doing Journey, one of the things I was concerned about was that I didn't want people to say, "It sounds like a studio band." This was a rock band. It was not a bunch of studio musicians. It wasn't anything sterile. Not that being studio musicians makes it sterile, but there's always that conception. "The drummer? He keeps great time." That's great for the studio, but I don't want to hear that when I'm out on the road beating my brains out.

**RF:** So how do you counter that?

**MB:** First of all, by having the aggressive attitude. I try to play more on top, because I think rock is definitely bash and crash. Make things sloppy. Don't worry about making everything perfect. That's a big difference in live playing. If you're playing in a fusion band at the Baked Potato, everyone has the microscope and it has to be perfect, but when you're dealing with rock 'n' roll, people don't hear those minute things. They'd rather see or hear something wild. It doesn't matter if it's a 16th of a beat off. Playing sloppy is a hard thing for a studio player to do. One thing that was different between this tour and Rick's was that, with Rick's, I took the attitude of being very precise, not that I didn't play with authority or didn't play hard, because I did, but this time it was a different vibe. If you hear something, just play it. Make it sloppy. Who cares? Hopefully, I succeeded in doing that so people didn't walk away saying, "The drummer, the time . . . ." It used to actually bug me that people in town used to call me "Mr. Time." I would walk into a date with a lot of pressure, and I got so fanatical that I carried a stopwatch. I would time myself every two

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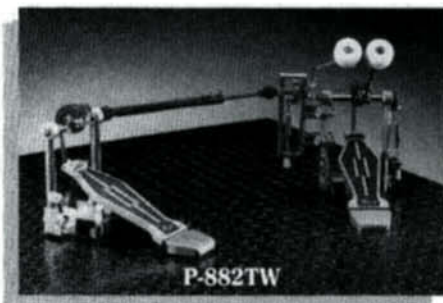


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bars. If it was a tenth of a second off, I'd freak out.

**RF:** That's a lot of pressure.

**MB:** I did it to myself. I'm surprised I didn't get an ulcer the second year I was in the business.

**RF:** Did you ever do anything to work on your time?

**MB:** I always practiced with a metronome. When I realized how fanatical I was about the time, I realized that time was not that critical. The important thing is what it feels like. That's what's happening now with time. Drum machines and sequencers are perfect, but where's the identity? Certain things feel great with a machine if they're supposed to be that regimented, everything-right-on-top kind of thing. But there are certain things where the machine just doesn't make it. What I dislike about everybody's jumping on the machine thing is that there are not that many people who are willing to take a chance. Everything is computed and there is a formula, so it's "Let's all do the same thing." Granted, there are some great programmers out there, but you can play any tune on the radio, and I can tell you what chip it is and what machine it came from. It's like the same drummer playing on every tune. There is no performance anymore. It's "How clever can I be with the extra bells and whistles," or "Let me program a drum machine part that nobody in the world can play." I think it's finally changing. I don't know if it will ever go back to the way it was, because that's just not progress. It's going to take somebody like Michael Jackson or Prince to say, "What can I do to be different? All acoustic! What a concept!" And then everybody will go on that.

It's a great tool for writers, but what winds up happening is that the writer writes the tune to the feel of the drum machine, and when you try to recut it, it doesn't feel the same. On the El DeBarge single, "When Love Has Gone Away," I basically played cymbal overdubs, but even just that makes a difference in the track. I've done tom overdubs for Jay Graydon and David Foster, and all that

stuff makes a difference. I think that's what's happening now. People say it saves them money if they can cut everything with a machine and replace the machine later with a drummer. Then there are people like Lionel Richie who say, "No, I want a rhythm section." Then there are tunes like "Say You, Say Me" that have three drummers on them. "Say You, Say Me" has Paul Leim, Jeff Porcaro, and John Robinson, where they used this fill and this bar from this drummer from that take and then put it together. That's lunacy.

**RF:** You played double drums with Jeff on a project.

**MB:** We played on a track on a Pointer Sisters album [*Energy*], which Richard Perry was producing. It was double drums at Studio 55 with Jeff and me. Abe Laboviel [bass] was jumping up and down. It was happening. I didn't know how it was going to work, but we were just playing.

**RF:** What role did each of you assume?

**MB:** That's the interesting thing. We didn't say, "Okay, you play this fill, and I'll play that fill." It was actually pretty mind blowing. The first two takes were amazing. It was so on that it was ridiculous. Every fill was exactly the same in the same place. It was magic. We went into the booth, and the engineer threw up the faders. I said, "Okay, throw in the other drums," but they were already in. It was dead on, almost canceling each other out. There were little bitty flams here and there, but it was so on. It was just one of those magic moments. From that point, Richard Perry said, "Okay Jeff, I want you to do this, and I want Mike to do that," and the whole thing was history. Then I started thinking about it. It still sounded good, but not like it had been.

**RF:** Can you recall some other magic moments?

**MB:** That first date with Lee Sklar, like I said before. That was a magic moment. Another one was when we cut "Jesse's Girl" with Rick Springfield. Then there was a track that David Foster cut with Olivia Newton-John that was all done except for the drums, and they wanted to add drums. It was totally rubato, not cut to a



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click. There were ritards everywhere, and I had to record everything. I did that in like two takes, and that was a magic moment. Donna Summer's "She Works Hard For The Money" was also magic. The fill in the beginning of that was just something where they counted the tune off, and I, just for some reason, thought of this fill and went for it. We went through the take, and it was, "Great, now do it again." I wound up actually being able to pull it off. One of the first overdub cymbal dates that sticks in my mind was a George Benson tune, "Turn Your Love Around." That had a drum machine that Jeff programmed, and I did the cymbal overdubbing, so we got

dual credit on that, although we didn't do it at the same time. A moment I thought was pretty hilarious was when I went into a session at Studio 55 and asked them what I was overdubbing on. They said it was a tune for Richard Perry with Willie Nelson and Julio Iglesias ["To All The Girls I Loved Before"]. I thought that was the most hilarious combination I had ever heard. They had drums on it, but they didn't like them, so I changed them.

**RF:** How did you change it?

**MB:** They didn't like the fills or anything. Who knows who played on it? Nobody talks in those situations. Believe me, I've overdubbed on everybody's stuff, and

everybody has overdubbed on top of my stuff. Usually when you overdub on somebody's stuff, you listen to it and say, "What could you possibly want me to change?" It winds up just being your interpretation of how it should be played versus somebody else's. It's just that the producer was looking for something other than what he got. The year before last, I did maybe five actual rhythm dates for records. I still did film stuff for Mike Post, which is rhythm section, but for records, I did only five dates. And it's very strange to do that anymore because of the industry change. "You mean there are other people in the room here I have to play with?" It's a really unique thing when you're not used to it. Everybody in the room thinks, "Wow, what do I do?"

**RF:** What do you want? What is your goal?

**MB:** I used to think I didn't want to be a studio sausage the rest of my life. Drummers have it the worst of anybody, just from the standpoint that they always get ribbed about "a drummer is a musician's best friend." They're always the low end of the totem pole. That saying is finally starting to turn around, and the outlook on drummers is finally changing. One of my biggest goals is that I've always wanted to write a tune and stand in front of the Grammys, holding a statue, saying, "I hope this disproves the old joke that the best friend for a musician is a drummer." So that's what I'm working on. I want to write tunes, and I'm getting into some projects, looking to explore production.

**RF:** What advice do you have for the younger drummers coming up?

**MB:** I think, for young cats coming up, the main thing is to keep tuned to what's on the radio. Go to clubs. Get ideas. A friend of mine, Jim Home, a very successful horn player, always said, "Don't ever lose the fire." That's the main thing. If you lose that edge—that drive—you're digging your grave. That's what happens to a lot of people in this town. They wind up getting put out to pasture because of that attitude.

**RF:** How do you keep the fire?

**MB:** By not becoming comfortable. Everybody has an ego, but don't let it get to you. Don't ever think you've got it made, because in this business, you never do. It's a feast-or-famine business, and the minute you think it's never going to stop, guess what? The phone doesn't ring. You can cop an attitude and that will last for a while, but eventually, it will catch up to you. I've always had a positive outlook. Get into electronics. Learn it better than the next person. You can't buy every piece of new gear out there—some people can't even afford to buy a cheap Simmons kit—but learn what you can do with it. Now the drummers have a double role. Not only do they have to play, but they also have to create. It's a new avenue. Create something unique. Go for it.



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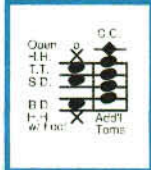
by Kenny Aronoff

# Man Vs. Machine



Photo by Rick Malkin

**MUSIC KEY**



Many drummers have had that uncomfortable experience of being replaced by another drummer, but being replaced by a drum machine is even more frustrating. Most of the time, we're not even aware that it's happening because we're simply not called for the recording session. I personally experienced this while recording John Cougar Mellencamp's *American Fool* album in 1982.

One day, I walked into the studio and saw the engineers working with the sounds in a Linn LM-1 drum machine. "Whose idea was this?" I wondered. It had never been mentioned or brought up before, and it was so unlike John's style to use a drum machine. I was definitely surprised.

At any rate, I had no choice but to go along with the program. In order to be involved, I learned how to program the drum machine and came up with a suitable part for the song, "Jack And Diane." I basically replaced a standard acoustic drumbeat with different sounds from the machine. For example, hi-hat became tambourine, snare drum became hand claps, and bass drum became floor tom. I also added a Cabasa.

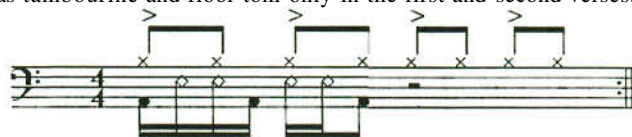
"Jack And Diane" took a long time to arrange, and we did a lot of experimenting in the studio. The song played in its original form was not very exciting, so we had to try different ideas to create dynamics in the song. With this in mind, we decided to have real drums enter with a short solo to create excitement and help make the song build. The contrast between the drum machine and the acoustic drums was very effective dynamically and texturally. When I first walked into the studio, the acoustic drums were being

replaced by a drum machine. But by the end of the session, acoustic drums had become the main feature.

The characteristic beat of the song was programmed on the drum machine. There were two variations of the beat. This was used in the first and second intros, the first and second choruses, and the tag. (The tambourine part is written on the hi-hat space, the hand claps on the snare drum space, and the floor tom on the bass drum space.)



In the next pattern, the Cabasa (written in the snare drum space) was only used in a small part of the first verse and the third intro. It was tambourine and floor tom only in the first and second verses.



After two intros, two verses, and two choruses with just the basic drum machine beat, something big was needed to add excitement to the song. The acoustic drums were the answer. The drums entered with a two-measure solo, and then they played a groove for 12 measures while the drum machine accompanied. (The drum machine part is written on the top staff, and the acoustic drums on the bottom.)

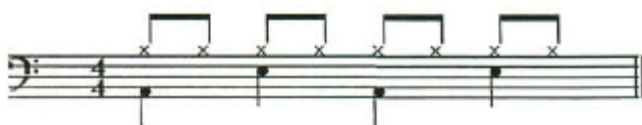


I had another experience with a drum machine last January when guitarist Paul Pesco asked me to replace a drum machine track with real drums. I liked that idea a lot!

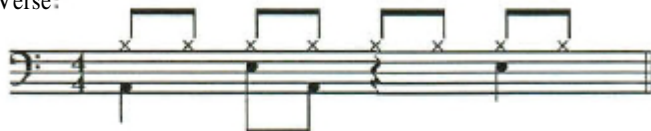
Paul told me that the machine had good time, but not the human feel and attitude that he wanted. So I flew to New York and replaced the drum machine parts with my drums. I basically played the drum machine grooves, but with my feel.

One of the songs, *Hypnotized*, had two basic grooves.

Intro, chorus, and bridge:



Verse:



These beats were simple, but playing them perfectly with the drum machine and making them groove was not so easy. It took a lot of concentration, because every note had to be perfectly placed and in

the pocket. Since the beats were so basic, all of my focus was on the feel and groove of the song.

After doing that session with Paul, I realized that a human can come very close to playing perfectly in time, like a machine. But a machine cannot assimilate the feel and personality of a human drummer. Humans can react instantly to whatever is going on around them, but machines can't. I am not, however, saying that drum machines are bad. They have added something new and creative to the music scene, and they are here to stay, so drummers should become familiar with them.

If you own a drum machine, here are some ways that you can use it in conjunction with your acoustic drums. (1) Learn how to program different kinds of beats on the machine. You'll probably come up with some new ideas that you can then use with your acoustic drums. (2) Compose and program two-, four-, and eight-measure phrases on the machine. Learn to play these phrases on your acoustic set, and then play along with the machine. (3) Program a simple beat on the drum machine, and then use it as a metronome or timekeeper when you practice time and grooves. (4) Program a percussion part on the machine, and then play beats that fit with it on your acoustic kit. Concentrate on getting a good feel and groove.

It's a good idea to be prepared for any situation that you may encounter. Being able to program a drum machine or play along with one is vital for your survival in today's music scene.

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by Dave Calarco

# Drummer's And Bass Players

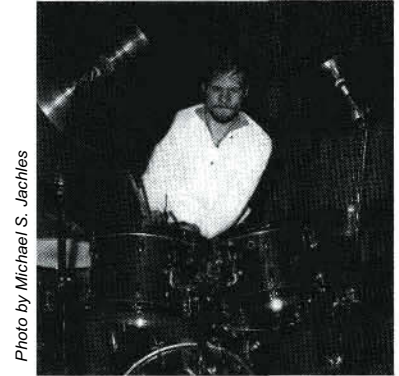


Photo by Michael S. Jachles

In 1986, I had the distinction of presenting clinics at the Eastman School of Music, North Texas State University, and the University of Miami, where the level of musicianship is extremely high. Even so, students from all three schools asked many of the same questions pertaining to subjects rarely dealt with in books or in school. One of the most common things I heard from student drummers was "Man, how can I play with this bass player?" Let's stop right there.

The relationship between drummer and bass player is the most *important* one in any musical group. These musicians are the heart and life blood of any musical style. A drummer and a bass player who play well together can make even a mediocre group sound great. On the other hand, a great drummer and a great bass player who never get together come off as two egos who contribute nothing to an already bad musical situation. So, now what? Well, my first answer to these students was that they were probably playing *at* the bass player rather than *with* the bass player. Let me give you an example of what I mean. A drummer and a bass player are playing in the rhythm section of a small jazz group. The bass player has a tendency to rush a little. The drummer's first reaction is to show the bass player "where the time is." The drummer becomes so concerned with showing how wrong the bass player is playing that the main objective—the feel of the music—becomes the last consideration. Now, I'm not saying you should rush the time just because the bass player does. What I'm saying is that you must learn to play with the bass player no matter how he or she plays, before you'll get that individual to play as you want.

One of two things happens when a drummer plays *at* a bass player. The bass player either takes the attitude of, "Oh yeah? I'll show *you* where it is," or becomes extremely intimidated and afraid to play, either of which only makes the problem worse. What young players must realize is that the bass player may be very

nervous about playing with you. Maybe the bass player has a legitimate musical reason for playing that way, or maybe he or she just doesn't know how to function in that situation. Whatever the reason, you must understand that bass players want to play their best just as much as you do. Using this knowledge, you can now approach how to play *with* the bassist.

All drummers need to learn that every bass player plays a little differently, and that some are going to be more compatible with you than others. Conversely, bass players are saying the same thing about drummers. What we need to do is learn to adjust to different bass players according to how they play. The most recognizable difference is going to be where the bass player places the beat. There are three distinct places in a beat: the front, the middle, and the back. Someone who plays the front would have a tendency to play a little "on top." Someone who plays the back would have a tendency to play "underneath." These are very subtle differences, but they're often the root of the problem.

If the bass player plays "on top," don't try to fight it by holding back and playing a whole other time altogether. Play on top with the bass player for a while to see how it feels. Once the two of you have experienced that, then you can back off a little and the difference should stick right out. Now most players will notice and want to get that feeling of playing together again, so they will try almost anything. If the bass player is oblivious to this and just keeps plugging away, then the problem needs to be discussed by the two of you.

Let me say here that the best solution for any of these problems is some good dialogue. I don't mean screaming like a maniac at the bass player or even telling the bass player how to play. My suggestion is just to talk about the music, how you would like it to come together and feel good, and how maybe the two of you could try this or that. Maybe the bass player has a suggestion. Again, communication is the key to good music. As players advance and become of "another level," there's no

need to verbally discuss things. Communication becomes an ESP type of thing. Good players know when things are not going right and don't need to be told. They also know when everything is "poppin'," and you'll find there's no need to say much then either.

If a bass player drags, don't try to pound the time out and speed things up. You'll find it's like trying to pull a freight train; all you'll do is get frustrated and sound it! What I find works sometimes, especially in a rehearsal situation, is to lay out for a chorus or two in the middle of the song. But do it diplomatically and musically. Don't stop in the middle of a chorus or sit there looking disgusted. Just do it in a purely musical way. Usually what happens is, if the bass player is dragging, when you lay out, the whole thing will slow right down, sometimes unbelievably. It's then that it becomes obvious to everyone that there *is* a problem. Once you've established that, you're halfway home.

I've had the good fortune of playing with some of the greatest bass players in the world, and I've had to adjust to every one of them. They've all had to adjust to me as well. How quickly and sympathetically we adjusted to each other directly affected the quality of the musical experience. I remember sitting there playing and thinking to myself, "Wow! This guy makes me sound great!" At that moment, all I wanted to do was play my best. I wanted to make him feel the same thing.

The most important thing you can do, however, is to play with a bass player on a regular basis. Really learn how that individual plays. Try things in different situations that you might not ordinarily try. Become secure musical partners so that each of you feels confident in the ability of the other. There should be no second-guessing. You should feel as though you could play anything and the bass player would make it right. And finally, remember that it's not a matter of who's right or wrong, but rather, who's the first one to make a bad situation work out right.





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by Peter Donald

# The Working Teacher



In the past few months, I've read at least two articles in which name musicians have expressed doubts about training so many young players to be professional musicians, thereby encouraging them to go into a field in which the job market is changing and employment is perceived as being unstable. If, indeed, one does choose a career in the performing arts, job security should not be at the top of one's list of lifestyle preferences. The legendary ups and downs of our profession are not for the fainthearted. But with talent and dedication, a life in music can have rewards that far outweigh those offered by more conventional pastimes. That the music business of 1987 is changing is no secret to anyone, and the question of how to prepare our students for a fulfilling career is one that concerns teachers everywhere.

It would be unfair, in many cases, to discourage young players from studying music seriously, because we, as seasoned professionals, are experiencing what is apparently a dwindling demand for traditional instrumental skills. To a beginner, the desire to play has nothing to do with prospective employment. Rather, it is a deeply rooted need that must be fulfilled at almost any cost, and no amount of practical dissuasion will (or should) change that fact. As working teachers, we owe our students the benefit of our knowledge of the music business, and we can share with them—in very practical ways—how we have utilized our natural talents and acquired skills. It is for the students to decide how to adapt and/or expand upon this knowledge when they put it to the tests peculiar to their own generation.

The joy of making music should not disappear from our lives once we decide to do it professionally. In anything that takes commitment and hard work, there are certain times when it seems more like a "job" than other times. Transforming something that's basically fun, such as playing, into a draining bore often has more to do with the people you're doing it with than with the music itself. For some, the act of playing is as important as the content of what is being played; for others, content is everything. But even the most rabid purists can still enjoy many different styles of music.

Because they, themselves, have spent long hours developing their craft, they can appreciate how much work is involved in attaining proficiency on an instrument—regardless of the kind of music being played. So, whether one has aspirations to great artistry, refined craftsmanship, or some combination of both, experiencing (or at least being aware of) a variety of disciplines that are part of our heritage can only broaden one's ability to communicate.

This is the age of eclecticism. A tremendous amount of information—musical and otherwise—is being beamed at us constantly. To make use of all this input, one must have an open mind and an ability to absorb different musical languages. The risk is not that drummers may be overly eclectic and have no original vision, but that they might render too limited a view from not responding to what is going on around them. As modern-day drummers, we must acquaint ourselves with many things that don't seem to have much bearing on how hip our ride cymbal pattern is or whether our press roll is even enough.

Being a well-rounded musician doesn't necessarily mean that you are going to be a studio player who can walk into a session and play any style that is asked of you. What it *does* mean is that you have made some thoughtful choices about what you want out of music. You have explored different disciplines, have rejected some and embraced others, and have, through a process of elimination, reached some conclusions as to what it is you do best and derive the most satisfaction from. There's nothing worse than being forced into a style of playing entirely because of limitations. Of course, in some cases, the opposite holds true: Some great styles were born out of limitations! But how many of us, given a choice, are going to take that chance with our own lives?

To play any instrument, one must have a sense of its history. Although marching drums have a past that long predates jazz, the drumset didn't appear until the beginning of this century. It's gone through many evolutions to get to where it is now and will certainly continue to do so. It is all very well to look at pictures of the quaint

drumsets of yesterday and read articles about older drummers, but it's much more important to have *listened to the music* that was played by those people on those drumsets. Many young players have only had a cursory listen to Elvin Jones or Tony Williams, let alone Roy Haynes, Philly Joe Jones, or Kenny Clarke—*let alone* Papa Jo Jones, Baby Dodds, or Sid Catlett. Beginning rock drummers would be victims of the same historical myopia by ignoring such players as Al Jackson, Gary Chester, and Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste. Absorbing and listening to these important stylists will give you more material to draw upon when approaching contemporary styles. (The practical applications become obvious when we see periodic revivals of pop music styles long since past.) Furthermore, an awareness of history will show you that no definitive style is born in a vacuum.

One of the most important developments in drumset playing within the past ten years has been the grafting of Afro-Cuban and Brazilian hand drumming onto the set. Using different limbs to reconstruct the clave, bottom, middle, and top lines of "la batteria" has given a new meaning to drumset independence. The traditional roles of the feet and hands, which have always had basic similarities in rock and jazz, have been turned upside down in some cases to accommodate Latin rhythms. This can only help to freshen up already established styles, as well as to break new ground. The intricacies of Latin percussion should be dealt with on their own. However, as part of drumset playing, they have redefined a lot of old assumptions.

Mallets, timpani, or "tuned percussion" have been embraced by more and more "serious" set players over the years. Percussionists, likewise, have done the reverse to some extent. To be honest, I wish, in retrospect, that I had spent more time dealing with these skills. But as a student, I felt I was much too hip to be fooling with the likes of a xylophone! Although some proficiency on the keyboard is essential for the study of harmony and theory (a *must* for any complete musician—drummer or not), it can be advantageous to

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work on these areas simply to exercise some of the same muscles that you use to play the drums. Spending some time with a mallet instrument can only enhance your basic hand technique. Equally important, dealing with melody and harmony will ultimately bring you into the music-making process that everybody else in a band is involved in. From a more practical standpoint, being a "doubler" makes you a more valuable resource to producers and composers, and can open up more areas of work. The extent to which you involve yourself with percussion has to do with aptitude and personality, but it is something that should not be ignored.

Last, but certainly not least, there is our crucible of the 1980s: electronics. So much has happened in this area in the past few years that drummers have been left reeling under an onslaught of confusing and expensive hype. To some degree, the advances in electronics are perceived as threatening, so we scramble to keep up. On the other hand, they have been liberating, as we are now able to expand our range of expression to include synthesizer programming, sampling, and signal processing. Involvement in this new technology is exciting and mind-expanding, but the choices are almost too many and the expense potentially ruinous. Having a working knowledge of musical electronics can save you a lot of grief, time, and money.

With the advent of the synthesizer studio, it is true that a certain amount of work has been lost for drummers—especially in the areas of demo recordings, basic tracking for records, and increasingly in computer/synthesizer-generated scoring. There is the common myth that drummers are somehow more qualified than anybody else to program drum machines, and that, therefore, that process should be left to us. I've never thought this was entirely true, as any musician with a good ear can put a decent—and sometimes first-rate—program into a drum machine. What drummers *can* do is become adept programmers: Spend the time to get better sounds than non-drummers can through sampling and other forms of sound manipulation,

and come up with programs that could enhance a live performance in a more natural and interesting way than a non-drummer could imagine. Beyond that, we just have to keep going with the flow that the technologists dictate and hope that people don't get tired of *watching* us play the instrument!

It should be said that there are prerequisites for taking all this on. They are: the ability to read, a rudimentary knowledge of drumming, and a grasp of basic music theory. Reading seems to be the most commonly daunting hurdle for the young player. The long hours of concentration that must be spent programming the human hand/eye computer comprise a discipline that can be quite tedious. Some people have a greater gift for it than others, but to ignore reading completely is foolish. The time you spend aurally memorizing a given piece of music is wasted when you could be concerned with playing that piece of music without the worry of your part being right. The potential for fresh musical experiences is severely curtailed if you can't quickly and competently interpret a part. Reading facilitates learning: Imagine studying literature without being able to read prose . . .

In my teaching experience, I've encountered students who have run the gamut in terms of natural ability, ambition, and self-discipline—qualities that are necessary for sustaining a career in music (or any other area, for that matter). Natural ability is mysteriously bestowed on us at birth, and it must be nurtured consciously or it may never surface as a viable skill. Ambition varies from person to person, depending on emotional needs and self-expectations. The issue of self-discipline is something that I have seen defeat many talented students.

Thoughtfully working through new technical challenges and patiently training mental and physical reflexes—*i.e.*, *practicing*—is the only form of commitment that will reveal your true musical personality. Without some basis in technique, even the most basic musical idea cannot be expressed clearly. Much of pop music has a simplicity that belies the craftsmanship

and sophistication that goes into producing what we finally hear on a record or see in a video. Those who have achieved media success apparently without a background of hard work and discipline are skating on thin ice that most likely won't support them if (or when) their "magic" fades. There are no shortcuts.

The music business is not immune to those forces that afflict the rest of the economy. We are feeling the effects of automation in the studios with synthesized, sampled, and computer-generated music reducing the actual number of players needed to produce a "full" sound. And there is a new breed of musician who is more comfortable working alone with electronics than with an ensemble. Our unions are besieged by more strident management demands for concessions that reflect an increasingly competitive global and nonunion marketplace. Live music will never disappear, but it will continue to be subject to the usual vagaries of economics. There will always be those few people who, through sheer force of will and/or consummate talent, can rise above these problems, but most of us have to steer the slippery course that has become the life of the professional musician.

To deal with all this discouraging news, the aspiring player should marshal all of his or her resources to become as proficient and adaptable as possible. For drummers, this means beginning private studies as early as possible in order to obtain the basics of reading and technique; participating in as many school and community music programs as time permits; playing—for work or for fun—in as many bands as possible in order to gain experience; seeing as much *live* music as possible (records and videos are often "done with mirrors"); and staying informed through workshops, clinics, and the media. Although not to be disregarded early on, studies in arranging, composition, and theory can perhaps be dealt with more comprehensively at the post-high school/college level. Electronics and computer technology are an ongoing learning process for everyone, and we can come to terms with them through a mixture of education and personal experience. Sustaining some form of academics and supporting that with a musical environment will lay the groundwork for coping—and hopefully thriving—within the realities of our challenging and unpredictable profession.

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This page contains 12 staves of musical notation for a bass line. The notation is written in bass clef and includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several dynamic markings: *p* (piano), *cresc.* (crescendo), and *f* (forte). The notation also includes various accidentals, such as accents (>) and breath marks (circles). The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

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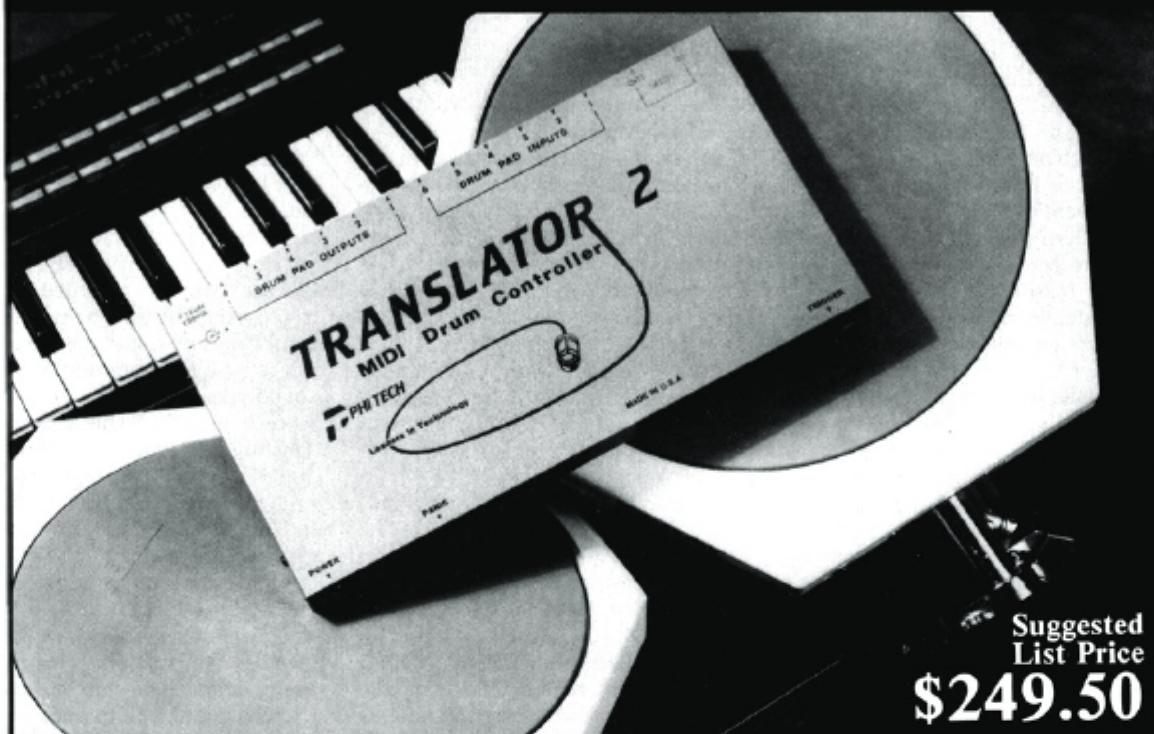
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## MIDI and

Many people equate electronic drums with terms like "artificial," "special effects," or the like. Seldom do people think in terms of an electronic replacement for acoustic sources, or in other words, *realism*. With the advent of MIDI, it's become possible for modern drummers to access realistic drum and percussion sounds electronically, for a reasonable price. Okay, how does one define realistic electronic drum and percussion sounds? Simple—if you listen to a recording and can't tell whether the sounds were created acoustically or electronically, you've got realism.

Most of the people I talk with these days (particularly drummers) are sure that electronic systems will never sound like acoustic systems. The reasons are varied, but in most cases, the bias comes from personal experience. Given the present state of the music industry, I'm really not surprised. To put it simply, most players have never *heard* a good system in operation, let alone having the chance to play one. No, I'm not talking about \$100,000-plus *Synclavier* systems and the like. I'm talking about affordable systems within the reach of

many musicians. The reason most people haven't seen them is that most people don't know they exist!

Before you run down to your local music store and start asking about these mysterious unknown setups, be advised of two things: (1) The salesperson will most likely think that you're suffering from paranoid schizophrenia, and (2) these systems simply don't exist as a single unit. "*What? But you just said . . .*" Yes I know, things are starting to spin, and you're seeing red.

You see, the key word here is *system*. Through the use of MIDI, you can assemble a very high-quality, versatile, and realistic electronic drum system. You no longer need to be trapped into one manufacturer's vision of electronic drums. The major problem with a MIDI-based drum system is *homework*. You must be willing to scout around for specific pieces of equipment, and you must be willing to spend some time learning how to program them. This means reading the manuals, and experimenting with various sounds and settings. I'm constantly amazed by the number of people I've met who simply find it a "chore" to read the instructions! Time well spent can produce some startling results.

First, let's look at some limitations inherent in many electronic drum setups and, indeed, many poorly planned MIDI systems as well. First and most obvious is the actual sound-generating circuit. Sorry, but a simple swept sine oscillator will never sound like a real tom-tom. The tone produced is just too simple. (That's why so few people use space drums today.) This can be enhanced with items like noise generators and filters, but not many people will be fooled by it. This process could continue by adding more oscillators, filters, and amplifiers, each step getting closer to reality, but with costs and programming difficulty climbing as well. For single-shot applications like percussion sounds, digital sampling is probably your best bet with the present technology. Sampling is essentially the process of recording a sound directly into computer memory, instead of, say, a tape recorder. Like a tape recorder, several levels of fidelity are possible ranging from portable cassette to beyond studio reel-to-reel mastering. (You guessed it, costs go up accordingly.) The items to look for in samplers are sampling rate, word size, encoding, and available sample time. All of these items will have an effect on your resulting sound.

Sampling rate indicates how many individual sample words will exist during a

given period of time. A 20 KHZ rate indicates that there will be 20,000 sample words in one second. Generally, the higher the rate, the better. The rate will determine how high in frequency the resulting sound can go. At best, the highest tone that can be successfully sampled will be one-half of the sample rate. Effectively, this tone is the highest harmonic recorded. If you're trying to sample very bright sounds such as cymbals, claves, and the like, a high sample rate will be required to avoid a dull-sounding sample. (The sonic effect is akin to turning your treble knob way down.) This suggests that a sample rate of at least 30 KHZ is required with 40 KHZ + being preferable. (Remember, most people can hear to at least 15 KHZ, and many people can hear in the area of 20 KHZ.)

A given sample rate and memory size will yield a specific sample time. If you sample at 20 KHZ and have 40 K words of memory available, this will produce a maximum sample time of two seconds. It's easily seen that, with a fixed memory size, there's a trade-off between sample rate and maximum sample time. There's also a direct relationship between memory size and charge account balance! The question then becomes: "How much memory can I get away with?" This can be tricky, because it depends on what you want to sample. Sounds such as kick drums, hand claps, etc., require very little memory, while long, sustaining sounds such as cymbals will require considerably more.

You may notice that many drum machines produce *truncated* sounds in an effort to save memory and, thereby, lower the cost. User sampling allows *you* the option of allocating memory as you see fit. You might opt for five or six short sounds, or just one long sound. When shopping, look for devices with high sample rates and large memories. Most drum machines and samplers are set with maximum rates in the 28 to 32 KHZ range. Many people can hear a big difference with the higher rates afforded by machines such as the Sequential *Prophet 2000*, Akai *S9000*, and E-mu *Emax* (around 42 KHZ for each).

The final arbiter in fidelity is the word size and encoding scheme. Today there are two basic forms: (1) 8-bit log, and (2) 12-bit linear. Generally, the more bits, the better. A larger number of bits means that the word can define a large number of distinct signal levels. It also indicates a higher memory usage. In linear encoding, each successive step has the same size for a constant resolution. In an effort to save on memory, some people have used a loga-

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# Realism

by Jim Fiore

rithmic coding scheme. Here, the step size changes in accordance with signal size. While an 8-bit log form may be superior to an 8-bit linear form, it's not necessarily superior to a 12-bit linear form. In fact, many engineers feel that 12-bit linear coding is superior for uncorrelated sources like percussion. By the way, log coding is not new. It's been around for a few years and is basically an outgrowth of the telephone industry. There are a few other schemes on the market as well. For comparison, the modern CD uses a 44.1 KHZ sample rate with 16-bit linear encoding, complete with error handling data.

Okay, let's say we find a great sampler or drum machine with a high sampling rate, gobs of memory, and a gonzo word length/encoding scheme. In the case of the drum machine, forget about memory and think nice, long, realistic samples. We now hook up our device with these incredibly outrageous, totally gnarly, and tubular drum samples to our MIDI interface device. We assign note numbers, channels, and so forth as explained in earlier articles, and—instant drumkit! The problem is that the more you listen to it compared to a *real* drumset, the less lifelike it seems. How can this be? After all, we've got ultimate samples!

Simply put, there are two basic problems here: (1) lack of overring and (2) virtually no dynamic variation. All drummers know that, if they hit a cymbal, it rings. If they hit it again, the second strike will blend with the ringing from the first strike. In other words, the first strike ring doesn't immediately stop when the cymbal is struck again. This is how we get cymbal crescendos and buzz rolls on a snare drum. Unfortunately, most drum machines will not do this. Every time a pad is struck, the corresponding drum sound will be re-triggered from the beginning without any ringing or resonance. This makes for rolls that sound more like machine-gun bursts and cymbal crescendos that are next to useless. A way around this is to continue the sample playback of early strikes, along with the new strikes. While this isn't exactly what's happening in the acoustic domain, it is much more realistic.

Fortunately, there are some machines on the market that will allow this sort of overring. A good example is the Korg *DDD-1*. This device can be set for normal (non-overring), overring, and overring-exclusive (which is useful for hi-hats). Most samplers will also allow you to produce overring by assigning multiple output channels for a given sound. At last, your snare rolls will blend!

Dynamic variation is the other major problem. If you strike a drum softly, you'll notice that its timbre is a bit different than when it's struck forcefully. Generally, the hard strikes produce a brighter sound with faster attack. An excellent example of this is a crash cymbal. In this area, the capabilities of a good sampler can be a godsend.

Let's look at some of the functions a good sampler will implement. First, the sample can be shaped with a VCF (voltage controlled filter). This will enable you to filter the high harmonics of a sample and thus change its timbre. The VCF will normally be set to respond with key velocity, meaning that loud notes will open the filter and produce a brighter sound. A VGA (voltage controlled amplifier) will probably be present, and its attack time can also be controlled by key velocity. The trick here is to make subtle adjustments for realistic sounds. The sampler may also have control over the sample start point. Very loud strikes will produce the entire sample, while soft strikes will produce everything except the very beginning of the sample. This is where the attack information is, and by ripping out pieces of the attack, a forceful sample can sound a lot like a more mellow strike.

The above techniques all attempt to take a single sample (typically a forceful one), and simulate a soft strike from it. Judicious use of these controls can produce excellent results. Another technique is to use two separate samples—one forceful, one not—and blend them together in varying degrees. Typically, this is referred to as velocity layering. Low-key velocity will produce the mellow sample, high-key velocity produces the forceful sample, and a medium velocity will produce a mixture. This can be very effective in many situations. Obviously, a combination of VGA, VCF, sample start, velocity scaling, overring, and layering can produce some startling results! Again, for realistic drum sounds, subtlety in programming is the watch word.

All of the above techniques can produce wonderful sounds if used correctly, but it will all be for naught if you're not comfortable *playing* the set. One item that bothers some people is the correlation (or more appropriately, lack of correlation) between the force of the drum strike and the resulting volume. As previously mentioned, some adjustment of scale is possible with most samplers. However, the transfer characteristic is usually fixed. For example, the response may seem perfect at medium to loud levels, but may appear overly sensitive at low playing levels. How

do you compensate for this? Some pad-to-MIDI interfaces give you the option of several different dynamic curves. Two such devices are the Roland *Octapad* and the Simmons *MTM*. Besides the ordinary linear response offered by most interfaces, these guys let you choose from logarithmic and exponential types as well.

The *MTM* includes a few others such as step type and reverse, which can be of good use in velocity layering of sounds. The best way to approach the curves is to simply try them, as they may not respond the way their graphs might lead you to believe. Both of these units also offer a minimum loudness setting, which can be used in conjunction with your chosen curve. No matter how soft a strike is, it will always be at least as loud as the minimum setting. Advanced users may wish to take advantage of the gate time settings on the *MTM* and *Octapad*, which, in conjunction with a sampler's VGA, allow you maximum control over the sample's loudness contour.

The final stop on our tour is emulation of the venerable hi-hat. This is tricky, to say the least. Unfortunately, I know of no company that makes a dedicated MIDI hi-hat controller. There are, however, a few options open. First, some interfaces like the J. L. Cooper *Drumslave* have provision for a hi-hat footswitch. This allows you to switch between two different sounds (open and closed hi-hat), depending on the footswitch position. Some drum machines also offer this feature, like the Kawai *R100*. This isn't bad for many applications, but it will not emulate a half-open hi-hat or a simple step on the pedal. Another technique involves dynamic adjustment of the release time on a sampler's VGA. This simulates pedal modulation, but it can be difficult to set up (with some machines, almost impossible). It seems that the hi-hat is the one area that most MIDI manufacturers have not spent a lot of time on. Hopefully, this situation will change in the near future.

As we've seen, it's quite possible to assemble a very realistic and expressive MIDI-based drum system. All that's required is a little homework, some experimenting, and a little patience. As we've seen in the past, the advantages of an all-electronic kit are numerous, including no mic's (or mic' bleed) and a consistency of sound that won't require hours to recreate when needed. As an added bonus, think of this: If a system is powerful and versatile enough to produce realistic drum sounds, just think of what it can do for your special effects!



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*Buddy Rich continued from page 22*

about himself, not about ordinary mortals. The rest of us have to strive to be good, practice, and give the instrument all of our attention. It was never necessary for him. Buddy never practiced; he seldom went near a drum during the day. There was little evidence around his house, other than a few pictures and one or two bits of memorabilia, that he was a drummer. He needed no reminders; he knew who he was.

Because of his God-like talent, people treated him in a manner reserved for those who tower above others. So many times I saw how colleagues, friends, fellow musicians, devotees of jazz, writers, music business executives, and fans deferred to him because he was Buddy Rich.

It started when he was "Traps, the Drum Wonder," a major star of vaudeville. Buddy grew used to this sort of behavior and seemed to expect it. Only when you were with him, one-on-one, did he become entirely natural, warm, and even caring—aspects of his personality he tended to hide from the world at large.

To the public, Buddy Rich was that fantastic drummer: the wisecracking, smart, funny, sometimes wounding guy who appeared on Johnny Carson's *Tonight Show*. With more than one or maybe two in his company, he became the Buddy Rich the public knew. Whenever he had an audience, he was on—doing shtick, being funny, zinging this one and that one.

Buddy came from show business, where you learned to be noticed and to fight off those who would try to outdo you. Show-business experience instilled in him the need to be at the center of things and to remain there; it made him a fighter—for billing, for what he felt he deserved. It even made him more than a little cynical.

His background in vaudeville—his stardom as a child—was put behind him and de-emphasized once he came into jazz; he didn't like talking about it. But the years on tour and his associations with show people, as a young—very young—headliner, left an indelible mark.

The influence of show business manifested itself in many ways—how he presented himself, how he dressed, how he felt he should be treated. His mother and father were Vaudevillians, and to quote a meaningful Yiddishism: "The fruit doesn't fall far from the tree."

Buddy became aware in the mid-1930s that show business was not for him. He sensed that it was all over for the vaudevillian. Motion pictures had provided the knockout punch in the late 1920s. After the music business began to change in the 1930s, when music, bands, and ultimately recordings became increasingly prominent, Buddy changed his direction.

The Casa Loma Orchestra was a big influence. Buddy liked Tony Briglia, the band's drummer. "He had a beautiful press roll—a roll accented on 2 and 4 that

cut through the whole band; he was something," Buddy often reminded me. He loved Chick Webb and admired Gene Krupa, then the star of the Benny Goodman band. And he was particularly involved with what was happening in Harlem. He learned from Sid Catlett, O'Neill Spencer, and particularly Jo Jones, who became a close friend. Jo and Count Basie immediately took a liking to Buddy when he sat in with the Basie band at the Famous Door in 1938; the whiz kid impressed the musicians and the audience in the club.

But we're getting ahead of our story. Buddy turned to jazz in 1935. He was taken to Harlem by his friends from Brooklyn. Black bandleaders asked him to sit in. And though he was relatively inexperienced when it came to playing with bands, he made an impression each time and was asked to return. It was a matter of great pride to him that he was liked uptown. Harlem had *everything* to do with music in the 1930s; it was where everyone went to listen, enjoy, and sit in.

Musicians who were aware of his potential brought him around to bandleaders, hoping to get him a job. Joe Bushkin gave Woody Herman a talking to at Roseland in 1936, asserting that the lean, curly headed youngster he had in tow "was the greatest drummer in the world." Woody had to tell the insistent Bushkin that his band was a cooperative venture, and that he couldn't hire anyone without consulting the rest of the band. Bushkin said he would take Rich to 52nd Street, the famed "Swing Street."

It was on 52nd Street that the young drummer caught on. Drummer-teacher Henry Adler had heard him one night; Rich sat in where Adler was working in Brooklyn. Because he was so astounded by what he had witnessed, Adler made Rich a cause—a personal campaign. He took Buddy to the Hickory House on 52nd Street to sit in with the Joe Marsala group on a series of Sunday afternoons in 1937. Finally, on the fourth Sunday, Buddy got his chance.

"At ten to six on the fourth Sunday, Marsala motioned to me to come to the stand," Buddy told me. "We played a medium-tempo thing and it went okay; I played time. Then he asked me if I could play 'up.' Well, I lived 'up' in those days. So we took off on a thing called 'Jim Jam Stomp.'

"Everybody started walking out of the joint when I sat down. Then I got going on this fast tune and took a solo, and they all filed back. Right after we finished, Marsala asked me if I'd ever played regularly in a band. And I said no. Then he put it right to me. 'Can you come back tonight? The band starts about ten.' I remember saying, 'I have to call home first.' I did; I got permission from the family. You know, people did that in those days. I came back, played, and was offered the job. 'Can you





BUDDY RICH  
1917-1987

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start in two weeks?' Marsala asked. I said yes. I was so thrilled that I didn't even ask what the salary was."

Rich's dad didn't understand his son's enthusiasm. They talked; Pop Rich felt that it was a comedown for Buddy. But the young drummer convinced his dad that it certainly wasn't. His future, he said, was as a drummer with bands.

Buddy loved to play, and the love was apparent in his playing. After several months with Marsala, during which Tommy Dorsey first heard about him, Buddy went on the road with the Bunny Berigan big band. Briefly, he headed a band on the Piccadilly Roof in New York. Then in 1938, tenor saxophonist Georgie Auld, who had been a friend of his on the Berigan band, called. He was with Artie Shaw at the Lincoln Hotel. He asked Buddy to come over and sit in.

Shaw listened and was impressed. He wanted "individuals" in the band who could bring it fire and stir things up. He sensed that Buddy had what he needed. But a question remained in Shaw's mind: "How are you going to play the charts? You don't read," the bandleader asked the young drummer. "Just let me sit in front of the band a few nights, and it won't be a problem," Rich responded. And that's what happened. Rich got a table near the band in the Blue Room of the Lincoln and immersed himself in the music. When he joined the band in January of 1939, he played the arrangements as if he had written them.

That's the way it went throughout his career. He would listen to a chart once or twice, and then he'd play it far better than those who could read music. Later he learned to read music, to some extent. But he never needed the music, only his ears.

Buddy always had problems with leaders. He knew what he wanted to do and wouldn't be turned away from what he thought should be done. A bit green when he joined Shaw, he had some time difficulties at the outset, but after a little while, he turned into the sparkplug that the clarinetist was looking for.

"I was quite clear about what my job was by the time I went with Shaw," Buddy said during the course of an interview with me several years ago. "I knew I had to embellish each arrangement, tie it together, keep the time thing going, and inspire the players always to be better. My way was to keep the energy level up and push hard. This concept was strictly from Harlem. I learned from black drummers, like Chick, Jo, Sid Catlett, and O'Neill Spencer. I never was a fan of white drummers, with the exception of Briglia and Gene; the others were just too bland. I loved excitement, fast tempos, and lots of color.

"In those days, the only reason you were hired was to keep the band together. It was up to you to swing the band, add impetus,

and drive. And it certainly helped if you had a feeling for what the arranger wanted when he brought a new chart in. The function of the drummer was to play *for* the band. If you were good enough, you'd be noticed."

Buddy was noticed, indeed. Drummers came around to hear him with Shaw, as they did when he worked with Marsala at the Hickory House. He had his fights with Shaw; they lasted as long as their musical relationship did, until November 1939, when Shaw fled the music business for Mexico.

Buddy was very physical and loud when he played, and he used the bass drum in a manner that had only been hinted at by other drummers. "I like everything *aggressive*," he said. "Lead trumpeters lay back too much. I felt I had to fill that vacuum. The reason I started using the bass drum to accent figures with the brass and the ensemble was very simple. What was being done just wasn't sharp enough. Other drummers didn't shape charts with the *muscle* that was necessary. By adding the bass drum to a figure, you brought importance—new power—to it. You added energy to the sound.

"When I joined Artie's band, incorporating the bass drum the way I did drove him crazy. Later, he came to expect it and missed the explosiveness when it wasn't there. Instead of accenting things with the brass on the snare drum, I would keep time on the cymbal and use the bass drum for the accents. Not only did I use the foot for accents, but I began bringing it into play in solos, by simply leaving two or three beats out, not playing them with either hand and substituting my foot."

Rich gave the bands he worked with a new-found thrust and power. When he moved over to Tommy Dorsey in late 1939, he added that special rhythmic vitality to the Dorsey band and particularly to the arrangements by Sy Oliver. Rich had to be persuaded to join Dorsey; he felt the band was not swinging enough—that it inclined too heavily to Dixieland. But Dorsey informed him that Oliver was coming over from the Jimmie Lunceford band. Buddy realized that the band would swing, and he intensified his negotiations with the "General Motors of the Band Business." He got the sort of contract he wanted. The drummer had come to realize how valuable he was to an orchestra, and the dollars were very much in line with his belief. He not only earned a top salary, but received billing with the band as well. By 1940, Buddy was a major star . . . again.

With time out for the marines during World War II, Rich worked with the Dorsey band until 1945. He developed an immediately identifiable style. Yes, he was loud. But his beat was tremendously buoyant and uplifting, and what he did with his hands and feet behind ensemble figures and under soloists promoted great excite-



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ment and interest.

Dorsey knew what he had in Buddy. He came to understand that Buddy's style of playing was not a matter of showing off; he was just bringing strength and design to arrangements, clarifying and energizing them. Rich added something to the band beyond the excitement he created as a rhythm player. He became an attraction whose solos were anticipated by fans; he danced in front of the band at theaters. Without reading, he added dimensions to the work of dancers, singers, comedians, and novelty acts during stage shows.

He made as many enemies as friends. Sinatra and Rich had enormous respect for one another; their friendship lasted until Buddy died. The singer, who never forgets those close to him, was a presence during Buddy's illness. And his concern for Buddy's memory and the Rich family continues. But the two had their problems in the Dorsey band. As a matter of fact, several members of the ensemble resented the drummer. Buddy wasn't the easiest to get along with. But he played like no one else could.

For many who watched and listened to him during this period—this writer included—BR seemed a magical maker of sounds and inventor of ideas. I remember vividly walking down the stairs of the 400 Restaurant, a large spot in New York that booked top bands in 1944 and 1945, and

picking up the sound of the Dorsey band. It seemed to me then that no one could make the snare drum whisper and shout and the bass drum explode the way Buddy did. And the way he kept time! Not long out of the marines, he gave every evidence in 1945 of being the only drummer who could make the Dorsey band come alive in a very special way.

When Buddy left TD to form a band of his own in 1945, the big band era was slowly drawing to a close. He fielded a very swinging band, bankrolled by Sinatra, that made its debut at the Terrace Room in Newark, New Jersey, in December of 1945. He not only had the change in taste with regard to bands to deal with, but he had to come to terms with what was happening in music. Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie were turning things around, and young musicians were responding. Drummers became freer; they approached the set differently. Max Roach, Kenny Clarke, and Stan Levey were setting the pace. Buddy didn't favor the way bop drummers broke rhythm; their concept of time annoyed him; it wasn't aggressive enough and didn't have sufficient weight. Keeping the basic time on the cymbals while semi-retiring the bass drum—bringing it into use essentially for accents—did not lay well with him. He spoke loudly and frequently about modern drumming. He insisted that drums were a complete instrument, com-

prised of several elements, all of which should be used.

But despite his negative feelings, he listened to one and all in the new generation of drummers, filing away what he thought might be workable for him. After a short while, his playing began to show signs of change—nothing major, but there were indications that his instincts told him that the new players had some valid ideas.

Despite his surface recalcitrance, he insisted that his band play modern charts. And he hired young, creative contemporary players and writers, like Johnny Mandel, Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Terry Gibbs, Jerry Thirlkeld, Jimmy Giuffre, Charlie Walp, the Swope Brothers, Allen Eager, Ben Lary, and others. The band built a following among musicians and jazz devotees. But the public progressively turned its attention elsewhere.

The Rich Big Band, between 1945 and 1950, provided a fund of memories. I remember how well it played, particularly on one nighters, in theaters, and on the air. Buddy had made it into a jazz band, bending little when pressed by economic necessity. But he still knew how to make show business work for him.

In 1947, Buddy broke his left arm in three places while playing handball in Columbus, Ohio. When he opened at the Apollo shortly thereafter, he took full advantage of the situation. Playing with his feet and right hand, he didn't acknowledge any difference and allowed the audience at the Harlem site to take notice that he was doing the job. When he came down front after the first number, having been obscured in the semi-darkness, he quietly stood at the microphone, his arm in a sling, while the audience collectively gasped. Immediately, BR became the talk of the town. Musically, he had done far more than was necessary; his feet and right hand took up whatever slack there might have been.

*Down beat* noted in its comments on this occasion: "[Buddy] danced around the stage; sang the blues; drummed for dancer Steve Condos and then danced with him—first putting Condos' arm in a sling so they'd be evenly matched. The show came to a climax with Rich doing his famous 'Not So Quiet Please' number with one hand and his feet. Legend has it that Basie drummer Jo Jones, after seeing the performance, quipped, 'If that arm heals, it ought to be broken again.' "

Buddy also sang with the band, at Sinatra's behest. It added another dimension to his and the orchestra's appeal. However, even another unbelievable performance, with attendant publicity, could not save the band. In 1949, he played two bass drums in front of the band at the Paramount Theater. With no preparation, and provoked by the press that Louie Bellson had gotten because he used two bass drums, Buddy had the Slingerland Drum

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MUSIC STORES

Company send him two bass drums. He had them mounted on the theater platform, and with a Basie arrangement of "Old Man River" as his vehicle, he gave a lesson on how two bass drums should be played. He said, "I got tired of hearing about Louie Bellson and his two bass drums. I didn't feel the whole thing was that difficult. So I decided that, if you're going to play them, you should *really* play them. That's all."

After the final breakup of the first editions of the Rich Big Band, the drummer continued to play startlingly well and to evolve as an artist in a variety of circumstances. He traveled and recorded with Norman Granz's Jazz At the Philharmonic troupe, associating with some of the best jazzmen ever, ranging from Lester Young and Roy Eldridge to Charlie Parker, Illinois Jacquet, and Gene Krupa. He worked as a star sideman for periods of time with the Harry James band, and appeared with the "Big 4" in the company of saxophonist Charlie Ventura, bassist Chubby Jackson, and pianist Marty Napoleon. Briefly, Buddy returned to Tommy Dorsey, who was co-leading a band with brother Jimmy, and spent several months with Les Brown's Band of Renown, with which he recorded still another memorable version of "The Carioca." (The original, of course, was waxed with the Shaw band.)

During this segment of his life, there were, in addition, several Buddy Rich small groups and a few reincarnations of the big band for specific engagements, featuring players that Buddy found stimulating. The years preceding the rebirth of the Buddy Rich Big Band in 1966 were also notable for the drummer's recording activity. He made a number of memorable recordings that are still in print, including some with Charlie Parker, Harry James, Lionel Hampton, and Art Tatum. He also went into the studio with Basie, and made albums of his own with large and small groups, and as a singer.

When he decided to form a contemporary band in '66 that would reflect a variety of trends while emphasizing its jazz foundation, Buddy got more than his share of flack from the know-it-alls in the music business. They said that the time was wrong and the band could never possibly succeed. But that meant nothing to BR; he insisted he was right, and this time, he certainly was.

The band through its entire life—with time off in the mid-1970s for Buddy to lend his name to a club in New York—mirrored the drummer's need to remain current and his lack of tolerance when it came to "nostalgia." He insisted that revival of yesterday can be nothing more than a cardboard replica, lacking the depth, power, and true effect of the original.

So he went his way, making sure his band's library covered a wide range. He was not afraid to take chances when it

came to material and new writers, "as long as the charts sound good and swing." He relied on certain arrangers and composers, like Bill Holman and John LaBarbera. The only thing he was really against—in addition to nostalgia—was overstylization. "The freedom is lost when you stick to a certain sound or way of playing, as Glenn Miller did," he said.

"I have a concert band," BR insisted. He told writer Elliot Tiegel, "I'm trying to establish an art form without all the gimmicks, without all the bullshit, without having broads come out and dance and jiggle. I'm selling music . . . ."

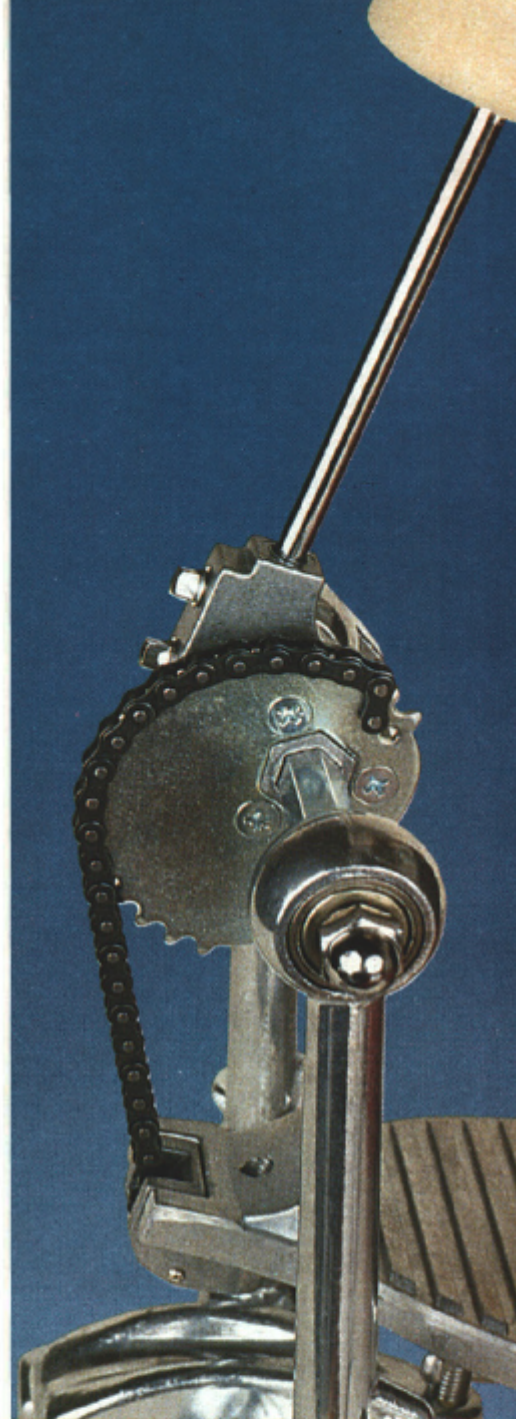
There was a parade of sidemen who moved through the Rich band. Buddy loved the good players and hated the ones who couldn't cut it. Guys like trumpeter Lin Biviano and saxophonists Joe Romano, Jimmy Mosher, Pat LaBarbera, and Steve Marcus—who stayed in the band until the end—made him happy. He often spoke of the guys who could "play." The respect was there; there was little he wouldn't do for those who had their stuff together.

BR felt the same way about drummers. Those who spoke their own language on the instrument and played consistently well had his admiration. Those who sounded like "everybody" or specifically looked to him for inspiration, turned him into "Victor Venom," a descriptive that Mel Torme came up with for the dark, angry side of Buddy Rich. *This* drummer was a man of very definite tastes.

During the last years, Buddy fought illness: his back, kidney stones, the heart problems that made for a quadruple bypass operation. From the time he had his first heart attack in 1959 until he succumbed to a combination of things he couldn't combat, BR did all he could to keep playing. He took care of himself but didn't allow his health problems to keep him away from the drums.

And somehow, because he played correctly and because of his enormous ability, Buddy continued to mature. He listened and learned about styles beyond the one he played best: swing. For example, he became the best rock drummer I ever heard. In essence, he opened himself to music of all kinds and grew up.

I saw him a month before the onset of the final illness. It was just before Christmas. He brought his young band to the Blue Note in New York City. We hung out at his apartment in Lincoln Center for a few hours, in the company of a promoter from England and Buddy's friend, drummer-teacher Freddie Gruber. He was unusually quiet. Before his first set at the club, my son and I spoke briefly with him on the band bus in front of the club. The performance that followed was typically strong. Buddy executed as no one can. More important, he supported his young band in a marvelous way. He had taken Jo



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Jones' advice and, for the last several years, had concentrated on playing *with* people, rather than playing *for* them. Even the purist jazz critics on hand came away convinced about the 69-year-old drum wonder.

Buddy Rich left us at his best, indicating that there was more to come. I'll miss him more than I can say.



*Buddy's Radio Kings continued from page 29*

on the snare was all you were going to do on the other drums. He said that he really wasn't interested in any of the hi-tech approaches or the massive hardware. He just wanted a simple, basic set of drums—a set that he'd be comfortable with. That, of course, was hard to put into words. It would just have to feel good when he played with the band.

By August of '83, I had put together the other four drums to a set, which, of course, were a 9x 13, two 16x 16s, and a 14x 26. They were all separate drums: The bass drum was red, one of the floor toms was black diamond pearl, and the small tom was painted blue. Mitch Greenberg from Chicago helped me find them. I just reworked them, beveling, trueing, and re-drilling the best I could to make them into a set. I had to re-cover them, of course, to match the original marine pearl, and I put calfskin heads on them. I retained all of the original hardware, including the hoop-mount tom-tom holder and the old straight hoops. I basically just took the chance of seeing if he'd get a kick out of them or not. It was really just a gesture on my part from one fan to the master, so to speak.

I didn't actually see him use them until October of '83. In my excitement, I went up to him and said, "So, do you like them?" He came back with a classic, "They're up there, aren't they?" We both laughed, and then he went on to compliment me on my work. Of course, I don't take credit for making the drums. They were made somewhere between 1940 and '44 or so. I just basically reconditioned them. He said they were extremely comfortable, and he felt very relaxed playing them.

Buddy always played relaxed. That was

one of the keys to his style. He just seemed to love those drums. He would often talk about how it was basically the same set he used with Dorsey, and he didn't know why he ever stopped. He always considered the drums as an instrument that should be played like any other instrument—not banged or hit. I was privileged to sit in the wings many times backstage when he played. He just seemed to be part of those drums. Rather than just sitting behind them, he seemed to be immersed in them. Buddy Rich was the drums.

His theory on drums was interesting. He didn't believe that you "tuned" them. He believed that you "tensioned" the drumheads to feel. He would actually let them get quite loose before he bothered to pull them up again. I suppose a lot of people imagine that he went around tuning them each night. He really didn't pay much attention to that at all. He was much more concerned with the music. He got an amazing sound out of a pretty basic snare drum—the eight-lug *Radio King*—by keeping the bottom head quite tight and the snares very tight, and he got depth from the drum by keeping the top head loose. Of course, with his amazing technique, he could play off the head anyway. It always appeared that the head was very taut, but he actually let it get quite mushy at times. Of course, he loved to use calfskin when weather permitted. Also, he hated to have the drums set up on carpeting, so he carried a piece of plywood that he always set the drums up on. He said that the plywood helped the drums project through the band better.

In December of '85, he said that everything was holding up well and he was very pleased. He said, "I'd like to go to a 28" bass drum." I never questioned why he would want to do that. That was how Buddy was. If he wanted to do it, he wanted to do it. He never expressed actual musical reasons for needing it over the 26. I think he probably felt that he could pace himself a little better with it—get a fuller sound with a little less effort. I had a 28" drum at the time, but I didn't have the material to cover it to match the rest of his set. That had been discontinued. It took me a long time to find the stuff.

We spoke this past February, and I told

him that I had the drum. He was looking forward to getting it and was excited about using that drum with the set. There again, I think it was going back to the Dorsey thing. I have some pictures where he was clearly at a drum that large. It was kind of the ultimate bottom of a band. He didn't really care to mike the bass drum. It was the only drum that he muffled. He got that warm, round tone out of it.

As it turned out, he went in the hospital just six days before he was due to come up here and pick up the drum. I have it here, and I'll always cherish it. I know I made him happy the last few years in terms of the drums he was using. He could have played anything, but he seemed to have gone full circle. He was using what he started with.



*Buddy's Letters continued from page 29*

Buddy Rich was, and will always be, a constant source of inspiration and motivation to me and generations of drummers to come. I feel very fortunate to have been able to see Buddy and his bands perform 20 times over the last 12 years. Each performance was an unforgettable experience. He gave us all years of great drumming, great music, and great joy. Thank you, Buddy. Believe me, you'll be missed.

Todd Remmy  
Cincinnati, OH

Buddy Rich's playing ranged from the ricky-tick of vaudeville to the rhythms of funk. He combined Billy Gladstone's snare drum control, Jo Jones' hi-hat finesse, Gene Krupa's showmanship, Chick Webb's unexpectedness, and Dave Tough's swinging sense of time. Buddy kept time, played strong and fast, excited the band, and mesmerized the audience—and he made it look easy! He was the standard by which all others were measured.

Bob Johnson  
Kansas City, MO

It's difficult to imagine the music world without Buddy. It's especially hard, as drummers, to accept that he is gone.

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AUGUST 1987

Although I didn't know Buddy personally, I'm grateful for the wonderful gifts and memories that he has bestowed on me. Buddy is gone in one sense, but in another sense, his presence surrounds us. He is everywhere in the music world and in the history of jazz, and he'll be present for generations to come.

Michael Ruggelo  
Amesbury, MA

It is with great sadness that I learn of the passing of Buddy Rich. Every drummer in the world has just moved up one rung of the ladder. Buddy was easily the greatest of the present-day masters. This is surely drumming's darkest hour since the death of John Bonham. I saw him in concert three years ago. During a break I asked for an autograph, and he told me, in that curt Rich fashion, "Later." I loved it and expected no less from this drum legend. After the show, my wife and I went on his bus, chatted with Buddy, and got the promised autograph.

Darryl Crawford  
Arlington, TX

A piece of drum history is gone. He was my idol—the best there was. He was an inspiration to us all. He spoke that special language that only drummers understand and, man, did he speak it fluently. So thanks, Buddy, for everything you have done for drumming. You have touched us all.

Lawrence Jannotta  
Bethpage, NY

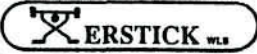
Buddy Rich influenced me more than any other drummer. I had met him 25 times. As far as I'm concerned, he was one of the nicest guys I ever met. I have a couple of pairs of drumsticks and autographed pictures that he gave me. Buddy Rich was the greatest drummer of all time, bar none. I will still listen to his records, love him, and miss him.

Tim Smith  
Silver Spring, MD

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Reader's Platform continued from page 4

#### STAN LEVEY

Thank you for your excellent article on Stan Levey in the May, 1987 issue. I enjoyed it so very much. When I was a teenager, the first big band I saw was Stan Kenton's, and Stan Levey was the first drummer. They were playing in a ballroom in New Hampshire. I stood at the foot of the stage listening to that great band and watching Levey. It was exciting! I didn't realize all the great players Stan was associated with. Thank you again for a very informative and enlightening experience.

Joe Mocerri  
Lowell, MA

Just a short note to let you know how glad I was to see the article on Stan Levey. Stan's drumming was some of my favorite. Burt Korall's writing was excellent; he knows what to ask and what to leave out.

Al Marland  
Long Beach, CA

#### THANKS TO LUDWIG

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Terry Ballard  
Asheville, NC

#### THE SCIENCE AND ART OF DRUMMING

I'm writing in response to Don Telian's article, "The Science And Art Of Drumming," in the May issue. Don said that humans tend to come in two forms: scientist and artist. He also seemed to say that, generally, the artist is not scientific and the scientist is not artistic, and that you're not a drummer unless you have both qualities.

In my opinion, it isn't so cut and dried. How can artistic players play artistically if they don't have some kind of technique? They surely have to know how to hold their sticks! And I fail to believe that a scientific player is like a robot, with no imagination.

I feel that *all* players—whether they are strong artistically or scientifically—are drummers! Perhaps they're at different levels, and possess different strengths and weaknesses, but they are still drummers, and you have a lot of nerve telling them that they are not. I agree with your conclusion that being, as you call it, a "scientartist" makes a successful drummer. It is a goal to be achieved. But how can players achieve this goal if you tell them they are not drummers?

Joseph Murro  
Old Bridge, NJ



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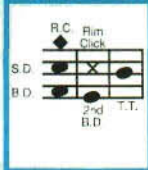


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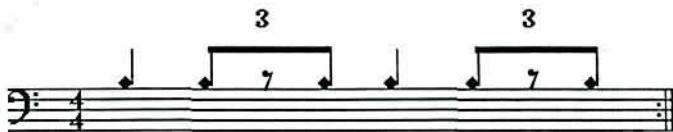
## Part 1

### MUSIC KEY



Playing with the (Dixie) Dregs and the Steve Morse Band has given me the opportunity to play in several different styles of music, including rock, fusion, jazz, funk, and country. Besides being of the opinion that versatility is an important part of musicianship, I also feel that many styles of drumming are closely related, even though they may appear to be

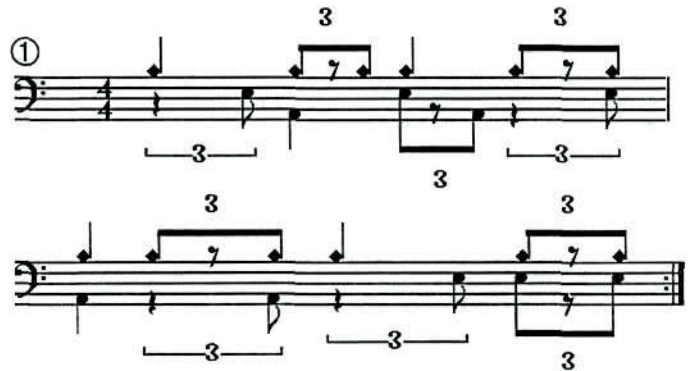
worlds apart on the surface. Take, for example, the traditional jazz ride pattern:



A good deal of jazz drumming is characterized by random "comping" patterns between the snare and bass. Two bars of "comping" might sound something like this:



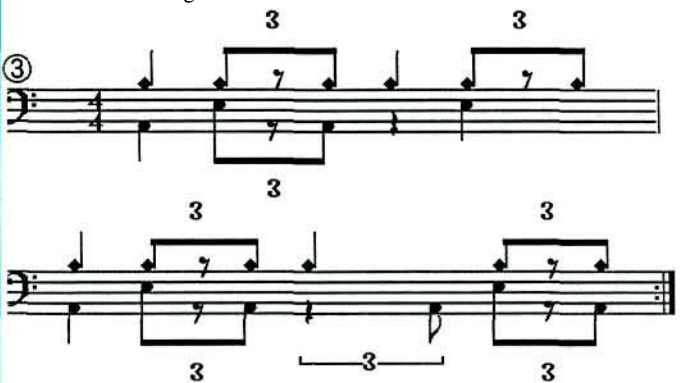
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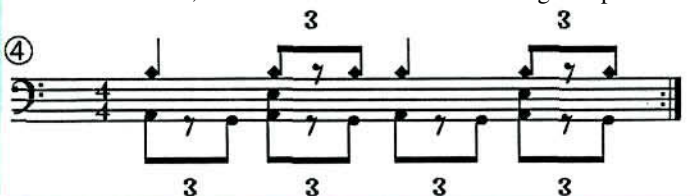
The following beat played at a slow to moderate tempo has a country flavor to it. Note that the ride pattern is identical to the traditional jazz ride pattern. Replacing the "comping" concept with a basic quarter-note snare and bass pattern (especially the 2 and 4 backbeat on the snare) changes the feel drastically.



If we continue with the jazz ride pattern, maintain the 2 and 4 snare backbeat, and add some kicks to the bass drum, the beat will take on a shuffling feel.



Add a second bass drum to Example 3, and you will have a double bass drum shuffle. It's interesting to note that, as intense sounding as this beat can be, it too utilizes the traditional swing ride pattern.



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The swing pattern also works well when playing funk with a shuffle or three feel. In this example, measures one and two maintain a heavy backbeat on the snare, while in measures three and four, the snare is syncopated. I sometimes call this kind of feel swung/funk, because the "comping" is similar to that of jazz/swing. The difference is in the way the snare and bass combinations are grouped, the occasional heavy snare backbeat, and an overall shift in attitude.

⑤

The following reggae beat utilizes (yes, once again) the traditional ride pattern. The shifting of the bass drum to beat 3 of each measure helps bring out the reggae feel.

⑥

Several different styles of drumming have been demonstrated, each with its own individual character, yet all having a common bond—the traditional jazz ride pattern. By changing the snare part (for example) from a random "comping" pattern to a 2 and 4 backbeat, or changing the bass drum from a simple quarter-note pattern to a more syncopated one, we can move smoothly from one style to another. Next time, we'll "straighten out" this swing pattern and see how many more styles we can add to the pile.

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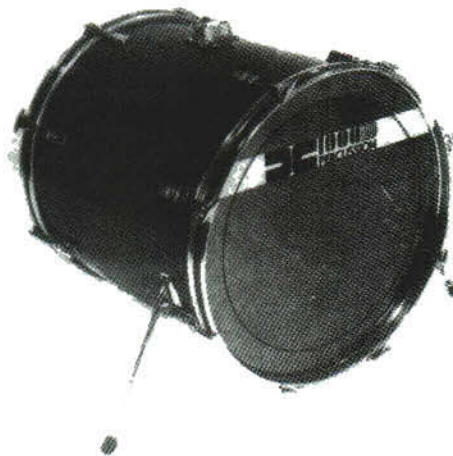
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**GINGER BAKER**—*Horses And Trees*. Celluloid 6126. Ginger Baker: dr. Foday Musa Suso, Daniel Ponce, Aiyb Dieng, Nana Vasconcelos: perc. Shankar: vln. B. Worrell: or. N. Skopelitis: gr. B. Laswell: bs. D. St.: turntable. R. Musso: or. *Interlock / Dust To Dust / Satou / Uncut / Mountain Time / Makuta*.

Ginger Baker has always known about the power of drums. When he first emerged with Cream in the '60s, it was his African-like tom-tom rhythms that helped set him apart from his contemporaries. He often played entirely on drums, without using hi-hat or ride cymbal for timekeeping. It gave the group a solid foundation that later "power trios" were never able to duplicate.

After being absent from the music scene for many years, Baker has returned. This is a true drum album, as it's the layers of drums and percussion that give this music its drive and personality. I really can't think of anything to compare this music to as a point of reference. All I can say is that it is unique and very powerful. If you are interested in the power of drums, this is music you will want to hear.

—Richard Egart



**JOHN SCOFIELD**—*Blue Matter*. Gramavision 18-8702-1. J. Scofield: gr. G. Grainger: bs.

Dennis Chambers: dr. M. Foreman: kybd. H. Bullock: gr. Don Alias: perc. *Blue Matter / Trim / Heaven Hill / So You Say / Now She's Blonde / Make Me / The Nag / Time Marches On*.

Here's an LP that you should definitely pick up. John Scofield has put together an excellent album, and this band (bass and drums in particular) is extremely tight. Scofield is a musician who should be aware of good drummers, having worked with the likes of Billy Cobham, Omar Hakim, Al Foster, and others throughout his career. On this album, Scofield has enlisted drummer Dennis Chambers, whose performance here is outstanding.

Chambers, along with bassist Gary Grainger, adds a sharp and funky edge to Scofield's jazz-fusion compositions. No matter how complex the tune, Chambers grooves hard, and he embellishes the groove with multi-note flourishes on his hi-hat, ride cymbal/hi-hat combination, and bass drum. Chambers also uses ghosted notes on the snare drum during the time feels, and he does it well. Chambers has a definite sound and style, and he applies it with authority on this album. Stand-out cuts include "Blue Matter," "Trim," "Make Me," and "The Nag." Check this record out!

—William F. Miller

**The Mel Lewis Orchestra**  
20 Years at The Village Vanguard



**MEL LEWIS ORCHESTRA**—*20 Years At The Village Vanguard*. Atlantic 81655-1. Mel Lewis: dr. K. Werner: pno. D. Irwin: bs. E. Gardner, J. Mosello, G. Drewes, J. Powell, B. Pusey: trp. J. Mosca, E. Neumeister, D. Purviance, E. McIntyre: trb. S. Fauber: Fr. hn. D. Oatts, T. Nash, J. Lovano, R. Lalama, G. Smulyan:

wdwnds. *All Of Me / Blue Note / Butter / C-Jam Blues / Dearly Beloved / Interloper / Alone Together / American Express*.

It's fitting that, on an album that celebrates a band's 20th anniversary, the music should reflect the roots of that band. From the first strains of "All Of Me," which kicks off side one, there is no doubt as to what band this is. The chart is by former co-leader Thad Jones, and only the Mel Lewis Orchestra can play Thad's charts like that. The rest of the album lives up to the promise of the first chart. This is straight-ahead mainstream jazz, with more room for soloists than in most big bands. Mel Lewis typically stays in the back and offers support, letting the soloists have the spotlight. But credit must also go to the arrangers, who have provided the band with worthy material. This is the most solid, consistent album this band has made in a while. It is highly recommended.

—Richard Egart



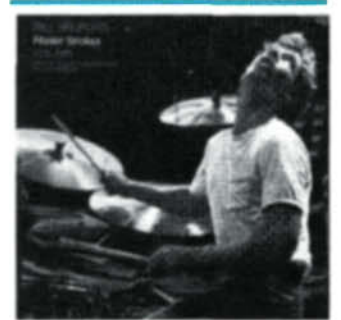
**BILL MEYERS**—*Images*. Spindletop SPT 114. B. Meyers: kybd. N. Stubenhaus: bs. Vinnie Colaiuta: dr. M. Landau, L. Carlton: gr. *AM/PM / Voyager / Heartland / Time Warp / Pastorate*.

This is a very unique album featuring the confident drumming of Vinnie Colaiuta. The musicians listed above are only the core of a much larger ensemble that was used on this recording. An entire brass and string section (over 40 musicians) was used, and I am told that it was all recorded digitally live to two track! With this instrumentation, the compositions sound a lot like movie soundtracks. However, these tunes are excellent, and as usual, Vinnie's playing at times

is frightening.

Along with a blazing rock shuffle, some odd-meter playing, and some straightforward rock playing, Vinnie actually plays some swing. On "Time Warp," some bop-influenced drumming is well-played and grooves. This same tune switches into a Latin section that Vinnie tastefully lays back and lets the percussionists shine in. Alex Acuna, Emil Richards, William Malouf, and Michael Fisher comprise the percussion section. Overall, the drumming is among the best parts of this album, and Vinnie definitely shows why he is so highly regarded.

—William F. Miller



**BILL BRUFORD**—*Master Strokes*. EG EGPL67. Bill Bruford: dr, perc. A. Holdsworth, J. Clarke: gr. J. Berlin: bs. D. Stewart: kybd. *Hell's Bells / Gothic 17 / Travels With Myself—And Someone Else / Fainting In Coils / Beelzebub / One Of A Kind—Parts One & Two / The Drum Also Waltzes / Joe Frazier / The Sahara Of Snow—Part Two*.

"I like to make music for people like myself," Bill Bruford once told me. "I'm just an ordinary guy who likes to hear something interesting." That's a good word for this record: interesting. Various sounds and styles are represented, and the overall feeling is one of exploration. And yet this is not one of those overly intellectual records that leaves you feeling worn out at the end. Rather, there's an almost playful quality, which suggests that the musicians were trying different things out of a sense of curiosity, as opposed to a situation where everyone is trying to prove something. This is sort of a "greatest hits" package, in

that most of the music came from the three albums by the Bruford group, which were released between 1978 and '80. The very first sounds on side one remind you that Bruford was one of the pioneers of modern drum sounds, while his acoustic rendition of Max Roach's "The Drum Also Waltzes" on side two proves Bruford to be one who is aware of the tradition of his instrument. This record provides a nice documentation of a transitional period in Bill Bruford's development. It was interesting then, and it is interesting now.

—Rick Mattingly



**MICHEL CAMILO TRIO**—*Suntan*. Pro Jazz Compact Disc CDJ 632; Cassette PJC 632. M. Camilo: pno. A. Jackson: bs. Dave Weckl, Joel Rosenblatt: dr. *We Three / Tombo In 7/4 / Las Olas / (Used To Be A) Cha-Cha / Suntan*.

For drummers who have been craving a heaping earful of Dave Weckl, this compact disc features a prime helping of Weckl grooving and improvising, along with plenty of knock-out soloing. *Suntan*, Camilo's second recording, is a shimmering blend of jazz, funk, and island rhythms. The ESP-like interaction between Camilo, Jackson, and Weckl that was discussed in depth in Weckl's October '86 *MD* cover story is laid out in full color on this disc. Once you get a taste of Camilo's trio, you most likely will also want to pick up his much sought-after first disc, *Why Not?* which up until now was only pressed in Japan. Pro Jazz has released *Why Not?* domestically on compact disc (CDJ 613) and cassette (PCJ 613).

The outstanding title cut demonstrates the joyous, uplifting quality for which Michel's trio has become known. One great pleasure in listening to these three consummate musicians is that, no matter how technically dense the individual players become in their improvisations, the ensemble heart remains central above all. Listeners should take note that the liner credits on the domestic release carelessly fail to mention that Joel Rosenblatt, not Weckl, provided the superb drumming on "We Three" and "Las Olas." As Weckl's successor to the trio's drum chair, Joel is currently performing live with Michel. Keep your eyes on this talented newcomer.

—Jeff Potter



**MULGREW MILLER**—*Work!* Landmark LLP-1511. M. Miller: pno. C. Moffett: bs. Terri Lyne Carrington: dr. *Sublimity / Without A Song / Blues Again / Powell's Prances / Work / The Sage / My Man's Gone Now*.

Here's an album that features some excellent jazz-trio playing from Terri Lyne Carrington. Her drumming on this album is very exciting, and the way she creates different sounds on her set is very musical. Almost all of these cuts contain some fine drumming (with the exception being "My Man's Gone Now," a piano solo).

The opening track reveals Terri Lyne's Latin playing; she grooves along in this quasi-bossa nova feel, dropping in powerful tom fills. She definitely helps build the tension throughout the piano and bass solos. "Without A Song" has Terri Lyne swinging hard throughout and interpreting

the head well. On "Blues Again," she locks in with the bass player on this blues feel. Terri Lyne burns through "Powell's Prances," an up-tempo (way up) number that she handles with ease and plays a nice solo on as well. This is a great example of what to play and what *not* to play in an uptempo tune. The album's title track also grooves well, with Terri Lyne using rim clicks in a creative way. "The Sage," my personal favorite on this album, is an interesting tune involving different feels and large dynamic changes. Terri Lyne's playing on this track is equally dynamic, and she uses different areas of the drumset to match the different sections of the tune. With performances like these, Terri Lyne Carrington will be a name to remember in jazz drumming.

—William F. Miller



**BOB MOSES**—*The Story Of Moses*. Gramavision 18-8703-1. Rahboat Ntumba Moses: dr, perc, syn, gtr, vcl. T. Okoshi: trp. S. Strickland: sx, fl, vcl. L. Quintero: gtr. J. Harris: bs, vcl. D. Alias: perc. P. Metheny: gtr. L. Mays: kybd. B. Frisell: gtr. Kenwood Dennard: dr. B. Martin: perc, vcl. D. Curtis: vcl. M. Monteiro: perc. J. Levatin: vcl. R. Moses: vcl. *Overture: Go Down Moses / Pharaoh's Song / Moses Floats Down The Nile / Hebrew's Blues / Song Of Moses / Love Theme / Burning Bush / Roots Run Deep, Spirits Fly High / The Ten Plagues / Ju Ju Eyes / Red Sea / The Edge Of Need / Mount Sinai / Exodus / Song Of Moses*.

This is a remarkable work. It is based on the Biblical story of Moses, and integrates music, drama, and poetry to create a

total theater piece. Bob Moses' music has always contained a variety of styles and influences, and they have never been better integrated than on this album. The music ranges from haunting to joyous, and there is a rhythmic intensity that provides a foundation throughout. In the liner notes, Bob states that this project "comes from the bottom of my heart and soul. Making this album stretched my intellectual, organizational, and spiritual powers to their limits." Bob didn't have to say that; the work speaks for itself throughout this two-record set. Good music says something about the person who created it. With *The Story Of Moses*, Bob Moses has expressed his very soul.

—Rick Mattingly



**UNCLE FESTIVE**—*Money's No Object*. Nova 8703. J. Ponder: gtr, gtr syn. R. Pedley: kybd. M. Levine: bs. Bud Harner: dr. Brad Dutz: perc. *Continuum / Odd Job / You're What? / Everyday Knife / Elf / Money's No Object / Let's Bar BQ / More*.

Drummer Bud Harner is best known for his work with Barry Manilow, which could label him as a "pop" drummer. However, on this album, Bud shows that he is capable of handling much more technical playing. Uncle Festive's music is a combination of progressive rock and fusion, with a very melodic edge to it. The tunes are pretty good for the style, and the musicians' performances are excellent. Also, the album sounds great, especially the drum sound. With a careful listening, you can hear sections where the drum sound is effected to enhance the tune.

(For example, during the "head" of "You're What?" the snare drum is huge, and then it tightens up for the solos.) These types of things give this album a good sound.

As for the drumming, the playing is coming more from a rock 'n' roll base than jazz. Odd meters are present on certain cuts and sound more like music than just technical exercises. Bud plays a lot of tasty

fills and time feels, but they all groove and make musical sense. Many drummers playing this style of music don't use the proper restraint and end up playing everything under the sun. Bud holds back, and when the time is right, he drops in a tasty fill. Brad Dutz contributes some great percussion playing, too. This is a good album with some fine drumming.

— William F. Miller



**BILLY JOEL**—*The Bridge*. Columbia OC 40402. B. Joel: pno, syn, vcl. Liberty DeVitto, Vinnie Colaiuta: dr. D. Stegmeyer, N. Jason, N. Stubenhaus: elec bs. R. Carter: acous bs. D. Brown, R. Javors, D. Parks, J. McCurry: gtrs. R.

Mounsey, J. Bova: syn. S. Winwood: Hammond B-3. M. Rivera, E. Daniels, M. Brecker, R. Cuber: sax. M. Stamm, A. Rubin: trp. D. Bargeron: tbn. D. Brooks: hmca. P. Hewlett, C. Lauper: back vcl. R. Charles: pno, vcl. *Running On Ice / This Is The Time / A Matter Of Trust / Modern Woman / Baby Grand / Big Man On Mulberry Street / Temptation / Code Of Silence / Getting Closer*.

Let me start by saying that I know this isn't a brand-new album; it's Billy Joel's most recent release, put out in mid-1986. I just thought I would be remiss in letting any more time

go by before stating that this album highlights the work of one of the finest, most versatile drummers in commercial music today: Liberty DeVitto. Whether you're a Billy Joel fan or not, you should listen to this record, because what Liberty does on it is nothing short of amazing.

The nice thing about a Billy Joel album is that Billy is into so many different styles of contemporary music, and you can generally find them all on one record. Liberty plays the daylights out of *all* of them, with the added bonus of being mixed well up in each tune. Billy seems to thrive on dynamic drumming, and Liberty provides just that. By now, we've all heard the singles from this album: "Modern Woman," "A Matter Of Trust," and "This Is The Time." (The duet with Ray Charles, "Baby Grand," has also received heavy airplay. This tune features a tasty cameo appearance by Vinnie Colaiuta on brushes.) But some of Liberty's best work is on

other cuts: "Running On Ice" opens with a frenetic, machine-gun snare attack, and continues on in a "Police-on-speed" uptempo reggae bag. "Big Man On Mulberry Street" opens with a shouting horn chorus and sounds for all the world like a big band from the Cotton Club days: blue and smoky. "Code Of Silence" opens with Liberty turning the beat around, laying a downbeat down on a snare drum that sounds as big as a house. This particular tune—along with the good-time-funky "Getting Closer" that follows it—displays Liberty's ability to lay down a serious, *big* ROCK drum sound. And while there's never a note wasted, Liberty always seems to find something innovative to do on the drums. This album demonstrates that a talented drummer can make his own statement, while still fulfilling his supporting role in the band. Great stuff!

—Rick Van Horn



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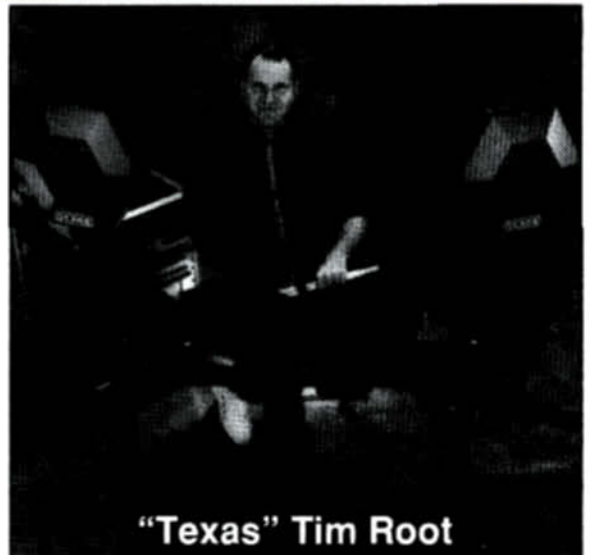
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*Brechtlein continued from page 33*

band. At the time, Joe was pretty much to himself because of the drugs and stuff. He was heavily into it.

**TS:** Did it bother you to play with someone like that?

**TB:** Yeah, it did, but Joe was my idol. I was 21. I was kind of overwhelmed at first. I mean Chick Corea, Joe Farrell, Rick Laird . . . wow! The first time I met him, Chick and I were rehearsing some music for the tour. We were waiting for Joe, so we just started jamming. Chick had this melody that he had been working on, so we made a bridge for it and played on it. The tune turned out to be "Fickle Funk" from the *Secret Agent* album. Anyhow, Joe finally arrived, and we finished putting the tune together. Our first concert was in Avery Fisher Hall. I was so conscious of Joe being there that I couldn't even look at him, but it really burned! He never really said too much either. My friends told me later, after the tour was over, "Joe was looking at you, man, and he was diggin' your playing!" That really felt nice. After the tour, I tried hanging in L.A. for a while. I would see Joe in Donte's, and he would just say hi, nothing much else. Then soon after that, we did *Tap Step*. Joe did the sessions. He was still kind of screwed up. We went on the road with it, and Joe played his ass off, but eventually, he left. It just got too out with the drugs.

**TS:** Was that a big letdown for you?

**TB:** Yeah. The guy was a monster, yet he did all these drugs and really was screwing himself up. I just couldn't understand it. After the tour, I moved permanently to Los Angeles and started working with the Al Vizzutti/Bunny Brunell band. We would be playing, and Joe would come into the club, still high. Our relationship became a sort of hi/bye situation. So I was playing more around town, getting into more money type gigs, and a little away from the jazz playing. In L.A. where they tend to label you, I figured that, if word got out that I played a lot of jazz, I was dead meat, so I tried more for the rock and money gigs. Kei Akagi would call me up a lot for gigs. He was playing a lot with Flora Purim and Airto. I resisted for a while, but he was the impetus for me to get back into more jazz-type playing.

One night, he called and asked if I wanted to do a gig at Hop Singh's with Joe Farrell. I said I just didn't know, because I had been on the road with him and he was . . . different. He asked me to please come and said I would notice a difference. So I did. When I walked in, there was Joe: bright, well dressed, smiling, healthy, and very talkative! Needless to say, the gig smoked! Joe told Kei that he wanted me in the band, permanently. Eventually, Bob Harrison joined us on bass. The band stayed the same for the last year and a half of Joe's life. He was a great teacher. He could really

put things in perspective and reinforce a lot of the things Chick had taught me. He was very good at correcting what he felt was wrong, and not just criticizing. He would always give solutions. Getting back to the beginning, Joe had straightened himself out. It takes a real strong person, especially as screwed up as he was getting, to decide to stop. That takes a lot of power. Then he went to rehab. He never drank. On the gigs, the strongest thing he ever drank was iced coffee, and he smoked cigarettes.

He taught me some new things about playing behind soloists, how to play with high intensity at a low volume, and things like that. One night he came up to me and said, "Tommy, you've got to quit chasing me all the time. It's cool sometimes, but it can get annoying. And you're playing too loud, okay" I remember that, at the time, I got kind of pissed, so when we got back up on stage, I was thinking, "Okay, I'll give you low volume, high burn, and no chase." I did it, and it burned! He got me determined enough that I just did it. He turned around to me and said, "Yeah Tommy, smokin'." That was what he wanted out of me all the while. He had that special way of verbalizing musical things, where you would know exactly what he meant. Besides Chick, he's one of the greatest musicians I've ever played with. He became like my Uncle Joe. And the music was everything from bebop, to Latin, to funk, to rock, to something he used to call pop and bop.

**TS:** Drummer's heaven.

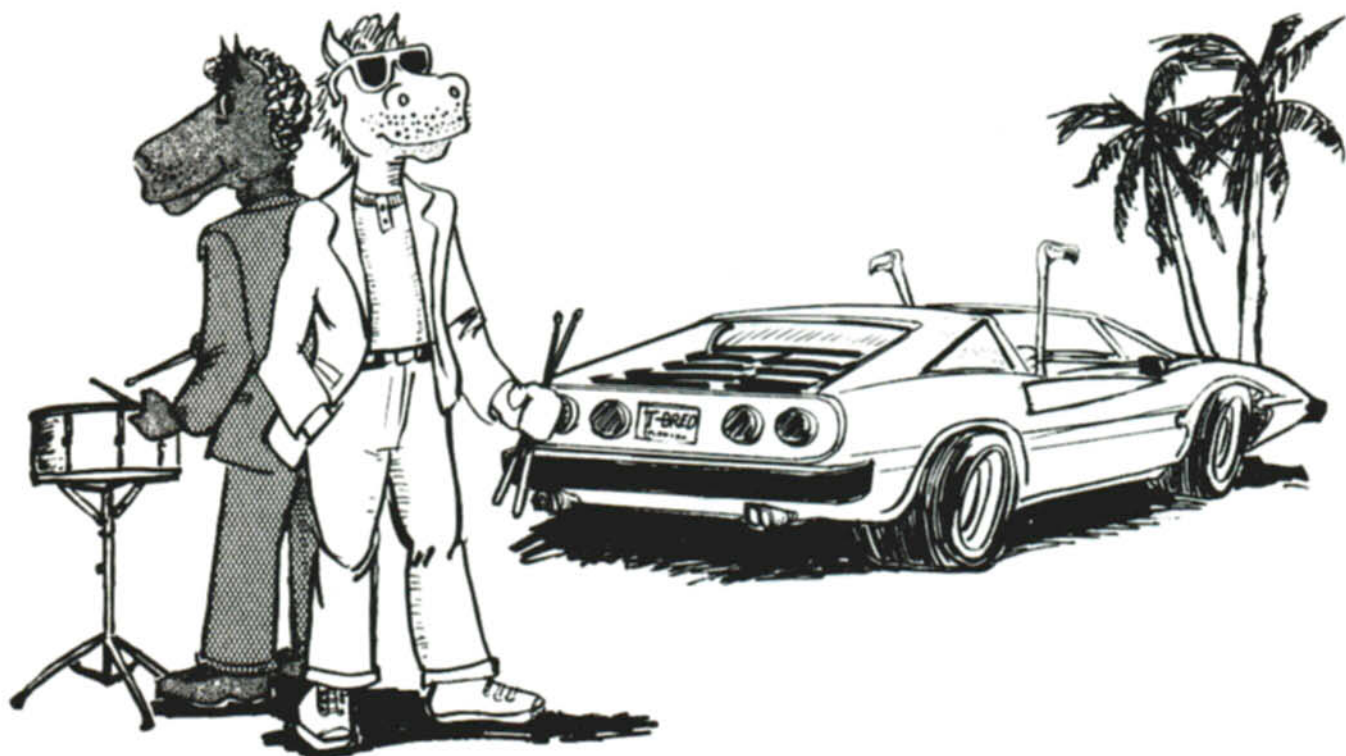
**TB:** Oh yeah! It was great—switch gears for days! We started getting a following and more gigs, new music, and arrangements. It was really happening. We did the first New York gig Joe had done in a long time. Michael Brecker, John Abercrombie, and some other guys came down. They all seemed to really dig it. We went to D.C. from there and then back to L.A. One night, while we were doing a club, Joe was playing sitting down, which he never did, and he looked pretty bad. I said, "Look Joe, you've got to go to the doctor." At first, he made nothing of it, so neither did I. Shortly after, I had a chance to go out with Wayne Shorter. We went all over the States, Europe, etc. I hadn't really spoken to anyone in the band for a while. The first hit after Europe was New York. I called Evelyn, my wife, and she told me Joe was in the hospital. They were testing him for some form of leukemia. I immediately called him. I stayed really up, because Joe was the type—and I mean this in a good-natured way—that, when sick, would take the whole nine yards to get some sympathy out of you. I was like, "Joe, what are you doing in the hospital? Come on, get up out of bed, lazy." He was real cool, though. So every day when we pulled into a new town, I would call him. He was progressively getting worse. I was getting pretty worried. We finally ended the Shorter tour in D.C. at Blues Alley. I would visit him a lot. Some days he was good, and other days he was a mess. I know this sounds kind of corny, but every gig I played on that tour, I played for Joe. When I got back to L.A., I learned he was doing well again and getting discharged. This was right around Christmas. That didn't last long, however, because soon he was back in. The last time I saw him, he pointed to me and said to the nurse, "This is my son." That was a Wednesday. I told him I would see him on Friday. He died on Thursday. So we all did the funeral thing. It wasn't easy, but I really tried so that all the other guys didn't get all 'grievy' over the whole thing. I was like, "Hey, if Joe could see you being like this over him, he would say, 'Hey, give me a break.'" That's the way he was. We were all real close. We all learned so much from him.

The soundest piece of advice anyone ever gave me came from Joe. One night in New York, we got off the bandstand, and John Abercrombie was there. I asked Joe, "What did John think about the band?" Joe said, "Ain't none of your business what he's thinkin', and it ain't none of his business what you're thinkin'. Just worry about playing the drums and the music."

**TS:** Playing with musicians such as Wayne Shorter and Chick Corea is something almost every drummer dreams of. Those are obviously tremendous experiences, in terms of both music and life. How do you know when it's time to leave situations like those?

**TB:** I love playing with both Chick and Wayne, but there comes a time when you just realize that there are other things to do, and you

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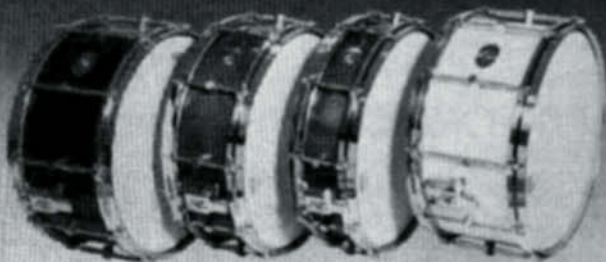
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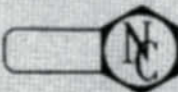


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can't play with these guys for the rest of your life. I want to do more recording, movies, and even jingles, because they're fun to do. I've been working on a project with Mike Miller lately. The working title of the band is Mike Miller And Three Guys Go In A Bar. It's a great band with incredible music. Mike is one of the most unusual guitar players you'll ever hear. Rich Ruttenberg is on keyboards. He can really write his ass off! All the music is instrumental. But it's not like all this deep personal music where the musicians are going to get into it and leave the audience out of it. When we do a gig, the music is geared to have something for everybody. It's not easy music, but it is easy to listen to and enjoy, which I think is the ticket, you know? Music can be heavy, but if you're not giving it to the audience, you might as well put it on a cassette and listen to it in your car by yourself. To me, for an audience to accept and recognize a different kind of music, it's up to the musician. The musician has to communicate that to an audience. If it stays up on the stage, they won't get it. If someone is going to write a bar of 5/8 or 7/8 just to be cool, that's okay, but the players must take the responsibility and get that to the audience.

Sometimes, though, the efforts of musicians to bring new musics to light are hindered by a record company stepping in too much and making the artist sound a little like someone else for the sake of selling more records. In that respect, in some ways, I feel that the record companies have got it a bit backwards. Maybe it's just the fact that I'm growing older, but it seems to me that, when I was a kid, the music came first, and that's why there were so many individuals and original acts. The record companies seemed to look for that truly unique talent. Now it's a case of "Money, money, money . . . how do we make more money? Well, we get another guy who sounds like so-and-so, because that worked, and then we get this group who all look like . . ."

**TS:** There are just so many different types of listeners out there with as many varied amounts of taste in music.

**TB:** Exactly. The reason why there are so many writers out there is because each hears life's music in a different way. Why not bring it all to the airwaves and give the audiences a choice? Record companies have a larger responsibility to the public than to pump out clone bands and force-feed promotions so that everything becomes the same. I know you've heard this before, but look at it. First, there was Prince. Then there was Sheila E. No Offense to her—she's a tremendous talent and percussionist—but her music and image were all Prince. Then there was The Time. Then there was another Prince clone band. Come on, give me a break! They even dressed up to look like him! That's insulting an audience. True, in some respects, the record companies are in a Catch-22 situation where they are risking or planning on risking millions of dollars and don't want to loose it. But still, they must realize—they actually *have* to realize—that only the true, unique talents will survive in the long run. Being true to the music: That's what it's all about. How did you get the Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Miles Davis, and Charlie Parker? Where did you find a voice as distinctive and unique as Michael McDonald or Ella? Even in the jazz market, there still haven't been too many newcomers putting out new music and turning heads. People's perception of jazz is totally different from coast to coast also. On the East Coast, the earlier roots of Parker, Miles, Elvin, and Tony are still very evident. You can play any style, go anywhere, and hear any style, but the roots are still there. If you can play all those styles, it's great! Here on the West Coast, you tend to get labeled. If they know you play jazz, that's all you play. Overall, that's a crock. It may be true for some, but that may be all they want to play, too. West Coast jazz is Yellowjackets, Larry Carlton, and lots of Latin and big band. This is not bad. It's all burning stuff! It's just a difference in style and popularity. On both coasts, it all has things to offer, but I just feel there should be something different, with different rhythms, influences, and ways of writing, to where a person at home can say, "What is that? Wow!" It should not be for the purpose of setting a trend, but for the purpose of having something new and different to offer, in order to strike an interest in investigating what's there.

**TS:** Speaking of investigations, what's happening with you and the



electronics end of the drum world?

**TB:** All that stuff is pretty essential today. I'm getting, or trying to get, all of that together now. I have a set of Simmons *SDS5s*, and I'm looking into a triggering system for my acoustics—maybe the *MX-1* or the *MTM*. There are a lot of nice machines out on the market. Korg has a pretty hip one, the *DDD-1*. It's MIDI. It's touch sensitive, it uses RAM and ROM cards, it's fully tunable, and it's reasonably priced. At first, I tried not to look at the fact that electronics for drums were going to enter the scene, but in the back of my mind, I knew it was inevitable. Now that I'm looking at it, it's kind of fun. At first, people were pushing me into it, and I couldn't get into that, but now I'm ready for it, so it's becoming fun to learn. You can't really push someone into cramming in all this new stuff. Things have to be tested to see if they work, for you and the situation. On one hand, you have the musical side, where you love to play drums and music. On the other hand, music has a business side, whether it's live or in the studio. When new equipment comes on the market, you have to really find out about it before using it. When you bring a new piece into the studio, you *better* make sure you know how it works or you're going to look like a dope, because they're not going to wait around while you learn. Time is money. I know that's a cliché, but in the studio, it's a cold, hard fact. It's the same thing as them waiting for you to learn a whole tune that everyone else knows, because they can read and you can't. It's simple basics.

**TS:** It's really hard now, with the frequency that new products come on the market, to decide what to get.

**TB:** I ask everybody first, "What do you think of this and that?" I'll ask drummers, keyboard players, engineers—everybody. If I get a favorable response, I'll check something out. At first it seems so overwhelming, because there's so much out there, but when you actually start doing it, you begin seeing the light of day. Then you might say, "Okay, I have a machine. Now I'll get a digital reverb." You take it one thing at a time. You don't have to rush it, and you shouldn't. Even if you get a piece of equipment that becomes a little outdated, keep it for a while. Learn it. Get experienced in what that type of unit is good for. Get a better understanding of what it's all about. Then later, you can upgrade to a more sophisticated unit. You will then know what you're looking for even more. And you won't have your nose constantly in the owner's manual, sweating the fact that you have no idea what's going on!

The technology is just getting so much better. Back ten or 20 years ago, drum sounds were more like cardboard boxes. Guys like Harvey Mason and Steve Gadd were getting tremendous sounds, very tonal and resonant, but they were the exceptions. Even still, the cardboard boxes were great sounding for the day. Now it's all digital reverb and MIDI everything, so the drum sounds are really outstanding and seem to stand out more in the tunes. The drums still have to be tuned right and sound good to begin with, I believe. In ten years, though, you're going to look back and say, "Hey, remember when those drum sounds were so up front—so clean and cannon-like? Didn't it sound kind of primitive compared to what we have today?" Things are getting more sophisticated, as are our ears. Those things they told us not to play on a pop record eight years ago—all those extra rhythms, ghosting notes, and underlying subtleties—are all over the records of today. Listen to Peter Gabriel and Steve Winwood. If the same drummer had been playing that stuff on a date even five years ago, he probably would have been fired for overplaying and cluttering up the tracks! Now, all that stuff is great! With all the drum machines, sampling, and the Latin influence in pop music, the door is suddenly wide open. Songwriters need to take advantage of that. Donald Fagan and Walter Becker kind of broke some ground for what's happening in today's music, whereas the Beatles broke that same ground in the '60s. Steve Gadd, Harvey Mason, Chris Parker, Herbie, Miles, and The Police all broke a lot of ground to send musical styles in many different directions. We need more of these guys. It's all a melting pot. Rock, jazz, Latin, reggae, Afro, Brazilian, Cuban, Oriental, Middle Eastern—it's all a part of our musical society and network. Let's use it, and almost everyone will accept it and enjoy

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**TS:** You've had your choice of endorsing many different drum companies in your career. Why did you choose Yamaha?

**TB:** When choosing the right drum sound, it's really a matter of personal preference. Yamaha drums sound and feel great to me. They're very warm and rich in tone and are easy to play. I love the bass drum—the new deeper shells. I have a 16x22. It records really nice, and gets that nice extra depth and punch when playing live. You can tell that Yamaha put a lot of effort into researching its product in choosing the right resonant woods and shell materials. Even the cosmetics of Yamaha kits are really together. The sound is directed and true, and the drums maintain their tone over long periods of time. I received my first kit while I was on the road with Chick. We had done the first set of a concert, and just before the second show, I went up on the stage to tweak up the tuning on the drums. They were brand-new drums with new white coated *Ambassadors*, so I figured they would be a little flappy in tone. I was blown away when I hit them. Each drum was right on the money. They hadn't wavered one bit! I just said to myself, "Okay," and went back to the dressing room.

**TS:** I have heard comments that Yamaha drums only sound good if they are played hard.

**TB:** I don't believe that. It's all in the way you tune them and your choice of heads. I now play with Remo *Pinstripes* on the top and clear *Ambassadors* on the bottom. Again, it's personal preference in the sound you want to get from your drums. I use a coated *Ambassador* on my snare drum. When I tune my drums, I go for a true resonant pitch—no bends or Happiness in the tone. I will tune to specific pitches, but stay away from perfect intervals between drums. I'll always go for a little duller interval than, let's say, a major third or a perfect fourth. I'll make it a bit flat or sharp, either way.

**TS:** Do you use the same snare drum for everything?

**TB:** I have a few different ones that I like to use: 7" metal Yamaha, a 5" Ludwig, and a 6" Ludwig that I don't use as much. I like to play them with as little muffling as possible. Just a small Mylar ring around the edge will usually do it. I run the rest of my drums as wide open as possible, too. I have 10" and 12" power toms on the top rack, and 14" and 16" floor toms. Sometimes I will use 13" and 15" toms on a floor stand, or 15" and 16". Once in a while, I'll use an 8" power tom for a third rack tom. Normally, I'll use the 16 X 22 bass drum. I also have a 20". All of these drums are pretty much the standard sizes. They work best for me and allow me to play all types of styles with proper tuning.

**TS:** What is in your cymbal setup?

**TB:** I use all Zildjians: a 20" *K Brilliant Ride*, 17" *^Brilliant* or 17" *K crash*, 15" *K crash*, a 16" *A*, and an 18" *K crash* I use sometimes. For hi-hats, I'm using a 13" *K* on the top, and a 13" *Z* on the bottom. Sometimes I will set up a closed, choked pair of hats to the right, just under my ride. They are usually 14" *A Brilliant Quick Beats*. I will use them at times as my regular hats, too. The thing that turned me on to Zildjians was the fact that they are so versatile. They respond to all styles of music. True, this is also up to the player, but I can get every texture and color I want out of all of them. The ride is one that I can use on every gig and recording session. The crashes and hats respond to all dynamic levels with true tone quality. Lenny DiMuzio and Mike Morris really helped me out a lot with the right choice in cymbals.

**TS:** What about footwear?

**TB:** Oh, you mean what kind of sneakers do I wear? [laughs] No, really, I use DW 5000 bass drum pedals. I also have a double pedal that I haven't used too much. I use the Yamaha 910 hi-hat stand. One bass drum pedal that I really love is the Yamaha 510. It's the real light one and the least expensive, too. It's very simple, and it's great! For mostly everything, though, I use the DW. It has simple, easy-to-adjust workmanship. It's light and quick, and the action is really smooth and even. I don't care for things with too many parts, so the DW pedals are really good for me.

**TS:** Do you have any definite plans for your future?

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**TB:** Well, I sing also, so I've been kicking around the idea of maybe doing some singing on tunes that I wrote myself. Maybe I'll have my own band. It won't be called the Tom Brechtlein Band, but something else, with the right musicians, and it will have music for everybody to come and enjoy. I like thinking about it. I just have to get it to the doing-something-about-it stage.

**TS:** What does having "made it" mean to you?

**TB:** There's a business standpoint, where you get calls to do a lot of records and make money. Making it, for me, is being able to go into any situation, work well with the musicians, have fun playing, have everyone else having fun doing it, too, and have that kind of atmosphere for each band member, whether it's the first time that person has played with you or the hundredth. It's making it feel good for everybody else, every time, even if you've had a bad day or someone else has had a bad day.

**TS:** You seem to have a great respect for the idea of just playing for the music and getting along with your fellow musicians.

**TB:** Yeah, absolutely. There's no denying it. You have to make money to survive; we all do. And true, I would like to make as much as I can, so I can do certain things I've always wanted to do. But at one time, I had my priorities switched around. I had the money in front of the playing, whereas when I first started, I had it the other way around. I sort of did a reassessment of things and asked myself, "Well, why did I get into this in the first place? Because I love to play every day, all types of music." That's when all the work started coming in again. Then I felt a lot better about myself, and lately, I've been less critical of myself. I've really been concentrating on what I *don't* know and trying to develop that end of things. A lot of guys who have played with real heavy players might tend to get that attitude of "Well, I played with him and him and so-and-so, so I can play anything I want." That's just not true. You've got to keep on expanding, because if you stay in that lie to yourself, it doesn't mean much because nothing ever stays the same. You have to keep on setting your sights higher.

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by Roy Burns



# Bob Yeager: Ya Gotta Try

Drummers from all over the world have lost a great friend. On March 10 of this year, Bob Yeager, founder and owner of the Professional Drum Shop in Hollywood, finally succumbed to a long, exhausting illness. Bob started "Pro Drum" (as it became known) in 1959. It was the premier drum shop on the West Coast. All of the top players and drummers would stop in when they were in town. It was, and still is, directly across the street from the musicians union on Vine Street.

I got to know Bob in the late '60s, when I moved to California, and we struck up an immediate friendship. Bob was a complex man. He was brutally honest, and profanity came easily to him—especially when he felt that someone was not being straight with him. More than one "clever" or overly aggressive salesman, vice-president, or president of a company has been verbally escorted from Pro Drum with his tail between his legs. To sum it up, Bob would not tolerate "B.S." in any form, from anyone, for any reason.

Bob could occasionally upset people because he spoke the truth. He would not be political or play games. If you asked him a question, he would give you a straight answer. Even if it was not the answer you wanted to hear, you knew Bob was being truthful.

Bob also had a great sense of humor, even if the joke was on him. I can remember him recounting any number of stories about when he was a wild young man. He would laugh about the crazy situations in which he had found himself. He especially loved to tell stories about drummers and the music business. He liked to hear a good story, as well.

At one time, Bob had been a very heavy

drinker. After receiving any number of tickets for drunken driving, he realized that, if he didn't stop drinking, he would lose his business or wind up in jail. To his credit, once he made the decision, he stopped drinking and was sober to the end. However, he still enjoyed telling stories about his drinking and about some of the funny things that happened during that period.

Bob didn't waste time on regrets. He would grumble and get on with it. The character he showed in overcoming his drinking problem showed up in other areas as well. Bob was a fighter right to the very last. Even when I would call him in the hospital, he could still make a joke. He never gave up; he just ran out of time.

Bob helped a great many drummers in a number of ways. If drummers had their drums stolen, Bob would let them take out a drumset so they could work. Bob would say, "Pay me when you can." A few people burned him over the years, and he never forgot that. He remembered the players who kept their word and the ones who didn't. Bob would give you his best, but if you burned him, you were on his "bad guy" list forever. This might sound harsh, but he applied the same standards to himself. If Bob said he would do something, you could bank on it. He would never let you down.

Bob Yeager was also something of a father figure for West Coast drummers. He helped a number of drummers negotiate contracts with drum companies and bandleaders. He gave business advice freely. Many people in various areas of the drum business benefited from his counsel and encouragement. Chuck Molinari was a stockholder in Pro Drum from the beginning. He worked as a sort of manager, confidant, and close friend. Chuck left Pro Drum after 21 years of "fun"—as he puts it. Today, Chuck is probably best known as the owner of Spectrasound. Chuck had been married several times during his tenure at Pro Drum. On the day Chuck left, Bob put his arm around Chuck and, with characteristic good humor, said, "Well, as a team, we lasted longer than any of your

wives did!" Chuck laughs about that line to this very day. He recently told me, "Bob Yeager was the most honest person I have ever known, bar none." That's quite a tribute from a close, close friend who knew Bob very well.

Jake Hanna was a regular at Pro Drum. He and Bob could trade lines with anyone. When they were together, it was "laugh time." Bob liked to have fun, and he liked people who were funny as well as unpretentious and down-to-earth.

"Bob was an extremely generous man," Jake recalls. "If I needed a cymbal or some drumheads to leave town, Bob always took good care of me. He would stay late or come to the shop on Sunday if a drummer needed help. And he helped a *lot* of drummers." Jake visited Bob in the hospital a few days before the end. "Bob was making jokes and carrying on like the old Bob. He was a brave man, and my oldest, dearest friend."

In recent years, Bob was very disturbed with the conglomerates that had entered the drum business in the '70s. Instead of straight answers, Bob began to hear the double-talk of the nonpersonal, middle-management executive who was not a drummer, didn't like drummers, and more often than not, did not respect drummers. This is the part that hurt Bob the most. He would often say, "They don't care about drummers. They don't respect drummers. All they care about is the bottom line. They've taken the 'feeling' out of the business." Bob wasn't saying that all corporations were like this. However, I did agree with him that they were usually less personal and less caring in a general sense—certainly more so than the great, privately owned companies and the original pioneers in the drum business. This point is important, because it reflects Bob's respect and concern for all drummers.

In 1963, Bob started Try Publishing. Many top drummers brought their ideas for books to Bob. He consistently paid higher royalties than the large publishing houses. When I asked him about this, he said, "These guys deserve to be well paid

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for their work and their ideas. My books are always open. Any author can check the sales and royalties." Such openness is rare in any business.

One of Bob's favorite drummers was Buddy Rich. He loved to joke with Buddy and could kid around with him like no one else. One day, Bob was preparing a drum-set for Buddy to use on the *Tonight Show*. The guys in the shop could not decide where exactly to drill the holes in the bass drum shell for the tom holder. Bob grabbed the phone, called Buddy's hotel, woke Buddy up, and told him to come over and show him exactly where he wanted the holder. Bob told his crew, "Buddy's a perfectionist. It will never be right if I guess at it, so he just has to come over."

When Buddy arrived, he was visibly upset, because he had been up late and Bob had awakened him. Everyone in the shop sort of moved away from Buddy when they saw the mood he was in. Bob walked up, smiling, and said, "What are you so damned happy about?" Buddy burst into uncontrolled laughter in spite of himself. Only Bob could have turned Buddy's mood completely around like that.

There is a great Sammy Nestico chart recorded by Buddy and his band called "Ya Gotta Try." As I thought of Bob and his friendship with Buddy, I could think of no better title for this article. Bob was a trier and a doer.

Bob was a pioneer, and the Professional Drum Shop helped to set the pattern for all real drum shops. A complete repair service, spare parts, all percussion instruments, and educational materials were all under one roof. The atmosphere was, and still is, directed toward the professional drummer. Bob's sons, Stan and Jerry, are continuing the traditions established by Bob. They still care about drummers the way Bob did . . . and he cared a lot.

With characteristic courage, Bob told his wife and family, "When I go, I don't want any sadness. I want everyone to have a ball." Consequently, at the funeral, the Frankie Capp/Nat Pierce Big Band performed with rare spirit. Jake Hanna played with a small group that included Ray Brown on bass. Everyone tried to have a ball as per Bob's wishes, although the sense of loss was great. Many famous drummers were there, and many young drummers as well. Bob Yeager touched a great many people during his all-too-brief lifetime.

As I write this, I feel a mixture of sadness and admiration for my dear friend. I keep thinking of Bob and the era that he helped to define, and I keep hearing that Sammy Nestico tune. At least for me personally, that will always be Bob Yeager's theme song. Bob would have liked that. If you were fortunate enough to have known Bob Yeager, remember his legacy: "Ya Gotta Try."





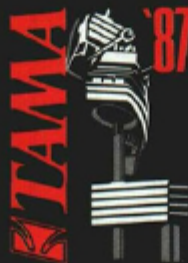
# REPORTING FROM THE ROAD: LIBERTY DEVITTO ON GRANSTAR



Gary Clark

**B**efore deciding to offer Granstar drums to the public as a part of our normal line, we wanted to put them to the test. A roadtest... with 100 shows in the States behind him, and Australia, Japan, Europe and the Soviet Union still to go, we checked in with Liberty De Vitto of the Billy Joel Band to see how he and his new Granstars were doing.

- Tama: So what's the word Lib? Everything O.K.?
- Liberty: Well, I'm not sure about myself, but the Granstars are doing great!
- Tama: Hang in there. Only 3 more continents to go. How are the drums sounding?
- Liberty: Incredible! And the finish still looks terrific, especially considering everything they've been through. Set up for Gary (Clark) this time around has been much easier because of things like the new adjustable spur, the one touch tom mounts, and of course, the Power Tower system we've been using.
- Tama: How about Gary? (drum tech for Liberty and others)
- Gary: In a nutshell, Tama drums have always been easy to deal with on the road. They're able to stand up to the toughest touring schedule, and they always sound great! The new Granstar line is no exception. Good job guys!



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by Rick Van Horn

# Thoughts On Buddy

On April third, early in the morning, I was awakened by the radio with the news that Buddy Rich had died the day before. I had been away from all media on the second of April, and so was not aware of Buddy's passing. I can't say that I was stunned or shocked; we had known of Buddy's serious illness for some time at MD. But I was tremendously saddened. I had grown up, literally and professionally, with Buddy Rich. He and his drumming had been a very important part of my own development as a player. The news of his passing caused me to start my day by looking back and reflecting on just how Buddy had influenced me, and why exactly he meant what he did to me.

I was too young to really appreciate Krupa in his heyday—although I can remember being inspired by my mother's old 78s of Krupa's band. And my drumming career was already well under way before the great rock motivation of Ringo Starr and succeeding '60s drummers came along. In the interim, I, and the drummers I studied with, had one great, shining star to look to: Buddy Rich. I learned to play on a marching snare drum, and so was concerned with sticking technique. The man to watch for that was Buddy Rich. When I graduated to a drumset in 1959, I took lessons from a big band drummer who taught

me how to swing, how to play with finesse and power at the same time, and how to solo in an exciting manner when the time was appropriate. The man both my teacher and I recognized as the master of all these things was Buddy Rich. When I started playing professionally, and needed to develop a sense of personal worth, confidence, and dedication to my craft so that I knew I *belonged* behind a drumset on a stage in front of people, my inspiration for those attitudes came from one source: Buddy Rich.

Of course, as a very young drummer, I mainly saw the speed, the flash, and the showmanship while soloing that Buddy was famous for. Later, as I matured as a player myself, I began to appreciate more fully what Buddy contributed to the band as its foundation. As I learned more about him and saw him perform live several times, I realized that there was something about Buddy with which I could identify personally. I don't mean to equate myself with him in any way; I only mean that there was one level on which I felt we had something in common. *Ifelt* it a while ago, but it was only recently that I *identified* that common aspect that we shared. Buddy Rich was the ultimate club drummer.

Yes, Buddy made recordings, appeared on TV shows, and headlined in Las Vegas. But while many other artists do such things and *also* appear occasionally in smaller venues, with Buddy, it was the other way around. The big-scale appearances and album recordings were almost incidental. What he did for a *living*—and for his way of life—was play on the road. To a point within a few months of his passing, Buddy was touring constantly. Yes, he played Vegas, but he also played the Catamaran Hotel in San Diego (where I saw him just before his 62nd birthday). Yes, he did the *Tonight Show*, but he also played the Carnation Gardens at Disneyland (where I saw him twice). Yes, he made records, but he also packed 'em in at the Bottom Line in New York City, where his bus was parked across the street from the club—not his limo, mind you—his band bus. And Buddy *rode* that bus, up and down the highways of this country. He played colleges, theaters, and most of all *clubs*. He was the greatest big band drummer who ever lived—arguably the greatest drummer of all time—and he played clubs. I think that meant more to me than all the talent and amazing technique he ever displayed.

I don't mean to deify Buddy; I know he had his faults. I've come to know more about those in recent years—especially

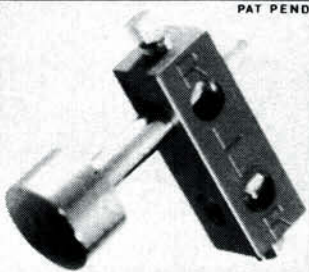
since coming to work at MD. As I matured as a drummer, I began to listen to Buddy with a more critical ear. I could hear that sometimes his sense of time wasn't quite where it should have been (although he might have argued that it was the rest of the *band* that was off). As I began to understand the function of a drummer in a band a little better, I sometimes had the feeling that Buddy tended to overplay a bit. I realized that he represented the opposite of the old "18 musicians and a drummer" cliché: Buddy's band was often very clearly one drummer and 18 sidemen. But even if that wasn't what I thought of as the optimum situation musically, I had to admire the kind of strength—chutzpah, if you will—that allowed Buddy to pull it off.

I think I envied that brashness in Buddy's personality quite a bit. I know many of the stories about his behavior as a band-leader; I'm aware that he often bullied his musicians. I'm not in a position to comment on that, other than to say that I believe that stemmed from Buddy's total dedication to his performance. He was never any harder on any of his players than he was on himself, and I know several stories about that side of Buddy, too. I know that he often played in tremendous pain from back problems; I know that he was on the bandstand less than six weeks after undergoing quadruple bypass surgery. (I know that one because I was there at the performance.) I've said before in this column that I hold an old-fashioned performance ethic; I believe in the "show must go on" philosophy. Buddy's show always went on.

And what a show it always was! Buddy always had the players, he always had the charts, and he always had the personal fire and aggressiveness to make everything happen to its maximum potential. There have been, and are today, other great big band drummers. But nobody does, or ever did, play with the sheer intensity of Buddy Rich. That's where I now realize I feel the greatest loss with his passing. I can remember the great shows I attended; I can listen to the great recordings; I can even watch some videotaped performances. But Buddy Rich's *intensity* can't be mechanically reproduced. It had to be experienced firsthand; it had to be felt when Buddy delivered it. Those deliveries have now ceased forever, and it is for that reason—for all the "deliveries" that future generations of drummers won't be able to receive from Buddy—that I feel the greatest regret.



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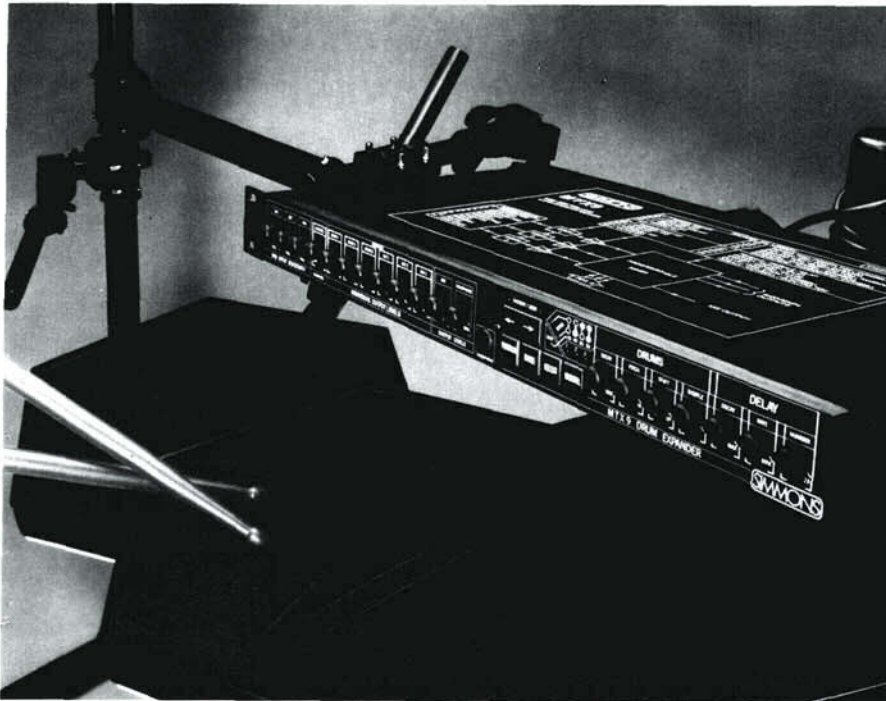
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by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.

# Simmons MTX-9 Expander



Simmons' new *MTX-9* is a three-channel percussion expander unit that can be used by itself, or in conjunction with the *SDS9* or *SDS1000* kits. The *MTX-9* contains 11 digitally sampled tom-tom and Latin percussion sounds, and can be triggered via pads or MIDI. The unit is rack-mountable and can store 40 "kits": 20 factory presets (in ROM) and 20 user-programmable kits (in RAM).

Available sounds in the *MTX-9* are: power tom, dry tom, electro tom (the old *SDS5* sound), timbale, conga, tambourine, Cabasa, clap, cowbell, clave, and sidestick. Since the unit is three-channel, you could have one kit set up using the same sample sound (i.e., conga) pitched differently on each of the three pads, or you could set up a kit containing three entirely different samples. There are quite a few possible combinations.

The rear of the *MTX-9* has three pad inputs and outputs, as well as a Mix output. It has jacks for MIDI thru, MIDI in, and cassette load/dump (it's capable of storing or retrieving on cassette), plus a

footswitch jack for remote kit selection. If you own an *SDS9*, the *MTX-9* sounds can be mixed in with your *SDS9* toms by using the three external tom inputs and trigger-thru jacks.

An array of knobs, buttons, and LEDs are on the front side of the *MTX-9*. Each pad has its own sensitivity control and output level. There is also a master mix level and headphone level (plus a headphone jack). Separate level controls are available for three external sources (such as your *SDS9* tom pads). This allows you to blend both the *MTX-9* and *SDS9* sounds on each pad, or replace the *SDS9* sounds altogether with the *MTX-9*'s digital samples. A "Dynamic" control is there to increase small dynamics, and it adds a compression effect at higher volumes (with an LED to signify that function).

The kits are stored in four banks of five kits. LEDs are used to indicate kit banks A-B-C-D; the same LEDs are also used for MIDI note numbers and MIDI channel. There is a MIDI function indicator LED as well. A window display is used to show kit

number (1-5). When in user mode, a dot appears after the kit number, just like on the *SDS9*. A large push button is used to change from factory to user mode, in addition to selection of kit number. Pressing the left side of the button decreases the kit number, while pressing the right side increases it. Pressing at dead center changes the mode (factory/user). I find this to be a major help in getting to the location you want, instead of cycling around all kits and both modes.

Four smaller push buttons are used to program a kit, store a kit, save a drum channel, and select a bank or drum channel. Other programming controls are: Pitch (increase or decrease), Sample Select (1-11), Decay, which allows a partial or full sample to be heard, and Shift, which increases or decreases pitch corresponding with the dynamic level. The *MTX-9* also has an onboard delay that can be programmed for decay rate, the time between echoes, and the total number of echoes (up to 15).

All in all, programming kits is pretty simple, once you know what to do. Simmons' owners manual is very well-written, so you shouldn't have any problem. The sounds built into the *MTX-9* are all great. The preset kits are all specifically arranged as to group and pitch, and thus can't be varied. But with the user function, you can develop your own kit combinations and tailor the sounds to your own personal liking.

The *MTX-9* is meant to interface with the *SDS9* but will work with *SDS1000* kits. It can also be used with various other Simmons products, such as the *SPM8:2* mixer, *MTM* and *TMI* MIDI converters, and *SDE* percussion expander, or it can be used alone. The unit is available two ways: with three Simmons pads at \$899 retail or the *MTX-9* brain alone for \$699 retail. Either way, drummers can now have hand percussion sounds readily available while playing on a kit, *SDS9* owners can update their analog tom sounds to digital sounds, and percussionists should love the flexibility the *MTX-9* affords. No doubt we'll see the *MTX-9* popping up in some hand percussionist's arsenal quite soon.

# SOUND CONTROL

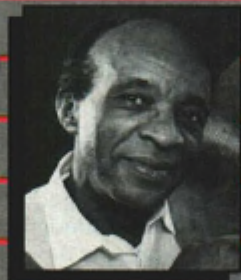
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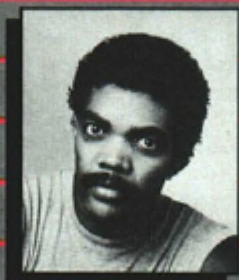
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## PURECUSSION RIMS CONTEST WINNERS

Purecussion, Inc., maker of RIMS and the new tunable RIMS *Headset*, recently held a drawing to determine the first winners of its "RIMS Two-Minute Test" contest. The names of Jimmy Gatewood and the Angus McCree Music Center of Greensboro, North Carolina, were pulled from a bass drum full of entries by Shannon Ford, drummer with the Gatlin Brothers Band.

Subsequent drawings have made Dewey James (Fork's Drum Closet in Nashville, Tennessee), Paul Buehler (Drome Sound, Schenectady, New York), and Shawn Felton (Smith-Holden Music of Bloomington, Indiana) RIMS winners, too. The contest is

being held at more than 300 RIMS Test Centers throughout the country to promote the sound advantages of RIMS Suspension Drum Mounts. Drummers are encouraged to visit their local dealer, compare a drum's sound with and without RIMS, and then fill out an entry form. Both the individual and the store are then eligible to win a free set of RIMS. During the course of the contest, at least 100 sets of RIMS will be given away.

Players should see their local Purecussion dealer for contest information. Dealers are invited to contact Purecussion at 5957 W. 37th St., Minneapolis, MN 55416, or call (612) 922-9199.

## REMO SUPPLIES MILLER BANDS

Remo, Inc. is the exclusive supplier of drumsets and drumheads to the Miller Brewing Company's Genuine Draft Band Network, and has furnished drumsets to many of the 23 bands that are being sponsored by Miller Brewing Company. It's Remo's first year on the program, which supports outstanding rock and country bands from all areas of the U.S. and Germany.

Participating drummers currently include Walter Salwitz of San Francisco's Dynatones, Charles Wolf of the Atlanta-based The Heartfixers, Matthew Jennings Warren with Kool Ray from Peoria, Dave

Rangeler of McGuffy Lane, a country rock quintet from Columbus, Ohio, Bill Shaw from Seattle's The Rangehoods, Harry Lewis of Smash Palace out of Philadelphia, Gary Smith of Austin's Tail Gators, and Chad Smith of the Detroit rockers Toby Redd.

Each of the bands is a working, touring group, and many play as many as 200 dates per year. Remo's support is being offered to all participating drummers, according to Rick Drumm, Remo's artist relations director. Additional agreements will be announced shortly.

## YAMAHA ESTABLISHES NEW ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE IN U.S.

In April of this year, Yamaha International Corporation (YIC) changed its overall structure. The company's name was changed to Yamaha Corporation of America (YCA), with a new subsidiary company: Yamaha Music Corporation, USA (YMC). YCA will coordinate and develop strategies for all Yamaha corporations in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Panama, with the exception of Yamaha Motor Corp. and its subsidiaries. Mr. Seiji (Sam) Kajimura will be president of YCA.

All music education, sales,

and marketing responsibilities previously performed in the U.S. by YIC will be assumed by YMC. Mr. Naomasa (Nick) Mitani will be president of YMC. He was president of Yamaha Canada Music, Ltd., until 1985.

Over the years, Yamaha International Corporation has given birth to several new organizations such as Yamaha Motor Corporation, USA (1977), Yamaha Music Manufacturing, Inc. (1980), and Yamaha Electronics Corporation USA (1981).

## PORCARO MAKES DIRECTING DEBUT

Jeff Porcaro, drummer for Toto, has made his directorial debut as the guiding force behind the band's most recent video. The video has been made to support Toto's latest single, "Till The End."

Entering this field "reluctantly," Porcaro claims his band mates pushed him to direct the Toto video. "I've been involved early on with doing story boards and coming up with ideas for the visualization of our songs," he says. "Doing this video has increased the fun." Porcaro describes the video as "a conceptual performance piece." It stars the members of Toto, along with

dancer/choreographer Paula Abdul (known for her work with Janet Jackson and Duran Duran).

How was it for Jeff, directing his own band? "They'd been on me for so long to do one that they were like clay!" After the experience of making his own movie, it's pretty clear that Porcaro has been bitten by the film bug. "I'd like to do more of this if time permits," he says, "maybe even for other artists." After videos, can feature films be far behind? "Of course, I've had some ideas," says Porcaro. "I'd like to toy with them sometime . . . when I'm too old to play drums!"

## BLAKEY RECEIVES BERKLEE HONOR

Internationally acclaimed band-leader and jazz percussionist Art Blakey has received an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music from Berklee College of Music. The award was presented to Blakey by Berklee president Lee Eliot Berk at the college's 1987 Commencement ceremonies held May 16 of this year.

Blakey has been at the helm of his band, The Jazz Messengers, for 30 years, during which

it has evolved into a traveling college of jazz. He has helped to produce a galaxy of instrumentalists, composers, and leaders, including Horace Silver, Benny Golson, Freddie Hubbard, Wayne Shorter, and Wynton Marsalis, to name but a few. In 1984, the Jazz Messengers were awarded a Grammy for the "Best Jazz Instrumental Performance Group."

## ENDORSEMENT NEWS

Barcus-Berry, Inc. has announced that **Kelly Keagy** of Night Ranger and **Rikki Rockett** of Poison are both using the company's drumhead pickups for electronic triggering . . . Nashville drummer **Harry Stinson** is now a Pro-Mark artist . . . **Paul Kriebich**, currently playing with the Ray Charles Orchestra, and **Gonzo San-**

**doval**, of the metal group Armored Saint, have both recently been signed as Gretsch endorsers . . . **Steve Schaeffer**, **Ron Aston**, **Mike Fisher**, **Chad Wackerman**, **Joe Porcaro**, **Ian Paice**, **Jack Bruno**, and **Joe Franco** are currently using trigger pads by Daud Designs . . . **Ricky Sebastian** is now with Zildjian.





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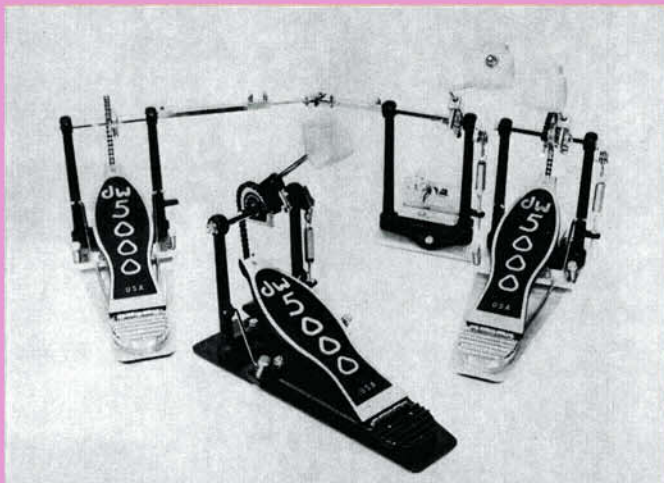
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## DW IMPROVES 5000 SERIES PEDALS



Drum Workshop's ongoing commitment to product development has resulted in two recently announced improvements to its 5000 series bass drum pedals. The upgrades come as standard equipment on new 5000 *Turbo*, 5002 *Double*, and *EPI* Electronic Trigger pedals and are designed to enhance the smoothness, balance, and speed of DW's single and double chain and sprocket pedals.

The new *Turbo Rocker Hub* uses needle bearings to reduce friction at the point where the spring assembly connects with the hex drive shaft for a noticeable increase in smoothness and balance. DW's 5002 *Double Bass Drum Pedal* has been improved by the addition of a

patented "Split-Block" linkage assembly that features a lubrication chamber with internal oil flow for ultimate speed, long life, and incredibly smooth feel. DW has also replaced the 5002's hitch-pin linkage connectors with square-head, drumkey-type screws.

These improvements have been made in an effort to refine current products instead of merely introducing new ones. Because of this consumer-oriented approach, the redesigned parts are also individually available to upgrade existing DW pedals. Contact Drum Workshop at 2697 Lavery Court #16, Newbury Park, California 91320, (805) 499-6863 for further information.

## MAGIK DRUM LUBE

Magik Drum Lube is a scientific blend of 18 extremely high-quality oils, chemicals, and virgin *Teflon*. Each batch of Magik Drum Lube requires over 24 hours to manufacture and blend. The result is a product uniquely formulated for the needs of today's high-performance drum equipment. Billions of finely milled, microscopic particles of *Teflon* are carried into microscopic imperfections by special solvents that deposit and implant them. When the oils are wiped off or evaporated, all friction points are virtually eliminated! Magik Drum Lube will not attract dirt or dust, and protects from mois-

Many drummers have complained about the tiresome chore of having to disassemble their drumkits and hardware in order to apply grease to their pedals, stands, lugs, etc., so as to keep them functioning properly. Magik Drum Lube requires virtually no disassembly. Simply apply it to the friction area, work it in, allow three to four minutes for the *Teflon* to settle, and wipe it off. You're ready to play! Applications include pedals, lugs, pivots, stands, keys, locks, and chain-driven units. For further information, contact Magik Lube, Inc., P.O. Box 113, El Cajon, California 92022-0113, (619)588-1177.

## EMAX RACK DIGITAL SAMPLER



E-mu Systems, Inc. has announced the introduction of the *Emax Rack* digital sampler—a convenient, rack-mountable version of the *Emax* digital sampling keyboard that will give any MIDI controller all the capabilities found in the *Emax*. The new unit is ideal for adding power to a current MIDI system, to link to an *Emax* keyboard for true 16-channel capa-

bility, or as the perfect sound brain for MIDI percussion systems. The product's MIDI Overflow Mode and multi-timbral capabilities make it a dynamic asset for MIDI sequencing setups. For further information, contact E-mu Systems, Inc., 1600 Green Hills Road, Scotts Valley, California 95066(408)438-1921.

## CANNON SNARE DRUMS

Cannon U.S.A. snare drums are available in 6 1/2" and 8" depths. These handcrafted snare drums feature 10-ply maple shells, Remo drumheads, hand-sanded sharp bearing edges, Pearl-type hard-

ware, and a parallel strainer. The drums are available through over 600 music stores nationwide, or contact Universal Percussion, Inc., 2785-87-93 E. Midlothian Blvd., Struthers, OH 44471.

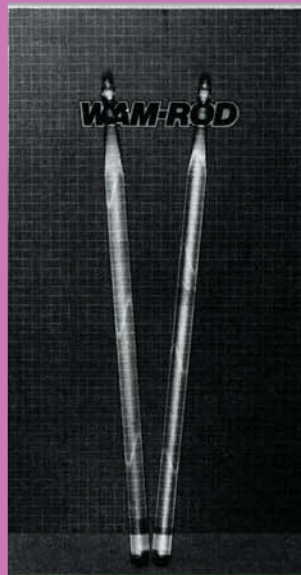
## AMBERSTAR WAM-RODS

Amberstar International recently introduced the first transparent electro-acoustic drumsticks. Amberstar spokesman Larry Sotoodeh, a professional drummer for 26 years, says the complaints of professional drummers who enjoyed

using electronics but had developed wrist injuries from battering hard sensor pads prompted him to develop a new line of drumsticks.

Although any size can be used on electronic or acoustic drums, the company aim was to offer a choice. "We feel strongly that electronic drums are here to stay, and we wanted to help eliminate some of the problems involved with playing them," Sotoodeh said.

The new *Wam-Rod* line offers a striking visual breakthrough with transparent colored sticks. The company claims that the super-polymer drumsticks "last three times as long as a conventional drumstick, and have created a new standard by which synthetics will be compared." Current sizes include 5B, 2B, and *Marching Corps*. For further information, contact Amberstar International, 111 East Laurel, San Antonio, Texas 78212, (512)227-7289.

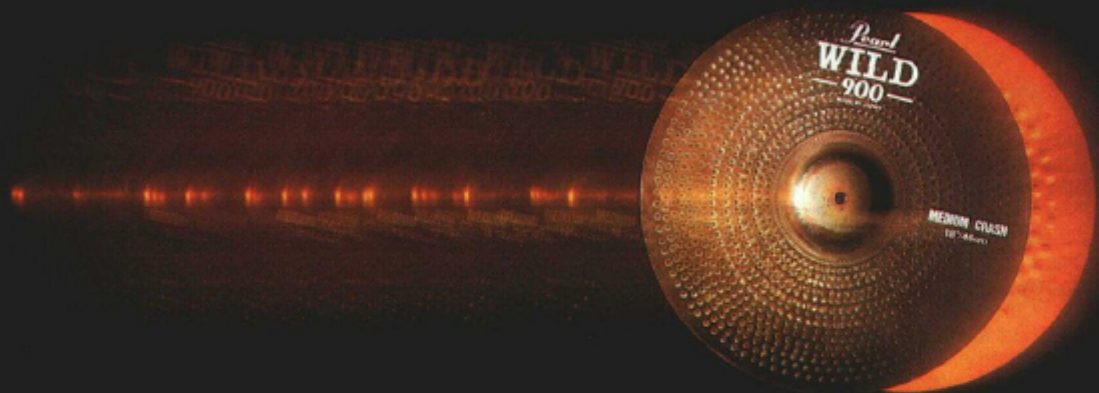




# The New Cymbal of a Total Eclipse

Until now, a few manufacturers with cymbals orbiting in the higher quality range floated along unparalleled and unchallenged, a temporary condition that has reached its end. Because now released in the same orbit is the perfect hybrid of old world craftsmanship with new world technology. The new CX-900 Series Cymbals from Pearl.

Available in both traditional and wild types, and all popular sizes, weights and styles, this is truly the cymbal for the most demanding player. The CX-900 is destined to be the brightest spot on the horizon. But then overshadowing the competition is nothing new for Pearl.

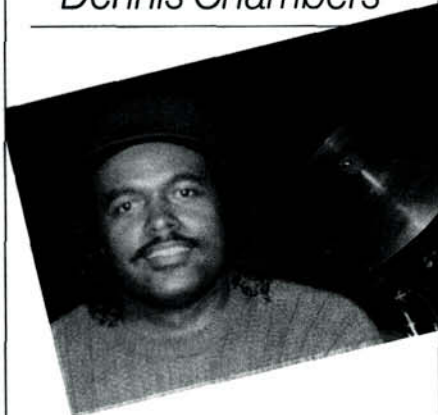


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# Profiles in Percussion

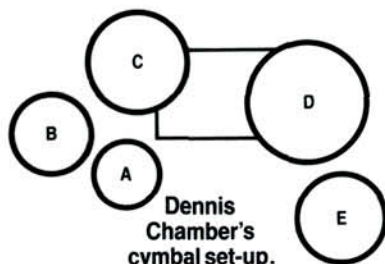
Dennis Chambers



Born in Baltimore, Maryland, Dennis Chambers began his professional career in the studios of New York. His first real exposure was with George Clinton's various Parliament Funkadelic incarnations, but he's also recorded with respected artists like Bernard Wright and Thomas Dolby.

However, it wasn't until he joined the group "Special EFX" that he was able to really display his serious Jazz chops. This led to tours with David Sanborn and the drumchair in guitarist John Scofield's burning new group. Dennis' ultra-funky grooves and explosive fills are the highlight of Scofield's "Blue Matter" Album.

His favorite Hi Hats are Zildjian's special combination of a 13" K Top with a 13" Z Bottom. "They're incredible," says Dennis. "I'll never use any other Hi Hats... unless of course Zildjian comes out with something even better!!"



Dennis Chamber's cymbal set-up.

- A. 13" K. Hi Hat Top
- 13" Z. Dyno Beat Hi Hat Bottom
- B. 16" K. Dark Crash Brilliant
- C. 18" K. Dark Crash
- D. 22" A. Earth Ride Brilliant
- E. 17" K. China Boy Brilliant

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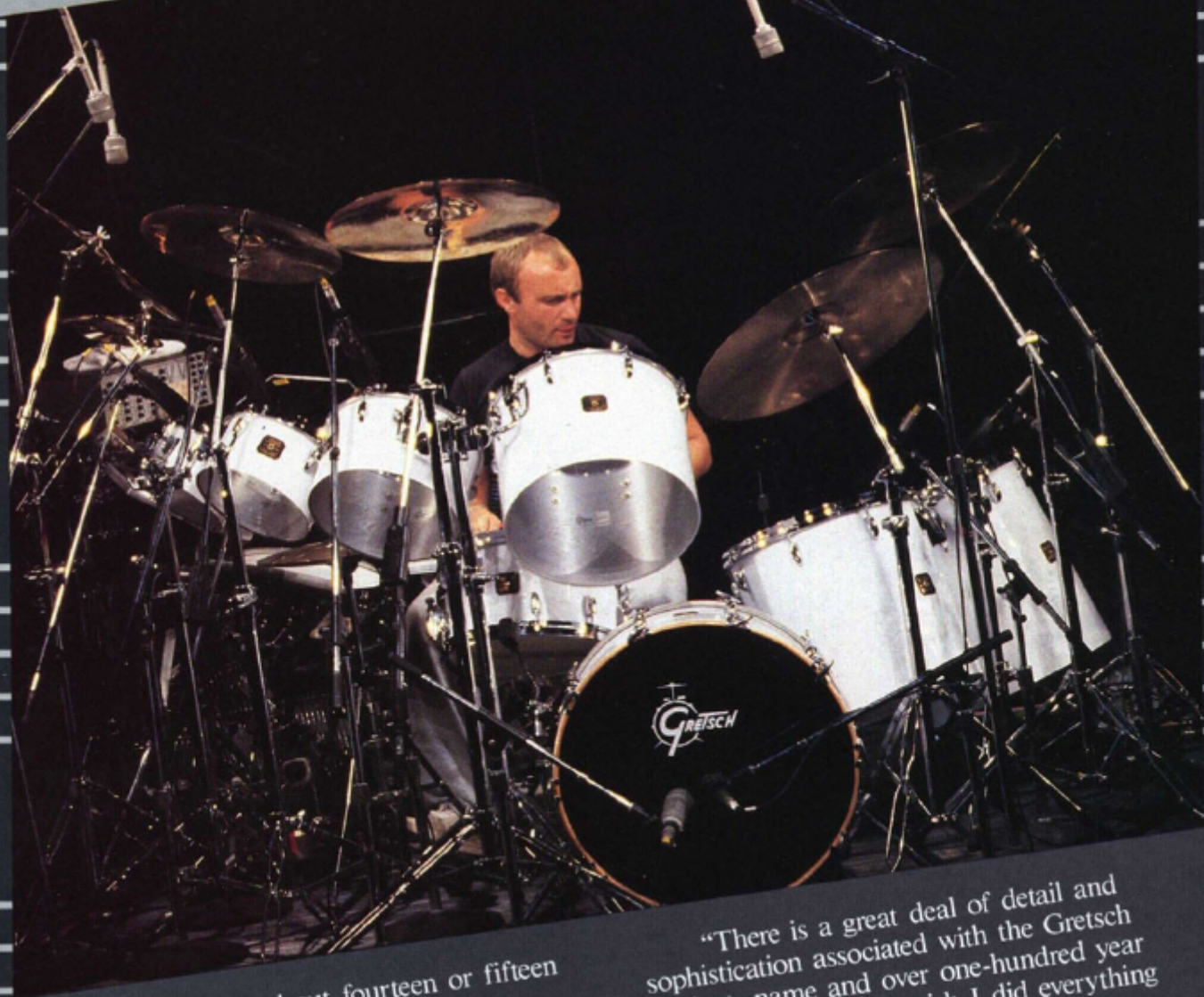
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# Why do I play Gretsch?

**Phil Collins**  
Genesis, producer & solo artist



"When I was about fourteen or fifteen years old, a good friend of mine who played drums in Joe Cocker's grease-band was playing Gretsch. I persuaded him to sell me his kit. From that moment, I was a Gretsch player. I still own that kit and it still sounds great today."

"Gretsch has always been 'a drummer's drum' and when the opportunity developed allowing me to play Gretsch again, I jumped at the chance."

"There is a great deal of detail and sophistication associated with the Gretsch product, name and over one-hundred year heritage. Sometimes I wish I did everything as well as they do."

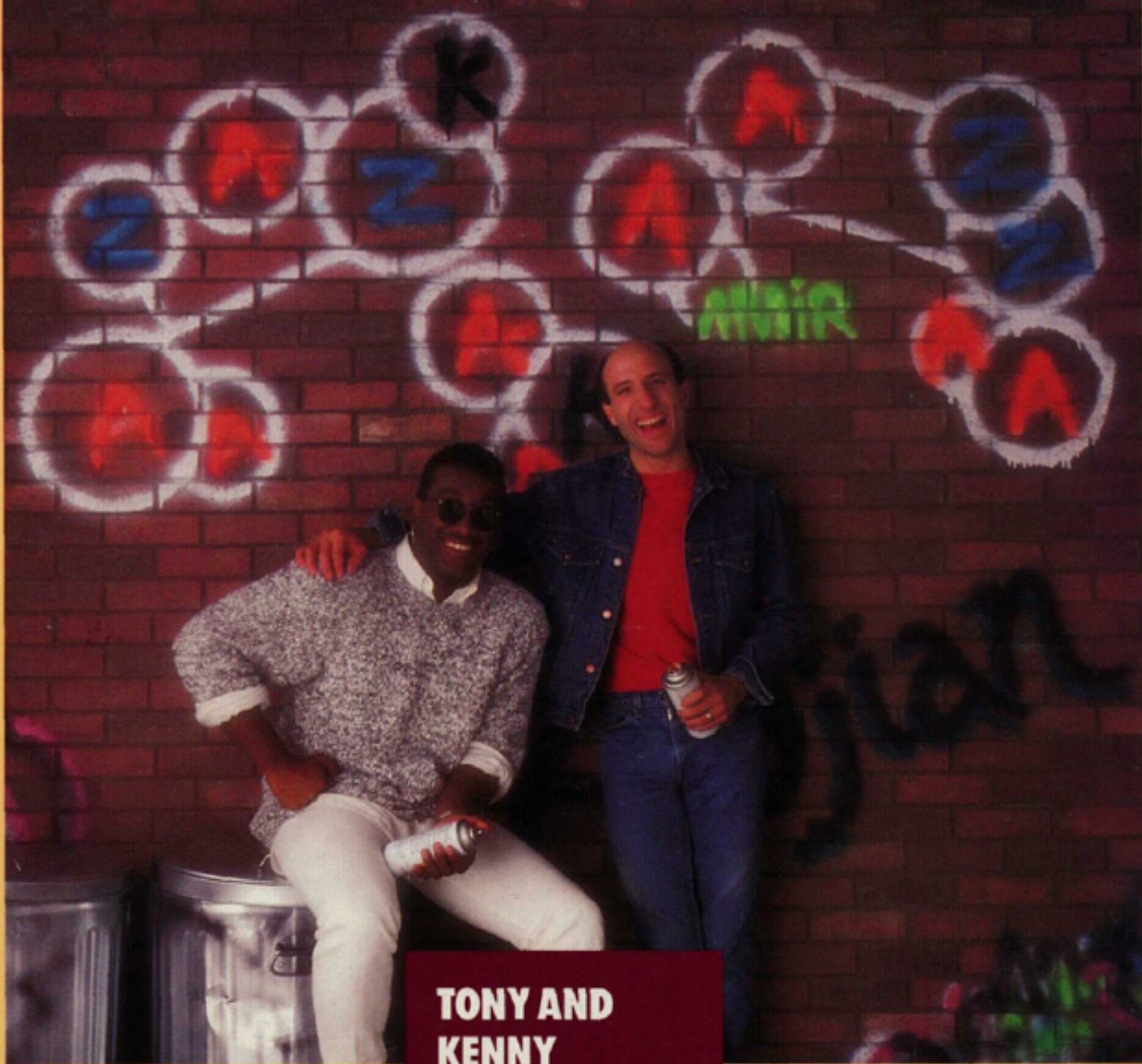
"How do I like my new drums? They're beautiful in sound and looks...And most important, they're Gretsch."



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**TONY AND  
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AND Z'S OF  
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Each Zildjian A, K and Z cymbal series has a distinct voice, character and personality. Indeed, Zildjian offers the greatest range of sounds—for every kind of music.

How can you mix and match the right Zildjian cymbals to create your own sound? One that sets you apart from other drummers?

Two of rock's most celebrated power players, Kenny Aronoff of John Cougar Mellencamp and Tony Thompson of Power Station fame, have discovered the answer.

"The only rule is that there are no rules," says Aronoff. "You have to experiment. Once I started using the new Z Power Crashes on stage I found I needed a louder and more powerful sound from my Chinas. So I went from 18" and 20" A China Boys to two 22's. Kaboom! These babies explode."

Thompson takes a similar approach, "I switch around a lot. I've been using a 22" A Ping or a 22" Z Light Power Ride on current studio projects and with my new band, The Distance. And I match them with A Quick Beat Hi Hats—the ones with the flat bottom and holes. I might use K crashes in the studio, but on tour I'll go with A's and Z's. I love the way the Z's cut through on stage. I hit hard and want my cymbals to be heard."

"Music is a series of frequency ranges. I look for the one that isn't being saturated, so my cymbals stick out. For example, recently I was in the studio and tried an A Ping Ride, then a K. But for the music I was playing, the Amir Ride really cut it. It was incredible!" says Aronoff.

"With the A's, K's, Z's, and Amirs, Zildjian's got every sound covered," adds Thompson. "And they're always creating new ones. Zildjian's been around forever, but they move with the music of the times."

"Zildjian gives me all the letters of the alphabet. I can pick and choose the ones I want to create the words, the sentences, the paragraphs, the story. The way you put your cymbals together is what makes you sound unique," concludes Aronoff.

"Zildjians are the only cymbals for any drummer that's got a really good ear. I know, I've tried them all. But Zildjian's definitely happening," says Thompson.

If you'd like to learn more about the A's, K's and Z's of mixing cymbals, stop by your Zildjian dealer. Chances are, if you hear it in your head, there's a Zildjian cymbal that can bring it to life.

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