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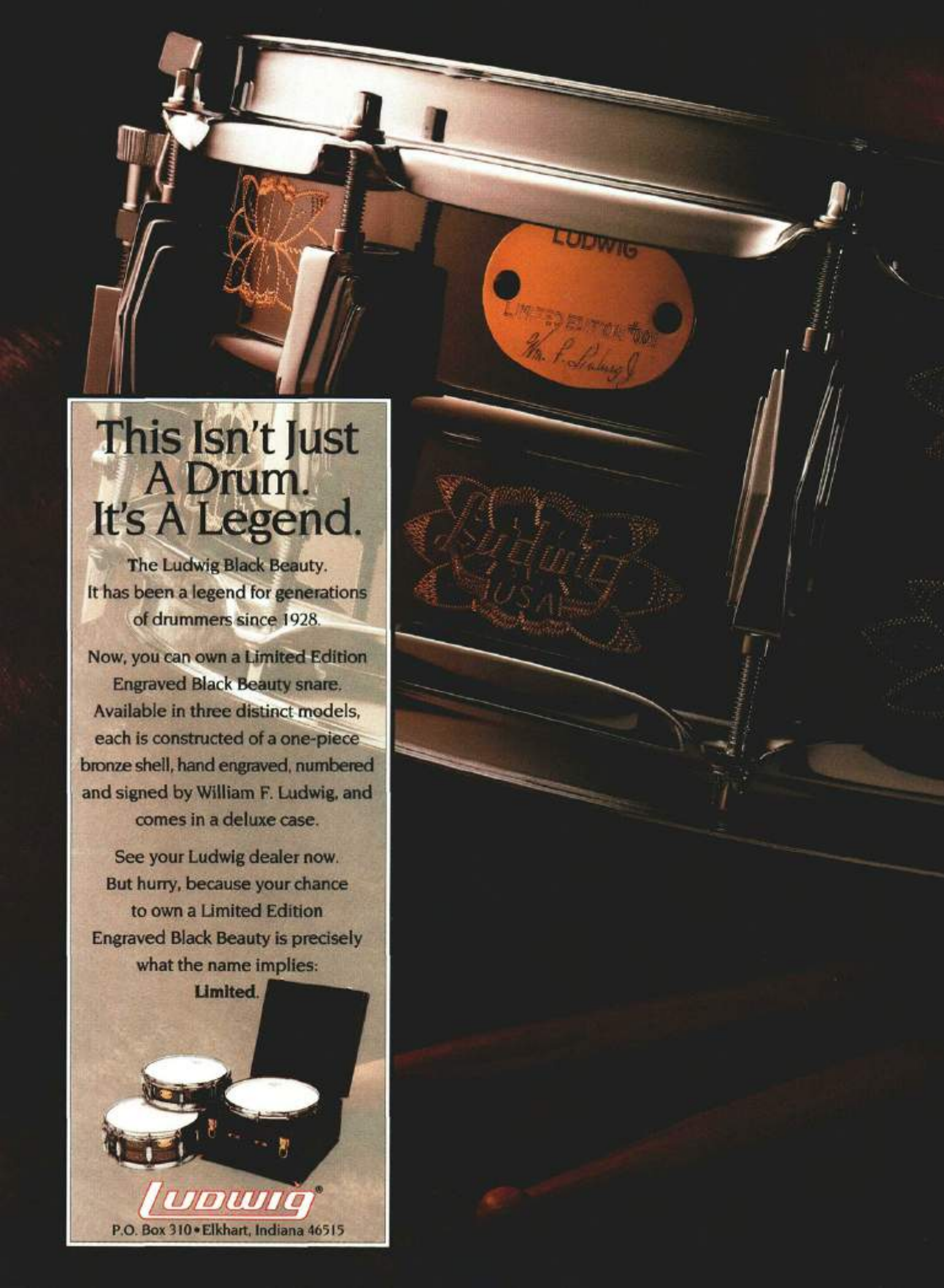

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VOLUME 16, NUMBER 9

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MD and Good Friends

This month's cover is a bit of a departure for us, with former *Tonight Show* drummer Ed Shaughnessy and recently retired host Johnny Carson photographed during the last days on the set of *The Tonight Show*. It was the culmination of a relationship that spanned nearly three decades. And during that time, Ed Shaughnessy has probably been seen and heard by more people than any other drummer in history. And Ed has plenty to say, in this, his third *Modern Drummer* interview.

I'm also proud to say that Ed has been one of MD's greatest supporters over the years. A member of our Advisory Board since 1979, he's authored numerous articles, was a featured performer at one of *MD's* Festival Weekends, and has *always* been there for us whenever the need arose. Ed's also never hesitated to put a good word in for *MD* in his many clinic appearances, and we certainly thank him for all of the above. And though *The Tonight Show* may no longer be a part of Ed's musical life, word has it that he'll be just as busy as ever doing clinics, teaching, and performing with his band around the country.

So what is Johnny Carson also doing on this month's cover? Well, first, we felt Carson deserved his own tribute of sorts simply for making one of the finest bands in the history of late-night TV an integral part of *The Tonight Show* for thirty years. That alone says something for his love and support of top-quality live music. Also—and many people are unaware of this—Carson is a fine drummer himself, and according to Ed, he's quite serious about it. Fans of the old show might recall his passion for drumming from the numerous appearances of Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, and Ed and Buddy in featured solo spots.

We also feel somewhat indebted to Johnny Carson for the exposure he's given *MD* over the years. For those who failed to notice, *Modern Drummer* was mentioned and displayed on *The Tonight Show* on three separate occasions over the years, giving us exposure to millions of viewers across the country. Interestingly enough, we never actually pursued the free publicity. Being a reader of MD, with more than a passing interest in drumming, Carson simply felt it appropriate to mention the magazine whenever it tied in with something on the show. Obviously, it was exposure we could *never* have possibly afforded if we had to pay to reach that many people via network TV

And so, our deepest appreciation to both gentlemen for the kindness they've shown to MD over the years. And, of course, our very best wishes and warm thanks to Ed Shaughnessy for his valued friendship, and for his support of *Modern Drummer* for all these many years.

MODERN DRUMMER®

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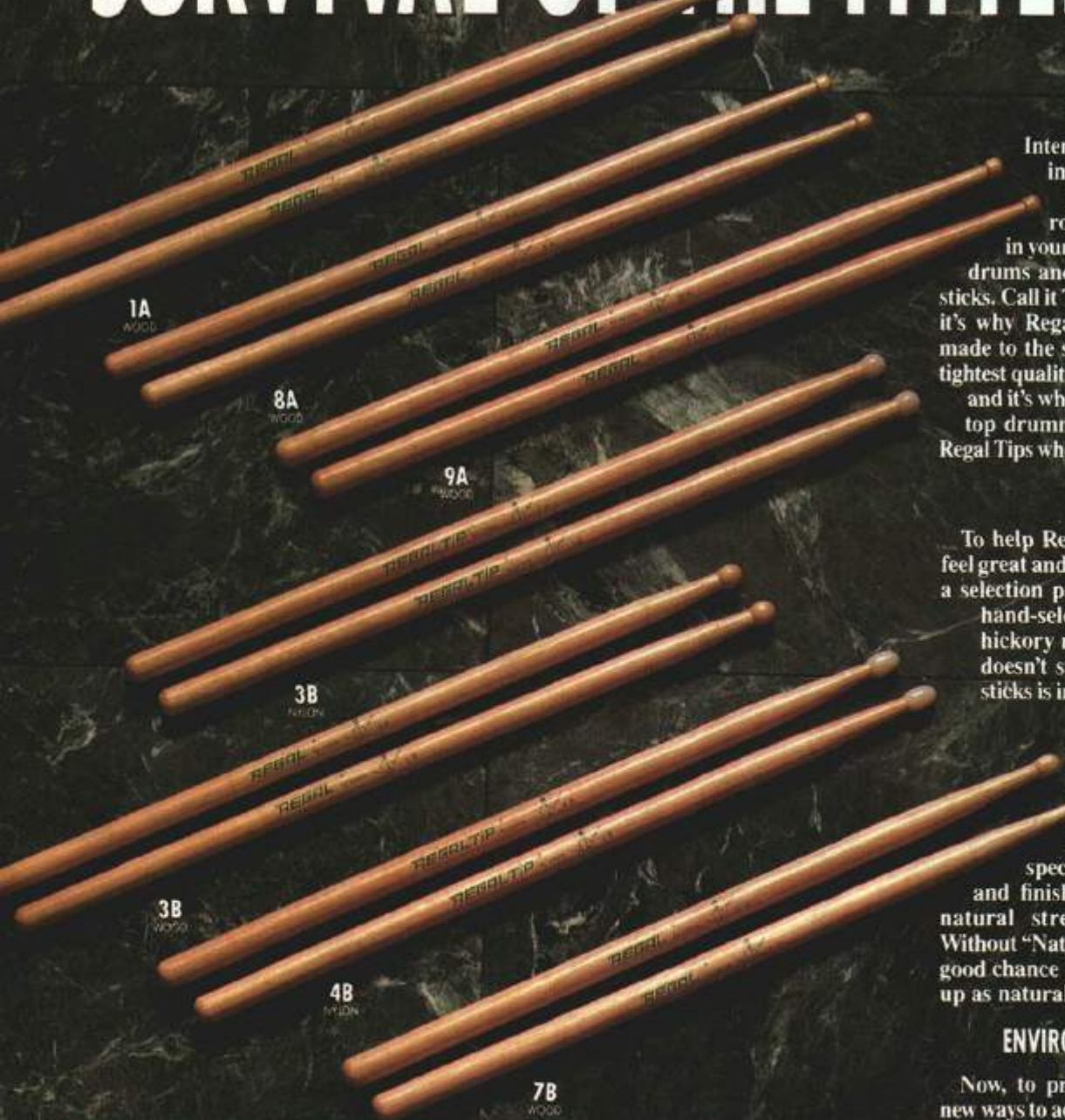

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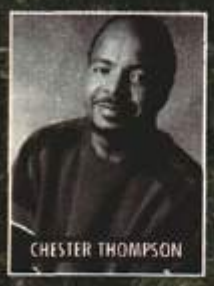
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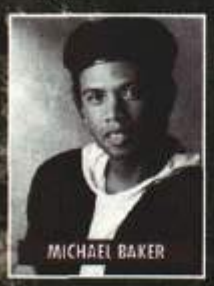
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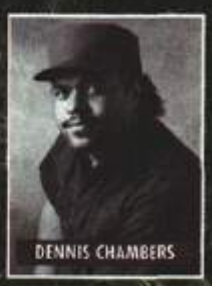
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Blas, You Can Please Some Of The People Some Of The Time...

I just received the June '92 issue of *Modern Drummer.* As I read through the feature article on Blas Elias, I came across one line that really reached out and grabbed me. Blas stated, "I've never touched drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes in my life." This one line should have occupied the entire page. I just wish there were more people out there like Blas who are proud enough of the fact that they *don't* use such substances that they'll let it be known to the public—and especially to the younger kids. We have to let them know that substance abuse is not a necessity for becoming a good drummer. Keep up the good work, Blas!

Paul Strand
Evansville MN

...But You Can't Please All Of The People All Of The Time

After reading your May issue, I thought, "This is how it should be done." The much-deserved cover article on Elvin Jones was original, inspiring, and very well-written. Following it was another great article on a very talented up-and-coming drummer, Matt Cameron (who displayed a profound respect for Elvin and other jazz greats). Both drummers articulately conveyed fresh and interesting views, making that issue a joy to read.

Then I received your June issue. My prevailing thought was, "They've got this all backwards!" Your cover article on Blas Elias (who would rather pout than smile) was full of self-absorbed hype on how good his drum tracks were. On top of that, you put Victor Lewis's article second. I felt that his words (though too few) offered much more insight, and that he deserved front-page coverage. Why does a jazz drummer have to be an international legend and over 60 years old to make the cover? Even your "New York Jazz Drummers Round Table" article featuring eight incredible drummers was a second story. As drummers reading a drumming magazine, most of us are more concerned with how to play better than we are with how to sell a million records. Oh well...there's always July.

John O'Reilly
Seattle WA

Victor Lewis

A million thanks for the long-overdue article on a truly amazing musician, Victor Lewis. I was fortunate enough to meet him at the Stanford Jazz Workshops during the mid-'80s. In master classes he always emphasized that *listening* and *musicality* were more important than any amount of chops you could develop. In fact, he went on to tell everybody that he had horrible chops. But to hear him play was truly inspiring. He listens and plays whatever is appropriate for any musical situation, yet he makes the drum part in every situation *his own.* Thank you, Victor, for being such a marvelous musician and teacher, and thank you, *MD,* for the article.

Don Zulaica
Menlo Park CA

Spacemuffins Correction

Subsequent to my review of Boom Theory's *Spacemuffins* electronic drums in the July '92 *MD,* I learned that my sole disappointment in their performance—a lack of independence between the snare drum's rim and head triggers—was due not to the *Muffins* but to the *drumKAT's* inability to process their signal. KAT's ever-patient Chris Ryan informed me that new "trigger interaction suppression matrix" circuitry in the *drumKAT's,* 3.0 upgrade software will eliminate the unwanted interaction. The circuitry is included in all new *drumKATs* and *midiK.I.T.I.s* and is available as an inexpensive retrofit for older models. Similar technology is also standard on Alesis's later-issue *D-4s.* I saw *Spacemuffins* demonstrated through a *midiK.I.T.I. Pro* and was astonished at the interaction suppression between the *Muffin* snare's dual triggers. I am a believer. My apologies to Boom Theory for the misplaced criticism, and congrats to KAT on the long-awaited upgrade.

Richard Watson
New York NY

Can I Please Not Have Your Autograph?

I would like to express my feelings about the abundance of "signature" sticks being produced by most manufacturers today. If it keeps up at the current rate, there will soon no longer be sizes such as *2B, 5B,* and *5A.* Instead, there will only be *Neil Pearts, Tommy Lees,* and *Billy Cobhams.* Personally, I don't like this trend.

To me, drumming is a way of expressing myself and my individualism. Having someone else's name on my sticks takes away from that, to a degree. It's no longer, "I use this stick." Instead, it's, "So-and-so uses this stick, and so do I." Why can't drummers just endorse sticks through advertisements like they do with drums and cymbals? I hope it never comes to having someone else's autograph on my drums or cymbals. It's a bad means of advertising that sacrifices what drumming is all about.

Pat Walters
Miami Beach FL

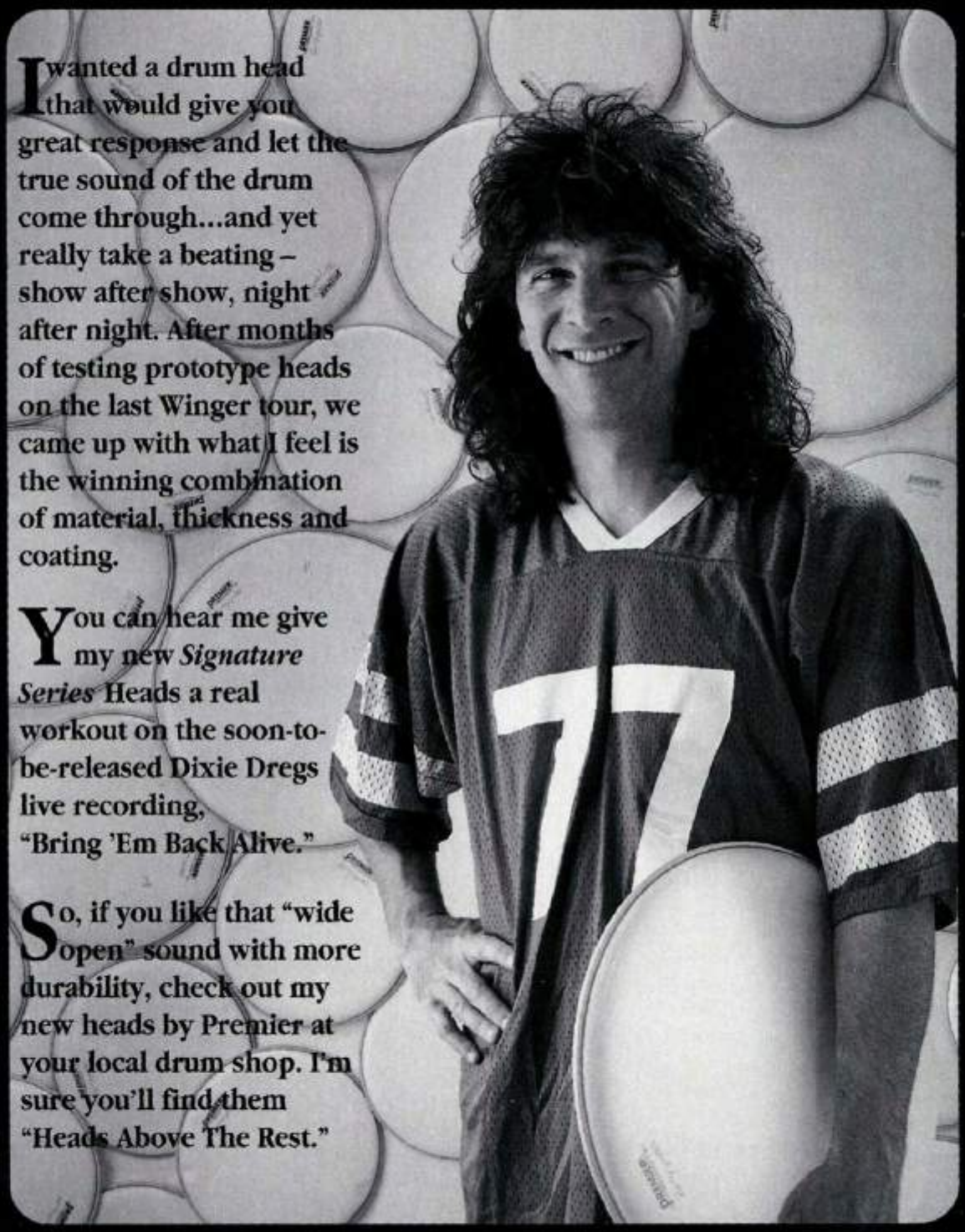
Thanks From Max

I would like to thank your staff and your readers for the *Modern Drummer* 1992 Readers Poll award. It is always a pleasure and an honor to be recognized by my colleagues in the percussion world. My best to your fine publication.

Max Roach
New York NY

Editor's note: Max was voted into the Readers Poll Hall ofFame this year.

Heads Above The Rest



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Deen Castronovo

In one sense, mainstream rock outfit Hardline might seem like an overnight success. But drummer Deen Castronovo says that each member has individually paid his dues over the years and, thanks to founding member, producer, and former Journey guitarist Neal Schon, each is also ready to reap the rewards of mainstream success.

"I've done the entire spectrum, from slammin' thrash to pop, and I can honestly say I'm having more fun than I ever have," beams Castronovo, who most recently did two albums for Bad English before departing with Schon to form Hardline. "I've always been a metal-head in my heart, and I just wasn't allowed to stretch out in Bad English. After a year and a half, I was starting to really miss rock 'n' roll, and it's great to get back out there and rock!"

But Castronovo, who also has several metal records and an instructional video to his credit, says it surprisingly took him a while to mentally adjust to his rock reawakening. "After our first show, Neal came up to me and asked what was wrong and why I wasn't *playing*. I guess after trying to hold back for so long, I was afraid of doing more and getting in the way. Neal wanted me to open up. He told me there were no rules and that I could just let loose. I said, 'Cool, you don't have to tell me twice!'"

After recording 14 tracks in just two days ("It took us two weeks to just do one song in Bad English"), Castronovo says Hardline is primed to make an immediate impact on the rock circuit.

• ***Matt Peiken***

Dave Mattacks

It's 1992, and Jethro Tull have a new drummer, Dave Mattacks. Dave is a veteran of the English studios, having played on albums and film scores with people like Paul McCartney, Elton John, Jimmy Page, Joan Armatrading, and Chris Rea. His regular band, Fairport Convention, also contains Tull bass player Dave Pegg.

Despite having about 25 years of experience as a professional, Dave admits to initial nerves about the Jethro Tull gig. But after getting a 24-date tour of the U.K. and Europe under his belt, he says he was delighted with the experience. "It was a really great tour, and right at the end I was able to dispense with my extensive notes." (Two-thirds of the material on the tour was from the last five years, with the other third being "oldies and goldies.")

By way of contrast to this "rock tour" ("I was knocking seven bells out of the drumkit," Dave says), Jethro Tull then embarked on their "acoustic" tour. Ian Anderson played acoustic guitar, mandolin, and flute, and although Martin Barre (guitar) and Dave Pegg used small amps, Dave only used bass drum, snare drum, hi-hat, and one cymbal. There was no keyboard player on the tour, so Dave also did a bit of doubling on keyboard and glockenspiel. "It went through a big P.A.," says Dave, "but we were able to get a much more intimate sound and approach."

The "acoustic" tour started with a couple of dates in England and went on to Germany, Switzerland, Greece, Turkey, and Israel, with a digitally recorded live album planned. The electric full five-piece Tull will be recording and touring later in the year, but it's possible that the acoustic four-piece will visit America between now and then.

If you'd like to hear Dave in the meantime, check out his work on the new XTC album, *Nonsuch*. Also, Fairport Convention's annual festival at Cropredy in Oxfordshire, England (August 14th and 15th) promises to be the best yet. It marks the band's 25th anniversary.

• **Simon *Goodwin***

Pat Torpey

Even though Mr. Big put out *Lean Into It* back in '91, 1992 is proving to be a bigger year for this band of veteran players. A lot of attention is being generated by their recent hit, "To Be With You," and Pat Torpey couldn't be happier (or more surprised) about the upturn of events. "Who really expects to have a number-one single from an album that has been out since last April?" asks Pat. "It's certainly all been unexpected for us. It can be kind of a shock when all this attention is put on you. All of a sudden you're doing a lot of interviews and running all over the place, and it can be overwhelming. We did work up to this point slowly, though, which probably has all been to our benefit."

Mr. Big has always had credibility on their side—due to the background of the four musicians—and now they have a broader fan base to boot. "Mr. Big has always been about trying to be good players," Torpey comments. "It's not the hairdos or the outfits that matter to us, although there's nothing wrong with caring about that. We just concentrate on playing. I'm probably as enthusiastic about the drums as I've ever been, if not more. When the bug bites you to play drums, then you really *have* to play. A trait that I've been blessed with is that I really push myself without anyone telling me to do it. I think that's my biggest asset—working hard."

The band has been touring almost since the day *Lean Into It* hit the streets. They plan to take a brief rest before starting their next album this fall.

• ***Teri Saccone***

Clem Burke

About a year ago, Dramarama sent Clem Burke a tape of their new album with hopes that he would join their band. Clem liked the music so much, he decided to take a hiatus from the Romantics. "I would say the music encompasses all the best things about rock 'n' roll music in the last twenty years," Burke explains. "The spirit of rock 'n' roll is definitely alive in this band. There's a lot of improvisation involved in the live performances, too. The songs lend themselves to that.

"Which songs I most enjoy playing depends on my mood that day," Clem continues. "If I'm in a down mood, maybe I'd like some of the darker, moodier songs, like 'Train Going Backwards.' Then there are happy songs, like a song about Earth Day called 'What Are We Gonna Do?'. 'Haven't Got A Clue' has kind of Ginger Baker drums on it, and, in fact, I'm expanding my set to include double bass drums, trying to get more into the spirit of Ginger Baker and Keith Moon." Clem adds that in preparation for his professional double bass debut, he's been working out on a *Stairmaster.*

Clem is also looking forward to working on the writing of the next Dramarama album. "With any band I'm part of, I like to be as involved as they will allow. I like interacting with other musicians. I have great respect for the main songwriter, John Easdale. With most things I've been a part of, whether it was working with Annie Lennox, Debbie Harry, or Iggy Pop, I've always had a firm belief in the front person. I have that feeling again with this band."

• ***Robyn Flans***

News...

Steve Schaeffer can be heard on soundtracks of the films *American Tail 2, Lethal Weapon 3, Housesitter, Newsies, Alladin,* and *King Of The Jungle,* and on TV shows like *Wings, Designing Women, Capital Critters, Tiny Tunes,* and HBO's *Sessions.*

Roxy Petrucci in a new band called Hell's Belles.

Scott Craigo on tracks by Marc Cohn, David Crosby, and Don Dokken.

James Kottak doing some live work with MSG. He can also be heard on George Lynch's solo LP, as well as on two tracks on an album called *LA. Blues Session* along with Gregg Bissonette, Greg D'Angelo, Fred Coury, and Scott Travis.

Brian Mcleod on new Wire Train release, *No Soul No Strain.*

Chris Frazier on tour with Tribe After Tribe.

Micheal Cartellone on Damn Yankees' new release.

Carl Allen recently on the road with the Benny Green Trio supporting their recent release, *Testifying.* Also, Carl has been asked to join new group the New York Jazz Giants, featuring Jon Faddis, Tom Harrell, Bobby Watson, Lew Tabackin, Mulgrew Miller, and Ray Drummond. They will be touring throughout the U.S., Europe, and Japan.

Scott Klein on world tour with Engelbert Humperdinck.

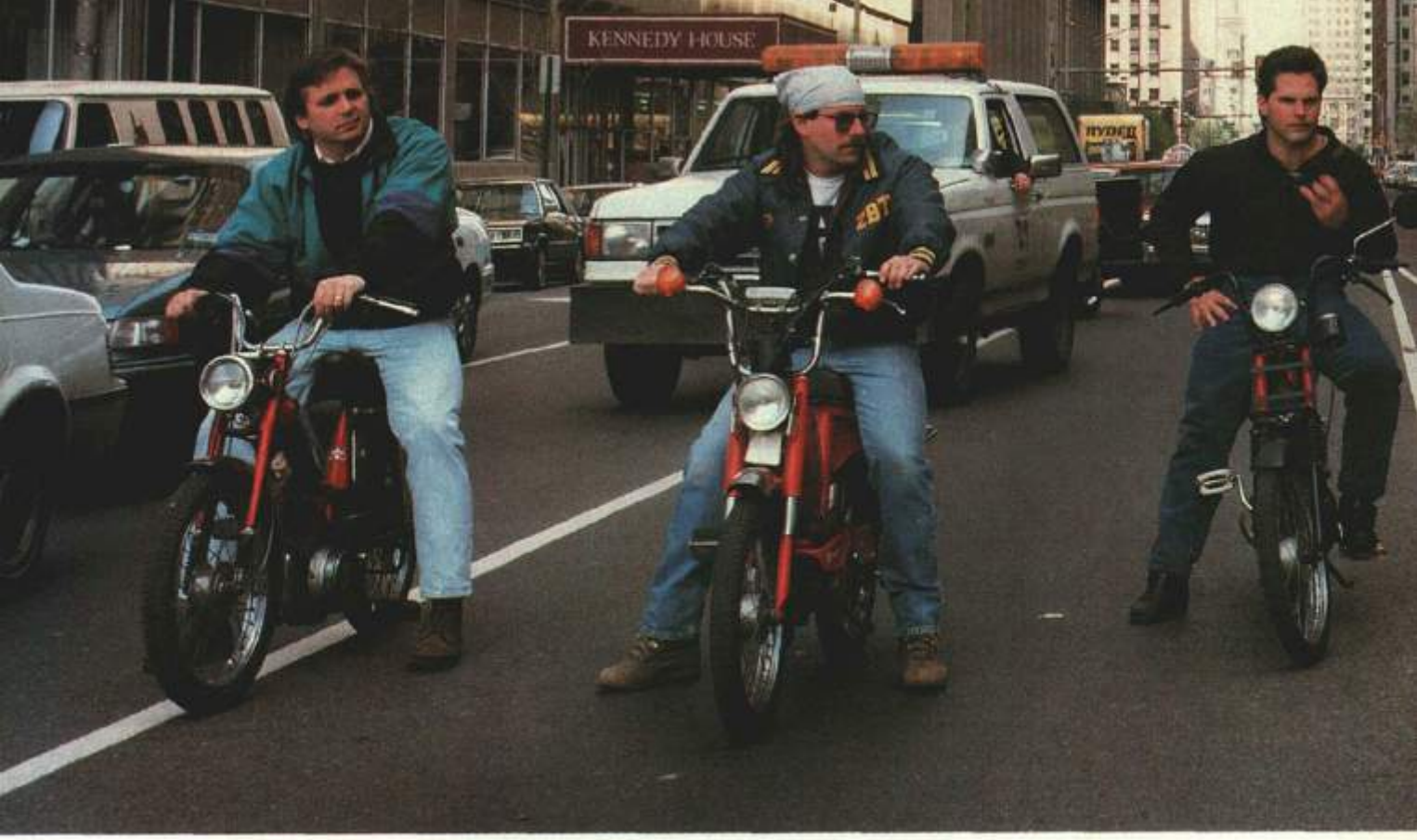
Charlie Adams currently on tour with Yanni, promoting the recent release *Dare To Dream.*

Tricky Lane on the road with Sweet F.A.

Gerry Brown recently toured Europe with Stevie Wonder.

Barry Keane recently completed albums with Gordon Lightfoot, Carroll Baker, and Roger Whittaker.

Congratulations to **Adam Nussbaum** and his wife on the birth of their son, Zachary Solomon.



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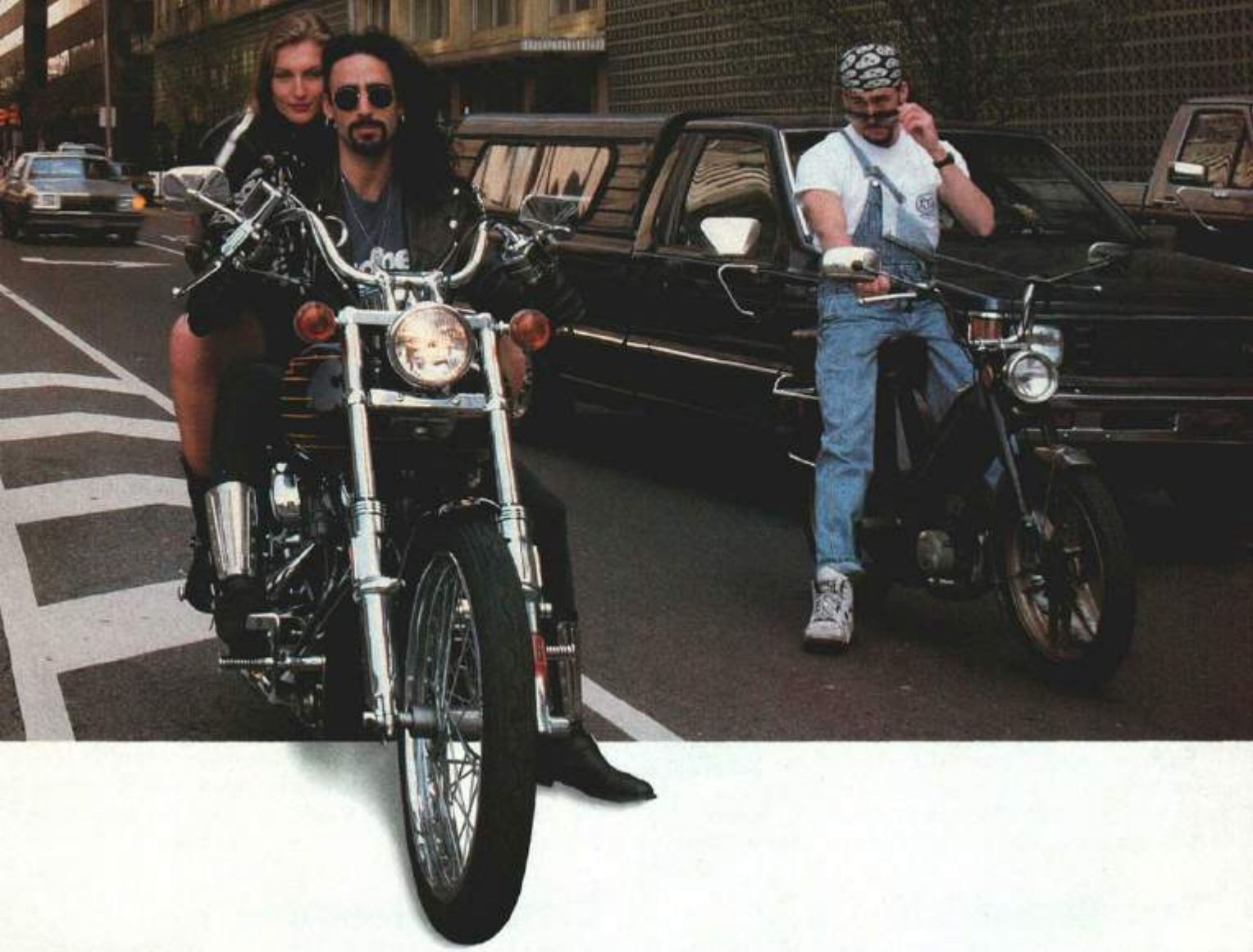

Some demand more of their equipment than others.

While for most, the ordinary will suffice in getting them from point A to point B.

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Chad Wackerman

Q I would like some information on your cymbal setup, particularly your hi-hats (including those on the fixed hi-hat above your third rack tom) and the cup chimes indicated in the Paiste ad in MD's March '92 issue. I'd also like to know if and when you'll be doing a video so that I can push my magic rewind button over and over to see you demonstrate some of your techniques. And finally, I recently read that you are the drummer for the *Dennis Miller Show* on television. I'd like to know where this show is aired, because it's not on my local cable company.

Dean Vance
Mt. Pleasant PA


Photo by Nick Charles

A Thanks for your interest! The cymbals you asked about are all Paistes. My regular hats are 13" dark heavy *Sound Creations;* the hats on the DW remote hi-hat are 13" (or sometimes 15") *Rudes* for a real contrast. The fixed "hats" above the third tom are an 8" *Rude* splash on the top and a 2002 bell cymbal on the bottom. I normally use these in a half-open position as an alternative ride source.

Above the first two rack toms I use #6 and #5 cup chimes. (Paiste makes a set of seven of these.) They have a pretty sound to them, as opposed to being "clangy" like some bell cymbals.

I don't have any immediate plans to record a video. Lately I've put most of my time and energy into my solo record. I would like to do one at some point, though.

Regarding the *Dennis Miller Show,* I have been playing in the band and writing some of the music as well. It was originally Andy Summers' band, but Andy left the show. We kept the nucleus of the band together—myself, David Goldblatt on keyboards, and Doug Lunn on bass—and added James Harrah on guitar and Steve Tavaglione on sax and EWI. The show is televised on different stations across the country. I believe that the closest station to you would be WGBS in Philadelphia.

Scott Rockenfield

Q I recently had the pleasure of experiencing Queensryche live for the first time in Manhattan, Kansas. Watching you play was as exciting as the show itself. There are a few questions I have concerning your playing. First, what is the extent of your musical training, and what is your philosophy toward the subject? Second, could you please transcribe the intricate snare rhythm at the beginning of "Revolution Calling," and the complex tom-bass pattern at the beginning and end of "Spreading The Disease"? Third, are drum charts for *Operation: Mindcrime, Empire,* or any other Queensryche releases available?

Heath Brady
Albert KS

A Well Heath, thanks for going to the show in Manhattan; I'm glad you enjoyed it so much. I've always tried to add a visual aspect to my playing, as well as the performance side.

In regard to my musical training, it lies strictly within my own imagination. Starting from buying a cheap drumkit about 13 years ago, I've just done what I felt was me. So the answer is: no, I've never been formally trained—which means for me to transcribe any of our music would take eons—sorry. I can't say if any of our material will be published, but watch the ads in *MD.* There have been collections done on Metallica and Rush, so it's possible that someone else will transcribe the Queensryche material, too.

Burleigh Drummond

Q I am a long-time follower of yours, and I was very excited to see your name in a recent *MD News* column regarding your assignment with Ed Mann's Perfect World band. Your playing with Ambrosia influenced me quite a bit in my earlier days—and still does. I'd like to know if there are any recordings available of your performances over that time period, and what you've been up to since the group disbanded.

Sean McPherson
Richardson TX

A Thanks so much for your interest in—and appreciation of—"the Ambrosia years." We recently began tracking again after two West Coast tours, and there is talk of an upcoming tour of Japan to coincide with the release of Ambrosia CDs there.

As of late, I've been busy with studio work in LA. and San Francisco, playing everything from car commercials to avant-garde jazz—and of course the entire gamut of pop music in between. There is another tour and record planned with Ed Mann later this year, in Europe.

I'm currently playing around L.A. with my own group, Tin Drum. I've been writing for several years with this group in mind, so I'm especially excited about it. Again, thank you for your interest, and I wish you all the best.

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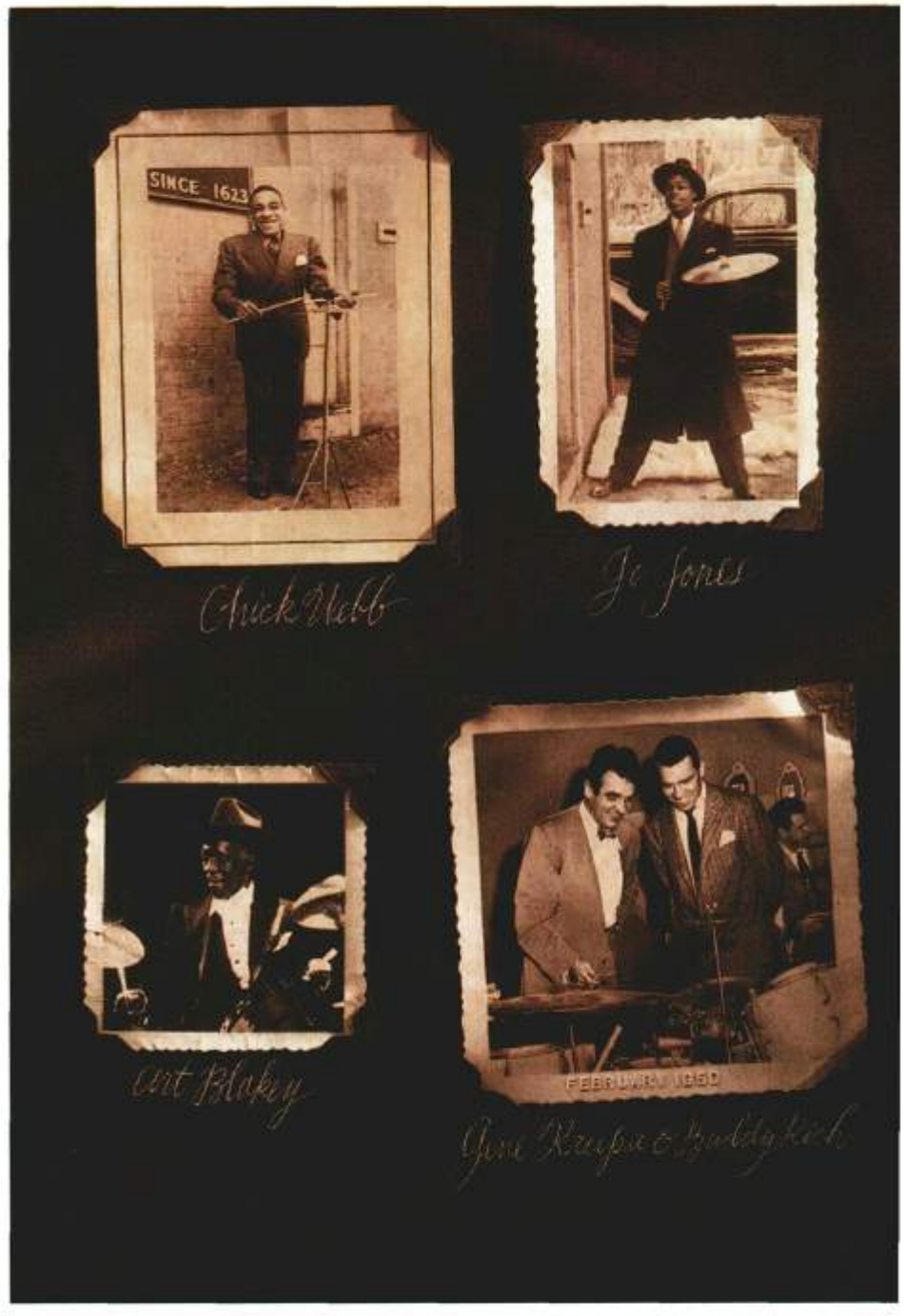

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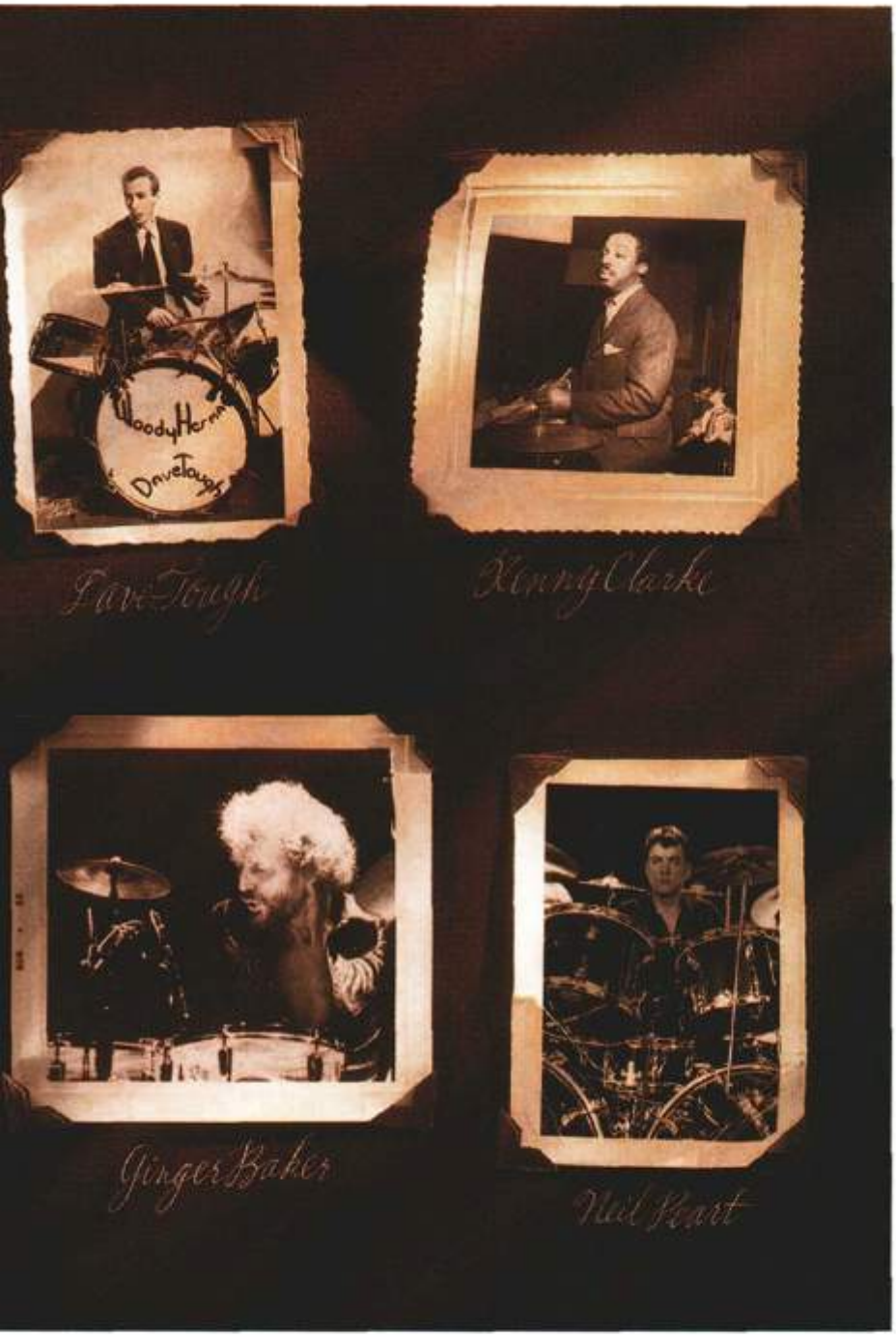

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How Can Snare Response Be Improved?

Q. I have a Gretsch 5½x14 wood snare drum. It originally came with 20-strand snares. The sound seemed very dark, and lacked crispness. Rick Van Horn has stated more than once that going to a 42-strand "power snare" would make a drum sound crisper, so I tried that. (Actually, the new Gretsch power snare is 40-strand.) This definitely improved the crispness, but there's a lot of snare after-sound when I really whack the drum.

I've tried everything in terms of tuning, string-versus-tape strainer holders, etc. And though the drum has a beautiful Gretsch sound, the snares keep on sounding. Is this just the nature of the wide power snares, or is there some trick to eliminate the after-buzz? Is there another type of snare wire or something that would be better?

Andy Puleo
Portland ME

A Rick Van Horn replies: "Power snares are most effective at improving the crispness of snare drums deeper than the one you're working with. Wide snares produce an after-buzz because the outer snare wires are held under a bit less tension than those towards the middle. Whether you use string or tape, the frame holding the snare wires receives more "pull" toward the center and less toward the outside—this is just simple physics, and there really isn't anything you can do about it. The greater the impact on the snares from the blow to the batter head, the more the snares respond. And since a shallow shell transmits a larger amount of this impact to the snares than does a deeper shell (given the same amount of striking force), the after-buzz is more noticeable on your 5½"-deep snare than it would be on a 7"- or 8"-deep drum.

"It may be that a power snare is simply too much for your drum, and that you need to achieve the additional crispness you desire by other means. Try going back to your 20-strand snare, but employ a thinner batter head, such as a Remo *Diplomat,* or an Evans *Genera Dry.* You can also improve crispness by changing to a thinner snare-side head. A great deal of any drum's pitch is determined by the weight and tuning of the bottom head, and the bottom head of a snare drum is even *more* critical, since it is the head that physically interacts with the snare wires to produce the drum's snare response. Most snare drums are shipped with an *Ambassador-weight* snare-side head, and many drummers aren't aware that thinner models are available. Remo offers *Diplomat* and even thinner *Diplomat MS* models; Evans offers 200-gauge snare-side heads in their *Resonant* and *Genera* series."

What Is This Cymbal?

A few years ago I bought a Zildjian cymbal at a garage sale for $15. It has an appearance I've never seen before: It's almost brown in color—even after years of vigorous cleaning using just about every cleaning solution and technique I know of. It has a somewhat slim profile, and the bell is half-way between a crash and a ride in size. The most interesting feature is the imprinted logo. The time period of the cymbal is when the company used the trademark "Genuine Turkish Cymbals." I don't know if it was before or after the Constantinople logo. The logo itself is about two inches in size, and raises about 1/8" to 1/6" above the top surface of the cymbal, which is 19" in diameter. I hope you can tell me what this cymbal might be and about how old it is. It's had me puzzled for years.

Jeff Bernhardt
Findlay OH

A Zildjian's Lennie DiMuzio responds: "Judging from the size of the logo and the descriptive information you have given, I'd say that your cymbal is approximately 35 to 40 years old. In those days, cymbals were not serial coded or numbered, so we have no absolutely accurate way of pinpointing the date of manufacture. Some cymbals of that age take on a very dark, brownish color that could be caused by any number of reasons: an accumulation of dirt over the years, oxidation of the metal, metal fatigue, or perhaps a reaction to extreme weather conditions.

"The value of the cymbal can only be based upon the demand for it. There are drummers who collect antique cymbals, and you would have to advertise the cymbal and—hopefully—reach the right individual."

Can I Get Special Sticks?

After 22 years of playing drums, I've finally found the perfect style of drumstick for my needs: the Vic Firth *SD2* or the Pro-Mark *SD-2* (formerly their MS-2). But there's a problem: These sticks are only made in maple, and my playing style demands hickory for its added durability. I've spoken to a gentleman at Pro-Mark who was very helpful, but he informed me that the cost of making that stick in small quantities would be very high. My questions are: 1) Do any of these companies have plans to make that model in hickory? and 2) Would they even consider it?

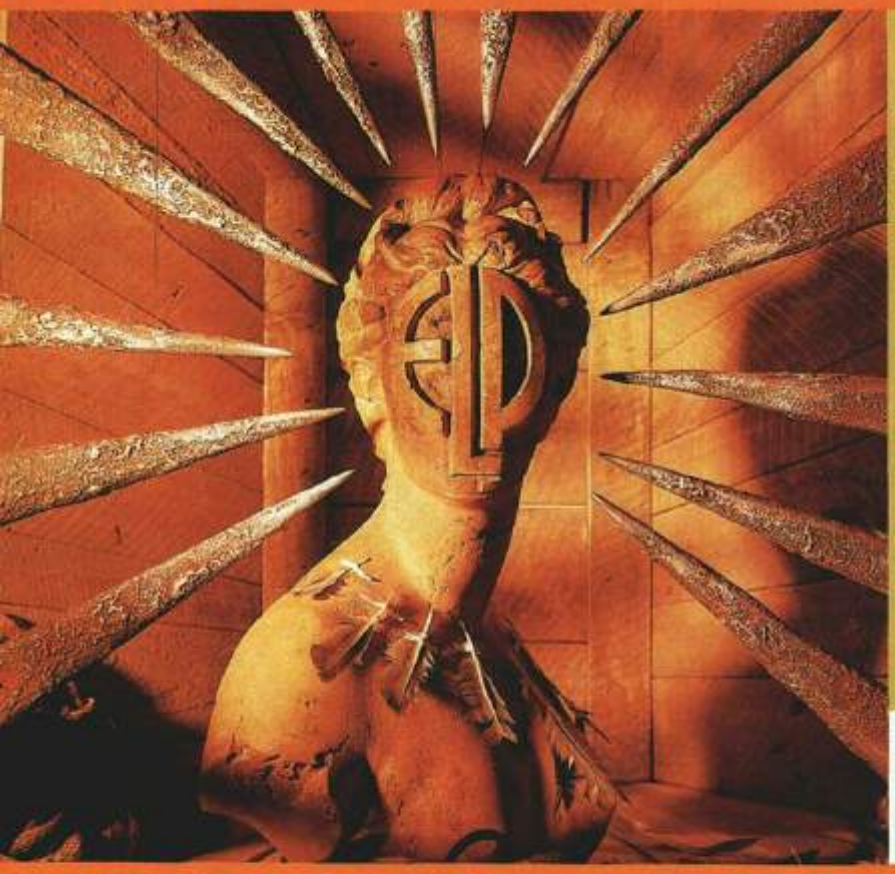
Jay Cohen
Lauderdale Lakes FL

A Although most of the major drumstick companies are quite sensitive to consumer requests, they are up against some simple economic realities when it comes to making special-order sticks. Drumsticks are made in sizeable quantities at a time, using expensive machinery that takes time to set up and adjust for each model being made. To interrupt the production process to create a very small quantity of sticks costs the company a great deal in time and labor. As a result, those special-order sticks would have to be sold at a correspondingly high price—most likely one that would make them prohibitively expensive for the person desiring them.

As to whether or not they would consider adding a different version of an existing

continued on page 76

WELCOME BACK MY FRIENDS TO THE SHOW THAT NEVER ENDS



With over 2 1/2 hours of music in newly digitally remastered sound, this is the definitive 2-CD/2-cassette retrospective of the supergroup's acclaimed 1970s work. The set includes "Lucky Man," "Karn Evil 9," "I Believe In Father Christmas" and other classics.

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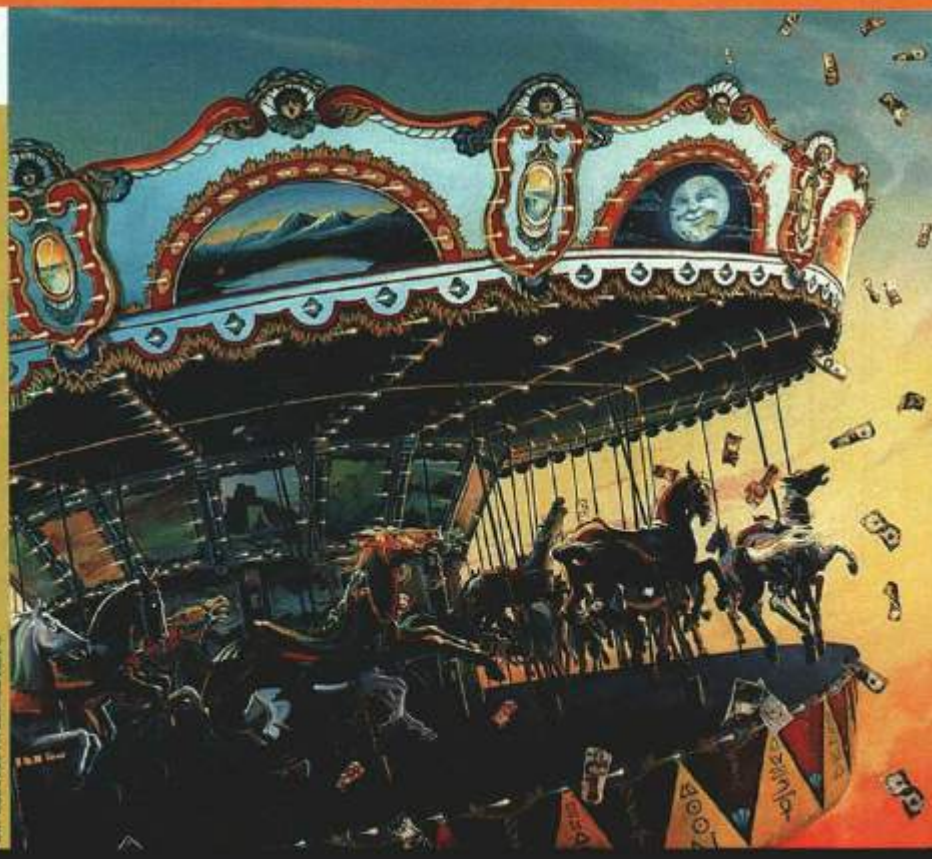

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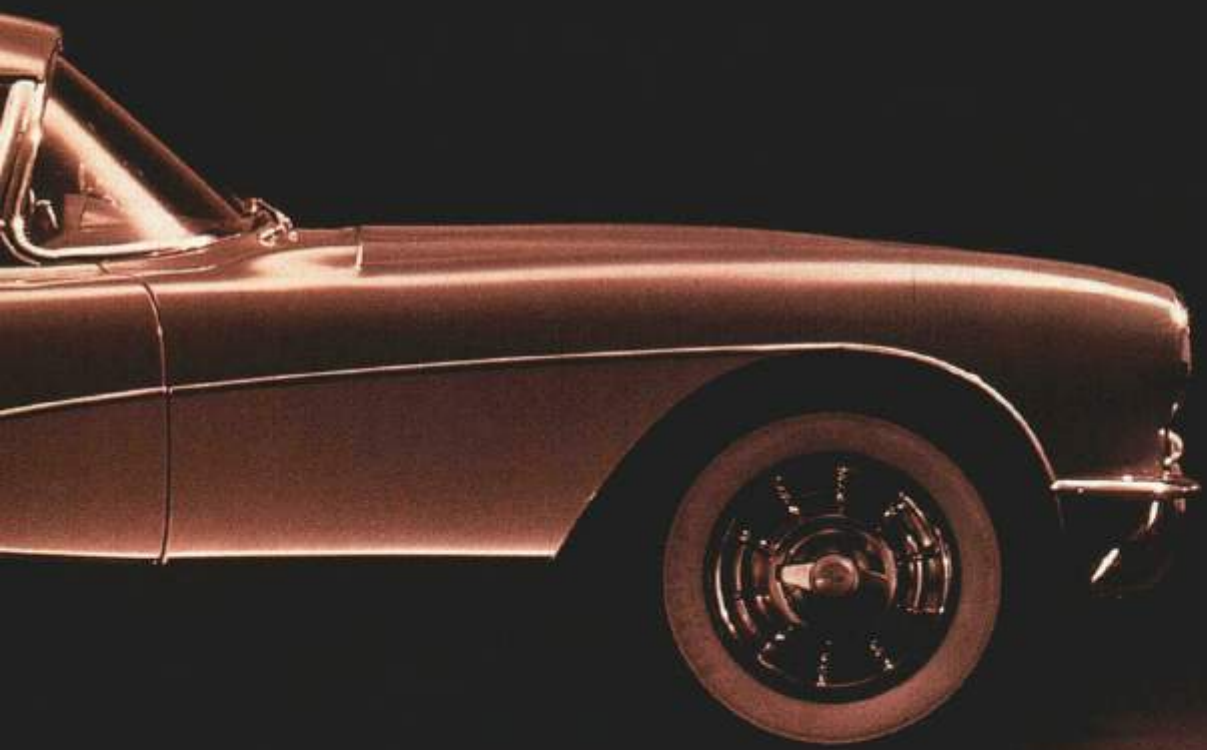

1956 Corvette. Photo courtesy of General Motors.

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Coding Your Setup

I employ a drum rack for my kit, and I have a tip that has helped me a great deal in reducing set-up time. At most art and hobby stores you can purchase very small vinyl letters and numbers that press on. I apply these to each rack clamp and the tom or cymbal arm that is to be put there. For example, "T1" would indicate tom number one, which would be my smallest tom. You'd be amazed at how easily even a massive kit just about sets itself up. A package of 250 letters and numbers costs about $2.

Gene Skiba, Jr.
New Brighton MN

Extending Snare String Life

Here's a suggestion for drummers who use strings to hold their snares on their snare drums: Dip the strings in a little *3-In-1 Oil.* This preserves the strings and keeps them from drying out, cracking, and breaking.

James Hunter
N. Miami FL

Restringing Bar Chimes

One of the most-used pieces of equipment in my percussion arsenal is a set of bar chimes that I've owned for about twelve years. During this period of time, many of the plastic ties that hold the chimes to the crossbar have broken. My set of 32 chimes ended up being a set of about 20—and looked like it needed serious dental work. Unfortunately, I couldn't find any ties that would fit the holes in the wooden crossbar. However, my "dental" analogy provided the answer: Dental floss, looped twice through both the crossbar and the chime, worked wonderfully! Waxed dental floss seems to last the longest (though the choice of mint or regular flavor would be a matter of personal taste).

Paul Stowell
Derry NH

Keeping Cymbals Clean

Once a cymbal is clean (or if you're starting with a new one), a weekly application of *Armor-All* automotive protector will keep dirt, fingerprints, and other contaminants (such as cigarette smoke) from tarnishing your cymbals. It also removes stick marks. Simply spray a few squirts on the top of the cymbal, wipe the top and bottom, then wipe again with a clean rag. This takes less than a minute per cymbal, and the cymbals don't need to be taken off their stands. A very thin film remains to protect the cymbals and keep them looking great—especially under stage lights. This film does not affect a cymbal's sound, and *Armor-All* will not affect the inked logo on new cymbals.

Jim Mansfield
Las Cruces NM

Reducing Ankle Problems

Having worked in physical therapy for nine years and enjoyed drumming as a passionate hobby, I have come to know and experience the physical demands that drumming places upon the human body. I've often spoken with drummers who've complained about pain, stiffness, and swelling they developed in their ankles, which made playing difficult. The repetitive movements the ankle goes through, coupled with hours of practice or playing, create a lot of stress to the soft tissues around the joint. By the term "soft tissues," I mean the tendons, ligaments, and muscles. They can become overworked, resulting in inflammation.

Here are two simple tips to prevent this occurrence and decrease the pain and swelling if it is present. First, stretch before playing. Stand on a step with the ball of your foot on the step and your heel dropped down off the step (while holding onto a railing for balance). Slowly lower your heel as far down as you can to stretch your calf. Next, push up on the ball of your foot to raise your heel above the step. Perform these two movements slowly about fifteen times to both stretch and strengthen your ankle.

My second tip is to fill a paper cup with water, put a popsicle stick in it, and place it in your freezer. After playing, remove the cup from the freezer and cut the paper away to produce an ice popsicle. Massage the ice over areas of pain and swelling in slow, circular motions until the area is numb and the skin is pink in color. This usually takes about ten minutes. This procedure will help reduce inflammation in your tendons, ligaments, and muscles. Of course, if pain or swelling persist, a physician's care may be warranted.

Debby Emper
West Deptford NJ

Tom Muffling Tip

The best way I've found to dampen the ring from your toms is to put cotton balls inside them. They allow the fundamental tone of the drum to come through when it's struck, but then come to rest on the bottom head—eliminating the ring. You can adjust the amount of dampening by adding or removing some of the cotton.

Richard McQueen
Elizabethtown NC

Note: The tips presented in Drumline *are suggestions based on the personal experience of individual drummers, and are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by* Modern Drummer *magazine.* Modern Drummer *cannot guarantee that any problem will be solved by any* Drumline *suggestion, and cannot be responsible for any damage to equipment or personal injury resulting from the utilization of any such suggestion. Readers are encouraged to consider each suggestion carefully before attempting to utilize any* Drumline *tip.*

TERRY BOZZIO

"I love *the* 'Dark Roar' of the black Colorsounds, and I'd be hard pressed to find another manufacturer that could offer me the sheer breadth of sounds Paiste offers … from the largest gongs to the smallest cup chimes and everything in between."

Cymbal Set Up

All cymbals and gongs are black. 2000's are all Colorsound.

1) 14" 2000 Crash/8" 2000 Splash
2) 18" 2000 Crash/10" 2000 Splash
3) 18" 2000 China/14" 404 Medium Hi-Hat Top - stacked
4) 20" 2000 China/14" 404 Medium Hi-Hat Top - stacked
5) 20" 2000 China with 20" 2000 Crash inside /14" 2000 Hi-Hat/Cup Chime
6) 12" 2000 Splash/20" 2000 Crash
7) 16" Prototype China with 13" 404 Medium Hi-Hat Top inside/20" 505 Ride with 20" 2002 Novo China on top
8) 26" Sound Creation No. 3 Gong
9) 10" 602 Heavy Bell/Cup Chime
10) 8" 602 Heavy Bell/Cup Chime
11) 15" Paiste Line Heavy Hi-Hat
12) 13" 602 Heavy Bell/Cup Chime
13) 8" Rude Splash(2), as Hi-Hat
14) 12" 602 Heavy Bell/Cup Chime

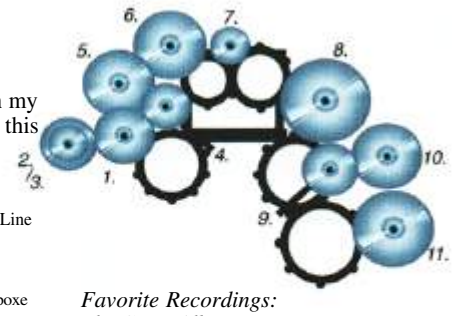
favorite Recordings:
Jeff Beck's Guitar Shop
with Terry Bozzio and Tony Hymas
The Best of Missing Persons
Heavy Metal BeBop,
The Brecker Brothers

MICHAEL BARSIMANTO

"Like a great conversation with my friends … Paiste cymbals does this for me."

Cymbal Set Up

1) 13" 602 Heavy Hi-Hat Top/ 13" Paiste Line Dark Crisp Hi-Hat Bottom
2) 12" 3000 Rude Splash/12" 3000 Splash (as Hi-Hat)
3) 8" 3000 Rude Splash inverted in a 8" Spoxe
4) 10" Paiste Line Splash
5) 16" 3000 China
6) 17" Paiste Line Mellow Crash
7) 8" Paiste Line Splash
8) 20" Paiste Line Dry Dark Ride
9) 12" Paiste Line Heavy Hi-Hat
10) 15" Paiste Line Mellow Crash
11) 18" 602 China



Favorite Recordings:
The Green Album
Eddie Jobson
That Was Then
Wishful Thinking
City Magic
Steve Bach

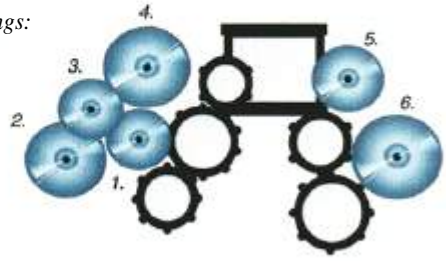
WILL KENNEDY

"As I think of reasons why I play Paiste cymbals, I recognize similarities between the cymbals and the qualities of a good drummer: Professional, consistent, musical, dynamic, able to diversify. It is a great feeling to know that my cymbals are always helping me to sound my best."

Favorite Recordings:
Greenhouse
Yellowjackets
Live Wires
Yellowjackets
One Music
Bob Mintzer

Cymbal Set Up

1) 14" Sound Creation Dark Heavy Sound Edge Hi-Hat
2) 18" Paiste Line Flatride
3) 14" Sound Formula Thin Crash
4) 19" Paiste Line Dry Ride
5) 16" Sound Formula Full Crash
6) 20" 2000 Sound Reflections Mellow China

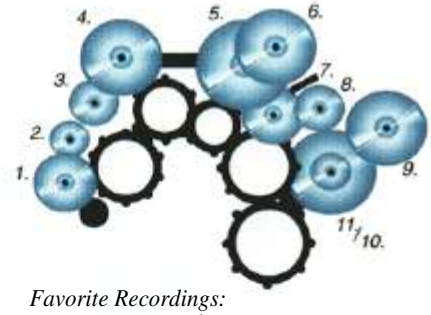


PAT MASTELOTTO

"I've been asked to conjure up everything from a rainstorm in Nebraska, silk to steam, heavy as death or light as a sneeze! Warm or cold, Paiste has all the elements."

Cymbal Set Up

1) 13" 2000 Sound Edge Hi-Hat
2) 8" 2002 Splash(2) stacked
3) 10" Paiste Line Splash
4) 18" Paiste Line Fast Crash
5) 21" Paiste Line Dry Heavy Ride
6) 18" Paiste Line Heavy China
7) 13" Paiste Line Dark Crisp Hi-Hat
8) 10" 2002 Splash with 10" 2002 Bell underneath
9) 18" 2002 Flatride
10) 20" 3000 Novo China
11) 8" 602 Bell



Favorite Recordings:
Just Put Your Hands On The Screen
Martin Briley
One Joy Bang
Cock Robin
Chalk Hills And Children
XTC

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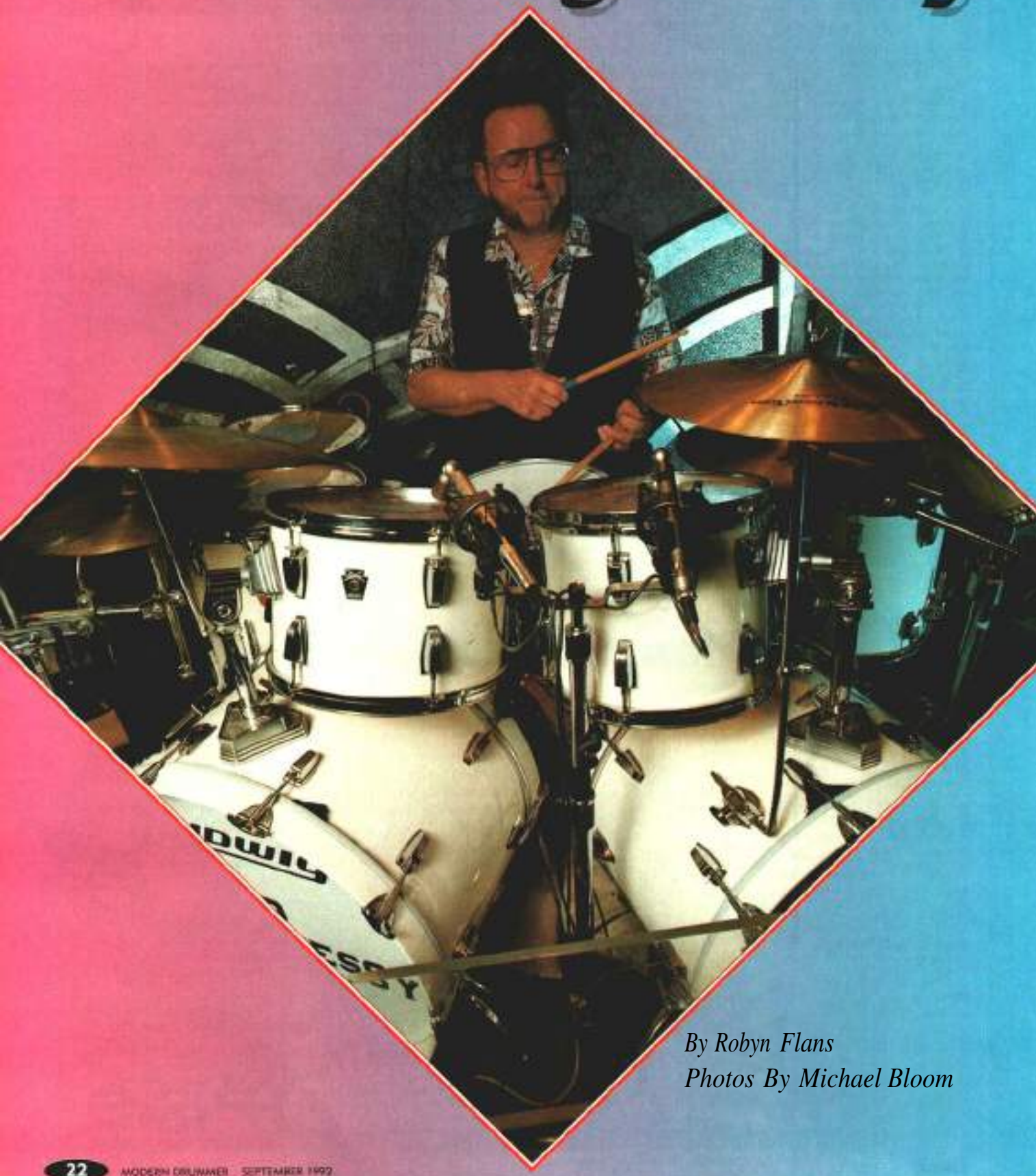
Ed Shaughnessy



By Robyn Flans
Photos By Michael Bloom

Life After The Tonight Show

TV without Johnny Carson's *Tonight Show* seems almost a contradiction of terms. For a lot of people, it's existed nearly their entire lifetimes. Whether they watched it every night, once a month, or once a year, they knew it was there—as sure as the sun set every day.

Ed Shaughnessy began subbing for the show in 1962, thirty years ago. NBC figures he played somewhere in the neighborhood of 4,600 shows. He finally accepted the gig full-time while enjoying a lucrative session career in New York, recording with such jazz luminaries as Count Basie, Oliver Nelson, Clark Terry, Wes Montgomery, Philly Joe Jones, and Cal Tjader. Ed's even on a Charlie Parker bootleg album called *Parker With Friends,* recorded at Cafe Society circa 1950. But the steadiness of the television show offered Shaughnessy a chance to be with his family—a priority in his life—and the opportunity to play a variety of music. When the show relocated from New York to LA twenty years ago, Ed and his family moved, too.

Now it's hard to believe it's over. While he's enjoying digging into some new and different projects—working with his quintet, with his big band, and with Doc Severinsen, promoting his album *Jazz In The Pocket* (CMC Records), and teaching—it's a time of mixed emotions for the drummer. For us, the end of *The Tonight Show* is a farewell to an American institution. For Shaughnessy, it's a farewell to life as he knew it.

RF: I'd like to start with a retrospective on your thirty years on *The Tonight Show*. First tell us about the highlights and who was magical to play with.

ES: Among the highlights for me was the opportunity to play with Louis Armstrong, who was always great to play with. He even sat in with us once or twice when we played with Doc at the Plaza Hotel during the '60s. That's the kind of man he was, as big as he was. He was in a class by himself. His music predates my musical era, and you've got to pay attention to it. It's like paying attention to Beethoven.

Another memorable moment happened when I had the chance to play with Jimi Hendrix. His drummer, Mitch Mitchell, had gotten sick at the last minute. And Jimi, instead of shopping around, came up to me and asked if I would play with his trio. I said, "What? Are you serious?" He said, "I know you can do it." So I said, "I'll do the best I can. Your music and my music are a little far apart." But he said, "There are only two things: Play loud as hell, and give me a lot of cymbals."

We played two songs, and he blew out the electric. They had to stop the show. He hit a pedal they told him not to hit. I could see him getting revved up, and I knew he was about to do it, because during rehearsal, he blew out the main cable. *The Tonight Show* only stopped if something broke. To keep the sense of immediacy, Johnny shot the show in sixty minutes unless there was a technical glitch. We didn't stop to make it perfect. He felt it looked better if it *wasn't* perfect. But Jimi was great fun to play with. I said to Doc, "I ain't playing with Jimi Hendrix in no shirt and tie, with him in his snakeskin pants."

[laughs] That was a highlight.

RF: Can you pinpoint how you would have approached your instrument differently between Louis Armstrong and Jimi Hendrix?

ES: You have to have a proper mindset. The way I look at myself, I'm kind of like my original idol, Sidney Catlett. I'm a generalist, and what I mean by that is that I haven't set a completely innovative style of drumming. I know that. I haven't done what Steve Gadd or Tony Williams or Max Roach or Art Blakey or Buddy Rich have done. But what I think I *have* done—and probably what I was supposed to do—is play a lot of different kinds of music well. That's been enough for me. It's kept me happy.

Jimi told me he had heard me play with Oliver Nelson's band at Birdland, and he said he thought I would be able to play for him. I thought it was a great compliment, because the average studio drummer may have been intimidated by him.

I always played a lot of other music besides the studio work, though. I never, ever let that be my life. I played other types of music, whether it paid good money or not, all the time. I think because I played a lot of avant-garde music, I learned not to be afraid of almost any kind of music.

I don't mean that to sound egocentric, but there's one good thing about playing avant-garde, like I did with Don Ellis and Charlie Mingus and a lot of those people: You kind of learn to go for it. You do the best you can, and you don't worry about it so much. In a situation like that, I'm going to do the best I can to play it like I've heard it, and that's what I mean by a mindset.

You don't play behind Louis Armstrong like you would behind Charlie Parker, which I also had a chance to do. The difference is that with Louis Armstrong, you play a much straighter, more unbroken rhythm. You'd probably play more bass drum because that's what he's used to, whereas with Charlie Parker, you'd play a typical bebop style, where the ride cymbal carries the beat. That's the essential difference between those two eras. The swing era used the bass drum as a potent force in the timekeeping, and the beboppers, because of the tempos, really, tended to drop the bass drum and play mostly on the cymbal.

I recently read a quote by Kenny Clarke, who was one of the pioneers of bebop drumming. He said the tempos were so fast that they had to find other ways to do it. Max Roach has said the same thing about playing with Charlie Parker. I also think that the music flowed a little more than the music before, and you didn't want as insistent and dominating a beat. In other words, the style developed by the beboppers like Max Roach, Kenny Clarke, and Art Blakey fit the music. Good musicians do that without dissecting the reasons why.

And I think that's why I'm successful as a teacher. I try to give people the recipes for playing different styles. With rock 'n' roll, it's 90% drums that make the pulse. The cymbals are incidental, maybe 10%. Jazz playing is 90% cymbals, and I won't say the drums are incidental, but they don't carry the pulse. If you can break it down to simple formulas like that, I think you can communicate well as a teacher, and also as a player.

"One of the highlights of my life on *The Tonight Show* was my drum duet with Buddy Rich."

RF: Back to *The Tonight Show*.

ES: Some of my favorite people were repeaters on the show, like B.B. King. Sammy Davis was a great joy to work with—such a great performer and so appreciative of good music. And Tony Bennett.

RF: Why these people?

ES: They're not only consummate musicians, but they're good human beings who make it easy to work with them, as opposed to someone like Ray Charles, who is very difficult to work with. I think he's a wonderful

artist, but you've heard this all before about him. He can really put somebody into the nervous breakdown state. There are very few I would say that about. The majority of performers really are decent.

RF: What happened with Ray Charles?

ES: The rehearsal tempo wouldn't be the tempo we'd do at the performance, and then right on camera he'd say, "You're not in tempo with me." But that wasn't the tempo we rehearsed. He did that once to me, right on camera. I went to Doc Severinson and told him I didn't want to play with him anymore. After that, he had to come with his own self-contained rhythm section. Frankly, I can hardly enjoy him anymore, not only because of my personal experience, but because I know two drummers he roasted so badly that he destroyed their confidence for years. The reason I particularly take offense to it is because the majority of people he does it to are trying to play for him and trying to do a good job. Generally, the kind of performer we didn't get often, but who could be a real problem, was the performer who didn't know what he wanted. That means it was either too fast or too slow, they didn't really know. But for the most part, we had a

Here's Johnny... On Drums!

"I know you've been on the cover of *Life* Magazine, among others," said Ed Shaughnessy to Johnny Carson, "but hopefully this will make your day. How would you like to be on the cover of *Modern Drummer* with me ?"

"Holy shit!" exclaimed Carson.

Many may ask, "Why feature the former king of late-night TV in MD?" But what they may not know is that, in addition to Carson being a great friend to drummers and a champion of the musical cause, he, himself, has been playing drums since the age of 14.

It was then that Carson bought an old snare drum from money saved up from work as a magician, "But I couldn't afford a stand for it," he recalls. "So I would put it between my legs and play it. That really whetted my appetite to play more, though."

When he came out of the service, Carson managed to buy his first second-hand drumset while attending college. He loved the instrument and would get together with friends to play, but says it was always a hobby, as he was already moving into local radio work in Omaha, Nebraska.

Once in New York in the early days of his show, Carson would venture out to Eddie Condon's club once or twice a week to play with some of the notables, such as Wild Bill Davidson, Pee Wee Russell, Joe Bushkin, and others in what they called the "Chicago Style."

"They didn't like the name 'Dixieland,'" Ed Shaughnessy laughs, and remembers actually meeting Carson for the first time at the club while subbing for Cliff Leeman one summer. "I was really a bebopper, working at Birdland," Shaughnessy recalls, "but I enjoyed going

back and forth from bebop to the more traditional style."

But for Carson, his greatest musical highlight came during a vacation in Fort Lauderdale. "It was during the early '60s, after I'd had *The Tonight Show* for a few years," he recounts. "Benny Goodman was there, working with a sextet with Teddy Wilson on piano and some other great players. I got a chance to play one or two nights with Benny Goodman, and I've never forgotten that. To me, that was the epitome, because, naturally, I had seen Gene Krupa play with him."

During the '60s and '70s, Carson also enjoyed sitting in with Buddy Rich's band, "although," he laughs, "I had to be feeling pretty good to get up and play when Buddy was there. But since we were good friends, I used to do it once in a while."

In fact, because of their friendship, Rich gave Carson one of his drumsets. A few years later, *The Tonight Show* band's music librarian, Don Sweeney, who is also a drummer, had his drums stolen. Shaughnessy recalls how Carson gave Sweeney his own set when he heard of his misfortune. As soon as Ed heard about this, he gave Carson a set of *his* cymbals, and then arranged for Ludwig to give Carson a full drumset, duplicating as best they could the set that Rich had given him.

Shaughnessy then went to Carson's estate to set up the drums in a room that overlooks the sunken tennis court, in a separate two-story building across from the main house. According to Ed, "Johnny sits there and plays all the time. There is literally a hole in the wall where he plugs in his headphones, and you don't see any controls except the volume. Everything is preset and hidden away. He just plugs in the 'phones, adjusts the volume, and goes.

"Recently, I observed what strong fingers Johnny has," Shaughnessy continues. "He has good control of the bouncing system that we try to teach younger drummers to develop. I said to him, 'I never realized that you have very strong, fast fingers.' He said, 'Don't you know why? I used to practice magic tricks with coins, balls, and cards for eight hours at a time. My fingers got really strong and fast from that. So my drumming ability, other than the fact that I'm lucky to have a decent sense of time, comes from my digital dexterity.'

"And Johnny learned that stuff by *himself,"* Ed Shaughnessy stresses. "I really have to say that I think if Johnny had put his mind to it, he could definitely have made a living as a drummer."

• *Robyn Flans*

very good track record. One thing that paid off for me is that I have always done defensive listening. I would listen to Top-40 in the car quite often because I had to play it, even though it was not my music of choice. I particularly like tunes that have a funky feel, though.

One time, about two years ago, Anita Baker came up to me after we rehearsed a tune. She looked at me with a kind of cute look and said, "You've heard this record." I said, "Well, yes I have." She said, "Well, thank you very much, because you're playing the same beat the drummer played on the record, even though it's not on the music. I always have to tell drummers working with me not to play what's on the music." Sometimes they wouldn't put on the chart what the recording drummer *played,* but what he *saw,* and maybe he came up with something a little better or something the artist liked in the studio.

I think I covered myself strictly through defensive listening. I think that was an important part of a job like mine. You can't sit back in your little cocoon and think that what was good five years ago is necessarily good now. And one of the advantages of the

Metal Drumming:

THE QUEST FOR CREDIBILITY

Metal may be the bastard child of pop culture, but it has at least one thing in common with other forms of music: At its worst, it's mentally deafening; at its best, it's moving and inspiring. The same goes for the drumming.

Text by Matt Peiken

Illustrations by Dan Yaccarino

Alive And Well

In the days of quintessential Keith Moon, there was no such thing as heavy metal. When Ginger Baker rode on wheels of fire and Mitch Mitchell gave us an experience with Jimi Hendrix, there was no such thing as heavy metal. And when John Bonham broke the levee, there was no such thing as heavy metal.

But these drummers' beats, fills, mannerisms, gyrations, grooves, and propensity for sheer volume have since become recognized as the foundation for a genre of music going into its fourth decade. Those who never understood metal and respected it even less have written its obituary time and again. But while other styles have briefly captured the public's fancy, only to become mere footnotes in the history of pop art, metal has more than survived—it has flourished.

Black Sabbath carried the torch in the early 1970s, and Judas Priest, Saxon, AC/DC, Van Halen, the Scorpions, and Iron Maiden set trends into the early 1980s. As metal evolved, American bands branched into other directions and formed sub-genres—glam, grunge, thrash, pop, progressive, death, doom, speed, and any other imaginable prefix. "Metal" has become as inadequate a description of today's music as "rock" or "jazz."

Through it all, one connecting thread has been the need for thunderous drumming. Unlike guitarists, who've adapted to the music basically through increased amplification, metal drummers have had to cut through on sheer muscle. Of course, bigger drums, cymbals, and sticks have helped. And if a few broke along the way—by being smashed, kicked, thrown, stomped on, bitten, or maybe played—it only added physical expression to the music. Live performances often weren't finished until the drums were, too!

But long before MTV, more so than in any other style of music, metal relied on visual imagery to get its message across. Posturing and playing have gone hand in hand from day one, and more than one band has been accused of dedicating its attention to theatrics and giving the music little more than an afterthought. How many drummers have relentlessly twirled their sticks in the face of an audience or held them high, head tilted skyward, waiting for the right time to send them crashing down in their own personal drama?

As much as it all appeals to unknowing or uncaring, headbanging youths, metal's visual excess meets snobbish scorn from the outside community. But (bad apples aside) metal couldn't have reached this age, albeit under various aliases, if it didn't carry at least some artistic merit.

If all things go in cycles, heavy rock is undeniably riding an upswing into the early 1990s. Less obvious but just as important, so is the drumming. As different styles of music begin to weave their way into metal, sometimes merging to form new hybrids, the creative demands on drummers have never been greater. Indeed, many respected drummers in heavy rock have musical roots outside of it, and they've invited the change. Others, who failed to educate themselves in other facets of music during their formative years, are frustrated when trying to meet the challenge of versatility.

For better *and* worse, both sets of drummers have to deal with each other. To the ears of the consumer, they're all one and the same. Outside this musical realm, the stereotypes seem indelible. But are they? While some drummers are turning back the clock to pave their creative futures, others are approaching drums with a non-metal mentality. They all have one thing in common, though: the quest for credibility.

Ears Wide Open

At "Foundations Forum "91," a hard rock conference/festival held last October in Los Angeles, drummers at all levels of experience and notoriety verbalized surprisingly similar visions about the future of metal drumming—and the steps they're taking to fit into—or keep from falling out of—the picture. We spoke to many of these drummers to get their views on the situation.

"I like all different kinds of drummers, and I learn something from all of them," says Keith Adamson, whose Arizona-based band War And Peace has major-league aspirations. "My main thing is that I don't want to be a boring player. You can play basic stuff and still make it interesting. A lot of people think hard rock drummers are just a bunch of cavemen. But how can you listen to Gregg Bissonette or Neil Peart or Stephen Perkins and not hear great music? I want to be more than just a headbanger for my own reasons, but also because I want people to respect what I do."

Liam Jason of Rhino Bucket says that it can't hurt for any drummer to work from the roots up. "It seems like there are two camps: the real technical guys, like Neil Peart, and then the groove guys. I think more drummers are going back to the groove thing right now. And that's good, because I've always appreciated guys who played for the beat. Younger guys often program themselves to learn to play as fast as they can and be as technical as they can, because they think that's what it takes to get noticed. But I feel that in hard rock and metal—especially hard rock—keeping the beat grooving is the most important thing. And it's an underrated art. If you look at history, those are the types of drummers who really stood out.

"I don't think you can ever figure out what style will be big down the road," Jason adds. "What it comes down to is which bands will come out of a particular style to make it big. There are drummers who go to PIT and make it, and there are guys who come out of the garage and make it. All you can do as a player is make yourself happy and hope that luck comes around."

Gene Barnett of Lillian Axe agrees. "You have to do what satisfies you as a musician first," Barnett says. "If that's play-

ing a huge kit and developing a lot of chops, that's great. If it's becoming a solid 2-and-4 guy, that's great, too. I decided on the direction to go with *my* style a long time ago, and I don't worry about trends. I'm totally wrapped up in improving myself as a player, and I constantly listen to other kinds of music, like new age and classical. It keeps me inspired."

"There's so much going on in hard rock music right now that it's hard to find a direction to take with my playing," says Larry Taylor, who recently moved from Florida to LA in hopes of making a career of music. "My set was huge when I was in Florida cover bands, but now I just have a single bass and a couple of toms. Once Guns N' Roses got big and people saw Steven Adler, everybody started going to single-bass kits. Some drummers seem to change from video to video. Right now, a small set is in, but it might be out tomorrow, and that's what confuses me. I just know I'm tired of hearing the same old thing, and I'm looking to guys like Will Calhoun, guys who are real diverse and play a lot of styles."

Dante Ferrara of Chico, California, a 16-year-old who took to drumming three years ago, admits that opening himself to a variety of styles isn't high on his priority list. "I'm really into Slayer and Deicide and bands like that, and I just can't see myself sitting down and listening to an R.E.M. tape and checking out the drumming. Even if the drumming was pretty cool, I'd probably go out of my mind and my head would explode in about five minutes," he says with a laugh. "I'm sure there's a lot of cool stuff I haven't heard, but I want to learn how to play my double-bass faster and keep my time steady. I'll probably get into other things when I'm older, but right now, speed metal is just about all I play and listen to."

Important Records In Metal Drumming

The following records aren't necessarily the *best* performances in the history of hard rock/metal drumming, but they were important or trend-setting in the evolution and development of the style.

Led Zeppelin, *Led Zeppelin II* (1969) "Moby Dick" was the definitive rock drum solo of the era, but the grooves on "Whole Lotta Love" and "Ramble On" told more about John Bonham.

Deep Purple, *Machine Head* (1972) There's much more to Ian Paice's groove than meets the eye, and his use of toms was somewhat novel at the time for music this heavy.

Jethro Tull, *Thick As A Brick* (1972) Tight yet open-ended drumming became an identifying mark of progressive rock.

Rainbow, *Rising* (1976) Classic double-bass from Cozy Powell.

AC/DC, *Let There Be Rock* (1976) Simplicity with intensity. Phil Rudd's four-on-the-floor set the stage for radio-friendly hard rock drumming of the '80s.

Rush, *Moving Pictures* (1981) What drummer wasn't moved to nail down Neil Peart's fills on "Tom Sawyer"? This record not only opened the public's eyes to Peart's talent, but gave metal drumming one fell swoop of artistic credibility.

Def Leppard, *High 'N Dry* (1982) An expansion from AC/DC in terms of the quality of the drum sound, producer Mutt Lange helped popularize the synthetically bottom-heavy snare, blending it with tom sounds.

Metallica, *Kill 'Em All* (1983) As Metallica gave birth to speed metal, Lars Ulrich did the same for speed drumming with a "Whiplash."

Motley Crue, *Shout At The Devil* (1983) Young drummers learning double-bass used Tommy Lee's steady onslaught in "Red Hot" as a measure of progress.

Iron Maiden, *Piece Of Mind* (1983) While most metal drummers turned to double-bass, Nicko McBrain's quick single-kick footwork gave others a reason to stay with one.

Living Colour, *Vivid* (1988) Will Calhoun was one of the first (and most visible) to incorporate funk stylings into a hard rock format.

Anthrax, *State Of Euphoria* (1988) Charlie Benante's blazing double-bass flurries have spurred a generation of thrash and, subsequently, death players.

Faith No More, *The Real Thing* (1989) Mike Bordin brought animalistic, frenzied energy back into drumming.

Tunnel Vision

Deen Castronovo, who recently joined new MCA Records act Hardline, says overcoming the stigma of being labeled a *metal* drummer has been difficult, but necessary to further his career. "When I first auditioned for Bad English," he says, "John Waite and Johnathan Cain didn't know what to think. They knew about my history in metal bands, and I think that in their eyes most metal guys couldn't do anything except metal-out. Neal Schon had faith in me from the beginning, but it did take a lot of learning and listening to guys like Mickey Curry for me to play tasty fills without dominating the music. Playing straight wasn't hard, but it *was* hard to come up with things that were interesting to play in that format. It takes a completely different frame of mind."

Castronovo says that younger musicians often develop tunnel vision, closing off other musical elements because of peer pressure. "Metal guys tend to stay in their metal world," Deen says. "You see it on the street corners where kids hang out, wearing black tour shirts—and you see it in the clubs, where all the guys have big hair, ripped jeans, and boots. When I was a kid, I listened to Iron Maiden and Judas Priest around my friends, and we'd kind of make fun of people who listened to anything else. But then I'd go home and secretly listen to Journey.

"I'm sure a lot of younger drummers don't listen to other kinds of music because they just don't think it's cool. But there's a lot to be learned by opening yourself to all kinds of music. You don't have to necessarily like it, but some of the sounds might be cool, or the drummer might pull off a neat lick that you'd like to steal, or his beat might be really happening. I know I wouldn't be the drummer I am today if it

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The Art Of Pipe Band Drumming

The author, Joseph McKee, drum sergeant of Chicago's Stock Yards Kilty Band

By Joseph McKee

"They sound so tight, like their hands are going to blow up." This is what a friend said to me when I played a recording of a Scottish bagpipe band for him. He was speaking of the snare drummers, for being drummers ourselves (myself a pipe drummer as well as a jazz, rock, and orchestral player, and my friend a very talented drumset player), *that* was what we were drawn to. My friend told me, in fact, that he could not stand the sound of bagpipes. I told him not to worry. I wasn't insulted because I knew this was the nature of bagpipes. If you don't love them, you hate them.

"But listen to that precision," I went on to say. "Have you ever heard a corps of drummers play together like that, with such a dynamic and intricate sound?" "Dynamic? It's intense, almost *too* intense," he said.

Intensity is an inherent part of this style of drumming. It's a controlled intensity, and the better the corps, the more control they have of that intensity. They can increase or decrease it to perfectly match whatever tune they're playing to. "Sounds like controlled insanity," he said, half joking. "But they sure have got some chops!"

This is a fairly common response from uninitiated drummers when first exposed to pipe drumming. They can tell there is some hot playing going on, but they can't quite tell what it is they're hearing, or whether they like it or not. It is a very quick style, and cannot be easily absorbed in one or two hearings. And, I would venture to say, because of its many idiosyncrasies and esoteric nature, even the best drummers would need many months—possibly even *years*—of exposure and teaching before they could properly adapt themselves to this unique drumming style.

Drums were first played with bagpipes by the British army during the last century. Pipers, being notoriously bad timekeepers, needed someone to help them keep in step. (This is my own theory.) So, drum sections consisting of bass, swinging tenor—played by drummers swinging large felt-headed sticks in rhythmic patterns for an exciting visual effect—and snare drums were added to regimental pipe sections to form the first pipe bands. This was followed by the formation of police and civilian pipe bands. It was in these bands that pipe drumming saw its greatest development and became one of the most unusual styles of drumming in the world today.

The first difference any drummer will notice about pipe drumming is the drum itself. It has basically the same dimensions as other field snares, but it's tuned much higher than any other drum—only drum & bugle corps drums come anywhere close to this kind of pitch. This is because it must match the high pitch of the bagpipes' chanter (or finger board), where the melody is produced. To achieve this high pitch, pipe drums are equipped with the basic bottom snare, plus an internal snare under the batter head, which provides additional snare sound. (Some drum corps use the same type of drum, but without the top snare mechanism.) In addition, the batter head is cranked extremely tightly.

Noted pipe drummer Jackie Houlden (foreground) and the Black Bottle Whiskey drum line, warming up before a competition in Glasgow, Scotland

When the drum is properly tuned, the head should be hard enough to tap-dance on. Having to apply such extreme pressure to the drum, however, was the cause of much aggravation, and the outlay of much time and money for pipe drummers. *Mylar* heads, until recently, were the only ones available, but they were able to withstand the pressure only for so long. When their will to survive ended, they would announce their demise with a loud, gunshot-like bang, resulting in a lovely split across the head. This would inevitably happen at the least opportune times (like on the competition field with a judge standing behind you), and it made tuning the drums reminiscent of a game of Russian roulette. Changing heads was a regular, aggravating, and time-consuming event for pipe drummers.

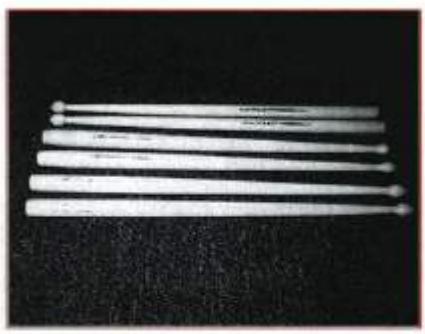
The advent of the *Kevlar*-mesh head has pretty much eliminated this problem. But these stronger heads, while being more capable of withstanding the high pressure exerted upon them, also exerted a much stronger pressure upon the drum itself. Drums began to fall apart in record time. Tension lugs would snap. Rims warped into unusable shapes. And tension brackets would pull right out of the shell. Bands with limited funds were forced to buy new drums after only two or three years.

This necessitated the invention of a new kind of drum that could withstand extreme pressure while delivering the same high, clear sound pipe drummers expect and need, but without requiring a superstructure to hold it up. The first drum to address this problem was the *Legato,* which was originally made in Australia, but is now owned and produced in the U.S. by Remo. Its recommended companion head is the Remo *Falam,* which is designed specifically for pipe drums and can stop a bullet at ten paces. *Legato* eliminates the tension from the drum's shell by putting all the head pressure into an oversized top head assembly and counterhoop, which is then attached to the shell with just three bolts. There are no tension brackets at all in its design.

Premier, one of the oldest manufacturers of pipe drums, has also come out with a new drum, the *HTS 200,* with its own companion head, the *Tendura.* The *HTS 200* uses a similar system, where the head is held in a tension hoop. This is attached to a suspension ring with twelve tension lugs. Twelve free-floating tension brackets attach the top assembly to the bottom rim and leave the shell free from most of the pressure. Both drums provide the high, crisp sound required in pipe bands, and have a much longer life span than the older-style drums.

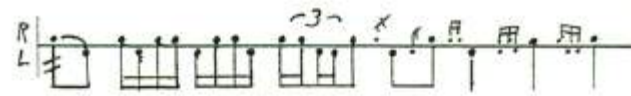
Two drums designed specifically for pipe drumming: Remo's Legato drum and the Premier HTS 200

There is also a specially designed stick for these drums. Alex Duthart, the patriarch of modern pipe drumming, originated the design for this stick. It's large but light for its size, and its object is to bring out the highest pitch and the quickest response possible. This was achieved by giving the stick a large butt end that tapers continuously down to a much thinner neck, topped by a large bead. The weight distribution gives it a light, fast rebound—much faster than that of sticks that taper only at the end. This, combined with the large, tapered bead, brings out the required high pitch. It may seem strange that a large bead would bring out a higher pitch than a smaller one, but I have personally compared my pipe drum sticks with some of my other sticks—the Vic Firth *General* and *American Classic 5A,* for instance—and, although much larger, my pipe sticks (the *Shaw Alex Duthart* pipe band model) do indeed bring out a higher pitch. In addition, they allow for very clean single strokes and open work, but also allow a very tight buzz roll, which plays a very important role in this style. Sticks designed to play on a softer head cannot achieve this variety of responses on a pipe drum.


Three pairs of pipe drumming sticks: the Shaw Alex Duthart model, the J. Reid Maxwell model by Grooves, and the Kilpatrick KP1 by Premier. Note their unique shape.

Another striking difference between pipe drumming and other styles is its notation system. Having been taught to read drum music in the American rudimentary style, I was used to reading all notes on the same line, with an additional line of letters (RLRR, for example) above or below for sticking instructions. When I took up timpani I learned to read on a staff, and with mallet instruments I learned how to read vertically as well as horizontally. This background made my transition to pipe drumming notation both easy and logical, and made the old American style seem slow and archaic.

The pipe drumming notation system is a derivative of the Swiss method created by Dr. ER. Berger, who was a student of the Swiss Easier style of drumming. Dr. Berger's method uses one line, with the right hand's noteheads written above the line and the left hand's below, with staffs pointing downward. All grace notes are written with staffs up to make them stand out more clearly; their noteheads are also above or below the line. This eliminates any need for letters, and makes expressing rudiments much easier. For example, if a roll is one 8th note long, starts on the right hand (upper note), and ends on the left (lower note), it is clearly a seven-stroke roll. Paradiddles, open rudiments, flams, and ruffs are also easily discernible when this system is utilized:



The Berger notation was a godsend for pipe drumming. Reading and writing the highly complex, note-heavy scores is a much simpler task using this system.

As I said earlier, this is a very idiosyncratic and esoteric style of drumming—idiosyncratic in its techniques, and esoteric by its nature. One cannot learn to play in this style properly without being taught by someone already well versed in it. Most pipe drummers, especially those from Scotland, Ireland, and Canada, play in this style and no other. They are raised in it from early childhood on, taught by rote by their father, a relative, or the local drum sergeant (the drum corps leader), like initiates in a religious rite. Techniques, rudiments, and phrasings are all passed along from one generation to the next, just as language is. Like spoken language, there are different town or area pipe drum "dialects." Drummers learn the drum language of their local predecessors, with all of its particular inflections.

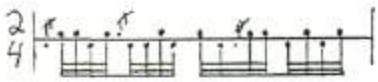
Many pipe drummers begin playing in their regional juvenile band, and then progress up through the ranks of higher-grade bands as they get older. Most will stay somewhere in the middle grades, but, as with anything in life, the better players will continue to rise up through the ranks, with the best reaching

the grade-one bands. This program is not really possible in the U.S., since there aren't enough bands here. But in Scotland, for instance (a country roughly the size of Illinois), there are hundreds of bands—easily more than in all of the U.S. It is because the U.S. lacks those countries' programs of education and "minor league" bands that American pipe drummers, on average, don't achieve the same level of playing proficiency as their counterparts up north and abroad. But this is changing.

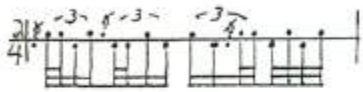
As the popularity of pipe bands increases in the U.S., the exchange of information between the old country and here also increases. Top drumming instructors are brought across for seminars and teaching camps, allowing more and more drummers access to them and to what they're playing.

This has been of utmost importance to pipe drumming in the U.S., because without direct access to an instructor, deciphering the complicated drumming scores and rudiments can be next to impossible for neophyte pipe drummers. This isn't only because of their complexity, but also because they are often written incorrectly. This is a hereditary problem, as well as an educational one. I've seen the exact same errors in recently written scores as those in scores from thirty years ago. Everything, right or wrong, gets passed from one generation to the next. Unfortunately, the art of transcription got off to a bad start in this field, and this has also been passed on.

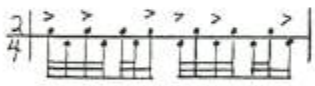
I first discovered this problem when I was given a stack of drum scores by a friend. My training taught me to play exactly what is written on the page. But when I tried this with these scores, I found myself totally perplexed. Either I wasn't as good a drummer as I thought, or these guys were playing stuff that is basically impossible to articulate. The first example I remember having trouble with is called the "mill-stroke." Here's a correctly written measure using this rudiment:



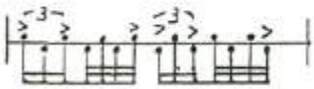
But this is how it is often written:



It's hard enough in the first version, but at a tempo of 80 beats per minute, the second is almost impossible. Here's another illustration of this unfortunate tendency, with a popular single-stroke phrase-first incorrect:



and then correct:



Drummer James King of the Polkemmet pipe band from Scotland showed me this last one. He wrote it out for me in the first version and called it a single-stroke seven. I played what was written, but he kept telling me I was wrong. In his pea soup of a Scottish brogue he tried to explain how to play it properly, "Auch, ye go' a stretch it oot, play throo the last auccent, so it flews togitherr. Di ye ken?" Huh? Ken who? I didn't ken, or whatever, so I had him play it for me. As he repeated it, I was able to slowly fine-tune myself to what he was playing, until he told me I had it.

It wasn't until later that I figured out how to correctly write it. So now when I see this phrase, I can play it properly—no matter how it's written. But without this combination of learning by rote and script, I may never have figured out how to play it. At the very least it would have taken me much longer.

Another source of confusion for uninitiated drummers is 16th notes. They aren't usually played as straight 16ths, but rather more like jazz 8ths, in a triplet rhythm. The same is sometimes also true of 8th notes. This is most probably a derivative of bagpipe music itself, which is notoriously ambiguous in its written form. Here everything is left to "interpretation." Notes are placed in the middle of a rhythmic limbo, left completely to the discretion of the piper to choose where they are to be played. A 16th note is rarely actually a 16th note. But you can't know this by just looking at the score; you must be taught this.

Phrasing and dynamics are two of the most important elements in pipe drumming. All drum scores are based upon or meant to accompany pipe tunes. And although pipers don't take breaths between phrases like other wind instrumentalists (they take breaths as often as possible), the tunes are very phrase-oriented. The drums must follow the pipe phrases and complement them as much as possible. This gives pipe drumming a very lyrical and melodic feel. When properly performed, the tune should be recognizable to some degree in the score, even without the presence of pipes.

But the drums aren't just an accompaniment to the pipes. They also play a contrapuntal role, filling in rhythmically sparse spots, or, when needed, providing a counter melody to the tune. This is more a modern facet of pipe drumming. Older scores were basically nothing more than a single rhythmic accompaniment relegated to a second-class status. But modern pipe drumming has thrown off this yoke of oppression and asserted itself into a more equitable position in the pipe band. This would probably produce a most vitriolic response to the contrary from most pipers, but they'll just have to keep their inflated egos in check and learn to live with it.

Dynamics in the pipe band are completely controlled by the drums. Bagpipes, while producing an extremely beautiful sound (beauty is in the ear of the beholder), have only one setting on their volume control: loud. Actually, one set of pipes can be much louder than another; this depends on the ability of the piper and on the reeds he is using. But, for all real purposes, only the drummers can truly change their dynamic level. And so, when a pipe major (the head honcho) wants to make a strong dynamic statement or accent certain notes, he must instruct the drum section to handle it.

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INSIDE SABIAN

By Rick Van Horn

Sabian, Ltd., of Meductic, New Brunswick, Canada, is currently celebrating its tenth anniversary as a company—with justifiable pride. In the ten short years since its genesis, Sabian has become one of the major cymbal manufacturers in the world.

Let's begin with a brief historical review. From the early 1920s until 1969, there was one major North American cymbal manufacturing company—Zildjian—which operated one factory—in Norwell, Massachusetts. In 1969, the company (then controlled by Avedis Zildjian and his two sons, Armand and Robert) was finding it costly to export cymbals to Europe from America.

Robert Zildjian had often spent time in Canada, hunting and fishing along the St. John river. He did some research and discovered that it would be less expensive to manufacture and export cymbals into Europe from Canada than from America. And, as Robert's son (and Sabian vice-president) Andy Zildjian relates, "He also found an attitude in the people up here that was very condusive to making a good product, which certainly tipped the scales heavily in favor of a facility here. If you have people who have an attitude of high quality and pride in what they do, you can't do better than that."

So, in 1969, Robert Zildjian established a Canadian manufacturing facility, under the name of Azco, Ltd., in the village of Meductic. From 1968 through 1970 this facility manufactured a line called Zilco cymbals. But after 1970, the parent company needed the Meductic factory's additional production capability for Zildjian cymbals. Castings were sent from Norwell to Meductic to be made into finished cymbals, and eventually the Canadian factory was responsible for 40% of the Zildjian company's output. In 1975, political problems with Turkey required the company to bring its K Zildjian production out of that country. It too, became a function of the Meductic facility.

In the latter part of the 1970s, Armand and Robert Zildjian began to develop different attitudes regarding cymbal production and marketing strategies. As long as their father Avedis was alive to mediate, these differences were held in

Sabian founder and president
Robert Zildjian

Sabian staffers Peter Stairs, Craig Gardner (V.R, Finance),
Nort Hargrove, Dan Barker, David McAllister, and Wayne Blanchard

check. But when he died in 1979 and ownership of the company passed to his two sons, their disparate philosophies led to a major rift. After two and a half years of drawn-out negotiations, an agreement was reached that left Armand in control of the Avedis Zildjian Company, while Robert took independent control of the Canadian factory and established Sabian, Ltd. (named for his three children, Sally, Billy, and Andy).

Andy remembers, "The actual company split took place on December 4, 1981. The Sabian company was established 27 days later. We knew that we were going to become a new company, and people 'in the know' within the industry were laughing at us. They thought there was no way that we could put a fabrication plant together in that amount of time. But we did—quite easily, in fact—and it's the same plant today."

Well, not quite the same plant. Fast-forward to the present day. The growth that Sabian has enjoyed in the past ten years has required the Meductic facility to undergo several major expansions. A new building to house the sales and marketing offices was completed in September of 1988. This provided additional space in the factory building—which had itself already been enlarged. A new warehouse/fabrication shop was constructed in late '90s. And plans don't stop there. According to David McAllister, vicepresident of marketing, "We estimate that expansion in 1992 will take the form of additional machinery, at somewhere between half a million and a million dollars in cost. In 1993, we'll probably add another 7,000 to 8,000 square feet in additional storage. At the moment, we still have stuff stored in a barn across the road!"

How has a company that didn't exist until ten years ago grown so rapidly—especially in the face of tremendous competition from established brands like Zildjian and Paiste? We spoke with several members of the Sabian management team to get their appraisal. David McAllister offers a pragmatic assessment.

"While it's true that Sabian is only ten years old, Robert Zildjian's family heritage is hardly a start-up phenomenon in the cymbal business. Sabian is Bob Zildjian's vision of cymbal making. You can't

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SABIAN CYMBAL PRODUCTION

Our tour of the Sabian production facility is conducted by the company's vice president for manufacturing, Dan Barker. Also a veteran professional drummer, Dan relates to the product he manufactures from the dual perspectives of developer and end user.

"For our HH and AA cymbals," Dan begins, "we cast our own alloy, which is 80% copper and 20% tin. Our *B8 Pro* and *B8* cymbals—92% copper and 8% tin—start as disks pre-rolled by outside metal fabricators. Once in the Sabian factory, they undergo essentially the same shaping and finishing steps that the AA series does.

"Our model line is fairly extensive," Dan continues, "and every year we come out with new products. This year alone we introduced over 23 new models just on the cast cymbals. From a production standpoint, that means that things are always changing. It's quite a task to keep it all straight on the shop floor."

The Foundry

The casting process starts with ingots of copper and tin, which are combined in two electric furnaces to create the bronze alloy. The molten metal is then poured into molds, where it cools into castings that will later be turned into cymbals.

"In addition to the basic metals," says Dan, "trace elements are added to the alloy—the most important of which is silver. Bob Zildjian's father, Avedis, used to talk in terms of shimmer, and described it as 'the silver speaking out.' The silver is actually added to the alloy for that purpose."

Is the cost of the raw materials a large part of the price of the cymbal? "It's certainly the part that has the most fluctuation," replies Dan. "When you buy metal on the open market, you pay whatever the price is on any given day. That's an area over which we have no control. But in addition to the new raw materials, we also re-use most of the scrap metal we generate. By setting meticulous about our foundry operation, we've actually been able to salvage about 99½% of everything we stock. And that savings gets passed on to the consumer."

Shaping

Castings from the foundry are sorted prior to being heated in a huge oven. Approximately 40 different sizes of castings are used to make over 360 models of cymbals, so one casting might become any one of five or six different models. However, Dan stresses that "The model of individual cymbal we're going to make is determined right from the very beginning. If we're making 16" thin crashes, that's what they're going to be."

"Once the castings are heated up," continues Dan, "they're passed through a hot-rolling machine. Each casting makes dozens of passes through the roller before we get the finished thickness."

The heating-and-rolling operation is an industrial ballet: Five men work together, their movements choreographed perfectly. As one pulls heated castings out of the oven, the other four feed them through the rolling machine and then take them back to the oven to start the process over again.

"Certain steps in this operation could be automated."

says Dan. "But when you're dealing with a rolling mill, anything can happen. The reason we use five people is that if a disk gets jammed, or the timing of it going through isn't quite correct, they can adjust *their* timing, so that they don't go out of sync. That can't happen with an automated system. We realize that we could implement 'more efficient' operations. But we're not making hardware; we're making a musical instrument."

Once the rolling process creates the finished cymbal "blank," the blank is put back in the oven. When it is heated, the cup is pressed in on a machine that uses different molds to achieve the various bell shapes for different cymbal models. When the blank cools again, the metal is as brittle as glass.

"We need to make the metal workable," says Dan, "because from here on in, our cold-working processes are going to take it to its extremes. So the next step is

tempering and annealing. This operation combines time and temperature according to a very careful formula in order to achieve the properties we need. Once the tempering is completed, we wash the disk, then drill out the center hole and trim the disk to the actual size of the final cymbal. Normally we only use about 50% of the blank; the excess becomes scrap that we melt again to make new cymbals."

After the blanks are trimmed to size, those destined to become AA cymbals are placed in a press to give them their basic shape. HH blanks remain flat, and get their shape entirely from the hand-hammering process.

"Hand-hammering is the historic, traditional method of shaping a cymbal," explains Dan. "And I hear Robert Zildjian telling me to tell *you* that we are the *only* company that still does it that way. Every HH cymbal is hammered entirely by hand, on anvils mounted on logs. No machine operations are used at all.

"On the AA line we employ an automatic hammer," Dan continues. "We program the pressure we want it to hammer at, the spacing between the peens [hammer strikes], the size of the peens, and the spacing between the rows. When all of that is correct, we get a consistent shape—and as such, a consistent cymbal model—time and time again."

The hammer pattern on an AA cymbal is quite uniform, while that on an HH cymbal appears almost random. Dan explains the reason for this: "The hammerer hits the cymbal where he wants to build it up and strengthen it. This is the old craftsman's way of shaping and forming. That's why every individual HH cymbal is going to sound a little bit different from every other—even within the same model."

Lathing

"Once we have the final shape," says Dan, "we lathe each cymbal to thin the profile out. With the AA series, the cymbals go right down the line, and each lathe operator takes a certain amount off until the desired thickness is achieved. But on the HH's, one operator does a whole cymbal, start to finish. The HH concept is to make a hand-made instrument. So one craftsman handles the creation of the cymbal at the hammering stage, and one other handles all of the lathing."

Lathe operators shave the cymbals using blades attached to long poles, which they cradle under their arms. The lathing blade rests on a metal bar to give it support as it's pressed against the spinning cymbal, but no templates or guides are used. Only the skill of the operator determines the amount of pressure applied and the amount of material taken off of the cymbal. After the lathing has been completed, the edges of the cymbals are smoothed and rounded. At this point, some cymbals are considered finished, while others receive a polishing and buffing process to give them a *Brilliant* finish.

"Obviously, there are a lot of steps that go into the manufacture of each cymbal we make," comments Dan. "But every operation we undertake—casting, hammering, lathing, whatever—has an acoustical value down the road.

Brilliant Cymbals

Does the philosophy that "every operation has an acoustical value" include the application of a *Brilliant* finish? Or is the obvious cosmetic appeal of that finish an exception to the rule? Dan replies, "We make *Brilliant* cymbals first and foremost for their look. But I have had people tell me that *Brilliant* cymbals *sound* more 'brilliant.' I've also had people tell me they sound 'warmer' and 'darker.' Everybody has their own theory.

"Sound travels from a cymbal in two ways," Dan continues: "in concentric circles, and in-and-out from the bell to the edge. As it travels, it has to go up and down over the peaks and valleys on the surface of the cymbal created by the lathing. Putting a *Brilliant* finish on a cymbal evens out those peaks and valleys.

"Let's consider one element of a cymbal's sound—pitch, for example. In order to achieve a certain pitch, vibration must occur at a certain speed. That vibration will travel more slowly over the peaks and valleys of a standard cymbal's lathed surface than it will over the polished surface of a *Brilliant* cymbal, because it has more area to cover. But you can't generalize any further than that. You'd need to take an individual cymbal and do an acoustical analysis of it—before and after buffing—to see what effect the buffing has had. And this effect will be slightly different on every single cymbal, because the lathing is all done by hand and the peaks and valleys are all going to be a little different. And remember that I was only talking about pitch; there are lots of other variables that work together. They can all be affected differently, as well.

"So there really is no general characteristic that you can attribute to the brilliantizing process," Dan concludes, "and those who feel that there is have a perception in their minds, rather than one that can be really proven

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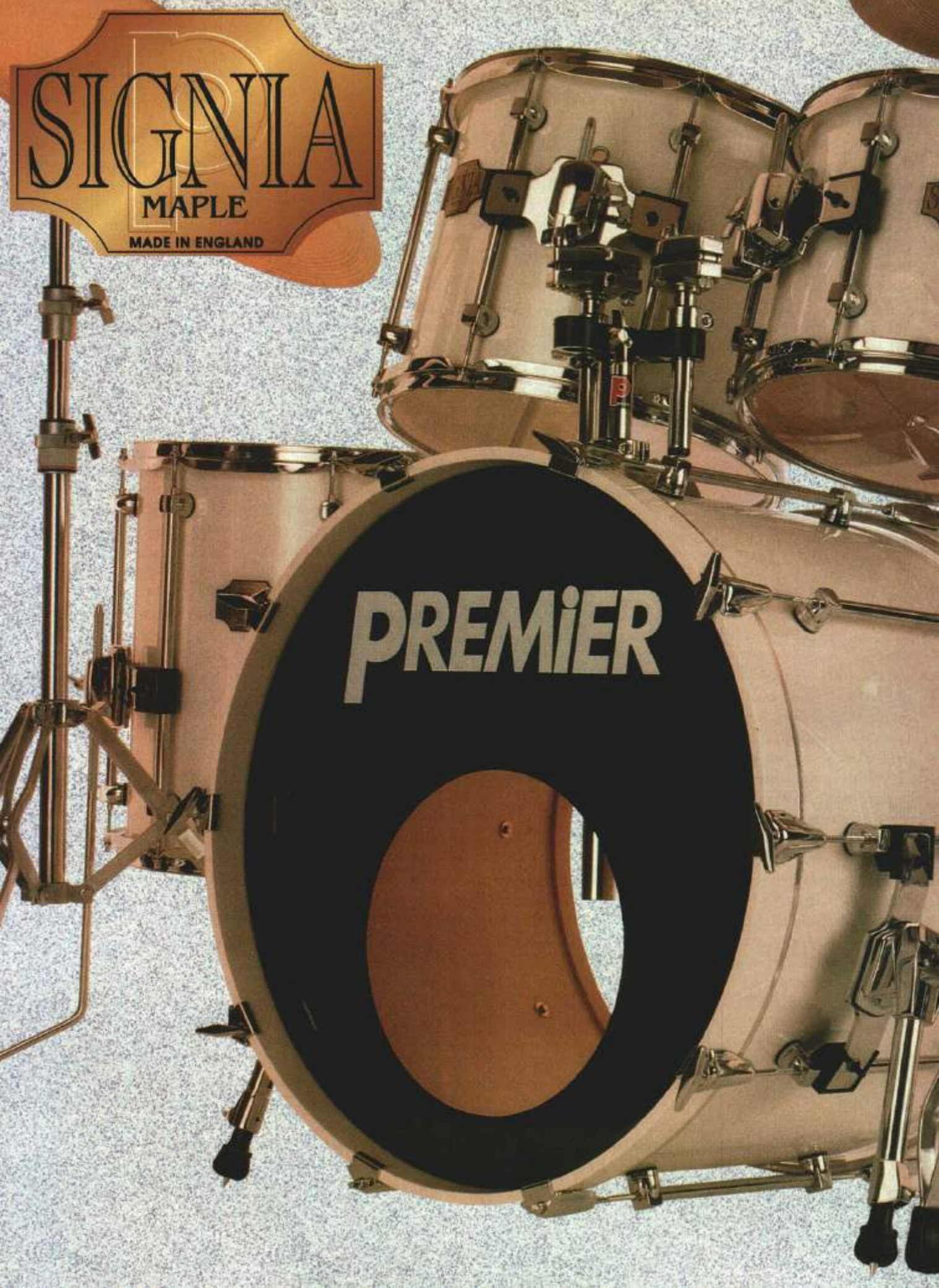
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Trick Kodiak T6 Snare Drums

- by Rick Mattingly

To make a drum that's loud, strong, and beautifully constructed...that's the Trick.

Photo by Rick Mattingly

Trick Percussion has recently introduced a solid-aluminum shell snare drum called the *Kodiak T6*. Three sizes are available: 4x14, 6x14, and 6x12.

A couple of years ago, we reviewed three Trick/Ocheltree snare drums, which had wood shells. Since that time, Jeff Ocheltree and Trick have gone separate ways. While the tuning hardware on the *Kodiak T6* drums is the same as on the former Trick/Ocheltree drums, it was designed by the Trick engineering staff, as are the aluminum shells. Ocheltree is not connected with the *Kodiak* drums in any way. By the same token, Trick is no longer connected with drums made by Ocheltree.

Okay, now that the politics are out of the way, let's get back to the drums. Removing the drums from the boxes they were shipped in, I was surprised at how heavy they were. They aren't the heaviest I've ever seen (the Sonor solid bronze and the Zildjian/Noble & Cooley snare drums hold that honor), but they are heavier than a typical snare drum.

And it's easy to see why. Where most metal drums are fairly thin, these are as thick as typical wood drums. Specifically, the 14" drums have shells approximately 5/16" thick, which is comparable to an 8-ply wood shell. The 12" drum's shell is about 3/16", similar to a 6-ply.

Maybe it's that extra thickness, or maybe it's the aluminum, but whatever the reason, these drums all sounded fuller than the typical metal snare drum. They were brighter-sounding than wood, but had a comparable body. The 4x14 produced a gunshot-like crack—especially with rimshots—but had more guts than a lot of thin snare drums. The 6x14 was one of the loudest drums I've ever played, and sounded full whether cranked up tight or in a medium range. The 6x12 favored higher pitches and had a tremendous amount of ring.

I found myself playing tight, crisp funk on the 4x14, while the 6x14 inspired more straight-ahead, fat-backbeat type patterns. The somewhat hollow (in the good sense of the term) sound of the 6x12 made me want to play reggae patterns with a lot of rimshots.

Examining the shells more closely, the words that came to mind were "simplicity" and "perfection." Because of the thickness of the shell, it is not necessary to have flanged bearing edges or center ridges to give the shell more strength. Therefore, the shell is absolutely smooth on the inside, like a lot of wood shells. But the metal has more consistency than wood, as there are no grains to contend with, nor are there any seams.

According to the Trick literature, these shells are computer designed and manufactured (CAD/CAM), allowing the company to be precise to the thickness of a human hair. This assures virtually perfect bearing edges and snare beds. And with metal that thick, I doubt if one would ever have to worry about warpage.

The tension casings are also made of aluminum, and are isolated from the shell by nylon gaskets. The 14" drums have ten tension rods per head; the 12" drum has six. The snare throw-off and butt are made by Remo, but Trick has modified them so that the screws that are used to hold the snare cable in place can be adjusted with a drumkey, rather than a screwdriver. That's the type of common-sense refinement that a drummer would think of.

There are six finishes available: Natural Polished (which looks pretty much like a traditional chrome snare drum), Purple Mountains, Black Bear Black (which is more flat than glossy), River Blue, Kodiak Gold, and Sunset Red. On the black and purple drums we received, it was as if the entire shell had been made from black or purple aluminum. The finish was not applied externally.

One final note: the shells carry a lifetime guarantee. The 6x14 drum retails for $570; the 4x14 for $530; the 6x12 for $520. Given the sound and quality of these drums, that's not only reasonable, it just might be a bargain.

CP Combo Conga Set

• by Glenn Weber

The increased use of percussion instruments in popular music has placed a demand on manufacturers to produce instruments that provide adequate sound quality, have a pleasing appearance, are durable—and are still low in cost. The CP *Combo Conga Set,* from LP Music Group, fills these requirements very well.

The *Combo Conga Set* includes drums approximately 28" in height, with 10" and 11" head diameters. These wooden drums have a natural finish, giving them an appearance similar to that of LP's top-of-the-line white wood congas. The soft-edge rims and tension screw plates are finished in matte black, using an electrostatic technique. The black hardware complements the natural wood finish and is a pleasant change from the chrome hardware we usually see. The drums connect to a steel stand (also finished in matte black) using a tongue-and-groove method. In what appears to be an economy effort, the stand is neither height-adjustable nor collapsible. But it *is* stable, and it holds the drums securely—positioning the playing surface of the drumheads approximately 40" from the floor.

The natural hide heads that came on our test models were thin and responsive, with good tone quality. They also had slightly rough playing surfaces. Each drum has five tensioning hooks, and the drums tuned easily. They produced good slap tones and very resonant bass tones.

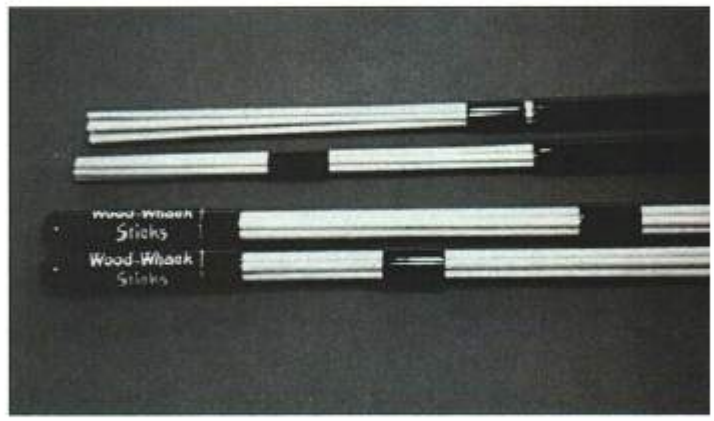
When a musician purchases equipment, he or she should consider several criteria. First, is the equipment suited to the job it's being purchased to do? Because the *Combo* congas are geared toward small club groups who want to add Latin sounds to their music, they work well for vocalists and instrumentalists who want to double on percussion instruments. They'd also be excellent for beginning students looking for entry-level equipment with above-average sound quality.

Next, will the instrument stand up, both to playing and also to the rigors of traveling? Generally speaking, wood-shell drums are not as tough as fiberglass drums are. But the *Combo* congas do have thick shells and are quite heavy for their size. The rims and side plates are also sturdy. So these instruments can be expected to hold up reasonably well.

Finally—and perhaps most importantly under present economic conditions—are the drums affordable? With a list price of $369.95 for the two drums and the stand, it shouldn't be too hard to fit the *Combo Conga Set* into your budget.

Wood-Whack Sticks

• by Brian Alpert



I believe it was Paul English—Willie Nelson's long-time drummer—who first thought of taping stick-length wooden dowels together at one end and using the resulting instrument as a sort of "hard brush." (If it wasn't Mr. English, my apologies to all concerned.) In any case, it was definitely someone who made his living playing country music and saw a need for a tool that would enable a drummer to play a good, hard, *loud* "train" beat while maintaining the "brushy" quality the style demanded. Times were changing, and brushes no longer produced enough on-stage volume. As always, where there is a need, someone with imagination will fill it.

Sooner or later, word of this invention got around, and Calato (Regal Tip) began marketing the first widely available commercial adaptation of this concept, called *Blasticks.* I've used *Blasticks* on

many gigs—and for much more than train beats. But they are made of synthetic materials and are not quite loud enough for some situations; they produce a softish "slap."

Which brings us to Wood-Whack sticks. These are a commercial offering of the homemade "taped-up dowel" routine. They are 16" long, come in two sizes (9/16" diameter and ¾" diameter), and are outfitted with a comfortable 5" black plastic handle and what the manufacturers call a "movable tuning device." This is a short plastic sleeve that surrounds the dowels and, according to the Wood-Whack people, "can be moved up and down the dowels to produce different tones." We'll get to that.

The Wood-Whack sticks performed just as they are supposed to, as "hard brushes." The train beat effect was exactly right: The amount of volume was greater than *Blasticks* but less than sticks. I particularly enjoyed the exotic, woody quality the dowels made, especially when playing rimshots, or on the rims of my toms and snare drum (with the snares thrown off). The ¾" model was a little too large for my hands, so I spent most of the time with the 9/16" model, but they are essentially the same item and will perform the same duties for drummers of all hand sizes. (The larger size, however, uses larger dowels and did produce a bit harder, louder sound.)

The sticks seemed durable enough; I've used them a few times per night, a couple of nights per week, for a couple of months, and I haven't noticed any deterioration of the dowels or the plastic handle. Despite the fact that you *can* make your own version with some 16" dowels and some duct tape, Wood-Whacks are a well-made product, and many drummers prefer to fill their stick bags with finished, "store-bought" accessories.

I do have one bone to pick, though. The literature that comes with the Wood-Whack sticks touts the fact that these are versatile, tunable instruments. The "movable tuning device" (plastic sleeve) supposedly enables the drummer to produce the hard brush sound *and*—by moving the sleeve up or down the dowels—to "produce different tones." The literature even claims that the Wood-Whacks will produce "a conventional stick sound." This is completely ridiculous. I tried playing the sticks in this fashion, and not only were they *nothing* like conventional sticks (How could they be? They're a bunch of separate dowels!), but the effect was unpleasant and the sound was—and I'm being polite—anemic.

The promotional materials also mention that one can flip the Wood-Whacks over and use the softish handle as a mallet. In all fairness, this is arguably so—but that's not why one uses these instruments. The "hard brush" is valuable as a producer of a specific acoustic attitude. It was invented to fill a need; that is why one plays it today. Wood-Whack sticks are a good product, and there is absolutely no need to stretch the truth to portray them as something they are not. So if you're listening, Wood-Whack people, market your product on its merits, not as some brand-new, "do-all" innovation. It's not true, and it's not necessary.

Wood-Whacks list for $16, and they're currently being distributed into selected drumshops by LP Music Group. For more information, contact Wood-Whack, P.O. Box 443, East Meadow, NY 11554, (718) 256-2268.

Stixonics Drumsticks

• by Rick Mattingly

One day, a drummer named Dexter Horton complained about the expense and poor quality of drumsticks to his friend Fred Goblet, a furniture maker with a degree in wood science & technology. The result of that conversation is a new drumstick company called Stixonics.

The company's promotional literature lists several attributes of their drumsticks—some dealing with the way they are made, some dealing with more musical considerations. In terms of manufacture, the sticks are made from "True American Hickory," which the manufacturer claims cannot be equalled or surpassed by any "exotic" species of wood. The sticks are said to have furniture-quality machining and finishing equal to or better than the finest wood furniture available anywhere.

Photo by Rick Mattingly

That's all well and good, but drummers aren't interested in a piece of furniture to display in their living rooms. If the method of manufacture results in a superior drumstick, fine, but if not, no one is going to care how great it looks. (Stixonics sticks do look great, by the way.)

So, let's discuss the attributes that are

of more concern to musicians than woodworkers. For starters, there are nine models available with wood tips and seven with black nylon tips. The sizes range from the nearly pencil-thin *SX-1* to the hefty *SX-7,* which resembles a drum corps stick. Most of the beads are oval shaped, but depending on the size of the stick, that oval might be fat or narrow. There are also a couple of round tips, one fairly large, the other similar to Vic Firth's *Bolero and Peter Erskine* tips.

The necks of the Stixonics sticks are relatively thick compared to the bead size, and the tapered shoulder area is fairly short. That obviously adds strength where it is often needed, but also affects the feel of the stick. The balance point is much nearer the center of the stick than with sticks that have thinner necks and longer, more tapered shoulders.

Stixonics sticks are matched by weight and balance, which assures that both sticks of a given pair will feel the same. It does not assure, however, that both sticks will have the same pitch. While some of the pairs of Stixonics I tested were pretty close in pitch, one pair was a full minor third apart. I mainly noticed pitch differences when playing on a rubber practice pad, where the ring of the stick could be heard clearly. The pitch differences were minimized somewhat with the nylon-tip models, but still noticeable. If practicing, say, *Stick Control* exercises where I want to make sure that each hand is even, then I want the sticks to be pitch-paired. But when playing on a drumset—with one stick playing a hi-hat or cymbal and the other stick smacking a snare drum—the pitch of the stick doesn't seem as important. What it boils down to is, if the pitch of your sticks is important to you, then you need to check each pair of Stixonics before you buy them. If, however, you are more concerned with sticks that feel the same in terms of weight and balance, then Stixonics will be exactly what you're looking for.

Both the wood- and nylon-tip models performed well on ride cymbals. The wood-tip sticks sounded clear and sharp, unlike some sticks that can sound a bit mushy. The nylon-tip sticks were a bit more pingy, and yet not quite as brittle-sounding as others I've used.

The sticks themselves seem to be especially durable. I used a pair one night on a gig where I was playing fairly loud, backbeat-oriented rock. At the end of the night, the sticks had some dents from rimshots and some nicks where they had struck the edges of hi-hats and crash cymbals, but overall they were in better shape than a new pair of sticks usually looks after an entire gig. There was no sign of splintering whatsoever. I'm sure that would happen eventually, and someone who plays harder than I do might splinter or break the sticks much sooner. But my testing suggests that these sticks might last longer than average.

Instead of the traditional plastic bag, Stixonics come in cloth bags that have elastic around the top. For drummers who like to take better care of their sticks than just dumping them all into a trap case together, these bags seem sturdy enough to last a while.

The *SX* series (wood tips) have a suggested list price of $7.50 per pair; the *SX-P* series (nylon tips) list for $7.95. In terms of manufacture, they are top-quality. In terms of feel, there are enough different models that most drummers can probably find one that is close to what they are already using. Also, a lot of drummers will undoubtedly appreciate the fact that Stixonics sticks are matched by weight and balance, and will appreciate the added strength of the fatter necks and shoulders, as well as the general durability of these sticks.

When Rick Van Horn told me he was sending me a new line of drumsticks to review, I wasn't sure the world needed another drumstick company. But there will always be room for sticks that are as high-quality as Stixsonics.

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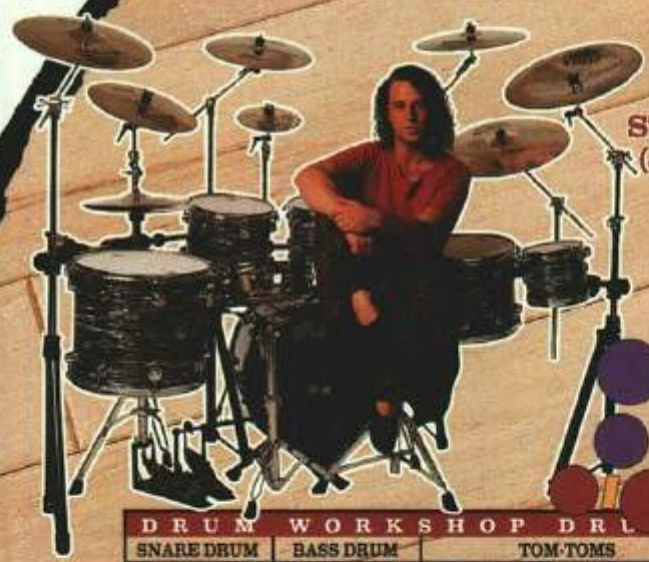

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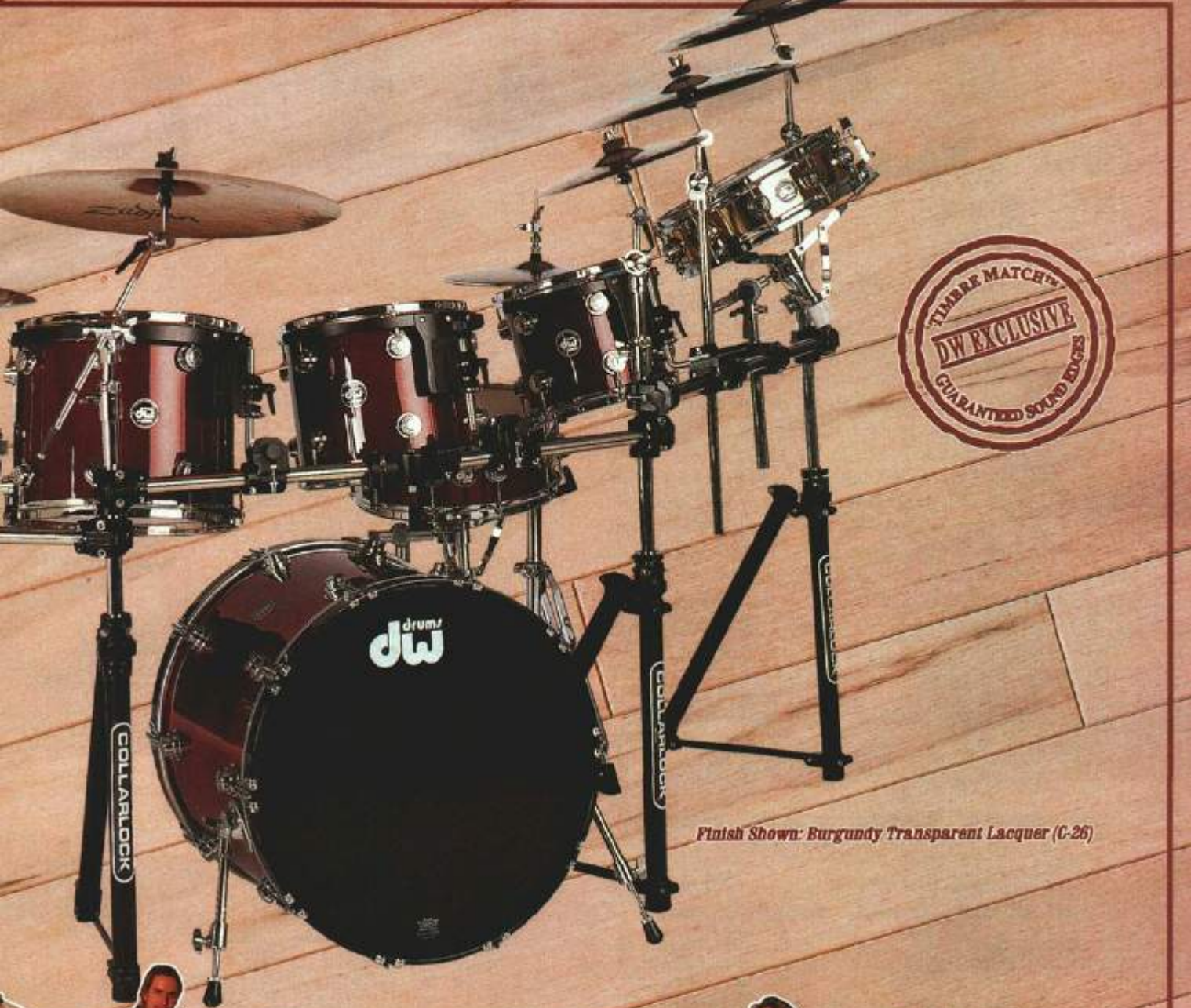

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AN CYMBALS		
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WORKSHOP PEDALS		
DRUM	HI-HAT	
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RIDE	HI-HATS	CRASHES	SPECIALTY
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BASS DRUM		HI-HAT	
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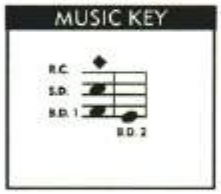
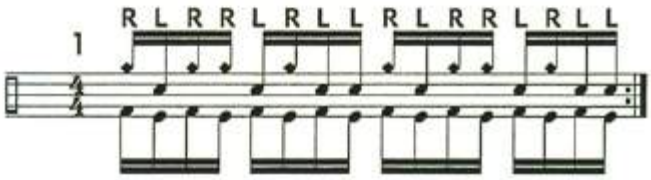
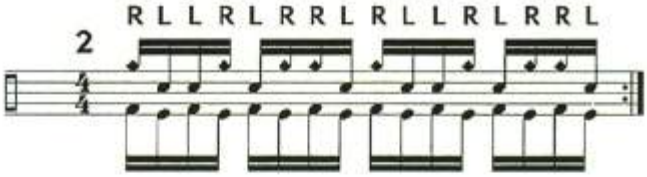
Double Bass Ideas: Part 2

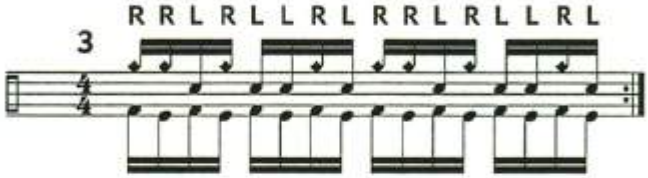
by Rod Morgenstein



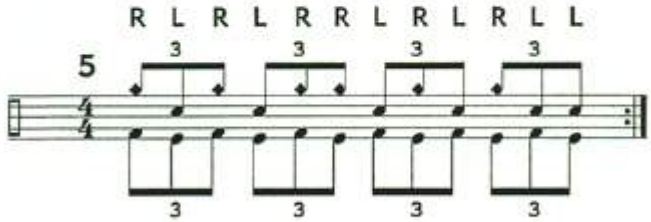
In my last article (June '92) we practiced playing continuous alternating single strokes simultaneously with the hands and feet. Now, with the double bass still playing alternating single strokes, let's try some single/double-stroke hand combinations. Examples 1-4 consist of a paradiddle and variations of a paradiddle. Unlike our last outing, this time the right hand will not always play with the right foot, nor will the left hand and the left foot always play together. The goal is to get a smooth, continuous right-left flow with the feet while laying the various single/double-stroke hand patterns on top. Remember, like last time, a flam is *not* the desired sound.

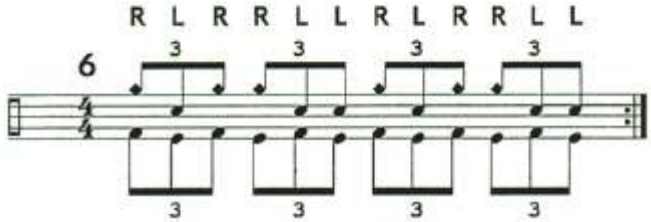


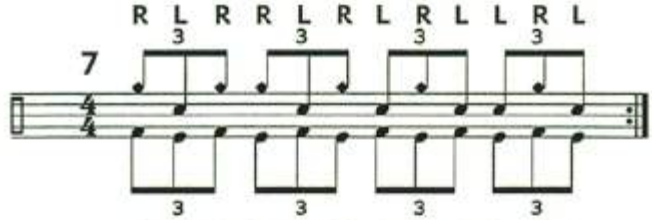


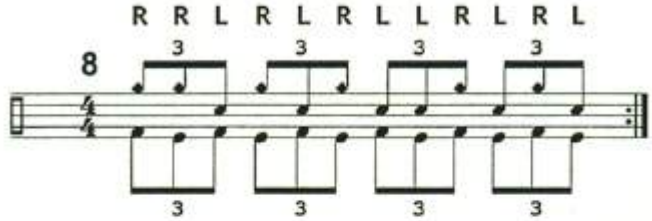


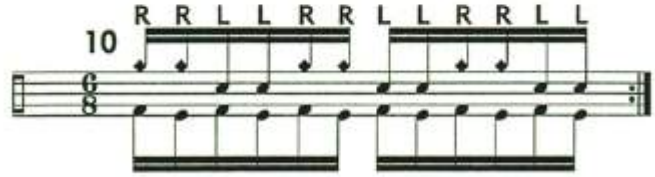
Now, do the same with the following triplet and 6/8 patterns. Example 5 consists of a double paradiddle. Example 6 is a paradiddle-diddle. Examples 7, 8, and 9 are variations of a double paradiddle, while example 11 is a variation of a paradiddle-diddle.



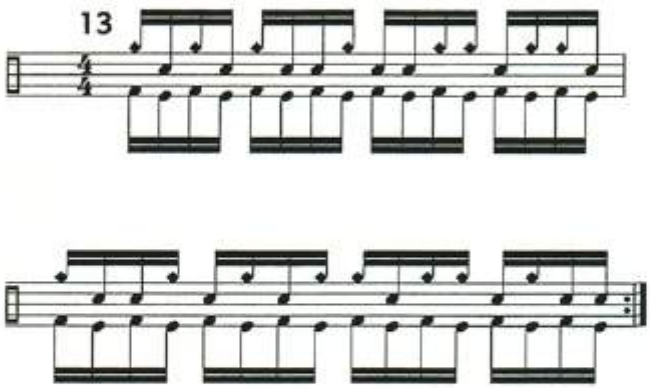


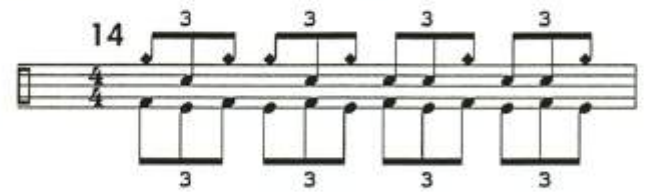


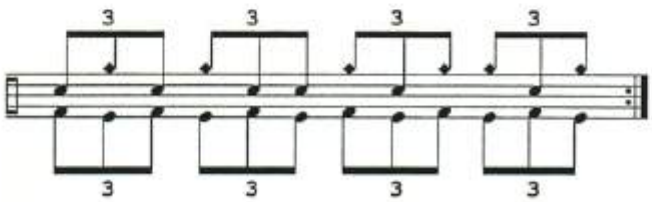




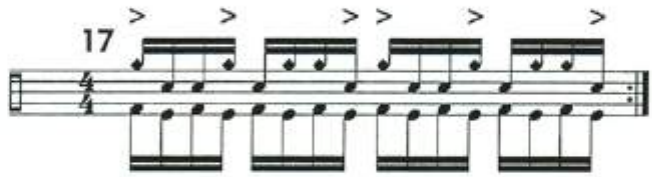
Examples 13-15 are random single/double-stroke hand combinations.

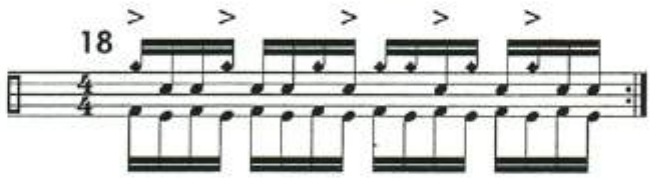


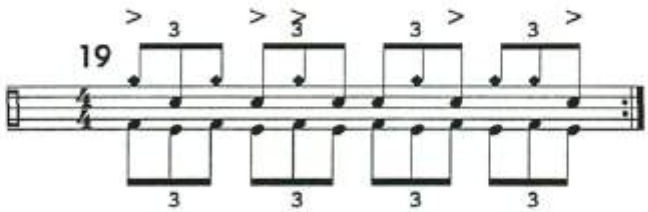


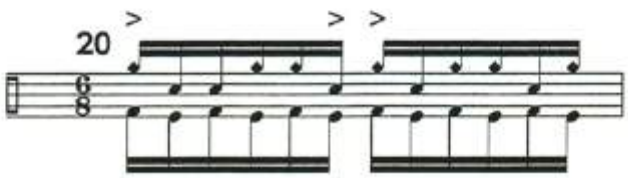


Now let's add accents to the random single/double strokes. Play the cymbal accent on the cymbal bell. (You might consider not limiting the right hand to the cymbal or the left hand to the snare, but rather taking a poke at all the available toms, cymbals, and other sound sources available in your kit.)









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Overcoming Performance Anxiety

by Jon Sacks

Have you ever been on the gig, gone for that "out there" fill—and come back into the song only to have caused a rhythmic collision? This mistake might then cause you to clam up for the rest of the set in fear of another problem. You had executed this fill a million times in rehearsals. How could you possibly have screwed it up?

Some drummers do their best playing in live situations. But for others, playing before an audience proves nerve-wracking—and can create a stifled drum performance, like the one I just described.

Being nervous and tense before a performance is a natural occurrence; but when anxiety and tension become hindrances to your playing, you might want to consider some suggestions. This article discusses possible ways to overcome the anxiety that public performance may cause. These methods will attempt to create the positive mental flow of a musician who is at one with himself, his environment, and—most importantly—his instrument.

When putting your performance into perspective, you should ask yourself, "What is the danger in playing my drums in front of an audience?" When you really think about it, playing your kit is a blast! You can communicate with other people without having to use words! You have a talent, and everybody enjoying your music envies this ability. Don't let fear be equated with the art of making music. Your playing should be serious, but at the same time, you should never lose sight of the fact that you are there to have *fun.*

Most people who are listening to you play probably wouldn't know Dennis Chambers or Max Roach from their state senator. So that technically flashy fill (or monster mistake) doesn't have the same meaning to them as it may have to you. A majority of your audience has no knowledge of the technical dimensions of drumming—or of music in general. (If they did, I can assure you that there would be no problem doing jazz gigs and being able to survive.) The reality of the music business is that a large segment of our nation is musically illiterate. Once you accept this concept, it should help to minimize your anxiety toward "going for it" on the gigs.

So what if you make a few mistakes? Sure, it might upset you. But as Roy Burns once mentioned in his *Concepts* column, "Instead of criticizing yourself, try to identify the problem." Why apply pressure to an activity that you enjoy so much? Once you assess the problem, you can work on it and become a better player.

Musicians who suffer exaggerated performance anxiety usually have certain feelings of inferiority. As a result they have problems coming out of their shells—of *going for it* without the fear of making a few mistakes. These feelings of inferiority are a direct result of how we judge ourselves. For drummers, it is usually how we judge ourselves compared to the drummer in our high school, the player in the next room at our rehearsal space, the pro in New York City, or the guy featured on the tape on your stereo.

We are who we are as individuals. Each of us has a unique personality, unique preferences, and a unique way of looking at the world. This individuality applies to how we play and create music. All serious musicians are on a quest to find their *own* voice, their *own* identity on their given instrument. Don't feel inferior if you can't do something that somebody else can do. Use their inspiration as an incentive to create your own personalized lick. Try to understand what the other drummer is trying to express, and use that as a basis for what comes naturally to your playing style. Find what *you* can do, and build on that.

> "Your playing should be serious, but at the same time, you should never lose sight of the fact that you are there to have *fun*."

Physical manifestations of performance anxiety affect even the most experienced professionals in all fields. The lawyer presenting a case in court, the doctor performing surgery—even your TV weatherman—all deal with varying degrees of anxiety. They know how to get their nerves under control, and thus are able to do their jobs to the best of their ability. Willard Scott of the *Today* show gets so tense before going on TV that he often throws up. Here is an established professional whose livelihood depends on his being able to effectively present himself to millions of viewers five days a week. Obviously, his being nervous only affects him before going on, because once in front of the camera, he does just fine.

Stage fright is a manifestation of the fight-or-flight instinct we, as animals, are endowed with. When a person sees performance as a threat, the physiological equilibrium of his or her body is dramatically disturbed. Feeling frightened of performance triggers the instinctual "state of alert." This state causes

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Sensitive individuals who are aware of the instinctual reactions that performing might have on them are in a position to exert their own power over the situation. An extreme example of this power would be the fireman running into a burning building to save a baby. This instinct to protect himself is overpowered by his will to save the child. The firefighter is influencing his own actions over a potentially life-threatening situation. By realizing that performing is nothing to be afraid of, we too can exert our own power over the situation—and can minimize our stage fright anxiety.

Another line of attack is trying to influence the physical aspects of our bodies. It is necessary to combat physical tension by staying calm and relaxed. One of the easiest ways to do this is to give yourself plenty of time to set up. When I was younger I used to become frazzled by breaking down the kit at the rehearsal space, rushing to the club, setting up, and then going through a sound check. This lack of preparation only compounded my performance anxiety. Arriving early will give you the amount of time needed to get your act together so that you can work through the following relaxation suggestions (and whatever drum technique warmup you go through).

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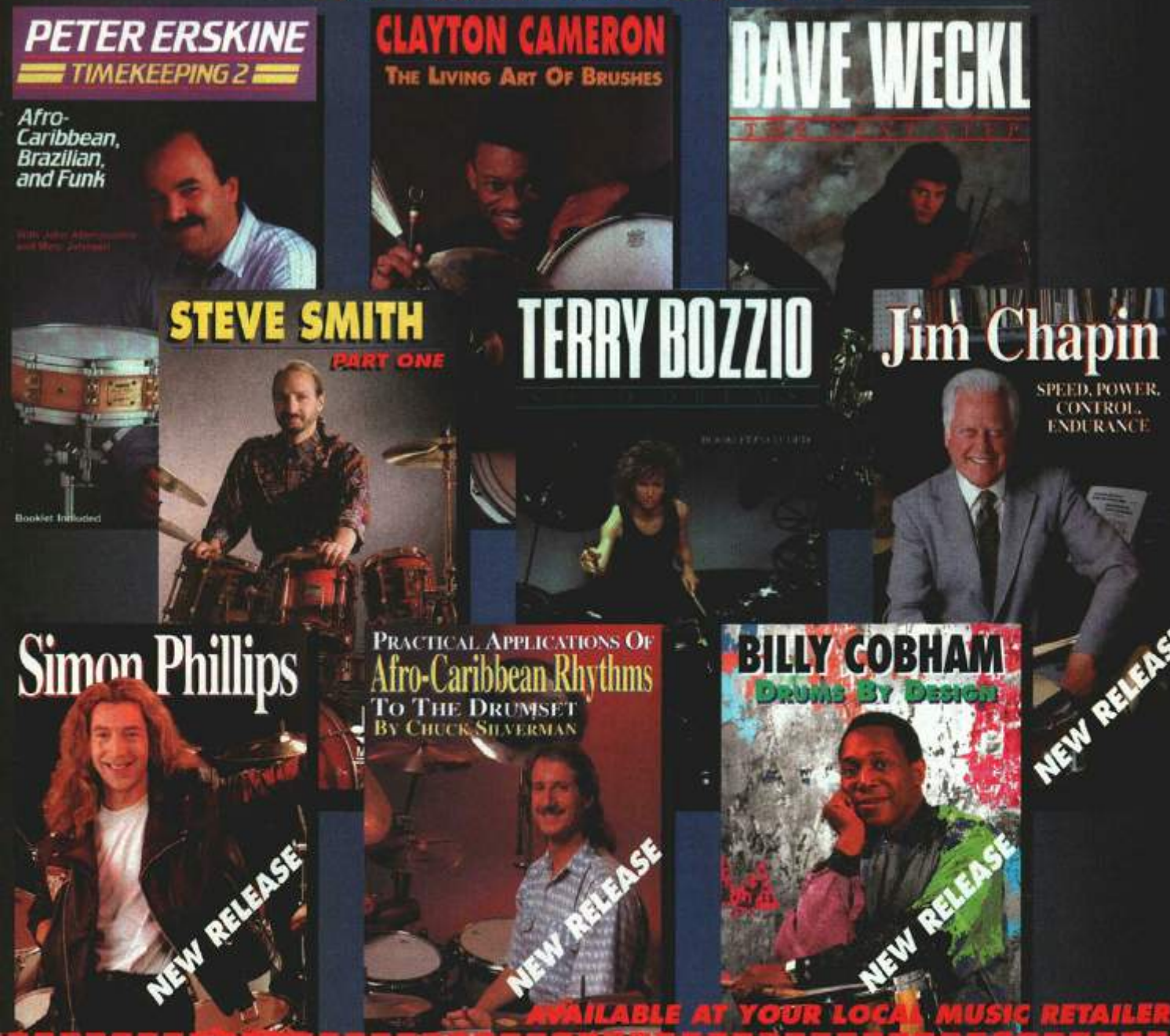

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lating your breathing, you can influence your heart rate. Slowing down your heart rate will relax the rest of your body. As you breath in deeply through your nose (exhaling through your mouth), try to concentrate on the act of relaxed breathing. When properly concentrating on this task, you are putting all the negative thoughts of performance outside your mind. I consider this a type of meditation exercise. As a variation, I sometimes try to visualize the graceful movements of playing the drumset. This visualization is done in slow motion, which reinforces the calm, relaxed state I want to achieve. Another suggestion is to run through rudiments on a pad while doing your relaxed breathing. All drummers should warm up on a pad in order to get their hands loose, and this is a great opportunity to get your playing technique prepared while simultaneously calming yourself down.

Athletes stretch before competition. Performing on drums—being a physical activity—should be afforded the same type of preparation. Stretching your muscles is a perfect way to prepare yourself for playing. It also contributes to keeping your muscles from tensing up as a result of anxiety. There are books that feature specific exercises for drummers advertised in *Modern Drummer*. I have also had effective results using ideas from a stretching book for tennis players. Tennis books include hand and arm stretching methods, which are important for the drummer.

I can't stress enough how important it is to *not* get involved

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with your own form of drug therapy in an effort to alleviate your anxiety. A few beers might calm you down, but they can have a devastating effect on your coordination. More importantly, alcohol affects your intellectual capacity to offer the music the total expression of who you are. Drugs take you down the long, unsuccessful road of mediocrity. Sobriety increases your chances in an already tough business where you can use every advantage available to you.

If your performance anxiety proves itself to be a profound barrier on which the suggestions in this article have little or no effect, your problems should not be dealt with alone. Counseling—and in extreme cases, modern medicine—are both helpful alternatives. There are a number *of prescription* drugs that inhibit the type of chemical action in the brain that causes anxiety, but that can be taken without any influence over your coordination. Obviously these drugs should be recommended by a doctor. Performance anxiety is so common that there are professional psychologists who specialize in problems of this nature. A listing of these professionals can be found in your local yellow pages.

I hope that every drummer out there can come to terms with his or her performance problems, no matter how serious or subtle. By overcoming personal barriers, we all get that much closer to reaching our highest potential. Good luck, and have fun!

Charlie Benante
Anthrax

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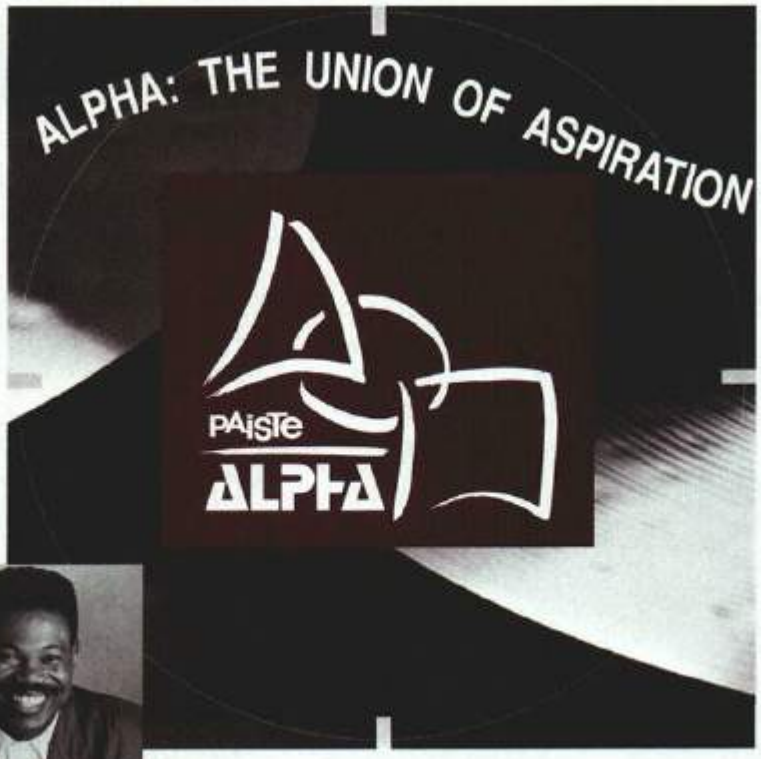

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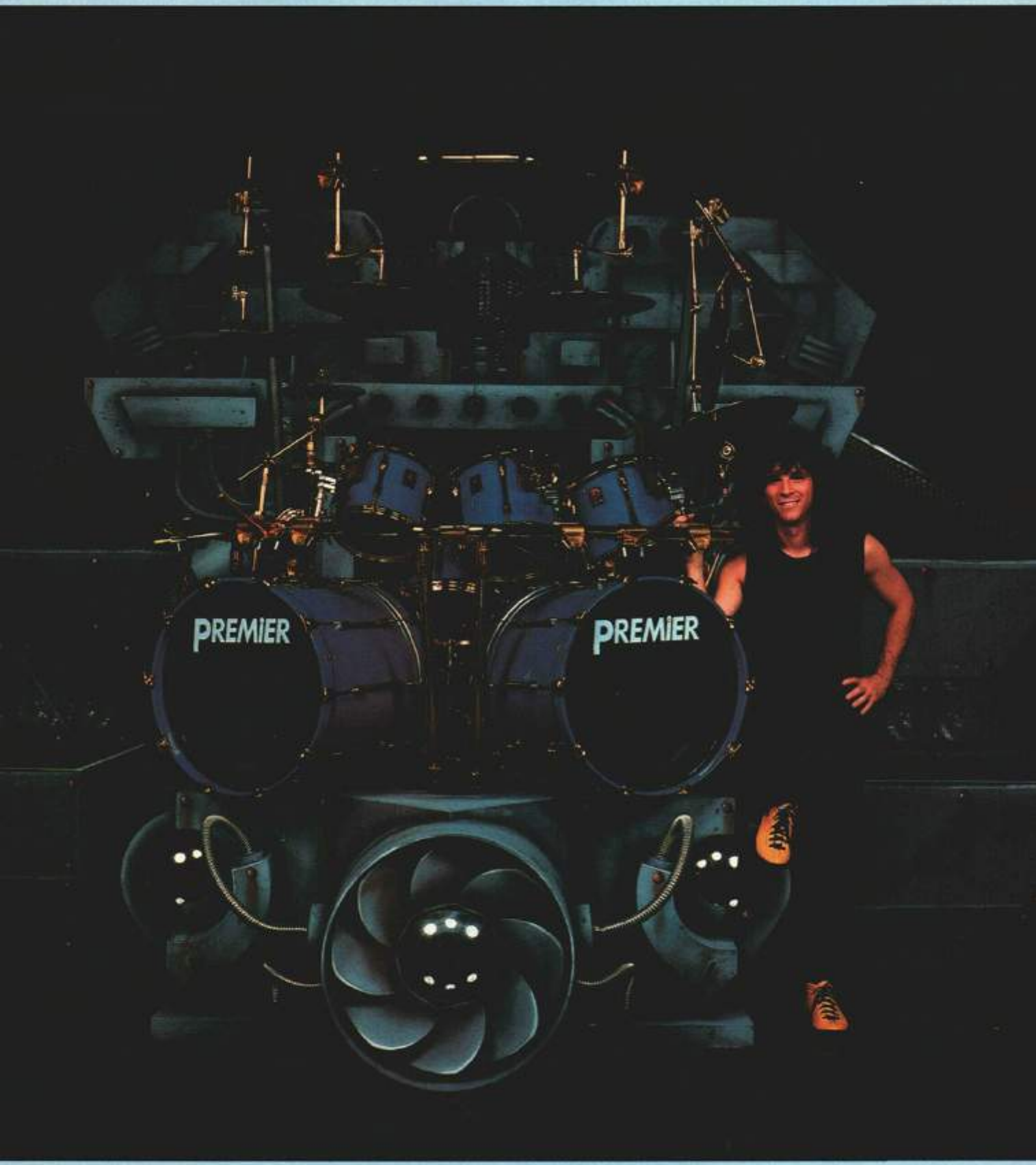

continued from page 27

job was that I'd sometimes hear two young drummers a week with different acts. That also helped keep me current.

One of the highlights of my life was something I had worked on for over two years to get going, and that was for Buddy Rich and me to play a drum duet. A lot of times on busy days when he would come, they would tell me it was a busy show and we couldn't do it. I kept nudging and finally I caught them a week before his appearance. They looked at the schedule and realized it would be a good show. That was in 1979. There was a lot of camera work and two drumsets. It was great fun for me because he and I had fooled around a little like that in clubs.

RF: What roles did each of you play?

ES: Contrary to what a lot of people would think who only know what I call "the outside picture of Buddy Rich," because he liked me and we were friends, he wasn't out to carve me. He not only liked me, but he had respect for me, and when he had respect for a

drummer, that was better than if he liked you. We just both tried to play well and have fun. I said to him, "Don't play too much cross-hand stuff and try to wipe me out," and he said, "Don't start up with that Indian ticky tocky-ticky shit in 25/4 that I don't understand." We had fun. Johnny Carson told me they had more mail on that performance than any other instrumental thing in ten years.

We had people like Count Basie come on and all kinds of other good people. My being primarily a jazz player, those types of players were the big thrills for me. Yet, I had to play for a lot of rock people, mostly pop people. The hard rock people came in mostly with their own bands. But Doc kept a lot of rock 'n' roll arrangements coming into the *Tonight Show* band, and I consider that a great source of experience. Most nights it was 50/50, although a lot of viewers wouldn't know that because they didn't hear all the music the band played because of the commercials. It was good experience for me, because if you come up a jazz player, you have to play a lot of rock 'n' roll to play well, and if you come up a rock 'n' roll player, you have to play a lot of jazz to play *it* well.

RF: Do you feel that having the rock experience helps a drummer play jazz?

ES: Absolutely. When you play rock 'n' roll, you get very strong. I was always a pretty strong drummer, but I got a lot stronger from my 30's on.

RF: How would being a jazz player help you play rock 'n' roll?

ES: I think mostly because in jazz you improvise a lot, therefore you bring some of that to rock 'n' roll, and you don't play the same break at the same place all the time. I try to explain to students when they come to study with me—they're all rock 'n' rollers—"I don't even want to suggest making you a great jazz drummer, but if the occasion arises to play it, you don't want to be embarrassed, do you?"

I audition them. I play a couple of rock tracks for them, and then I put on *Oscar Peterson And The Bassists,* which doesn't have drums. It's a great album to play with. I can tell within thirty seconds if they're really off-base, which most of them are. Then I stop the record and say, "Okay, you're playing mostly rock 'n' roll to jazz. Now I'm going to teach you how to play *jazz* to jazz," so I sit down and demonstrate 90% cymbals. They're playing the bass drum on 1 and 3, and the only thing they're doing differently than rock 'n' roll is a little ding, dinga-ding on the cymbal. So I explain, you play a 4/4 feeling lightly on the bass drum, you don't keep playing an after-beat, and you make the cymbals dominant. That's hard when you've been doing something else all your life. It takes about three months to get mediocre.

RF: Can you recall any other unpleasant experiences on the show?

ES: Jerry Lewis used to be a trial occasionally when he'd try to conduct the band. I lost it one day in New York when he said, "No, no, no...." And I said, "Maybe if you learned how to conduct, I could possibly follow you." I never had any trouble after that. He could be pretty obnoxious at times.

RF: So there have been times you've had to stand up for yourself?

ES: The few times I had to do it, Doc always supported me because he knew I

didn't lose it that easily. There were times we just had to speak up for ourselves, because there were some performers who were used to running over the people they pay. Therefore they'd come in with that attitude, but *we* weren't the people they paid.

RF: How did you deal with the different personalities? How did you decide to bite your tongue sometimes and let loose at other times?

ES: I think you cooperate up to a certain point, where people don't really intrude on your dignity or your professional standing. You're supposed to know a lot about what you do. I don't mind if a person knows what they like to hear; I'll do my best to give it to them. When I'm giving it to them and they don't like it, there's not much more that I can do. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred it was someone who didn't know what they wanted.

There was a famous producer by the name of Mitch Miller back in the '50s and '60s, and we were doing an album at Columbia Records in New York with a big monstrous orchestra. I'd worked for

Mitch before, and he said on the microphone, "Shaughnessy"—he could be very brusque at times—"Jesus, that's not it." I said, "What do you mean? I've got straight quarter notes. What is this supposed to be?" He said, "It's supposed to be a shuffle." It was written like a straight swing so I was playing it straight swing. And he said, "I don't know, how can I explain it to you? Let's try it one more time." So I played it one of ten ways I know how to play a shuffle, and he stopped and said, "You know, that's not it either, Shaughnessy. You probably won't be able to get it, but do you know that record 'Baubles, Bangles, and Beads'? That had the perfect feel. I produced that record and it was a million-seller. That's the feel I want." I said, "Do you remember who the drummer was on that record?" He said, "No." I said, "It was me!" I said it real loud, and the whole 50-piece band started laughing. It was dead silent and then he said, "Then I guess you're gonna get it."

RF: That's an interesting point—that there are lots of different ways you could play that shuffle.

ES: Oh yes. You can play more cymbal and just the backbeat, or you can play the shuffle and the backbeat on the snare drum, which is a little more powerful and funky. But I thought the more "white bread" approach fit the date we were on. I was lucky in the studios. A lot of time, they wanted me to play like me. My prime recording time was before they started telling you they wanted you to play like someone else.

RF: You've told me you feel you're playing better than ever now. Why is that?

ES: I think one of the things is that I have more confidence now than I've ever had. I've never been a frightened player; I've always had a lot of confidence—maybe not in life, but in drumming. But I think putting down drinking about ten years ago did a great deal for me. It's not that I ever played drunk. That wasn't my thing. I had too much respect for music. It's just that I didn't like myself so much. When I stopped drinking, I started to become a person that I liked much more. When you are that, then everything else that you do is better. It's self-promoting, not self-defeating. I wasn't a drunk who didn't show up for the job or one who played drunk. I didn't screw up, but that doesn't mean that I necessarily had my life where I wanted it, does it? A lot of people show up for work and do the gig, but that doesn't mean everything is wonderful. I've just always been a slow developer. I was a young drummer who succeeded to a certain level when I was very young, and I think I've gotten better as time has gone on.

RF: Do you practice?

ES: Yes, I practice to keep my technique up and to get better, so I'm always trying to add something on. I practice things I can't do too well, and I practice the same things I teach people. I do three-to-one exercises all the time, so that the weaker hand has to do more than the stronger hand. When you practice drumming, if you keep practicing two hands all the time, you'll get better, but the weaker hand will always be weaker. I found out as a player, if you do things for the weaker hand regularly that make it work harder than the stronger hand, then the weaker hand starts to come up to the stronger hand.

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Then I practice things that everybody practices, a lot of single strokes and double strokes, because those are really the basis of drumming. I practice a lot of things for endurance. I will take a rhythm and play it quite hard for two minutes, unbroken. That's a very long two minutes. Then there are a lot of other things I do between the hands and the feet. I try to limber up the feet as well as the hands. I can do all of that in fifteen or twenty minutes.

The rest of my practice is creative playing, improvisation. I play a fair number of drum solos each year, so I have to keep my improvisation sharp. I never play a solo the same way twice, ever. I'll do the same ending lick, because the band has to have a cue, but the rest is never the same. This, by the way, was a factor of Buddy Rich's playing that many people do not know, because they never saw him play hundreds of times like I did. He never played the same solo. The only thing he did in his later years—and probably because he found out how effective it was—was to start his famous single stroke very slowly and take it to an

absolutely blazing speed.

RF: Your role in the *Tonight Show* band is probably very different from your role in your own band. What are the responsibilities of a bandleader?

ES: I think it would be the best experience in the world for every sideman to be a leader once in a while—because you get to see it from the other guy's viewpoint. As a leader, it is so much more problematic and convoluted than just playing the role of Mr. Drummer in the band. This morning I spent twenty minutes on the phone doing a radio interview, because I'm getting ready to tour with my quintet. Yesterday I did two other interviews. The day before that, I did two newspaper interviews on the phone. Then there's making contact with my roadie, because he has to meet the bass player in Chicago. I have to make sure about all the airline tickets because I don't have a staff—I do everything myself. I have to make sure all the hotels are taken care of, and I have to make sure everyone knows what time we're arriving at each and every auditorium, so they make sure the stage door is open for us. The list is endless.

If you're one of my sidemen, you just show up at the first plane, and Ed takes care of you from then on. When I go out with Doc's band, I just show up at L.A.X., and I'm chaperoned the rest of the time. The difference between being a sideman and a leader is like night and day.

RF: Are you doing any shows with your big band?

ES: I haven't done anything in years, but I'm revving it up again. There is a jazz festival in Sedona in September, so I'm kind of excited. It's been about ten years since we've done that.

RF: What's the difference for you as a player between the big band and the quintet?

ES: For me, it's just getting back on the bicycle that I never forgot how to ride. If you started out primarily as a big band drummer, with very little small band experience, you could have a problem scaling your playing down. I don't have that problem, because I got my reputation initially as a small-group bebop drummer. I did it year in and year out, so I got to be a pretty decent combo drum-

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mer by the time I was 25. Then I had the desire to develop into a good big band drummer, and luckily I got into one of the gigs where I could do it over a long period of time, because the big bands were dying then. Then getting on the *Tonight Show* band was custom-made.

It's my opinion—and only my opinion—that a big band drummer, to be better than just average, needs a certain amount of seasoning. I've heard a great many more younger small band drummers who I think are outstanding than young big band drummers who are. I just think it's one of those things that takes a certain amount of experience. I don't think I really had it going the way I wanted until I was 35 or 40, and it's gotten better since then.

RF: So what's the role of a big band drummer?

ES: To tie all the ends together in a sense, because you've got fifteen, sixteen people. To try to give a unified rhythmic core that swings. The element of swing is extremely important. The idea is to do it in a supportive manner so that you don't stick out all the time. That means you must play strong in a supportive manner. You've got to play for the band when it's the band's time. When it's your time, it's your time. I think the secret of that is to listen to everything and edit your playing so it is never too busy for a big band.

What works in a small band doesn't necessarily work in a big band. You need more focus and attention on the groove. In a way, less is more in a big band. I learned that from people like Dave Tough and Jo Jones, by hearing how sometimes they wouldn't play a lot of stuff, except a few well-placed beats in the middle of phrases to kick things off.

RF: In a small band you have more freedom.

ES: And it's more like a conversation with everybody. You don't have all the rhythmic ends to tie together. There's not as much pulling at the rhythm, either

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faster or slower. I'm not saying that most good musicians don't play in good time, but it's still the drummer's job. One of the things I am most proud of is having done five albums with Count Basie. Count Basie said to me, "If my drummer and my first trumpet player are good and play well together, I can always build a good band." It doesn't mean everybody isn't important, it's just the nature of the chairs.

But I find both big band and small group playing very satisfying. I like the open opportunity for perhaps more improvisational playing in the small band, and I like the role of the big band drummer, because when a big band is really moving and swinging, there's a force and power to it that's terrific, and that's the fun you get out of it. Actually, the fun is being part of the team.

RF: The *Tonight Show* team is now split up. How do you feel about the end of the show?

ES: I have mixed feelings because the first thing is that I'm so grateful for having had such a wonderful job. I feel I've had a chance to play with a really high-level band. Doc deserves a lot of credit. We get along because we are a lot alike in this respect: We both think you should either play the best you can or get the hell out. That means every day, not just one day. The standard stayed there. It was not this comfy job where it's, "Let's not tune up." Oh no. He deserves that credit because the leader really does set the tone.

I was lucky to play with a very high-class big band without getting on the bus all the time. It enabled me to spend more time at home with my family than I might have if I were a traveling musician. I came from a broken family, and one thing I've always said is, "Musician or not, I'm going to be around for my kids." I had to be on the road from time to time, but mostly in and out. I feel very grateful to the job for that. I had a lot of different opportunities to go out and do more of my own thing through the years, but quite frankly, I was happy doing what I was doing. And it gave me the variety, musically. On *The Tonight Show,* no two days were alike.

RF: So there must be a lot of sadness.

ES: There is a lot of sadness. Johnny is a wonderful man. Many times he argued to keep that big band when NBC wanted to save hundreds of thousands of dollars a year by cutting it down to five pieces. He said, "No way—I stay, they stay." We're grateful to him. And he was always so supportive. He always plugged our individual dates on the air.

So there's a lot of sadness about it, even though I'm looking forward to doing the things that I'm going to be doing. It's been a good job and enjoyable job. My wife would tell you, I'm very resistant to change. I'm an old-shoe type of man, so it's very hard for me. That's why I don't jump around to a lot of drum companies. I'm that way about most things. I think I'm going to handle this okay because we knew about it for quite a while, but I know I'm going to miss the hell out of it, I know I am.

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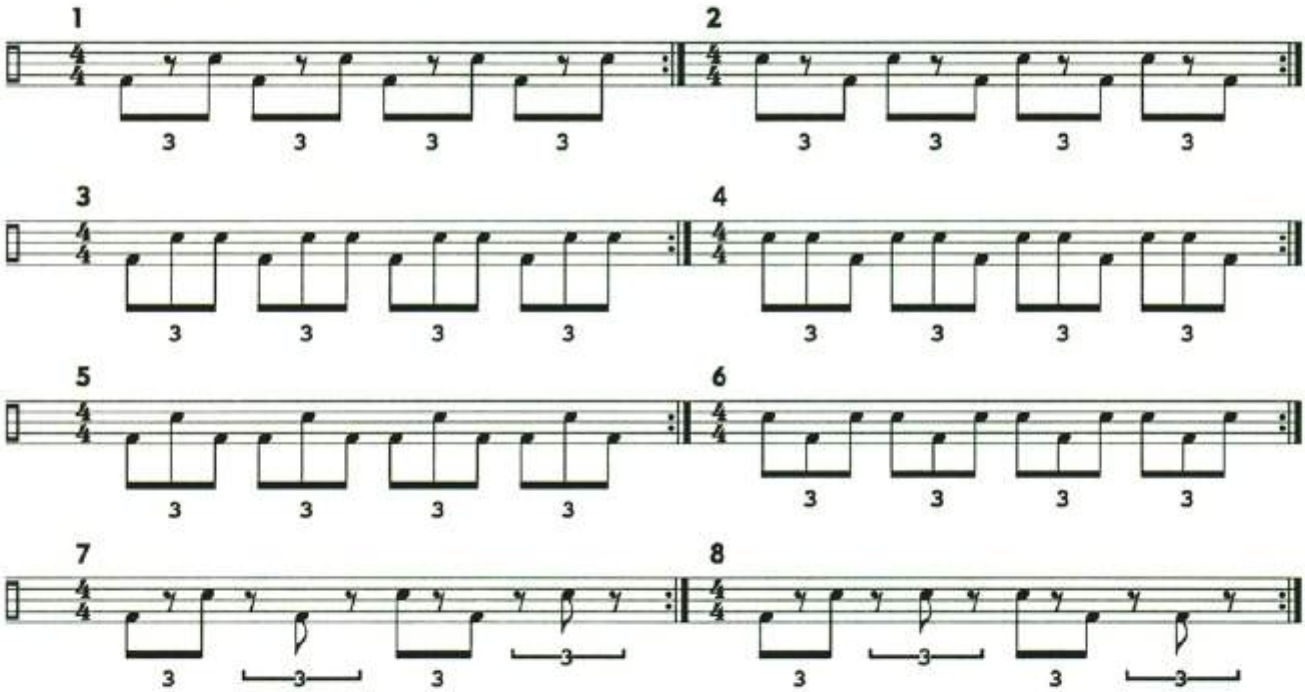
Advanced Timekeeping: Part 2

by Rick Mattingly

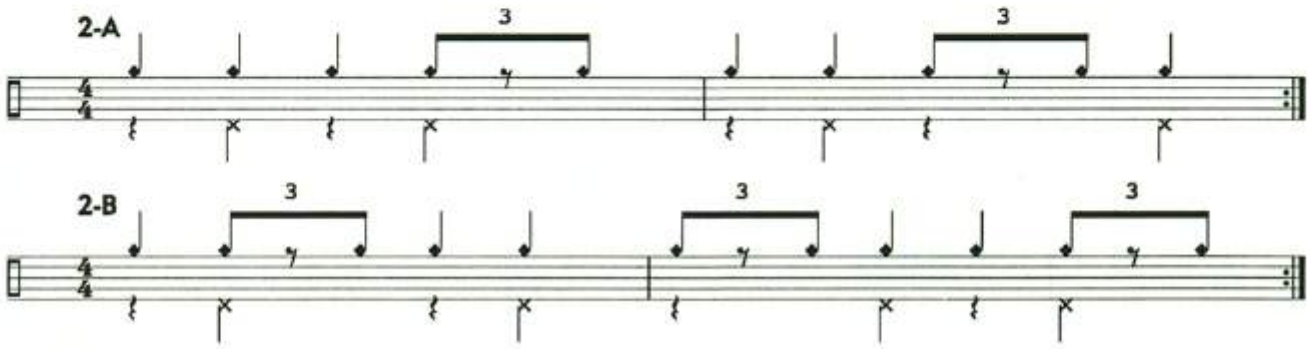
In our last article, we looked at ride patterns other than the standard "ding dinga-ding," and practiced basic coordination exercises against them. The idea was to move towards being able to break up the time more freely while still retaining coordination and a good sense of swing.

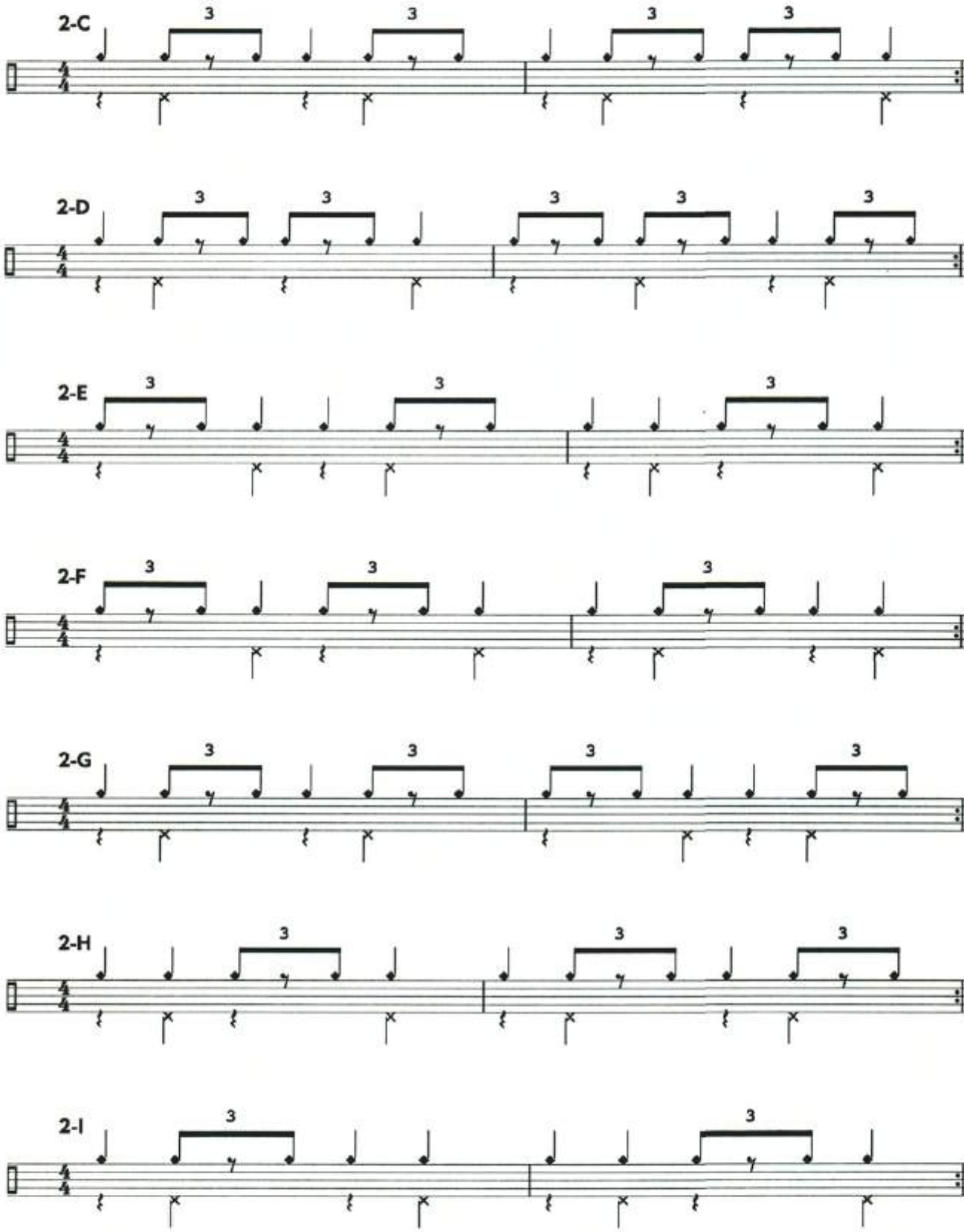
The next step is to get away from playing the same ride cymbal pattern in every bar. We'll start by concentrating on repeating two-bar patterns.

The previous article contained some basic rhythms to play on snare drum or bass drum against the ride cymbal patterns. It would be good to go back to that article and use those same rhythms against the cymbal patterns given below. But here are some new ones to practice as well, using both snare and bass.



Now, here are several two-measure cymbal patterns to use with the above rhythms. First, practice these patterns by themselves, striving to make them swing. Be sure that the basic quarter-note pulse is consistent, and that you are not adding stray accents when you add the swung 8th notes. Once you have each two-bar pattern sounding good by itself, practice it with the above snare and bass drum patterns. As indicated, maintain hi-hat on 2 and 4.





As suggested in the first article, you can also practice these patterns with the exercises in the Chapin book or with Reed's *Syncopation.* Once you feel adept at these two-bar patterns, combine them into four-bar patterns. In our next article, we'll look at ride patterns that contain anticipated beats.

IT'S QUESTIONABLE

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model to their regular lines: Yes, they would—if there is sufficient demand. When drumstick companies get enough requests like yours for the same variation of one of their models, they can't help but listen; their business depends on it. But in fairness to the companies, it's important to understand that whether or not they respond may depend on how difficult it is for them to create the variation requested. For example, adding a nylon-tip version to a model that had previously only been available with a wood tip is relatively simple. Taking an existing model and re-working its taper or tip shape is a bit more involved. And while it might seem that simply making an existing model out of a different kind of wood would be easy, that really isn't the case. Different woods require different lathe adjustments and, in some cases, different cutting tools. Drumstick companies have to take all of these factors into consideration before adding any new model to their lines.

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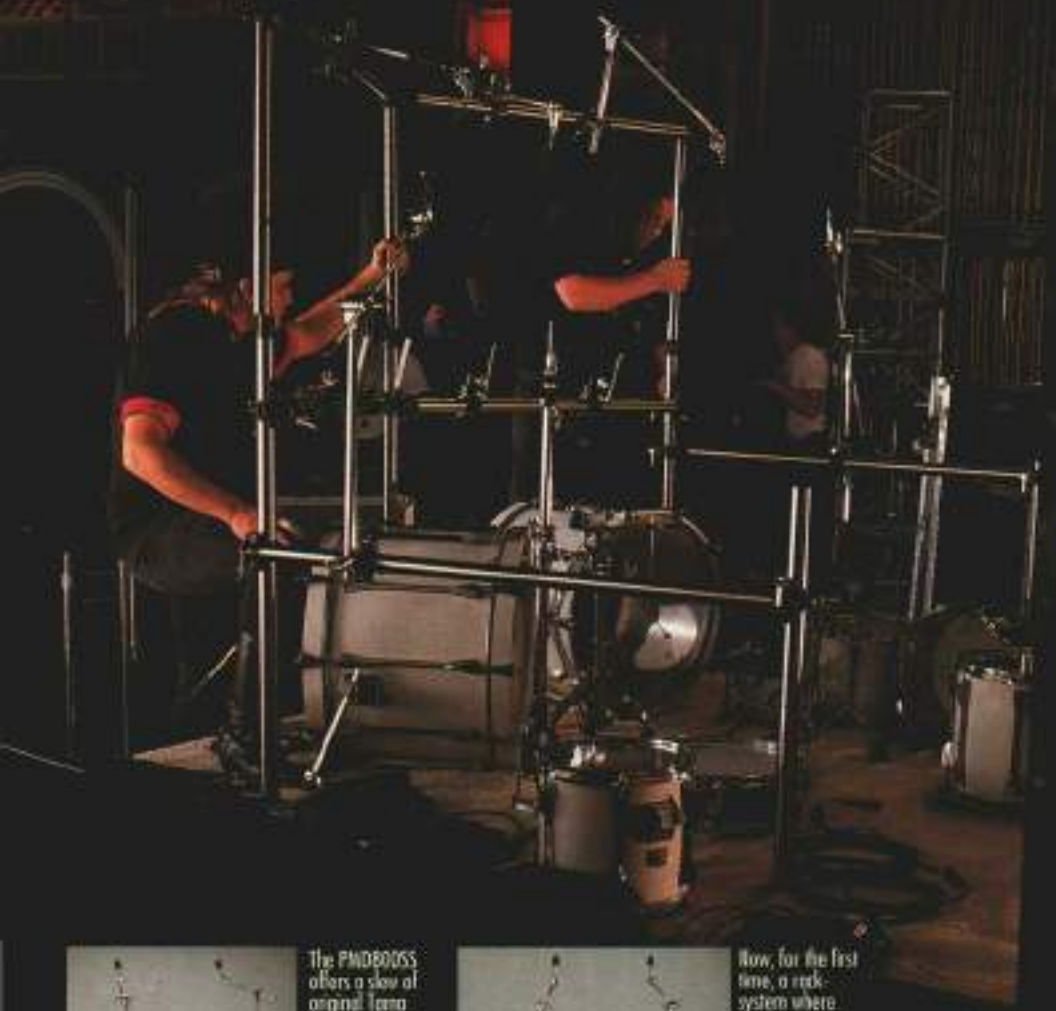

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weren't for copping from jazz and swing and funk and anything else I've stumbled across over time."

Castronovo also related how tunnel vision from other musicians kept him from getting a recent gig with a nationally known group. "The first thing they told me was that they didn't want a double-bass player, so I said 'fine,' and I did the audition with one bass, and I thought it went pretty well. I felt pretty confident I was going to get the gig, even though I wasn't sure I'd take it or not. I found out they wanted me, but they ended up asking somebody else because they felt the media would give them a hard time about hiring a drummer who just came from a pop band like Bad English. I couldn't believe that *that's* what they were worried about—especially considering I'd played in metal bands all my life before that! That just goes to show how you can be discriminated against at both ends."

Paul Massetti, who plays in a metal band and teaches drumset in northern Arizona, says that younger players often don't have the patience to learn the rudiments. "That's not just a problem with metal players, but with all young guys starting out," he says. "But the kids who like hard rock want to start out on double-bass right away and play real fast rolls across the toms. What I try to get into them right away is that they need to start from the bottom and work their way up. You have to learn the alphabet before you can read, and that's what the rudiments are. Believe me, you can tell the metal drummers who have their basics down from the guys who don't."

Tale Of The Tape

Unseasoned ears also present another hurdle for some metal drummers when they reach the recording studio, which requires more thought, finesse, patience, and planning to achieve stellar results than the live gig does. "A lot of bands I work with want the drums to sound like Charlie Benante's or Lars Ulrich's, and I'm not sure if it's because they really like their sounds or because those guys are good drummers and it would just be

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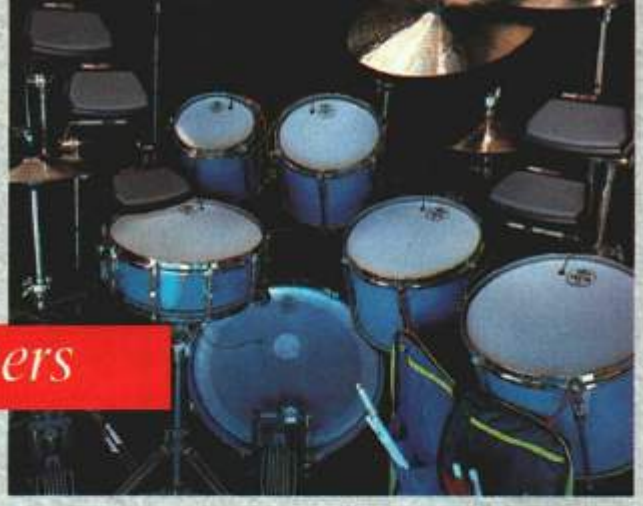

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cool to sound like them." So says Scott Cameron, a Bay Area studio drum tech who works for such metal bands as Forbidden, Vio-lence, and Vicious Rumors, and who has also worked with Todd Rundgren.

"When I first started doing this kind of work in 1987, people were mainly concerned with just getting a good sound. Now they want a *particular* sound, like a Neil Peart snare, or a Benante bass with Lars attack. I find that a lot of hard rock drummers don't know how to go about getting those sounds, which is fine, because that's my job. But they're also afraid of trying new things or listening to other ideas about how to get a good sound, whether it means using different tunings or different drums. And that leads to a lot of problems that cost time and money in an expensive studio.

"In general, metal drummers are a lot more picky with their sounds. On one session, though, I brought a brand-new Yamaha set for the guy to use, but he was real adamant about using his old, beat-up set for sentimental reasons that had nothing to do with sound. Other times, we might spend an hour tuning a guy's tom that he won't even use. But the biggest comment I hear from the drummers I work with, when they finally listen back to what they recorded, is that they're surprised to find out their drums actually sound better on tape than they do acoustically, to the naked ear."

Steve Ettleson, an artist relations manager with Yamaha Drums, says favored equipment among metal players may not be the right choice in the studio. "A lot of guys like 12x12, 13x13, and 14x14 drums for the visibility," he says. "But there's been a complaint that they don't have a focused sound in the studio. What metal players have to realize, I think more than other guys, is that what works live may not work well in the studio. They're two different animals. You don't necessarily have that problem in other styles of music, because the choice of drums and cymbals is different—usually smaller with a more defined sound."

Scott Cameron advises drummers to study a variety of musical sources for ideas on sound that can be applied to their respective recording situations. "A

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Babe Pace, C+C Music Factory, on stage with the CR-1604.

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A Polaroid™ of Pat Mastelotto in the studio with his CR-1604

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*Each time the number of inputs is doubled, it adds 3dB to the non-correlated operating level. Thus 16 channels running all at once is 12dB hotter than the same mixer with just one channel operating.

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lot of metal drummers I've worked with have been so dead set on their ideas that they might have missed out on something that would work and sound good," he says. "Don't get me wrong, I think drummers *should be* particular about their sound. It's just like a guitarist using a certain effect for a given song. But that's *why* drummers should be open to using more than one snare drum for a record, for instance. And they should realize that it takes as much time to learn how to tune drums and get them to sound good as it does to learn to play them.

More Than Meets The Ear

Hard rock and metal have always been as much a feast for the eyes as for the ears, and—to the detriment of the music—sometimes the posing is more important than the playing. Particularly in pop metal and glam, bands often overlook flaws in a drummer's performance as a musician as long as he has killer looks, a huge set, and the ability to twirl his sticks with the skill of a majorette.

But showmanship is a double-edged sword. It simply wouldn't have been KISS without explosive theatrics. Peter Criss's flaming drumsticks didn't make it any easier to play press rolls or prolong the life of his drumheads, but they sure looked hot! Tommy Lee has done more than anyone to stretch the boundaries of a drummer's movement, performing solos upside down, in an aerial somersault, and on the equivalent of a percussive monorail. His drum breaks during Motley Crue shows became the biggest thing since the introduction of seatbelts. And hydraulics aside, nobody brings as much to a stick spin as he does. Tommy Lee in action is a sight to behold!

But can you imagine Eddie Bayers lighting his sticks afire on his next country gig, or Louie Bellson doing big-band backflips? Closer to reality, you'd never catch Kenny Aronoff, Bill Berry, or Larry Mullen, Jr. resorting to such histrionics. As much as they might even secretly like to, musical integrity leaves little room for it.

Perhaps as a sign of the times, young hard rock and metal players today say they want to walk the tightrope. "I think

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you have to be entertaining," says Lillian Axe's Barnett. "Nobody at a heavy metal concert wants to see a drummer just sit there and play. Showmanship is definitely part of rock, and I try to include a lot of that when I play live. But if you can't keep the ride going or you lose your time because you have your stick up your butt or somewhere else, you shouldn't do it. The guys who are really good at the showmanship part of it know when to do it and when not to. That takes practice, too."

Absorbing Tommy Lee on Motley Crue's *Theatre Of Pain* tour in 1985 inspired RJ. Aitken of Fresno, California to improve the visual aspect of his playing. "He's got these really long arms, and he bends one in back of his head when he twirls with the other. It was just the most awesome thing I'd ever seen," Aitken says. "After that show, I set my drums in front of this big mirror we had stashed in our garage, and I practiced my moves. It may sound kind of stupid, but it really helped. I saw how I did things that looked kind of awkward, and I fixed them. I worked on bending my arm just at the right angle and holding my hand totally straight when I twirled my stick, and I checked out what I looked like playing standing up and crossing my arms over to hit cymbals. The guys in my band think it's pretty cool, but I'm still working on it. The hardest part is doing all that stuff and still playing what I'm supposed to play."

These drummers, though, receive a lot of scorn from within the metal community, particularly from players in the death, thrash, and speed veins. "They give us a bad name," Vic Caruso of LA-based War Dance says only half-jokingly. "A lot of people think anybody who plays metal isn't a serious musician, but I think that's because all they see are a lot of pretty boys who spend more time putting on eyeliner than practicing. It takes a lot of skill, and you have to be in good shape to play an hour or so of thrash. There's no time for me to worry about spinning my sticks."

Carey McRae of San Francisco thinks it's important for any efforts at showmanship to look as natural as possible. "I've seen a lot of drummers that kind of force it," he says. "They do things just to show off, but they're not really smooth, and it comes off looking phony. If it's not in your personality to do stick tricks, it'll look that way when you try it in a show. Neil Peart's one of my favorite drummers, but I don't think it really fits him when he does that stuff, because he looks real serious when he plays. He's not really a good-time drummer, and I think the showy stuff should be left to glam bands. And actually, it's kind of cool these days *not* to spin your sticks."

The Bigger They Are...

No aspect of hard rock and metal drumming is as mired in trendiness as the choice of equipment. Some time in the early 1980s, deeper toms and basses and 8" snare drums became the norm. Heavy-duty, double-braced hardware soon followed. Whether or not the change served more of an aesthetic purpose than a practical one, there was no denying the visual difference.

When Tommy Lee hit his peak of popularity in the mid-'80s, countless drummers arranged their sets to match

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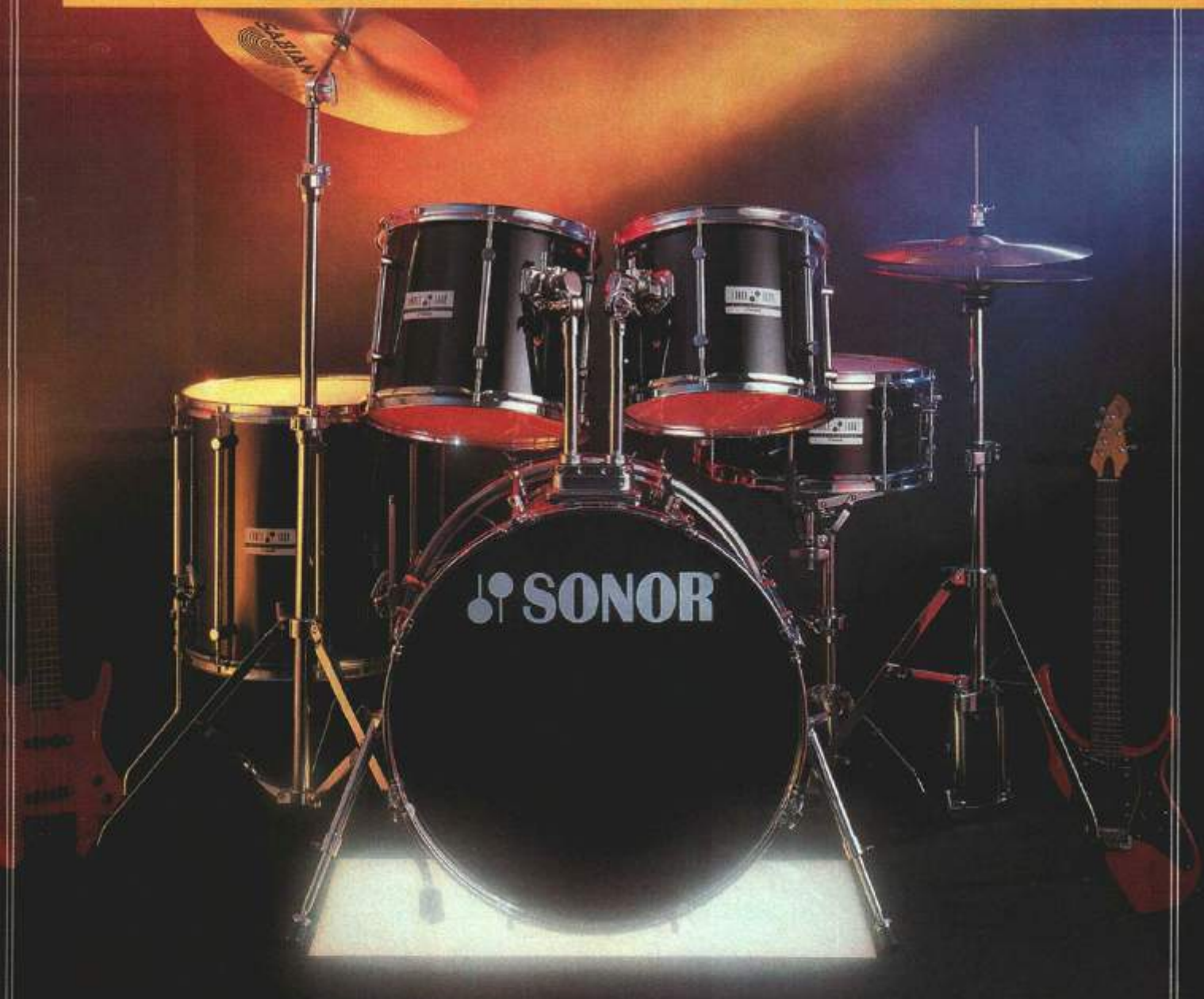

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his—two rack toms between two bass drums, with crash cymbals evenly placed above each kick. To make it easier for younger players to get in on the latest craze, drum companies marketed complete budget-minded sets in configurations used by the day's most popular players.

Ironically, according to drum manufacturers, ideas for equipment that eventually became heavy metal staples were born from other styles of music. "We came up with the motivation for heavy-duty hardware stands in the mid-'70s, but it didn't come from hard rock players," says Joe Hibbs, marketing coordinator and artist relations director for Tama Drums. "It was more from guys like Billy Cobham and Lenny White. And the need for extra depth came from fusion players looking for deeper tone. I think these things were made not so much for heavy metal as they were for rugged playing in any style. It's just that heavy metal generally requires a lot of heavy hitting, and most players feel the need for equipment that can take a pounding."

"It's an extra load to carry around, but I just feel more secure with them," says Blaze Yrida of Seattle. "I used to own regular stands, and the drums would always shake because I hit them so hard. I bought the Tama *Titan* hardware when it came out, and I'm totally happy with it. Until I can afford a rack setup, I'll stick with what I've got, even if it means hauling an extra fifty or hundred pounds around."

Ken Austin, artist relations director at Pearl Drums, says that the rationale behind using bigger and heavier equipment has changed over the years. "At first people probably wanted bigger drums for their sound. But I think long drums, to a big extent, are used more for the visuals than they are for the sound. Look at Alex Van Halen. What was he doing with four double-length bass drums? Triggering Simmons pads, that's what. You notice now that he's playing just one kick. He's trimmed down his set, and so have a lot of players. Smaller sets are more in vogue, and I think some of that is because modern miking and engineering techniques require more punch, but still a big sound. But I also think that it's cool now to play standard-sized drums."

In turn, Austin says, drum companies no longer have the large demand for such bulky supporting equipment. "Some players used a twenty-pound stand to hold up a ten-pound drum, and that's just not practical. People are realizing that regular stands can do the job just as well in many cases, and even metal players are going more for convenience and ease of carrying than for whatever extra support larger hardware might give. Heavy-duty, double-braced hardware is slowly going away, but I don't think it will totally disappear. There will always be a market for it. Guys who break stands, drums, and heads will *always* break them."

Yamaha's Steve Ettleson says larger drums are still prevalent in hard rock and metal, but agrees that there's a move towards smaller sets. "Visibility still has something to do with it. But the way the economy is, the average drummer simply can't afford a six-tom set with two bass drums and a huge rack to hold it all up

with. But I don't think rock 'n' roll is getting any softer volume-wise. Drummers without the benefit of miking still need help from the acoustic sound of the drums.

Eric Paiste of Paiste Cymbals says diversity in this particular form of music is allowing drummers to explore a wider variety of sounds than they ever did before. "Players are starting to forget what it says on a cymbal and are just going for whatever sounds good," Paiste says. "The thing people should consider—and I'm not sure a lot of younger metal players do—is what a drum or cymbal will sound like *outside* of the music store, in their kind of music. That might be hard to envision, but the sound requirements for this type of music are different than for any other. Hard rock is splitting into endless directions, and consequently, in terms of cymbals, it can be a buyer's remorse.

"But cymbals are probably the easiest and quickest way for drummers to change or adapt their sounds. A new splash or China-type can put a new spark in your playing, a different way of expressing yourself."

Many drummers, though, are reluctant to dramatically alter their setups—despite what the times might indicate. "I play a double-bass set with a rack of big toms and a lot of cymbals—and I use *everything,* it's not there for show," says Lillian Axe's Barnett. "I like to think I can settle into a groove, too. But if I had to change my set or tone down my style to a great degree, I probably wouldn't be happy. So I stick with what I do—this is the drummer I am—and I've never had trouble finding bands to fit into."

On the other end of the spectrum, Alan Doss of Galactic Cowboys says he's always played a four-piece kit. "That's all I've ever needed," he insists. "I've never been into metal a whole lot. I'm a big fan of Ringo Starr, Mitch Mitchell, and Tony Brock of the Babys, and I think my style comes from that. You're always going to draw from your influences, and there's nothing wrong with that. Just be yourself and, no matter what style of music you play, your own personality is going to come through."

Though Deen Castronovo sees other players around him trimming down their sets, he doesn't plan to do the same. "Why should I? I use six rack toms and two floor toms and double-bass—always have. A lot of people say, 'That's the '70s,' but it's me and it's something I've always done. I used to be really into Neil Peart, so I bought a mahogany kit that was exactly the same as his, and later on I bought some custom shells and had 30x24 bass drums. It was a horrible-sounding kit, but it looked cool! I had the biggest kit in Portland, and that's all that mattered.

"Now I'm a lot more discerning as to what my drums should sound like, and I think kids today can't afford *not* to be. One move I see a lot of metal drummers making today is using just one bass drum and a double pedal, but that's just not for me. I like having two bass drums, and nobody can say it doesn't sound different than playing one drum with two beaters. Everybody has their influences, and it's hard not to do what they do, but eventually you have to make your own path."

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Where We Were, Are, And Will Be

Several metal drummers, through undeniable talent and landmark recorded works, have risen to legendary status (at least among fellow drummers) and have come to represent a generation of musicians. It's arguable that groups such as the Who, Cream, Vanilla Fudge, and Led Zeppelin wouldn't be revered twenty-five years after their heydays without the respective drumming talents behind them. On the other hand, would the world have ever heard of Neil Peart if it weren't for the barrier-blowing music of Rush? And you could say the same for Rod Morgenstein of the Dregs, Phil Ehart of Kansas, and Gil Moore of Triumph. Frank *Zappa,* and Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull have produced music that couldn't help but bring respect to any in the series of drummers each called on to play it.

The most renowned metal drummers of the past decade have not coincidentally come from the most popular bands. Phil Rudd of AC/DC became universally known for his driving, rock-solid 2 and 4. Young players in the mid '80s didn't feel they made progress on the double-bass until they could play Tommy Lee's intro to "Red Hot" from Motley Crue's *Shout At The Devil.* Nicko McBrain of Iron Maiden, noted at the time as one of metal's few single-bass players, naturally earned a rep for his quick foot. When Rick Allen of Def Leppard lost his left arm in an auto accident, he embraced technological advances to build a custom set to continue his career, and unknowingly opened new creative avenues for conventional drummers. Thrash mongers turned their attentions to Lars Ulrich, who, along with Metallica, gave the underground world a "Whiplash" with unprecedented speed.

Today, as hard rock diversifies, it has seemingly come full circle. Its most noted young players either come from non-metal backgrounds or play in bands that wouldn't have fallen under the metal banner even a few years ago. Will Calhoun of Living Colour, Mike Bordin of Faith No More, Stephen Perkins of Jane's Addiction, Matt Cameron of Soundgarden, Tim Alexander of Primus, and Jimmy Chamberlin of Smashing Pumpkins are just a few who incorporate nuances of jazz and funk into their playing. Scott Rockenfield of Queensryche and Mark Zonder of Fate's Warning are direct descendants of Peart's deliberate approach. All of them belie stereotypes of the metal drummer.

It seems, then, that metal's continued existence is directly tied to musicians who refuse to stay inside the perceived boundaries of the style. In fact, its growth appears *dependant on* erasing boundaries. But that responsibility doesn't fall solely on the shoulders of "name" players. If it did, metal would die when current bands dissolve. It's up to street-level, garage-band, woodshedding musicians to keep their craft fresh, interesting, and inspiring. And *that's* one thing drummers in this genre have in common with all others: Today's visionaries are tomorrow's role models.

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Improving Your Time

by Robert Danielson

Drummers are continually concerned with their timekeeping, the goal being to eliminate unintended variations in tempo over the length of a song. Most bands *expect* the drummer to be the timekeeper, and this makes sense. But there can be problems if one or more of the other players are weak in the time department. To be fair, it's nearly impossible for a drummer to be unaffected by a bandmate who rushes or drags. (A steady player is certainly a lot more fun to play with than a technical virtuoso who can't keep good time.) But don't overlook the possibility that it's your timing problem and not someone else's. If it is, it doesn't have to be a major problem, because there are a few things you can do to rectify the problem.

Setting Up

The way you set up your kit will influence your ability to play comfortably and steadily. Out-of-reach cymbals and toms and awkwardly positioned foot pedals are going to hamper your ability to perform with ease and accuracy. Even if you've played the same setup for years, it's never a bad idea to give your drums a critical once-over to be sure that everything conforms to your height and reach. Position the components of your set in a way that requires minimum reach, but that doesn't make you feel crowded. It's essential to feel *balanced.* If your upper body is moving with every bass drum or hi-hat leg movement, your time is bound to be unsteady. Placing your pedals in a comfortable location can help. Try to position them equal distances away from your hips for better stability.

Listening

Your ability to play steady time will improve with practice and ear training. Listen to recordings to determine what kind of feel each member of the rhythm section contributes to the song. Is the feel in the pocket, or does it fluctuate? Does the tempo waver when the drummer does a fill? Live recordings made without a click track are excellent sources for ear training. Listen carefully and learn to identify the good and not-so-good influences that each player may have on the time. This is the kind of perception you'll need to bring to your own practice sessions and performances.

Metronomes And Drum Machines

Metronomes and drum machines are essential tools for all musicians interested in working on their time. Whichever device you use, make sure you can hear it clearly over the volume of your instrument. I prefer to use a metronome with a stereo outlet. I then plug isolation headphones that completely enclose the ears into the outlet. With the headphones on it's easy to reach a volume setting that allows me to hear the click track *above* the drums, or even the entire band.

A click track can be as simple as the tone put out by a conventional metronome, or as complex as an entire drumset rhythm played back from a drum machine. If your metronome or drum machine doesn't have a headphone jack, try recording a click track onto a cassette tape. Record several tempos and give each at least five minutes of tape time. Now you have a click track you can practice with.

If you *really* want to check your timing, make a customized click track, either by programming it into a drum machine or recording it onto a cassette. You might start with a track that consists of seven measures of click, followed by an eighth measure of silence. Be sure to repeat the cycle for several minutes. These recycling click tracks are easy to program into a drum machine. If you're recording a customized click onto a cassette from a conventional metronome, simply turn off the record volume level during the silent eighth measure, and put it back on for the downbeat of measure one. Practice playing a steady beat through all eight measures, or try seven measures of a beat with a drum fill during the silent eighth measure. Make sure that you're in tempo when the down beat of measure one clicks back in. You could also experiment with even *longer* periods of silence

...More Tips On Time

by Ken Vogel

1) *Practice With Records:* Use headphones when practicing along with records or tapes. Try to lock in with the drummer on the recording. Just play the essential beat at first, and leave out the fills. Once you're able to play the basic beat throughout without any tempo fluctuations, then add the fills.

2) *Using Tape:* Tape yourself while playing along with a recording or a drum machine. Pay close attention to the flow and consistency of your playing when you listen back. Are you locked in with *yourself?* If you're playing a straight 8th-note pattern on a closed hi-hat, and a straight quarter-note pattern on the bass drum, are both limbs striking at exactly the same time?

3) *Slow It* Down: Since maintaining accurate time seems to be much more difficult at slower tempos, practice playing along with a drum machine or metronome at slow settings. Also, work with slow music on records or tapes. Keep your beats and fills basic at first. As your time improves, try more complex patterns.

4) *Playing Live:* Concentrate on locking in with the musicians in your band, the same as you would with a drum machine or metronome. Tape yourself in live situations and study the playbacks after the gig. Is the intro of the tune played at the same tempo of the count-off? Does the tempo of the tune change when going from the intro to the verse, the verse to chorus, or the chorus to the solo? Do you have a tendency to drag the tempo when changing from a straight 8th-note pattern on the hi-hat to a quarter-note pattern on the bell of the ride cymbal? Do you rush or drag fill-ins or solos? These are all very important areas to examine when attempting to improve your timekeeping ability.

on the click track.

Simplification

If the rhythm you're playing is a challenging one, take care not to sacrifice the time for the sake of a difficult coordination pattern. Simplify your part if that's what it takes for the song to groove. Don't confuse *simple* playing with *simplistic* playing. Simple playing requires tasteful combinations of dynamics, tone, and emotion. Simplistic playing is lifeless and doesn't have any feel of push or pull. Sometimes simple playing is required not because of difficulties *you're* having with tempo, but because another player is unsteady. The beat is more clearly defined when you play simply.

Remember, as a drummer, you have tremendous influence over the feel of a tune. If it seems to you that a bandmate is rushing or dragging, don't be insistent by playing louder or busier. Project a positive, concentrated, in-control attitude. Playing a simpler rhythm can help define *exactly* where the time is.

Finally, before a performance, give yourself plenty of time to both warm up and relax. Stiff or cramped muscles will cause you to drag the time. Also, avoid drugs, alcohol, and people who use them. Your perception of time can suffer from the influences of stimulants or depressants. Drummers with a good sense of time are always aware of the beat, and always in *control* of it.

continued from page 35

The heart of any drumming style is its rudiments, and this is especially true of pipe drumming. They are the drummer's vocabulary. The application and predominance of certain types of rudiments are what define a style. Drum corps and marching bands lean heavily towards open rolls and paradiddle movements; rock drummers use predominantly single and double strokes, etc.... Now let's take a look at which rudiments make up the pipe drummer's vocabulary.

It would be impossible in this article to show more than a few rudiments pipe drummers use. So I will choose some that best exemplify the style and present them in phrase form to give a true sense of how they are used. I've broken them down into stroke type: buzz, singles, and double strokes. Grace notes are also very important to this style, so we will also look at how they are employed.

Let's start with the buzz roll, since its function is the most idiomatic, or more precisely, *peculiar,* of this style. It is used in ways that are found in no other style, and can be the most confusing thing you've ever seen on paper!

The buzz is extremely tight. It matches the tightness of the drumhead; as the drums improved and the heads got tighter, so did the buzz. In fact, with heads as tight as these, only a very condensed buzz stroke can be played effectively. If you try to open your roll too much, it becomes haggard, uneven, and unsatisfactory.

All the basic rolls are used—long and short, six- and ten-strokes, and so on. The biggest difference is the use of accent-

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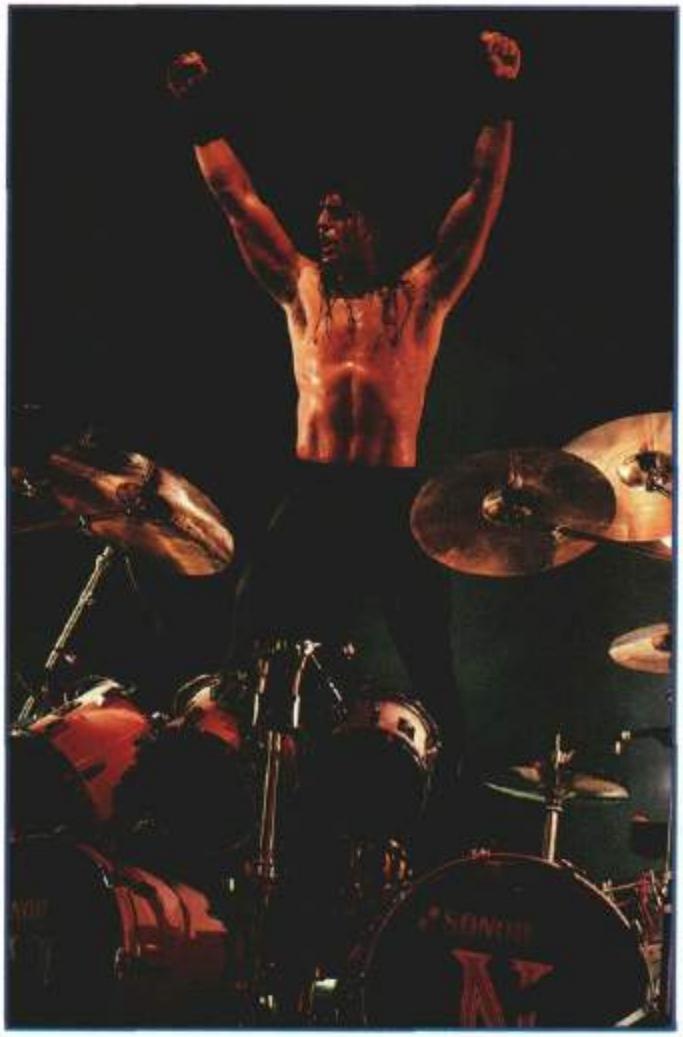

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ed rolls. The combination of various rolls, accents, and drags has created a hybrid form of playing that is unique to this idiom. Its lyrical technique allows drummers to beautifully match the lilting, dancing tunes of the pipes.

What follows is a phrase from a strathspey, a purely Scottish type of dance tune played normally at about 116 beats per minute. I've written it in my own way, which I believe is more correct and easier to understand than other versions I've seen. It may be confusing to look at, but it is actually comprised of only three rudiments: accented five-stroke rolls, six-stroke rolls, and drags (or, as they are known in pipe drumming lingo, four-stroke rolls or "tizz-roll"). In this genre the accents are written over notes with roll hash marks, instead of separating the accent and the roll. So, the first note is a single-stroke accent, followed by the roll:

The drags, or "tizz-roll," are played in a very specific way. When I teach this rudiment to students, I first have them practice double strokes, then carefully place a buzz stroke in between the two taps, being sure to keep them evenly spaced. They work well in jigs, allowing the drummer to use the roll sound while producing a strong, smooth, rhythmic feel in a quick 6/8 time. For example:

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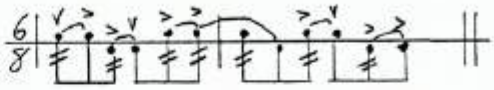
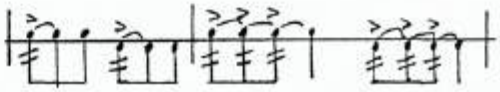


As you see in this example, playing in a triple meter adds an extra twist to this rudiment. In order to bring out the triple feel, the second accent of the hand playing on the second beat must be played stronger. This is akin to playing double strokes with an accent on the second tap.

Another unique rudiment adapted from these drags uses a one-handed three-stroke. It's either played with one drag between the first two strokes, or with three successive drags. The latter can be thought of as a half-single, half buzz-stroke roll. Here's how they look:



Drags are also played in the more usual fashion, which in pipe band lingo is called "dot and cut" (a.k.a. dotted 8th and 16th, or dotted 16th and 32nd). But this also brings up one of those ambiguous idiosyncrasies I spoke of. These drags are often written not dot and cut, but as straight 8ths or 16ths—the pipe-16th syndrome again. The following is an example from the pen of the late, great Alex Duthart, written just as he did. It is from one of his famous drum salutes, "Salute To Max Rayner":

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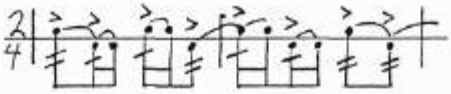
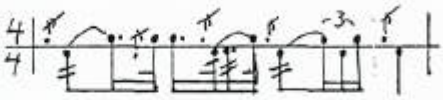


The drags are written as straight 16ths, but are played dot and cut. The only written clue hinting at the difference between these drags and those mentioned earlier is that these have only one accent on the first note, while the others have accents on both notes.

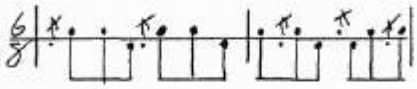
Flam rolls are also popular. They're used in the same way as accents but add an extra punch and texture that plain accents don't provide:



Before going on to single and double strokes, it is necessary to first take a look at grace notes. They play an integral part in pipe drumming and are used extensively in all drum scores. Without first gaining an understanding of them, it would be difficult to comprehend many of the examples that follow.

Grace notes are often (but not exclusively) added to the pick-up note of a phrase or lick. The pick-up feel is extremely important in pipe music because beat notes are often overshadowed by their preceding pick-up. Drummers aid and strengthen this syncopated feel with the addition of grace notes. I relate this closely to the rhythmic feel of jazz, with its strong "chic-KA-boom-KA-boom" sound, and I often use it as a teaching technique for getting this idea across to students. Grace notes aren't the exclusive domain of pick-ups. They're often inflicted upon unsuspecting little accents that thought they were too tightly packed into a phrase for any more notes to fit in, but somehow it gets done.

A flam's a flam, and a ruff's a ruff, right? This is true to a point. There's not much you can do differently with flams: Jazz drummers play them open, pipe drummers play them tight. The main difference is the context in which they are played. Two common flam rudiments introduced through the influence of Dr. Berger can give a taste of this context: the "Swiss army flam triplet," and the "Swiss inverted tap flam":



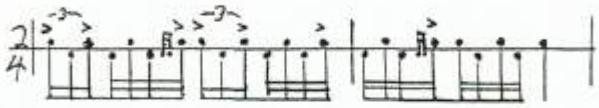
Ruffs, on the other hand, can be played differently. An American three-stroke ruff has a definite "rrruff" sound, where as the Scottish version has more of a "zot" sound. It's actually closer to a flam, with the tap replaced by what is called a "deadstick." This is a short buzz stroke that is pushed into the head until it stops. Ruffs often replace flams, adding a more potent and aggressive sound. The open American-style three-stroke ruff has also gradually worked its way over in ratamacues and

other related rudiments. The two ruffs are differentiated on paper by the direction of their staffs—closed are up, and open are down.

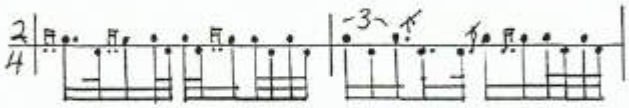
The four-stroke ruff is also popular. It's sometimes played with alternated strokes, but the more prevalent version uses a single/double-stroke combination. All of these grace notes will be shown in the examples that follow.

Single strokes are used extensively in pipe drumming. They have been highly stylized to match the requirements of the music, both rhythmically and through the application of accents and grace notes. Almost all single-stroke runs are based upon either triplets, groups of four, or both, with many derivations of the two.

The single-stroke seven, shown earlier, is a prime example of how fours and triplets are used together. But it gets even better when used in longer lines, with a few grace notes added—like here, for instance:

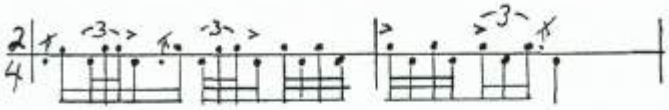


and here:

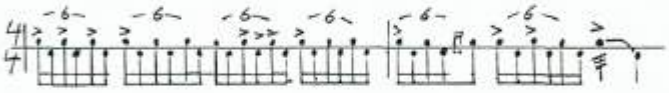


Both examples have the "zot" ruff in them, both on the beat notes and on the pick-ups. At 80 beats per, an American ruff would be impossible. The trick with these ruffs, at this tempo, is to play through them. Don't allow the sticks—and the rhythm—to bog down. Hit them and get smoothly and quickly off them.

Here's another single-stroke based example using the four-stroke ruff and flams. The grace notes are written out for rhythmic clarity; the tempo here is also around 80 beats per:



This next single-stroke run is from a strathspey. It's comprised of sixes, which work well in tunes based on a three feel, such as jigs and strathspeys. The dynamic force of this line comes from its use of accents. Notice the small cluster of accents on the third beat; it requires a bit of practice and good stick control to get right, but it has a great sound when done properly:

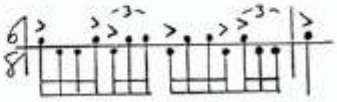


Double strokes have slowly worked their way into the pipe drumming vocabulary. In the past they were confined mostly to

simple paradiddle movements. A few intrepid adventurers were brave enough to try out some more complicated double-stroke rudiments, but they were in a small minority. Their efforts, though, did help lead to a greater acceptance and use of the double stroke.

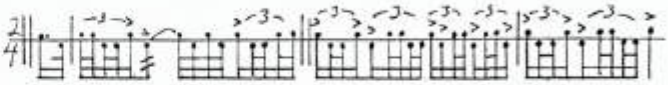
Inverted paradiddles are now commonplace. The "mill-stroke" is a good example of this. It is a second inversion paradiddle with a flam, but, for added fun, the flam can be replaced with a ruff. This is a common practice around here: Take a tough rudiment and add something to it that makes it even tougher.

First inversion paradiddles are also getting a lot of airplay. They're often used in place of single strokes, adding a more textural sound while utilizing the same rhythm. They can be broken up into "para-bits" (my own word) and combined with other rudiments or full paradiddles to make some great phrases. This is one from a 6/8 march score I got from Jackie Houlden of the Black Bottle Whiskey Pipe Band of Glasgow:



Its foundation is the elemental rhythm of 6/8 pipe tunes—dotted 8th note, 16th note, and 8th note.

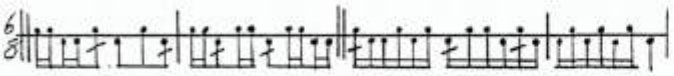
With today's greater acceptance of double strokes, open rolls are now attaining a much more prominent role. Long rolls are not involved. Five-, six-, and—to a lesser degree—seven- and nine-strokes are the only open rolls being used. These rolls don't function the same as buzz rolls; they are more akin in sound and use to singles. On paper, they are always written out note for note, indicating the rhythmic importance of each note. You won't see long strings of open rolls, as in the case of the accented rolls shown earlier. For the most part they come in short bursts mixed in with other rudiments. Here are examples of this:

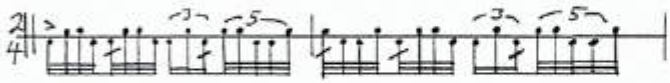


One peculiar technique I've recently come across for double-strokes replaces the second tap with a "deadstick." I first discovered this in an Alex Duthart score. He placed the deadstick on the last notes of paradiddles. This is quite a difficult thing to do. I needed to practice a long time on just the double-stroke part, slowly working up an open roll with a trailing deadstick, before I could come close to playing the whole paradiddle. This gave me a solid preparatory foundation for this rudiment and its many variations.

A deadstick makes a great replacement for the accent of an open roll. It adds a whole new dimension to the roll and allows the drummer to highlight specific notes in a way other than with just an accent. In fact, the deadstick can be used in place of any accent; it spices up any phrase like an extra dash of

tabasco on your Bloody Mary. Here are three spicy examples to show what I mean. The first two are from a jig by John Quigg of the Denny & Dunipace pipe band from Washington D.C., the second is from a march by Jackie Houlden. The hash mark indicates the deadstick:





This has only been a quick look at pipe drumming, but now that you've had this brief indoctrination, if you happen to see a pipe band soon, be it in a parade, at Highland games, or wherever—especially one that has elevated itself up to a higher playing level—give it a close listen. You may be surprised by what you hear. There's a lot more to them than just a bunch of drunken Scots and Irishmen marching around in psuedo-feminine attire. Because, afta ahl, laddy, therr be a mahdness te their muthud!

Mambo Applications: The Maracas Pattern Revisited

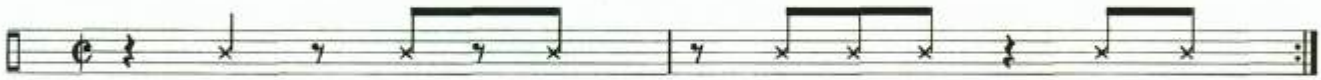
by Chuck Silverman

In July's *Latin Symposium,* we looked at the mambo maracas pattern as applied to the drumset. This pattern has brought forth many interesting applications. By playing the pattern on the hi-hat with your weak hand, you're helping to develop it. By juxtaposing the pattern, you're enhancing your independence. And by learning some typical applications, you're developing feel. All of these things combined help you better develop your command and control of the drumset.

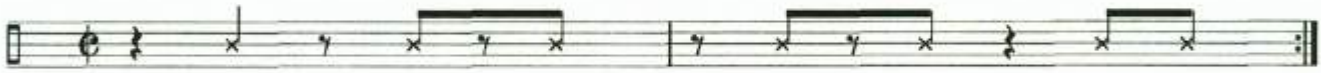
If you were in a typical Latin musical situation, the patterns from July's column would work very well for the verse section of a mambo-style tune. For example, the combination of maracas and clave, with the bass drum playing the tumbao pattern, works quite well in that context. This month we'll examine a practical application of what you might play for the chorus section.

The mambo cowbell is the instrument that the timbale player most often plays during the chorus of a mambo-style tune. There are many different patterns to choose from, some more common than others. In future columns we'll examine some very typical patterns and some approaches to applying them to the drumset. This time out, though, we'll look at a less common pattern.

Jose Luis Quintana (Changito) is the great Cuban drummer with the band Orquesta Los Van Van. He has influenced many drummers all over the world. Many credit Changito with inventing (or at the very least popularizing) the rhythm of songo. Changito frequently plays the following mambo bell pattern. As written, it is in 2/3 clave.



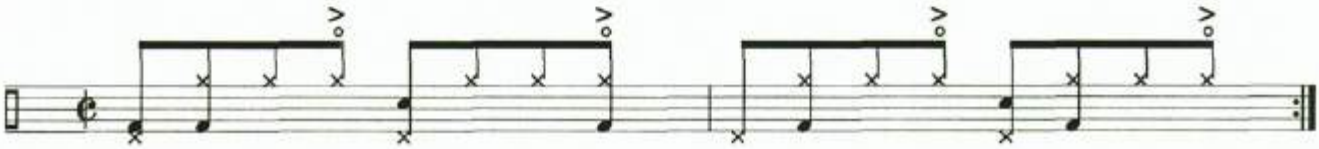
Now let's alter the bell pattern in order to create a drumset groove to play opposite the maracas pattern on the hi-hat. Here's that alteration:



Now let's apply the altered pattern to the drumset. Some of the notes are now played on bass drum, others on the snare. Remember that since we're still applying the pattern in 2/3 clave, we have another groove waiting, the one in 3/2. Here is the application in 2/3 clave, but by starting the pattern on the second measure and then playing the first measure, you'll have the 3/2 application.

Next, let's have the snare play on the backbeat. By starting a groove with the two bass drum notes at the end of the application, the snare notes fall on the backbeat. Of course this permutation also changes the hi-hat pattern. Here's the permutation:

A slight alteration places the snare on both backbeats:



Now let's apply the original hi-hat maracas pattern with the latest permutation.

I hope these applications help you see some of the possibilities in applying Latin rhythms to the drumset. There are many other ideas to come. By remaining open and receptive to change and new ideas, we *all* become better. As always, your comments are welcome.

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INSIDE SABIAN

continued from page 37

discuss Sabian and not discuss Bob in the same breath, because that's his life."

But many cymbal consumers had no idea of the connection between the Sabian brand and Robert Zildjian's family heritage. In fact, the agreement between the two companies specifically forbade the use of Robert Zildjian's name in conjunction with the promotion of any Sabian product. So all that drummers knew in the early 1980s was that there was a new brand of cymbals on the market—to be taken at face value and judged according to their sound. Robert Zildjian was keenly aware of this, and he established a policy within the company to deal with it—as customer service manager Peter Stairs explains.

"I started out as a tester seven years ago. I can remember Bob talking to me about the quality-control process. He said, 'Remember, nobody knows who the hell Sabian is. The product is all we have to offer, so we have to have the best product there is.' I can remember us throwing out complete batches of cymbals because they didn't meet Bob's standards. He wanted only *great* product on the market; he didn't want even one clunker out there to spoil the reputation we were working so hard to establish. So I think it was that quality control—which was established from the beginning and continues today—that helped us grow in the marketplace as rapidly as we did."

It's unquestionably true that a company can't succeed without a quality product. But even *with* such a product, entering the highly competitive cymbal market in the way that Sabian did in January 1982 (they were legally prevented from entering the U.S. market until the following year) was no picnic. The first few years gave little reason for confidence, as Nort Hargrove, assistant vice president for manufacturing, explains. "By the time Sabian was three years old, we could see a pattern going on; you could read it from the numbers sold. We started with 52,000 cymbals sold the first year, then 49,000, then just over 40,000."

Manufacturing vice president Dan Barker continues, "The name was out there, but the reaction was, 'Oh well... another cymbal company.' People looked at Sabian as a Canadian second-grade Zildjian. We knew that in order to gain

people's attention, we had to make products that they really wanted. How do you do that? You go back to the requests that you've had from people over the years.

Dan gives an example: "I've always had requests for recording cymbals: 'My cymbals are great live, but I can't take them into the studio. I'm spending hours trying to EQ them, and the engineer always gives me problems.' That's where the inspiration for our *Sound Control* series came from. It offered a line of small crash cymbals that were in and out quickly and had a volume threshold. It was a good series for its purpose, and even went beyond our expectations.

"When we wanted to address the entry-level market," Dan continues, "we started by importing a phospher-bronze cymbal made in Germany. But we decided that we could put out a better product if we did it in-house. That's where the *B8* line came in. It was a good product, and it really got the 'cymbal wars' started, because at that point Sabian had a line to go up against the entry-level lines from the other major companies. It doesn't take a genius to realize that when you satisfy the public and/or come out with something that is innovative, all of a sudden it's like somebody hit the accelerator—things happen!"

What happened, in Sabian's case, was an acceptance in the marketplace and the beginnings of the consistent sales growth the company has enjoyed over the past seven years—to a point where 1992's projected output will be between 225,000 and 250,000 units.

David McAllister is quick to point out that "We haven't reached that level by compromising our quality standards. If anything, the standards have gotten higher. And when you're putting out that number of cymbals—working two shifts—maintaining that quality standard is a whole new ballgame."

But other companies in the music industry have quality products, and have still not enjoyed the kind of success that Sabian has in such a brief period of time. Why is that?

Wayne Blanchard, Sabian's manager of marketing communications, theorizes, "Possibly because we've always maintained a very aggressive stance at both the consumer and dealer level. I like to think that we've recognized the shortcomings of our competitors and picked up the ball in regard to what consumers and dealers are looking for. We have several drummers on our staff—including Andy, Dan, and myself—and we're constantly pushing for new things. We also listen very hard to outside suggestions. We have an ongoing directive from Bob to be in touch with the public, keep our ears to the ground, and know what's happening. And due to the nature of our company, when we learn something, we have the capability to react quickly."

David McAllister adds, "We also employ a team style of management. Nobody—not even Bob—sits in an ivory tower making decisions. Instead, we gather the input from our people in the U.S., Canada, Europe, and wherever else we do business. We exchange ideas, dissect what we've done, and plot directions for the future. Obviously, it's all done within the framework of financial and marketing plans, because the company has to act responsibly in terms of how we run our business. But it's very much a team effort, and what can come out of that is really good. The direction is not 'How do we make more money?' or 'How do we squeeze more out of the market?'; it's 'How do we do a better job?' and

'How can we make our product better?' Frankly, a positive financial result is just going to follow as a result of those activities."

Has that "positive financial result" been affected by the current world-wide recession—and particularly the slump in the U.S. musical-instrument industry?

David replies, "There are more than adequate statistics to show that the percussion market in North America was in a serious decline in 1991. But our 1991 business in North America was *ahead* of 1990—albeit marginally. And we know that we did that by taking market share from our competitors. It was a very tough and costly fight—we have to give our competitors credit for their tenacity. Fortunately, we underwent terrific growth in Europe and Asia that sort of offset some of the tightness of the North American situation.

"In 1992, the world economy is still very uncertain. But our business in the U.S. at the end of the first quarter was up 27%. A lot of that was new-product-led, with the success of products we introduced in January. But it does seem as though there is a recovery of sorts in the U.S. retail area at the moment, while the international market continues to grow."

"The 1992 Winter NAMM show was sort of a watershed for us," comments Wayne Blanchard. "We came away with a very positive feeling. For the last four or five years we'd tended to regard ourselves as sort of the underdogs. We'd like to think that we now realize our own self-worth as a company—standing up and making a statement for ourselves: Sabian's here, and we've got the goods."

Editor's note: With all the references to Robert Zildjian in this story, the reader may wonder why he was not included among the Sabian personnel interviewed in it. The simple fact is, when MD *visited Sabian, Bob was "on the road," visiting dealers in conjunction with several Sabian clinicians. As his son Andy puts it, "Dad's always involved with everything, making sure the pot is continually stirred. He likes to sweat the details. When people ask me where Bob Zildjian lives, I say: 'Canada, Massachusetts, and American Airlines!'"*

SABIAN CYMBAL PRODUCTION

continued from page 39

on the cymbals. But because people *do* have those perceptions, the controversy will go on and on.

Quality Control

Of all the various production stages, which is the most influential on the final quality and sound characteristic of the cymbals?

"They're all equally important," replies Dan. "When you're seeking acoustic value, it has to start right from the alloy and continue all the way through the production steps. If the product isn't perfect at the first step, it doesn't matter what we do after that. We cannot correct a mistake.

"A lot of our operations are simple," continues Dan. "But we do them in a very thorough manner, because—again—we're not going after hardware. We're going after sound and acoustic value. We make a conscious effort to explain the acoustic value of the first steps—casting, or heating, or rolling the

blanks—to the guys doing those steps. When we train our workers, we make sure they understand *why* they're doing what they're doing. As a result, everybody here is a quality control inspector. If something goes wrong at any point, there isn't a person on our line who doesn't have the authority to reject the product right on the spot."

Testing and Evaluation

Each batch of cymbals is assigned a number, and a sheet that accompanies it through the various production steps records its history. The sheet notes how many cymbals came through each particular process, how many were rejected, and how many were passed. "We document everything just in case we have to go back," says Dan. "If we have a problem, we stop what we're doing, figure out what's wrong and why it's happening, and take appropriate action."

After the cymbals come off the production line, they are given a preliminary testing by the shop foreman. Then they go to the inspection station, where they are allowed to sit for three to five days. "This gets into the aging process that's part of the 'mystery' of cymbal-making," Dan comments. "We've taken a piece of metal and done things with it that it didn't want to do. The molecules have been displaced, and now they want to come home. The problem is, they don't quite know where home is, so they run around for a little while. As a result, the cymbal sounds a little dull; it doesn't open up and have a full body yet. But in a matter of three days, that sound will come right out. After that, it's a sliding scale, and those people who have the philosophy that 'the older a cymbal the better'...well, there's just no proof of that at all. We've taken scientific measurements, and we've determined that the greatest amount of change takes place in the first 72 hours after production—almost regardless of alloy."

What would cause an inspector to reject a cymbal at this point? "Obvious imperfections in appearance or manufacture," replies Dan, "along with acoustical imperfections that only a trained ear could detect. He also checks each cymbal on a metal pad to make sure that it

sits flat all the way around. If it's warped, it's rejected. Since so many of our cymbals are hand-made, there is going to be a certain degree of imperfection. But some of those imperfections can be corrected. A *Leopard* cymbal, for example, can be re-hammered, because it hasn't been lathed. It may not come *back* as a *Leopard;* most probably it would come back as a lathed HH."

Once the inspection has been completed and the cymbal has aged, it gets put on the shelf according to what model it is. As cymbals are chosen to fill a given order, they receive a final ear check. So each cymbal gets three acoustic tests. Only after an order is made up do the cymbals receive their printed logos—after which they're immediately bagged and boxed. This keeps the logos from getting scratched or smeared while the cymbals are on the shelves.

When it comes to shipping, Sabian approaches this seemingly mundane operation ecologically. "We use a powerful shredder to convert all of our office paper, newspapers from home, and scrap cardboard into packing material," says Dan. "It's a lot better than styrofoam 'popcorn.' We're also looking at paper wrap for cymbals and other products instead of plastic. But even the plastic we're using now is recyclable."

Metal Fabrication

In addition to cymbals, Sabian makes Turkish and Chinese gongs in Meductic. Larger, symphonic-style gongs are imported from Taiwan. Up until recently, the stands for those gongs—as well as the "trees" used by dealers to display cymbals in their stores—were also made in Taiwan. But the company determined that they could make these items better—and more cost-effectively—if they had their own metal fabrication facility in-house. So a portion of the storage building built in 1990 was recently re-dedicated to this operation. According to Dan, "It looks as though the manufacturing operations are going to be expanding to where we'll soon have to build yet another building for our warehousing."

Custom Cymbals

Does Sabian's busy production schedule allow time for making custom-order cymbals for individuals? "Yes," enthuses Dan, "and we do a lot of them. Last year, we averaged making two individual special-ordered products per week. And it doesn't matter if you're a big-name endorser or just a working drummer. People will come to us and say, 'I have this favorite old cymbal that I love. Can you make one like it?' Yes, we can—if you give us that old cymbal to take the specs from. If you just call me on the phone and try to *describe* a sound you want—that's another story. But if we have something to go on, we stand a very

good chance of duplicating it.

"We do so much special development," says Dan, "it's become a mainstay of why there *is* a Sabian. In our business you just never know what the next wrinkle is going to be. And it often happens that the work that we do on special orders comes to fruition for us as a marketing item. A year ago, Mel Gaynor came to us and said, 'I love a ride cymbal with a big bell, but I'm tired of cymbals that have *only* that one dimension. Can you develop a cymbal that has both a big bell *and* a decent ride quality?' So we came up with the HH *Power Ride.* We were able to get the big bell, and—because we can do things by hand—we were also able to get the bow shaped and the lathing done so that there was a real cymbal sound as well—not just a clank.

"Our R&D is a little different from that of other manufacturers," Dan continues. "We work very closely with our endorsing artists to develop highly specialized items. Jack Dejohnette is probably the best example. It goes beyond production with Jack; it gets into an art form. He always has his mind open, and working with him is quite an undertaking. There were times during the development of Jack's *Signature* series when I'd have to stop and ask, 'What the hell are we doing?' Even after the product was made and Jack said, 'This is it,' I still wasn't sure what we had. It was only after I heard him do a clinic at a PASIC show that I really appreciated what he had been going for. And I was right there in the development the entire time.

"Chester Thompson came to me one day and said, "Dan, I have a certain cymbal that I'm looking for. I've never actually *heard* it, but I have the sound in my head." From a manufacturing standpoint, you want to see panic? How do I get a mechanical spec on a product when I can't even get the acoustic specs from the drummer? Well, we worked together until we obtained what he wanted. And whether it's Mel, Jack, Chester—or some kid from Podunk—that's the fun of this job."

Stimulating Creativity

• by Woody Thompson

Finding ways to keep the pursuit of drumming interesting and creative over the years is sometimes challenging to experienced players. Drummers often become "addicted" to certain patterns, both mental and physical, that confine us to plateaus of creativity and inspiration.

There are many tried-and-true techniques for stimulating our rhythmic minds and helping us out of our musical ruts. Taking licks from recordings, seeking new input from videos or personal instruction, seeing a top-notch player perform live—these are some of the more common ways of keeping the musical mind fresh and open.

I'd like to suggest a few other, perhaps less conventional techniques that drummers can use to keep from becoming entombed in their rhythmic habits. These suggestions are all geared toward breaking habits that may be so entrenched in your musical life that you're unaware that they are holding you back.

1) *Listen to music that is completely different from the music you normally listen to.* Frank Zappa once said that most people listen to music that supports and reinforces their lifestyle. As drummers, we often listen only to music that directly reinforces our own *musical* style. Although it is admirable to listen intensively to a certain kind of music in order to perfect our own knowledge of it, it can also limit the development of our own musical voices. Listening to different types of music can help loosen our preconceptions about what music is supposed to be, and open us to new perspectives.

Choosing a particularly rhythmic type of music—such as African or Latin—might be a step in the right direction, but don't limit yourself. Check out music from other countries, cultures, or times—anything to jog your ears out of their comfortable listening habits. Listening critically and analyzing the rhythmic approach of music can certainly be helpful to a drummer's growth, but the important thing is to expose yourself to something new and give your musical mind a chance to absorb it.

Most musicians operate from a kind of "stew" of musical influences. In our culture, due to the narrow marketing of musical styles, this stew can begin to taste dull. The point is to add new and different ingredients to that stew, which will hopefully be reflected in your approach to the instrument.

2) *Allow yourself to be influenced by instruments other than drums.* One of the ruts that drummers often get into is listening only to the drummer when they listen to music. But the drums are a musical instrument similar in basic ways to other musical instruments. Therefore, drummers can be influenced just as easily by an instrument such as the guitar as by other instruments of the percussion family.

Study the phrasing and time feel of a singer or horn player and attempt to duplicate it rhythmically on your drums. Drummers like Max Roach and Elvin Jones enhanced their artistry by building their solos on the melodies of the songs they were playing, using the phrasing of the melodic instruments to structure their own improvisations. There's no reason you shouldn't be able to apply such ideas, too.

3) *Rearrange the physical setup of your instrument.* Set up your toms in different configurations, mount your ride cymbal on your weak-hand side, switch your bass and hi-hat around—anything to interfere with the normal physical approach you have to your instrument. Much of what drummers become habituated to is the physical movement patterns that they employ on the set. Rearranging your kit can help thwart these conditioned actions and force you to reinvent patterns.

If you play a large kit, try paring it down to the basics. If you play a small kit, try adding a sound or two. It's not even necessary that your setup remain this way—only that you practice breaking your physical habits. Take careful note of the results of this restructuring, and try to integrate it into your playing style.

> "Mistakes are sometimes the result of subconscious creativity attempting to emerge and influence our routines."

4) *Follow your mistakes.* I have a personal theory that mistakes are sometimes the result of subconscious creativity attempting to emerge and influence our routines. Of course, often enough a mistake is simply a mistake. But I have also found that if I pay attention to the way my body "mishandles" something it is used to doing, it can lead to a new way to handle a pattern. Sometimes a mistake can be the result of hearing something new that cannot yet be executed. Instead of always seeing mistakes as complete aberrations of the correct, try viewing them as windows to the possible. So if you make a mistake, stop, and try to repeat it in a workable context.

5) *Try "spazzing out" on the drumset.* This is a technique that more than one avant-garde drummer has credited with advancing their style. Bobby Previte has said that by allowing himself to let his limbs go as they wished on the kit, he was able to move toward a more creative form of

expression on the instrument. This is not a technique for everybody, and I *don't* recommend that you do it on the gig. However, lurking in your creative consciousness may be ways of structuring time that you aren't fully aware of. It may be that these will only show themselves when you give yourself permission to go wild and break all the rules.

Of course, it isn't necessary that you adopt this as your style of soloing or playing. Again, what *is* important is paying attention to the sonic and rhythmic results of your willingness to play freely, and then distilling out those moments that sound or feel good to you. Hopefully this will lead to the creation of a base of new ideas with which to enhance and enliven your playing.

MD's "Drumkit Of The Month"

Every drummer is proud of his or her drums, but some go to special efforts to create very personal kits. These might involve unusual arrangements of drums, special finishes, unique mounting methods, or innovative staging ideas. If you have a kit that you think other drummers would enjoy seeing, *MD* invites you to send us a photo. We will select photos from among those sent to appear in future issues in *MD's Drumkit Of The Month* department. The criteria for our selection will be kits that are **visually interesting** and/or **musically unusual**. We are **not** looking for kits that are simply **big**.

Photo Requirements

1. Photos must be in color, and of high quality. (35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered. Polaroids cannot be accepted.)
2. You may send more than one view of the kit, but only one photo will be published.
3. Photos should be of drums only; no people should be in the shot.
4. Drums should be photographed against a neutral background (a sheet, drape, blank wall, etc.). Avoid "busy" backgrounds such as in your basement, garage, or bedroom.
5. Be sure that those attributes of your kit that make it special are clearly visible in the photo.

Send your photo(s) to Drumkit Of The Month, Modern Drummer Publications, 870 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Please note that photos cannot be returned, so don't send any originals you can't bear to part with.

RECORDINGS

THE ED THIGPEN TRIO

Mr. Taste

Justin Time R2 79379

Ed Thigpen: dr

Tony Purrone: gtr

Mads Vinding: bs

Ginger Bread Boy; Sometime Ago; Denise; Dewey Square; A Child Is Born; Invitation; You Name It; Ballad; Jamaican Baion; E.T.P.; Round Midnight; Tony's Blues

The title says it. Thigpen has always sounded especially strong with small, intimate groups or behind vocalists; these formats demand that a drummer be just as sensitive with a driving up-tempo bopper as with a quiet ballad. His long stints with Oscar Peterson and Ella proved that he's definitely the man with those qualifications. Superb with cymbal coloration and kit textures, Thigpen also reaffirms his status here as one of the great brush masters. (Check out "You Name It.")

On this disc, one of his few recorded dates as a leader, the master gets his chance to step out front equally with fellow trio members; there's plenty of stretching and soloing, and Ed has also contributed three tunes. Bassist Vinding gives the trio a fat, sumptuous grounding, and Purrone's nimble, full-o'-chops guitar work lends an urgent, modern edge to the trio's interplay. One surprising highlight is the group's unusual fractured samba arrangement of "Round Midnight." Good cooking, good taste.

• **Jeff Potter**

CONFESSOR

Condemned

Relativity/Earache 88561-1092-2

Scott Jeffreys: vcl

Brian Shoaf: gtr

Ivan Colon: gtr

Cary Rowells: bs

Stephen Shelton: dr

Alone; Prepare Yourself; Collapse Into Despair; Defining Happiness; Uncontrolled; Condemned; Eve Of Salvation; The Stain; Suffer

After digging past garage-like sound quality and the

challenge of distinguishing one song from the next, drummers will discover a goldmine of double-kick inspiration on *Condemned.* This album is a showcase for Stephen Shelton, who peppers the record with complicated polyrhythms and fills. But because Shelton rarely gets bogged down in tedious double-bass assaults, the record, though one of the busiest on the market, also comes off as one of the most listener-friendly.

Shelton's performance is the undeniable highlight here. And the band, smart enough to realize this, pretty much gets out of the way and lets him fly! The music, mostly power-chord driven thrash-grunge, leaves plenty of open space for the drummer. Shelton uses the twin kicks primarily for one- or two-beat triplet or 32nd-note fills. Unpredictable, tasteful cymbal chokes punctuate the action.

Key cuts include "Alone" and "Collapse Into Despair," where Shelton's creativity materializes into over-the-top hand-foot rhythmic combinations, while the title track features an involved drum intro. Bars of straight time are few and far between on this record, and the dry drum sound makes it easier to pick out the intricacies of Shelton's playing. And for metal drummers, that's reason alone to grab this record.

• **Matt *Peiken***

CHICO HAMILTON AND EUPHORIA

Arroyo

Soul Note 121241

Chico Hamilton: dr, vcl

Cary DeGris: gtr

Eric Person: sx

Reggie Washington: bs

Alone Together; The Dance We Didn't Have; Stop; Where's The Peace; Taunts Of An Indian Maiden; Tickle Toe; Sorta New; Cosa Succede?

Chico Hamilton began his career drumming for the ground-breaking, piano-less Gerry Mulligan quartet of the '60s. He eventually recorded over forty albums as a leader and did tons of session and soundtrack work. His light, Latin-influenced style has always prized musicality over brash technique, his trademark being a laid-back, extremely hip *groove* that permeated the surrounding music.

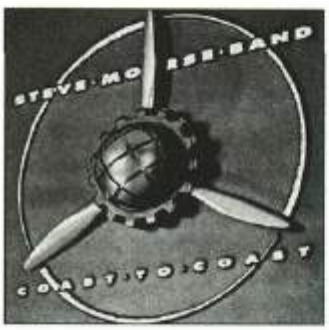
Arroyo finds this 50-something musician still grooving, with a band young enough to be his kids. After three albums together, this is a *band* in the real sense. Unlike many new releases where jazzers rehash the '60, *Arroyo* is a blend of funk, Latin, blues, *and* bebop, with the players' personalities

given full expression over diverse material. On "Alone Together," Chico kicks off with a funky Chambers-ish hi-hat/snare pattern, joined by DeGris' (remember the name) slippery guitar and Washington's slapping bass laying the path for some free, swinging solos. Some fusion ("Where's The Peace"), a pretty ballad ("The Dance We Didn't Have"), and Hamilton's impressionistic pieces ("Indian Maiden" and "Cosa Succede?") make *Arroyo* a surprising listen.

• **Ken *Micallef***

STEVE MORSE BAND

Coast To Coast
MCA MCAC10565
Steve Morse: gtr
Dave LaRue: bs
Van Romaine: dr
User Friendly; Collateral Damage; Get It In Writing; Morning Rush Hour; Runaway Train; Long Lost; The Oz; Over Easy; Cabin Fever; Flat Baroque



Guitar hero Steve Morse has always been caught between a desire to make art and a deep-seated need to rock. His 1989 opus, *High Tension Wires,* a more personal project, tended toward the pretensions of high art. He came back last year with the full-tilt rocker *Southern Steel.* Now Morse has come up with the perfect compromise in *Coast To Coast,* an album where he feeds his nobler impulses and gets his ya-yas out, too.

"User Friendly" and "The Oz" represent the more accessible, commercial aspects of Morse's palette, while he aims for higher ground on grandiose suites like "Get It In Writing" and "Long Lost." On the blazing-tempo workout "Collateral Damage," a kind of hyper-speed version of the Allman Brothers, Van Romaine has his double bass flailing. And on the bluegrass-y breakdown "Runaway Train," he complements Morse's techno-chicken-pickin' with some authentic country shuffling.

Throughout the album, Romaine is challenged to double up on precision jaw-dropping passages and navigate through tricky tempo changes, the same way Morse challenged Rod Morgenstein during their Dregs days. Now, after two albums and two tours together, it sounds as if Morse, Romaine, and super bassist Dave LaRue have established a tight rapport.

Morse, a virtuoso and a relentless perfectionist in the studio, always demands the best of his sidemen, and he certainly got it on this ripping project.

• ***Bill Milkowski***

DAVID MURRAY

Shakill's Warrior
Columbia/DIW CK 48963
David Murray: tn sx
Don Pullen: org
Stanley Franks: gtr
Andrew Cyrille: dr
Blues For Savannah; Song From The Old Country; High Priest; In The Spirit; Shakill's Warrior; At The Cafe Central; Black February; Milano Strut

What a fun surprise: Andrew Cyrille, universally respected drummer of the jazz avant-garde, presiding over a finger-popping set of deep-fried organ blues! Equally refreshing, of course, is visionary pianist Don Pullen's return to the sanctified Hammond, an instrument he mastered in Harlem during the '70s. Mix in David Murray's spiraling tenor and the mediating rhythm guitar of Stanley Franks, and you have perhaps the most remarkable organ band since the original Tony Williams Lifetime (featuring Larry Young).

Only Andrew's skittering fills nod toward the free-blowing world in which he is best known. Otherwise it's a solid shuffle, a smoky ballad (he holds back just enough when the front line pulls ahead of the congregation), a loose Latin romp, or a mischievous funk beat, occasionally reminding of his roots in the drum corps. "Priest," the lone Cyrille composition here, begins with a cryptic rap before giving way to an infectious groove and an angular melody, the guitar figure nicely bent to match. Murray takes it outside before Pullen take's over, with tone that feels like running your hand over old, polished wood.

• ***Hal Howland***

ARTHUR TAYLOR

Mr. *A.T.*
Enja R2 79677
Willie Williams: tn sx
Abraham Burton: al sx
Marc Gary: pno
Tyler Mitchell: bs
Arthur Taylor: dr
Mr. A.T.; Hi-Fly; Soul Eyes; Bullet Train; It Doesn't Matter; Ahmad's Blues; Gingerbread Boy

One of the most recorded jazz drummers of the late '50s/early '60s, "A.T." made his mark on hundreds of albums including classics like Coltrane's *Giant Steps.* In '64 Taylor moved to Europe, then returned to New York in '84. During the past two decades, he's appeared less frequently in the public eye. This high-spirited, soulful release marks his comeback as a leader, featuring the first edition of "Taylor's Wailers" since the original late-'50s group.

The second coming here is no nostalgic rehash. This group of newcomers is fierce and kicking, with an eloquence rooted by Taylor's maturity. Taylor's still got the stuff; entering his 60's hasn't cooled his furnace one degree. The opening cut proves how muscular brushes can be, and "It Doesn't Matter" offers an inflamed drums/alto duet. The material favors the kind of catchy lyrical melodies that work so well with Taylor's

blues-y, deep-grooved swing feel. "Mr. A.T."—the tune—is an irresistible melody that rolls around your brain for days. It deserves a quick promotion to the book of standards. "Mr. A.T."—the drummer—is, of course, already one of our great standards.

• ***Jeff* Potter**

GINO VANELLI

Live In Montreal
Vie/BMG 24350-2
Joe Vanelli: kybd
Enzo Tedesco: dr
Mike Miller: gtr, bs
Maxayne Lewis, Gino Vanelli: vcl
Richard Baudet: sx
Brother To Brother; Living Inside Myself; Wild Horses; Crazy Life; In The Name Of Money; Hurts To Be In Love; Something Tells Me; People Gotta Move; If I Should Lose This Love; Black Cars; I Just Wanna Stop; Where Am I Going; Black & Blue

With albums like *Storm At Sunup, Brother To Brother,* and *Nightwalker,* Gino Vanelli combined lush production values, neo-jazz fusion arrangements, and romantic power pop ballads to create music that at its best was progressive and challenging, at its worst a bit schmaltzy. But the music itself was always impeccably performed, drawing superb recordings out of drummers like Graham Lear, Casey Scheuerel, Mark Craney, and Vinnie Colaiuta. Intricate, challenging grooves and dramatic shifts in texture always brought the best out of the musicians the Vanelli brothers worked with.

Though his profile in the States has been low during the '80s, Vanelli remains popular in his native Canada, from whence this live recording was made. His powerful voice is still in top form, brother Joe remains a true keyboard marvel, and on *Live...* they've surrounded themselves with little known, exciting musicians once again. PIT instructor Enzo Tedesco has absorbed the drumming styles of Vanelli's ten recordings, but he performs here with a hyper, brilliant stamp obviously his own, with a nod to Mr. Weckl in the clinches.

More than a greatest hits collection, *Live In Montreal* is the legacy of two brothers embracing life and music.

• ***Ken Micallef***

BOOKS

BACK TO BASICS and *THE NEXT STEP*

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Price: $21.95 each

As part of the "DCI Video Transcriptions Series," these two Weckl book/audio tape packages are intended as companions to the DCI videos of the same titles.

The meat of these books is in the tune and solo transcriptions. Praise here goes to John Riley for his meticulously accurate job. Every ghost note is accounted for, and the interpretation of "looser" phrases is clearly grouped. The exercises relating to these transcriptions maintain a different focus in each volume.

The hand and foot exercises in *Basics* focus on reassessing one's fundamentals, while *Step* deals with conceptual studies, such as playing with a sequencer, displacing beats (so-called "playing backwards"), odd time playing, and soloing.

Though each package works alone, owners of previous DCI Weckl products will find some needless overlap with these books. Many of the audio tape numbers have been featured on the *Contemporary Drummer Plus One* package. Also, most of the book's text is repeated verbally between playing examples on the audio tape and on the video as well. Such three-medium repetition is a bit of overkill; it's also a hindrance while cueing up playing examples during practice.

Despite this small efficiency snag, the material is excellent. There are plenty of valuable ideas and exercises, all clearly presented. Although *Basics* contains material helpful to beginners (the cover cites playing level as "beginner to professional"), both volumes realistically cater to the very advanced. Those with the patience and ability to analyze the dense solo transcriptions will reap the most rewards. It's a starting key to Weckl's complex style—an astonishing technique that flashes by all too elusively when studied on video alone.

• ***Jeff Potter***

BAG OF TRICKS: Soloing Concepts For The Drum Set

by David Brady
Hal Leonard Publications
7777 West Bluemound Road
Milwaukee WI 53213
Price: $14.95

This new book and tape set offers a conceptual foundation for drumset improvisation, as well as some ready-to-use weapons for your hot licks arsenal. Several musical styles are represented, including jazz and Latin, but rock feels and sensibility predominate. The tape provides clear (if not always spotlessly clean) demonstrations of the licks and solos.

The Study/Review section's 20 exercises require at least an average reading ability, progressing rapidly from elementary to intermediate levels of difficulty. These help develop or reinforce the player's grasp of sometimes tricky rhythmic combinations that are both challenging to play and interesting to listen to.

In the Licks section, each pattern is played in three permutations, such as quarter-note triplets and straight 8ths, preceded by several bars of an appropriate groove. Because I'm greedy, I wanted more than the five licks offered. (Perhaps a sequel: *Revenge Of Bag Of Tricks?)* Mostly comprised of uninterrupted sequences of same-value notes—all 8th triplets or all 16th, etc.—their interest lies not in rhythmic complexity, but in *placement* of the notes around the kit. Wisely, these patterns are interspersed judiciously amongst many non-cyclical ideas in the Solos section.

Since musicality is a very subjective notion, some of the *Bag Of Tricks* solos may appeal to some players more than others, but each has a character distinct from the other 19. The result is a rich variety of ideas to mix and match, modify and inspire—in total a valuable tool for drummers at all levels of soloing experience.

• ***Richard* Watson**

SOUND CONTEST

Compare our Sound Formula and Sound Formula Reflector to Zildjian's A & Custom A and to Sabian's AA & AAX and win valuable percussion gear!

Sound Formula and Sound Formula Reflector are Paiste's new professional cymbal lines. They're made according to traditional Paiste cymbal design principles from our unique, patented cymbal alloy - Paiste Sound Alloy. The results are beautiful cymbal sounds that are sure to please you.

Naturally, you can imagine how *we* feel they compare to Zildjian's A & Custom A as well as Sabian's AA and AAX lines. But we want to hear *your* side of the story. So, visit your favorite store, try all these cymbal lines for their sound, write us about your opinion and enter our drawing automatically.

Who knows - maybe you'll win one of the prizes. But one thing's certain: you'll discover a great cymbal sound and join drummers like Jeff Porcaro, Carlos Vega, Will Kennedy, and Chad Wackerman who've already chosen Sound Formulas for their cymbal sets.

Good Luck!

REFLECTOR

Prizes

1st: a set of Sound Formula or S.F. Reflector cymbals: Hi-Hat, two Crashes and a Ride, size and models your choice.

2nd: a GMS Grand Master Series Maple Shell Snare Drum, finish your choice.

3rd - 10th: a dozen pair Rimshot Drum Sticks, model(s) your choice. 11th - 30th: a Paiste T-shirt, style and size your choice. And, if you win and have already purchased an item identical to the one you win, we'll refund your purchase price!

Paiste "Sound Contest" Official Rules:

1. No purchase necessary. In order to qualify, visit a music dealer and compare Paiste Sound Formula and Sound Formula Reflector to Zildjian A and Custom A, Sabian AA and AAX. Then write a letter to Paiste, describing the opinion you formed about the sound qualities of Sound Formula cymbals versus the competition. Letters should be addressed to "Paiste Sound Contest", 460 Atlas Street, Brea, California 92621. All letters must be received by September 30, 1992. The contest begins May 1, 1992 and ends September 30, 1992. The winners will be selected at random from all entries received by Paiste. The drawing will be held on October 1, 1992. The winners will be notified by certified mail or telephone.
2. Prizes are: 1st: a set of Sound Formula or S.F. Reflector cymbals: Hi-Hat, two Crashes and a Ride, sizes and models your choice. 2nd: a GMS Grand Master Series Maple Shell Snare Drum, finish your choice. 3rd - 10th: a Dozen pair of Rimshot Drum Sticks, model(s) your choice. 11th - 30th: a Paiste T-shirt, style and size your choice. Approximate retail value of prizes: $2,800. The winner's names will be published in a future issue of Modern Drummer. In the event that winners have purchased an item during the period of the Paiste Sound Contest which is identical to the prize they receive, they may elect, at their sole option, to receive a refund of their purchase price instead of the prize. All taxes are responsibility of the winner.
3. Paiste is not responsible for lost, illegible, late, mutilated, or misdirected mail. All letters will become the property of Paiste, and none will be returned.
4. By claiming prizes, all winners allow the use of their name, likeness and/or voice in publicity concerning the Paiste Sound Contest promotion without compensation and grant any and all rights to said use to Paiste. Winners agree that Paiste and its agents or employees shall have no liability in connection with acceptance or use of the prizes and participation in this promotion.
5. The Paiste Sound Contest promotion is open to residents of the U.S.A. and Canada, except for employees or representatives of Paiste America, Inc., authorized Paiste distributors or dealers or members of the immediate family of any of the above. Void where prohibited by law. All federal, state and local laws and regulations apply.
6. For a list of the prize winners and prizes awarded, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Paiste Sound Contest, 460 Atlas Street, Brea, California 92621. This contest is sponsored by Paiste America, Inc., 460 Atlas Street, Brea, California 92621.

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Immediate Gratification

by Howard Fields

Having been a drummer for 25 years and a drum teacher for 15, I'm well aware of the importance of reading music. I would also be the first to question any teacher who doesn't put a student through the rudimental process required to achieve technical excellence. Instruction in reading and technique is certainly part of the great responsibility a teacher takes on throughout the course of his or her relationship with a student. They are important skills that can take years to achieve and master.

This article, however, is not concerned with the long term or the "big picture," but rather with a crucial period in a drum student's experience: the first few drum lessons. I believe that while beginners *should* be sat down behind the pad and taught how to hold the sticks and how to read quarter notes and quarter rests at their first lesson, they should *also* at that point be sat down behind the *kit* and taught to play something practical and accessible.

This idea is, of course, contrary to the philosophies of many teachers, who contend that students should *not* be put behind the set until they have put in a proper amount of time on the pad and have achieved a reasonable command of the rudiments and of reading music. I urge those teachers to consider this: In the 1990s it makes little sense to have a beginning student practice *only* quarter-note snap-backs on the pad and then turn on MTV and see Lars Ulrich or Liberty DeVitto rocking and rolling. This student, whether child or adult, is very likely to become frustrated. His or her drum lessons aren't going to have a connection to what's going on in the world—thus increasing the potential for spotty practicing or for stopping lessons and dropping the instrument altogether.

Today, perhaps more than ever before, new drum students need a light at the *beginning* of the tunnel. The first steps on a beginner's journey into drumming should be inspiring—as well as a lot of fun. *Motivation* is the key, and I've found nothing to be more motivational than teaching students a simple rock beat and showing them how that beat can be played along with U2, Michael Jackson, Skid Row, or whomever. This provides the "immediate gratification" that will hopefully help pave the way to a positive teacher/student relationship.

Here is the simple method I use to get a student playing on the drumset right away. All it involves are the following steps, which employ a few simple counting systems.

1) First, explain what the concept "metronomic" means, making reference to everyday sounds such as the ticking of a clock, the dripping of a faucet, or the beating of one's heart.

2) Once this is understood, have the student strike the hi-hat with his right hand, slowly and metronomically.

3) Now write down in his notebook the following:

RIGHT HAND—HI-HAT	1& 2 & 3 & 4 &

Instruct him to continue striking the hi-hat, and as he does so to count "1&2&3&4&," with one of those counting syllables coinciding with each hit.

4) Now add the snare part to the hi-hat part. It should now look like this:

RIGHT HAND—HI-HAT	1& 2 & 3 & 4 &
LEFT HAND—SNARE	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Have him play the snare part by itself. Explain that he should continue counting "1&2&3&4&," but hit the snare only on the large counts 2 and 4.

5) Then have him play the two parts simultaneously.

6) Now add the bass drum part, and the exercise will look like this:

RIGHT HAND—HI-HAT	1& 2 & 3 & 4 &
LEFT HAND—SNARE	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &
RIGHT FOOT—BASS	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Have the student play the bass drum part alone, counting "1&2&3&4&," but only playing the bass drum on the large counts 1 and 3.

7) At this point I have the student first play the hi-hat and bass drum parts together and then the snare and bass drum parts together, making sure that he continues counting "1&2&3&4&" aloud.

8) The student is now ready to play the full beat.

9) After he can do that comfortably (and in some cases that will not be until the next lesson), it is imperative that he play the beat along with music. I find it best to first have the student *count* along with the music before he attempts *to play* along with it. He must, of course, be made to understand that his 1 and the song's 1 need to match up. I've always thought it an indicator of musicality in very young students (around five years old) when they exhibit no problem hearing where the 1 is on a recording.

If an individual has understood all of the previous steps, then he is pretty much ready to play along with recorded music,

although he is likely to require a little coaching. Slowing down, speeding up, and losing it are to be expected, and he needs to be made aware of these pitfalls. If the teacher has communicated the method well, though, it's now up to the student to get it together.

And students *do* get it together—most times during the first lesson. In my experience with scores of students, I have encountered very few who don't conquer the beat—playing it along with music—by the second or third lesson. And it is this conquest that allows an absolute beginner to experience what it feels like to really *play*. And that experience is an aspect of the learning process that it would be foolish to disregard.

The teaching method described in this article is taken from Howard Fields' book The Drum Teacher. *Information on this book can be obtained by writing to The Drum Teacher, Suite 1338, 1671 E. 16th St., Brooklyn, NY 11229.*

Cross-Sticking: Part 2

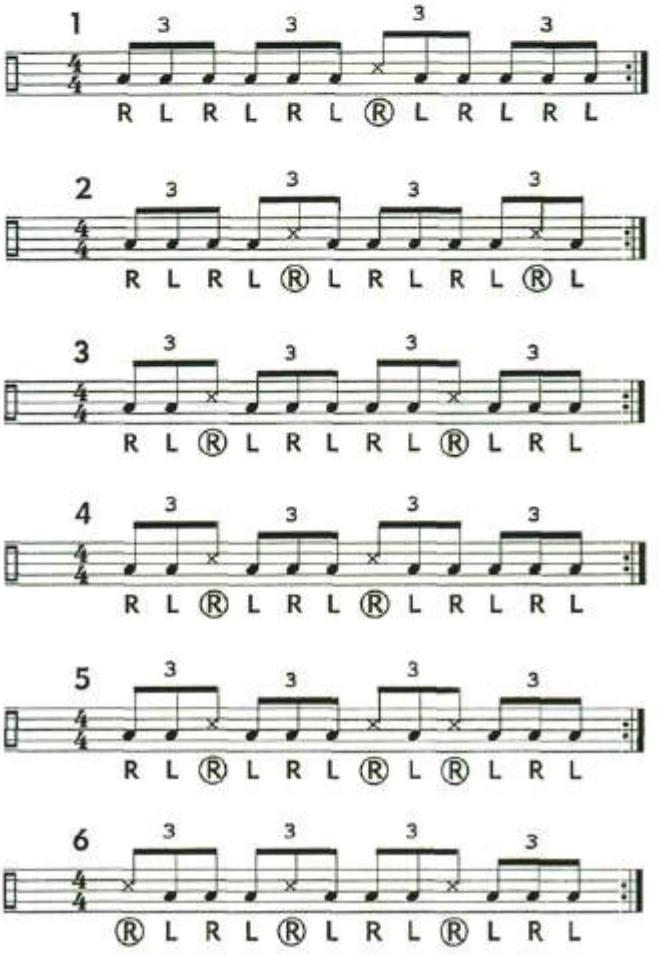
by Ron Spagnardi

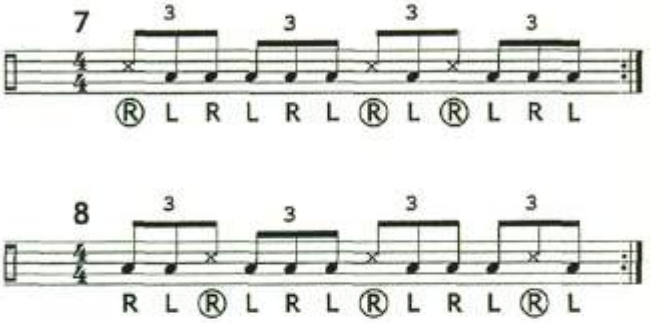
MUSIC KEY

Last month we presented 32 cross-sticking exercises that had the left hand crossing over or under the right. This month we'll work with patterns that have the right hand crossing *over* the left. We'll also put it all together to create some interesting combination patterns. As in Part 1, a cross-sticking is marked as an x and a circle around the hand making the cross-over.

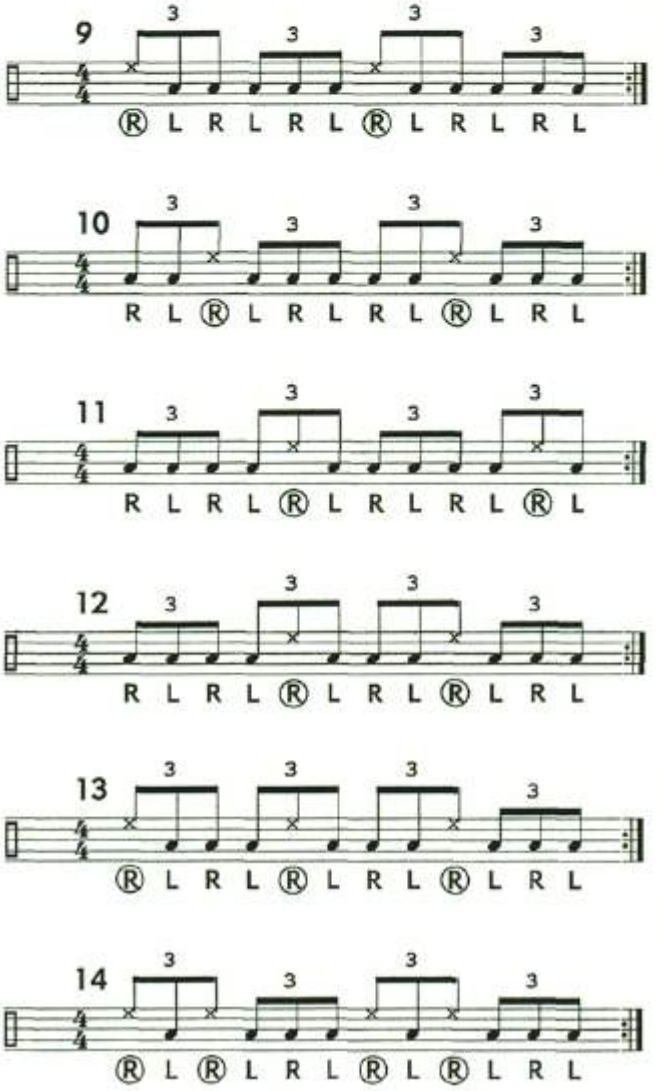
Once again, for the sake of simplicity we'll stay with single sticking in an 8th-note triplet format. Be sure to start out slowly, and gradually build up speed when you're comfortable with each exercise. Then go on and devise your own patterns—there are *hundreds* of other possibilities. Master the techniques of cross-sticking, and you'll add another exciting dimension to your solo work.

Floor Tom To Snare Drum





Floor Tom To Small Tom



15

R L Ⓡ L R L Ⓡ L R L R L

16

R L Ⓡ L R L Ⓡ L R L Ⓡ L

Adding The Snare Drum

17

R L R L R L R L R L Ⓡ L

18

R L R L R L R L Ⓡ L R L

19

R L R L R L Ⓡ L R L R L

20

R L R L Ⓡ L R L R L R L

21

R L R L Ⓡ L R L Ⓡ L R L

22

R L R L Ⓡ L Ⓡ L Ⓡ L R L

23

R L Ⓡ L R L R L R L R L

24

R L Ⓡ L R L Ⓡ L R L R L

Combination Exercises

25

R L R L R Ⓛ R L R L Ⓡ L

26

R L R L R Ⓛ R L R L Ⓡ L

27

R L R L R Ⓛ R L R L Ⓡ L

28

R L R L R Ⓛ R L R L Ⓡ L

29

R L R Ⓛ R L R L Ⓡ L R L

30

R L R Ⓛ R L R L Ⓡ L R L

31

R Ⓛ R L R L Ⓡ L R L R L

32

R Ⓛ R L R L Ⓡ L R L R L

Portions of this material excerpted from Cross-Sticking Around The Drums *by Ron Spagnardi, Published by JR Publications, New York.*

Sonor Signature Limited Edition Drumset

Sonor has taken the word "elite" to new heights in the drum industry. Only fifty of their new five-piece maple drumsets with gold plating and walnut stain lacquer will be made available. Each set will be hand-crafted to the owner's personal specs, with his or her name engraved on each drum—*and* a personal invitation to Sonor's Aue, Germany plant for presentation of the kit. Available drum sizes include an 8x14 snare drum, 18", 20", 22", and 24" bass drums, 8", 10", 12", 13", 14", 15", and 16" tom-toms, and 14", 15", 16", and 18" floor toms. Custom sizes are also available upon request. **Sonor, c/o HSS, Inc., Lakeridge Park, 101 Sycamore Dr., Ashland, VA 23005-9998, tel: (804) 550-2700, fax (804) 550-2670.**

Zildjian A Customs And New Sticks

Zildjian has added a few models to their new A *Custom* line, including 13" hi-hats, 14" and 19" crashes, 20" and 22" Ping rides, and 18", 20", and 22" swishes. According to the makers, A *Custom* ping rides provide the same warm undertones that are characteristic of the A *Custom* range, but with higher pitches and cleaner stick sounds than regular A *Custom* rides. The 14" and 19" A *Custom* crashes round out the line's crash range, and the 13" hi-hats are said to provide a tighter and more focused stick and chick sound than 14" hats. A *Custom* swish cymbals feature an unusual taper with an upturned edge, and produce a low, "generally more funky and Chinese sound, with a faster attack."

Zildjian has also added five new models to its drumstick line. The *Super 5A* is basically what it sounds like—a *5A* stick with a beefier diameter and shaft, but with a smaller acorn head and a 16 1/2" length. Also available are Joey Kramer, Luis Conte, Jonathan Mover, and Ian Wallace signature sticks. **Avedis Zildjian Company, 22 Longwater Dr., Norwell, MA 02061, tel: (617) 871-2200, fax: (617) 871-3984.**

New Remo Kits And Legacy Patent

Remo's *new Bravo* drumset is a low-priced kit that comes in five- and six-piece configurations and features the company's *Acousticon 220* shells and *112* series hardware. A six-piece double-bass set is also available. Drum sizes for all configurations include 6 ½x14 snare drums, 16x22 bass drums, and power toms sized 9x10, 10x12, 11x13, and 16x16. *Ambassador*

batter heads come standard, and white, black, and cherry red *Quadura* scratch-resistant coverings are available; snare drums feature a chrome covering.

Also new from Remo is their ten-piece *Terry Bozzio MasterTouch* kit, featuring Remo's *Acousticon 516* shells. The Bozzio kit, which matches the one he currently uses on tour and in clinics, includes four tom-toms, a 6½x14 snare, 14x14 and 16x16 floor toms, and two 20x22 bass drums. Clear *Ambassador* batters, *Ebony* bottoms, and *PowerStroke 3* bass drum batter heads come standard.

Remo has also been granted a patent for their *Legacy* laminated drum head construction, which employs a permanent bonding of the surface fabric to the base plastic film. In addition, Remo has received patents for its *Acousticon* shell, *Quadura* shell covering, and *MasterTouch* sets. **Remo, Inc., 12804 Raymer St., North Hollywood, CA 91605, (818) 983-2600.**

New LP Items

Recent additions to LP's catalog include a cajon, a tunable djembe, a conga bag, and new bass drums. LP's new cajon is designed after the Cuban/Peruvian instrument that is primarily a wooden box with a hole in the back, used to create bass and slap tones. LP's Siam oak djembe is based on the traditional instrument, yet features tunability and a light weight.

LP's new conga bag features a full-length, adjustable strap, padded sides, a removable head pad, an exterior pouch for small items, and a low price. LP's new *Ascend* bass drums are made from maple, and do not employ holes for hardware, in order to allow the drum to resonate more fully. Available sizes are 14x22, 14x20, and 14x18; finish is a natural maple. **Latin Percussion, Inc., 160 Belmont Ave., Garfield, NJ 07026.**

Pork Pie Kit And Tom Protector

Pork Pie Percussion has recently introduced its lower-priced *Junior Pie* kit, which features maple shells, precision-cut bearing edges, RIMS mounting sys-

tern on all toms, and vinyl wrapped finishes in a variety of colors. Pork Pie's *Tom-Dom* is a protective device made of neoprene that is attached to tom-toms butting up against snare drums. The *Tom-Dom* is attached with *Velcro* straps secured to a tom's tension rods. Pork Pie also offers custom work on existing drumsets, including redone bearing edges and painting. **Pork Pie Percussion, 21917 Lopez St., Woodland Hills, CA 91364, (818) 992-0783.**

New UDU Products

UDU, which manufactures Nigerian-style clay pot drums, has introduced some new products. The *Utar* features a flattened body design, can be held in a variety of ways, and produces the widest range of tones of all UDU drums, along with a cowbell type of sound. In addition, all traditional-shaped UDU drums are now available in the hand-molded *Claytone* line.

Also new from the company is a line of stands custom-made for UDU drums, called *SoftPaw Performance* stands. These stands can be used either with standard snare drum stands or universal

clamps. UDU also offers a 60-minute video and a 40-page book with accompanying cassette that feature performances and instruction on the complete line of UDU drums. **UDU Drum, Rt. 67, Box 126, Freehold, NY 12431, (518) 634-2559.**

Orlich Glass Drumsets

Glass artist John Orlich has combined two of his interests—glass art and drumming—and made a unique instrument. Orlich's hand-made drums are constructed from 3/16" beveled glass, and employ brass hardware. No hardware penetrates the drumshells, and Orlich assures that the drums will not break from normal use. Full drumsets are being manufactured, but only in a limited quantity of one hundred sets. Each drum is individually signed and numbered and comes with documentation of authenticity. Orlich states that close artist/client relationships are kept, with individual choices of drum size and head selection assured. Orlich's drums are built under the premise that glass is an excellent resonating material. **Orlich Percussion Systems, Inc., Cody Marketing Group, P.O. Box 456, Winchester, VA 22601, (703) 722-4625.**

Simmons Hexahead

Simmons says that their new *Hexahead* is the first electronic pad to feature an "on-board" gain control. According to the makers, the *Hexahead's* sensitivity control allows you to eliminate cross-talk without having to reach to an electronics rack and search through screens and menus to make changes. Simmons also says that the *Hexahead* has an "acoustic" feel to it, and can also be used as a practice pad. **Simmons, 756 Lakefield Road, Unit "C," Westlake Village, CA 91361, tel: (805) 494-5007, fax: (805) 494-9415.**

Larrie Londin Fund

On April 24, Larrie Londin suffered a cardiac arrest while conducting a clinic in Denton, Texas. Though he was resuscitated, he has not regained consciousness since that time. The prognosis for his recovery is uncertain. What *is* certain is that Larrie's medical care has been and will continue to be extraordinarily expensive. In an effort to help Larrie's family with these expenses, an account has been set up at First American Bank of Nashville. If you wish to join in this effort, you may make a contribution payable to The Larrie Londin Fund (account # 1000 596 461). Please send contributions to Lisa Harless, First American Bank, P.O. Box 120038, 1604 21st Ave. South, Nashville, TN 37212.

Yamaha Drum Rig Given Away

Steve Turowski, winner of Yamaha's Drum Rig Giveaway, which was run in the December '91 and January and February '92 issues of *Modern Drummer,* was presented with his prize at Vincitore's Music in Poughkeepsie, New York on April 23. According to Turowski, "Winning this prize is one of the biggest thrills I've known in my drumming career. I did not realize the magnitude of the prize until seeing the rig set up at the presentation. You can be assured that this equipment will see action on upcoming gigs. My sincere thanks to Yamaha, *Modern Drummer,* Vincitore's Music, and all who took part in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

Top Drummers In UNICEF Benefit

Drummer Eddie Tuduri recently coordinated a benefit for the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in Los Angeles. Tuduri has been involved with these shows since 1986.

"UNICEF deals with children five years old and under," Tuduri explains. "They work in health, sanitation, education, and immunization. This year, between the World Health Organization in Japan and UNICEF, we've achieved 80% immunization worldwide, which is an incredible step."

Through the years, Tuduri has managed to rally guest artists from all musical fields to take part in his benefits, including such drummers as Vinnie Colaiuta, Ralph Humphrey, Mark Craney, Gregg Bissonette, Joe Porcaro, Emil Richards, Tony Braunagel, Larry Zack, Chet McCracken, Bob Harson, Marty Fera, Joe Lala, Kevin Ricard, Walfredo and. Danny Reyes, Richie Hayward, Herman Mathews, Jerry Steinholz, Graham Lear, and Mick Fleetwood.

"Everybody donates their services," says Eddie, "from the biggest-name performers to the guy who sweeps up afterward.

Vater, Calato, Vic Firth, and Drum Workshop donated money to help cover our costs for the tee shirts, pins, buttons, and hats that we make. Guitar Center has helped the past few years, and we have auctions where we raffle off everything from washing machines to sets of cymbals to chiropractic services.

"We aren't only encouraging big names at these events," Tuduri stresses. "Any group of players anywhere can produce a show for UNICEF with little effort and maximum fun. Every city has its favorite bands. Get the horn section from one, the singer from another, and the rhythm section from a third—or more. Notify UNICEF that you want to do a benefit. Follow their guidelines, rehearse a few times, then go down to Joe's Bar & Grill and charge $5 or $10 at the door. The nearest UNICEF office will be happy to help you coordinate everything. You can call the U.S. committee for UNICEF in L.A.—or call me in care of them—at (310) 277-7608 about forming your own chapter. I know that what we do here can be successful anywhere."

• ***Robyn Flans***

Firth Master Class Sweepstakes

Vic Firth Drumsticks is currently sponsoring a series of in-store master classes with artists involved with the company's *Signature Series* drumstick line. Interested drummers must visit their local drum shop to enter the Master Class Sweepstakes. Ten winners will be chosen to attend each master class; second place winners will receive a pair of *Signature Series* drumsticks. The first Master Classes took place in April and May of this year, involving Anton Fig (Sam Ash Music), Rod Morgenstein (Long Island Drum Center), and Omar Hakim (Manny's Music). Additional sweepstakes promotions are being planned for the West Coast with such Firth artists as Dave Weckl, Alex Acuña, Harvey Mason, and Gregg Bissonette.

In Memoriam

Veteran big band drummer Tony Torre, Sr. recently passed away at the age of 72. Torre had performed with bands led by Jan Savitt, Bunny Berrigan, Glenn Miller, and Jimmy Dorsey during the big band years.

Seattle School Wins Sonor Kit

Seattle's Garfield High School was selected as "Outstanding Festival Ensemble" at the Lionel Hampton/Chevron Jazz Festival, held recently in Moscow, Idaho. The school's prize was a Sonor *Force 2000* five-piece drumset, which was donated by the makers. Sonor was the official drum of this year's festival, providing twelve drumsets for all performance sites during the four-day event.

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Electronic Drum Sale: Roland Pad 80, PM-16, PD-31, PD-11 & **all** Roland products on sale! Simmons, KAT, Pearl, Tama, & Sonor drumkits at Blowout deals!! Tama, Pearl, DW, & Yamaha hardware on sale. We have the largest stock of drum gear anywhere! Bizarre Guitar 2677 Oddie Blvd, Reno, NV 89512. (702) 331-1001.

Drum Machine Super Sale: Korg, Roland, Yamaha, **All** on sale! We have memory cards, sampler cards, etc., in stock and discounted! **All** makes of Drum machines & **all** digital Reverbs and Processors on sale and in stock! We will not be undersold! Bizarre Guitar, 2677 Oddie Blvd, Reno, NV 89512. (702) 331-1001.

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