

• JOE MORELLO ON FINGER CONTROL • SEAN KINNEY: OFF THE RECORD •

MODERN DRUMMER

# MODERN DRUMMER®

The World's Most Widely Read Drum Magazine

OCTOBER '93

## VINNIE COLAIUTA

### HIGHLIGHTS OF MD'S DRUM FESTIVAL '93

### INTRODUCTION TO TABLA

### PLUS:

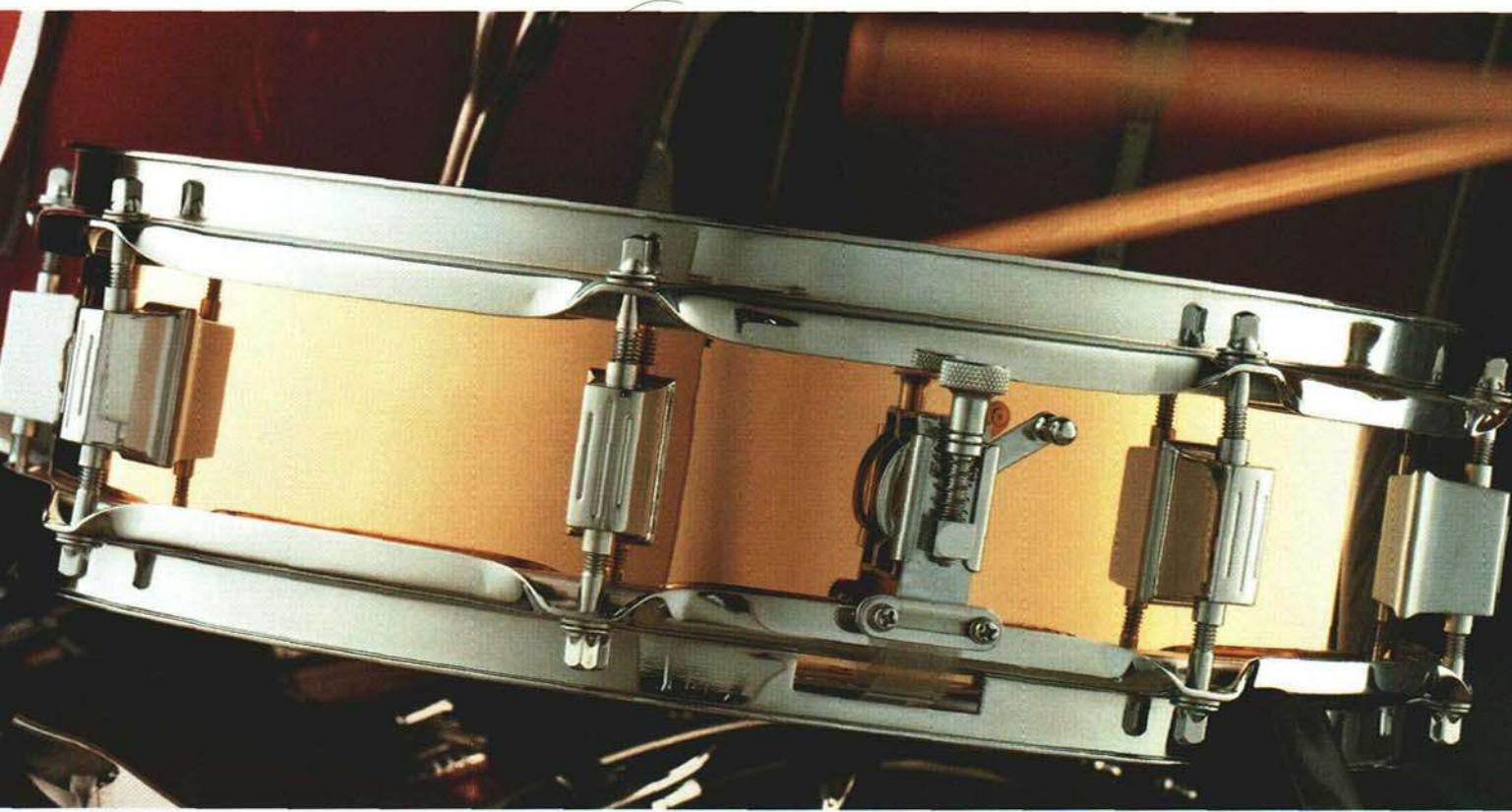
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- IN THE STUDIO FOR THE FIRST TIME
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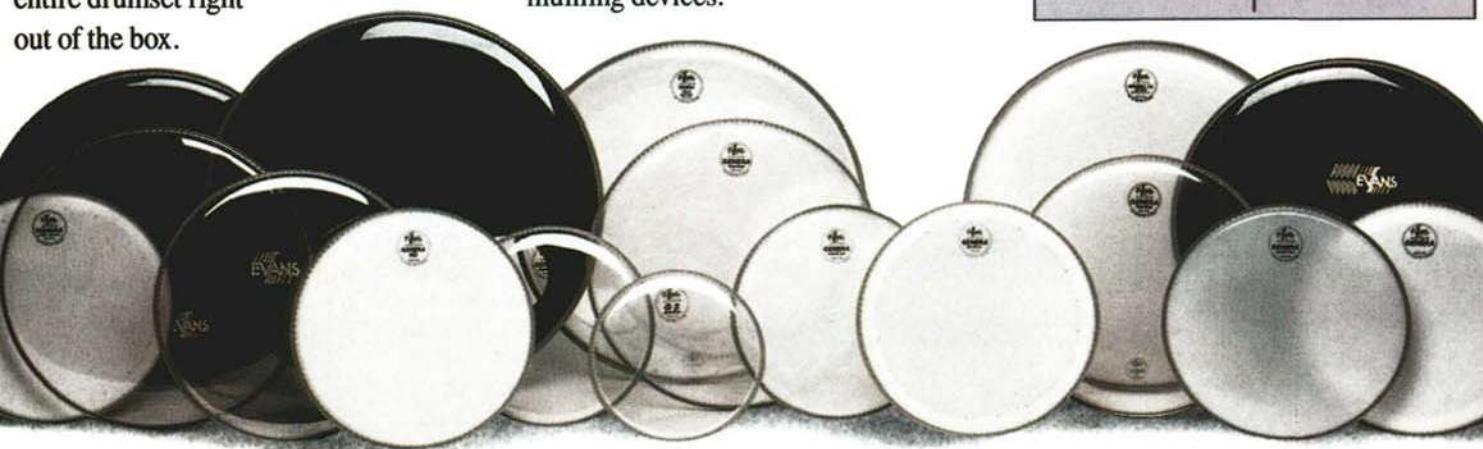
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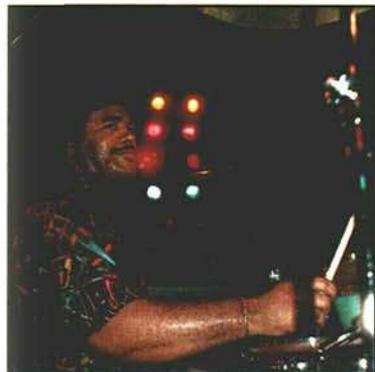


### VINNIE COLAIUTA

Sure, the studio life was safe and lucrative. But when a certain blonde bass-playing pop star dialed up Vinnie Colaiuta with a world tour in mind, it was an offer the drummer couldn't refuse. And so the magic of Vinnie fuses with the majesty of Sting....

• Robyn Flans

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### HIGHLIGHTS OF MD's FESTIVAL WEEKEND '93

What happens when the talents of Rob Affuso, Mickey Curry, Terry Bozzio, Louie Bellson, Dave Abbruzzese, Adam Nussbaum, Ginger Baker, and Dennis Chambers descend upon a small town in New Jersey? Our special photo-essay tells the tale.

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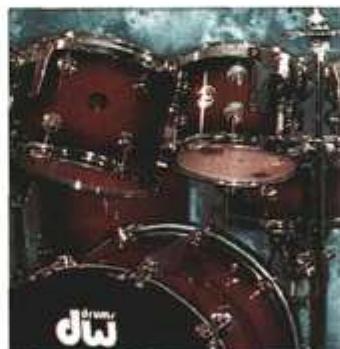
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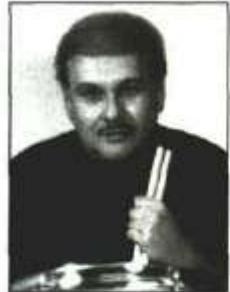


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# A Presidential Priority



Most everyone in the field of music education nowadays is well aware that school music programs have suffered greatly as a result of drastic budget cuts over the past few years. Despite this fact, the National Coalition For Music Education recently issued a report praising the effect our present administration could have on music education. Apparently, President Bill Clinton strongly believes that music education is essential for the enrichment of the lives of young Americans. Furthermore, he's promised to support those beliefs and to continue federal funding of the arts.

How important is all this to the future of music in America? Well, in a recent survey of professional musicians, nearly two-thirds reported that their school music programs were of great importance in awakening their interest in music. Many commented that had it *not* been for their experience in school music, they probably would not have become professional musicians.

I've always avoided matters of a political nature in this column. However, the present administration's promised support of music education could have far-reaching effects for all of us in music. For example, more youngsters who are inspired through their school music programs equates to more entry-level players, which means more opportunities for private teachers and teaching studios. That in turn can mean more young people involved in the formation of bands, which increases activity at the musical instrument retail and manufacturing level. In essence, the current administration has *the potential* for being very good for music in general.

As the governor of Arkansas, President Clinton initiated reforms that included music as a *requirement* for high school graduation, and student participation in music increased 30%. And while many states reduced funding, the program in Arkansas was increased. "Bill Clinton may be the first president who is an accomplished product of public school music education," says Francis McBeth, conductor emeritus of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra. "He was the first governor to pass a bill requiring music for every grade school child. We've never had a president who is as concerned about the arts as Bill Clinton."

The goals of the National Coalition For Music Education are simple and well-focused: 1) Every state will have a coalition for music education. 2) Every state will have a full-time music supervisor. 3) Every school-age child will study music as part of the basic curriculum. Again, these are worthwhile goals that can have a very positive effect on all of us in our industry over a period of time. If you feel strongly about this, you can help by taking two simple steps: First, find out if any of your local leaders share President Clinton's love for music. Second, help them translate that affection into advocacy. We'll all benefit from it in the long run.

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## FESTIVAL WEEKEND '93

Ron and Isabel Spagnardi, Rick Van Horn, and the entire staff of *Modern Drummer* should be congratulated for an absolutely superb Festival Weekend '93. Each artist brought a wealth of experience and information to the audience while managing to be thoroughly entertaining in the process. There was truly something for everyone.

From backstage, I watched in amazement as drumsets were assembled, disassembled, and rolled on and off stage with the precision of a military operation. Add into the mix the fact that most of the performers brought one or more supporting musicians, and it is all the more remarkable that the show remained on schedule both days.

Those folks lucky enough to experience Festival Weekend '93 are, no doubt, planning to attend next year. I know we are!

Pat Brown

National Sales/Artist Relations Manager  
Pro-Mark Corporation  
Houston TX

I attended the May 1993 Festival with my eleven-year-old son. I can't say enough to describe his impression of the weekend and the ultimate impact it made upon him. It more than exceeded both our expectations. The variety and breadth of the performances was just outstanding.

The accessibility of the performers absolutely overwhelmed my son. Your organization should be commended for creating an environment so conducive to learning. Nothing I could do or say would be more inspiring than his personal experience over the course of the two-day Festival. I would especially like to thank Dave Abbruzzese for his warmth and sincerity. He certainly made my son feel very special.

My son and I can hardly wait for next year's event. We're eagerly looking forward to coming back.

Charlie Campagna  
Hockessin DE

I've just returned from my first Festival Weekend, and it was fantastic—every-

thing from the inspirational drumming to the give-aways. Although all the drummers and percussion acts were incredible, two stood out for me: Rob Affuso and Dave Abbruzzese. Rob demonstrated his ability in styles of drumming other than rock, then played a blistering solo. And as if that wasn't enough, he raffled off his cymbals to benefit the family of a terminally ill former teacher. Dave was the most approachable drummer of the weekend. He was outside signing autographs, posing for pictures, and talking about his drumming for hours on both days. His portion of the program displayed his powerful style, and made him my favorite drummer of the show.

Both Rob and Dave demonstrated ability, class, and integrity seldom seen in the music business today. I'm glad they were at the Festival, and I look forward to seeing them both again.

Ron Bialek  
Chicago IL

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## EDITORS' ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

As the daughter of the late Gary Chester, I am writing to say that my family and I thank you for presenting the *Modern Drummer* 1993 Editors' Achievement Award to my father [July '93 *MD*]. I am so glad he is still being recognized as one of the most creative and influential teachers in drumming, even after his passing. It's amazing how many people he influenced—and continues to influence. I just wanted to say thanks, and I know he would have wanted to thank you, as well.

Katrina J. Chester  
New York NY

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## CORRECTION FROM ALDRIDGE

I'd like to thank Ron Spagnardi for the kind words in his June 1993 editorial. His announcement of a regular column on vintage drums is welcome news to all vin-

tage drum collectors. I also commend the choice of Harry Cangany to write the column. Harry is a very knowledgeable person with an exceptional drum collection, is well-known to most collectors through his work with Rob Cook on the *Introduction To Vintage Drums* video, and has been a long-time supporter of my newsletter, *Not So Modern Drummer*.

There is, however, one small mistake in Ron's editorial. I don't live in Denver, Colorado. For the past four years I have lived in nearby Boulder. The poor John Aldridge who *does* live in Denver is probably ready to strangle Ron, since folks are getting his number and calling him trying to reach me. I have received a couple of calls from folks who were diligent enough to pursue it past Denver, but I feel that many more would be able to reach me if the correct town were identified.

John M. Aldridge  
Boulder CO

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## PLAYING THE BODHRAN

As a regular reader of your very fine magazine I would like to thank you for your article on bodhran playing in the May issue. I am a very average drummer who, unfortunately, knows very little about bodhran playing. I thought that some of your readers might be interested to know that there are tutorial cassettes, books, and videos on the subject available from either Waltons of Frederick Street or Rocksteady Music (on Chatham Street)—both in Dublin.

Another noteworthy addition to the Irish ethnic percussion family is the bones. A very fine example of both bodhran and bones playing can be heard on an album by Micheal O'Suilleabhain called *The Dolphin's Way* on Venture Records (a subsidiary of Virgin Records).

Garry Burns  
Oldcastle, Meath  
Republic of Ireland



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## Grant Young

"I wanted to go with a 'Sly and Robbie' kind of attitude."

No, Grant Young and his bandmates in Soul Asylum haven't traveled down the reggae road with their new album, *Grave Dancers Union*—though you probably already know that if you've spent the least bit of time watching MTV or listening to rock radio lately. But for their Columbia Records debut, the band did decide to strip their sound down some, hence Young's allusion to reggae's groove-master rhythm section.

"I wanted to play as simple as possible—with fewer fills and more of a concentration on soulfulness rather than just on technique,"



the drummer explains. "We always experiment, but I wanted to find other ways to experiment."

That different sort of experimentation actually began during rehearsals for *Grave Dancers Union*. "We sat in [singer] David Pirner's basement and played with acoustic guitars, and I used a snare, one tom, one kick, a hi-hat, and brushes," Young recalls. "The way we worked before was with loud guitars, playing as much as we could, and then stripping it down from there. This way, we actually built up from where the songs started, which I think works a lot better."

If record sales are any indication, Soul Asylum's new methods—as well as Columbia's support and enthusiasm, according to Young—are just what the doctor ordered. After a short tour of European stadiums opening for Guns N' Roses, the band is doing an outdoor arena tour with the Spin Doctors and Screaming Trees.

• Adam Budofsky

## Bruce Rutherford

Since 1990, Bruce Rutherford has been working with country artist Alan Jackson. "Alan is probably the most laid-back guy I've ever worked for," Bruce says. "He doesn't make any specific demands on us in any way. Everyone coming into this gig assumes he wants the music like the record, unless he says differently. But there have been some songs that he likes a little bit faster live, just to give it a little more energy. Obviously, he needs me to be real consistent as far as counting the songs off—and to sing in tune." (Bruce also played and sang on Jackson's debut *Don't Rock The Juke Box* and sang all the harmonies on his last

album, *A Lot About Living And A Little About Love*.)

Not all of Rutherford's bosses have been quite so easygoing as Jackson, though. Guitarist/singer Keith Whitley was much more demanding, according to the drummer. "Keith didn't like to talk much on stage, and he liked those songs to be like rapid fire, one right after another. Alan is so laid-back that I could probably fall off the stool back there and he wouldn't even panic about it. I think more than anyone I've worked for, Alan realizes everyone is human." Bruce will be touring with Jackson throughout 1993.

• Robyn Flans

## Danny Carey

Danny Carey's drumming life has been a series of anonymous gigs—until now.

Before playing on three songs for Carole King's latest record, Carey spent six years in L.A.'s Pygmy Love Circus, as well as stints in a country band and a group that played into commercial breaks for a network TV comedy show. Carey also had the dubious honor of playing drums for Green Jelly's cartooned debut, *Cereal Killer*.

But the thirty-one-year-old Kansas City native establishes himself as one of rock drumming's rising stars with *Undertow*, the throbby first full-length effort from

Tool. A slot on the Lollapalooza '93 tour helped catapult both Carey and the aggressive power-groove band out of the ranks of the unknown. "Green Jello [now Green Jelly] was great comic relief," says Carey, "but I'd been trying real hard to get into a band that was serious about making it, and that was the complete opposite of where that band was at."

Carey actually recorded the Green Jello record and the debut EP from Tool, *Opiate*, back-to-back. "I was playing in both bands at the same time and also working full time, so I was getting just two

or three hours of sleep a night," he recalls. "Tool just started clicking really quickly, and it seemed more my style. Green Jello has a great sense of humor, and it was fun, but it wasn't a 'player's' situation."

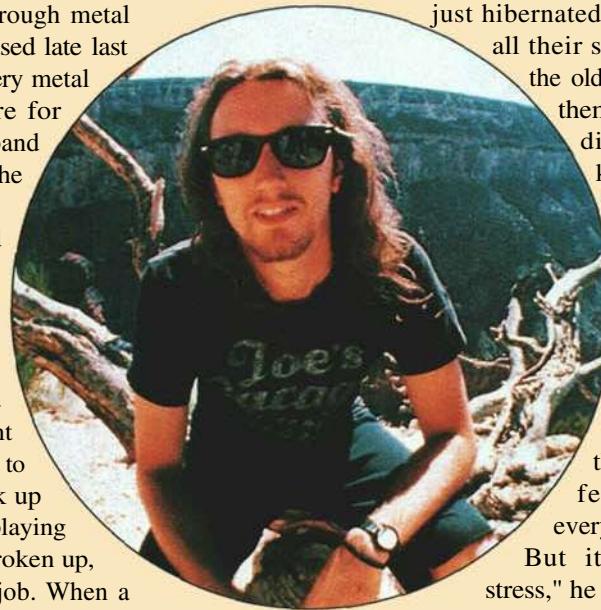
Still, Carey, who studied classical music at the University of Missouri, says, "It's hard for me to put all my eggs in one basket. [He's currently programming on a Simmons SDX for an industrial project.] I get a lot of fulfillment out of playing in a lot of different situations. But Tool is keeping me busy right now, and I'm going to ride it out and see where it takes me."

• Matt Peiken

## Dave McClain

Sacred Reich have become 1993's biggest breakthrough metal band as a result of their *Independent* album, released late last year. The album has hit Number 1 on virtually every metal radio chart in the country, and has stayed there for months. Drummer Dave McClain, who joined the band just two years ago, is obviously quite pleased with the upswing the band has taken.

Originally from San Antonio, Texas, McClain had been kicking around the LA club scene for several years with a succession of bands prior to joining Sacred Reich. According to the drummer, the opportunity to connect with this established, Phoenix-based group couldn't have happened at a better time. "I was twenty-five years old, at the point in my life where I wondered if my career was going to happen," recounts McClain. "My goal was to hook up with a band that was at least touring. I had been playing for fourteen years, the last band I was in had just broken up, and I wondered if I was gonna have to get a real job. When a friend told me that Sacred Reich was looking for a drummer, I



just hibernated for a week, learning all their songs exactly the way the old drummer had played them. I flew to Phoenix, did the audition, and knew by the looks on their faces that I had done okay.

"Right after I joined," he continues, "We went out on tour, and I figured I was a hired hand. Then we did this album, and now I feel the pressure of everything that's involved. But it's a good kind of stress," he laughs.

• **Teri Saccone**

## News...

**Tony Morales** has been on the road with the Rippingtons. Their new live album was recently released.

In his off time from being on the road with the Rembrandts, **Pat Mastelotto** has been doing tracks for Murray Attaway (along with **Jim Keltner** and **Gary Ferguson**), Susanna Hoffs, Peter Kingsbury, Deborah Holland, and Cherish Alexander.

**Kenny Aronoff** has recently been in the studio with John Mellencamp, Stevie Nicks, Meat Loaf, the Bodeans, and Marty Stewart. He also participated in the televised Willie Nelson 60th Birthday Celebration, where he played with such artists as Bob Dylan, Paul Simon, Marty Stuart, B.B. King, and Willie Nelson, and played at Farm Aid 6 as well.

**Josh Freese** has been recording with Blues Saraceno.

**Tony Braunagel** has been in pre-production for a new Jack Mack & The Heart Attack album. He and **Richie Hayward** did tracks on a new Taj Mahal record, and Tony recently co-wrote and produced a jingle for the Palace Station

Hotel in Las Vegas.

**Scott Garrett** is now playing with the Cult and involved in the recording of their next release.

**Doug Garrison** has been on the road with the Iguanas.

**Tal Bergman** on Billy Idol's new album, *Cyberpunk*.

**Randy Castillo** on the latest Ozzy Osbourne release, *Live & Loud*.

**Pete Thompson** on Robert Plant tracks.

**Vikki Foxx** on tour with Vince Neil.

**Eddie Bayers** recently in the studio and/or has albums out with the following artists: Trisha Yearwood, Paulette Carlson, Clint Black, Dolly Parton (with Loretta Lynn and Tammy Wynette), Colin Raye, Dan Seals, Kathy Mattea, Alan Jackson, Billy Falcon, Suzy Bogguss, George Strait, Tanya Tucker, Julio Iglesias, and Rodney Crowell. He is also coproducing an album on Lane Brody. And the next-generation Bayers, twelve-year-old Eddie Bayers, III, did a summer tour with SBK recording artists Monti, including dates in Russia. He also did a

track for Rodney Crowell's forthcoming album.

**David Sanger** on new *Asleep At The Wheel* disc.

**Roy Haynes** has been nominated by the Danish Jazz Center for its 1994 Jazzpar prize. The prestigious international jazz award comprises a 1994 concert, an international tour, recordings, and a cash award.

**Marty Fera**, along with **Joe Vitale** and percussionist **Machito Sanchez**, on the road with Glenn Frey and Joe Walsh.

**Vinny Appice** has re-formed Dio, with vocalist Ronnie James Dio. A new album is being recorded for Warner Bros.

**Vincent Dee** just returned from a tour of Japan with Brenda Lee.

**Billy Cobham** spent the summer on tour with the Jazz Explosion Super Band, featuring Stanley Clarke and Larry Carlton.

**Deen Castronovo** on the road with Paul Rogers.

**Bret Zwier** now working with Tiffany.



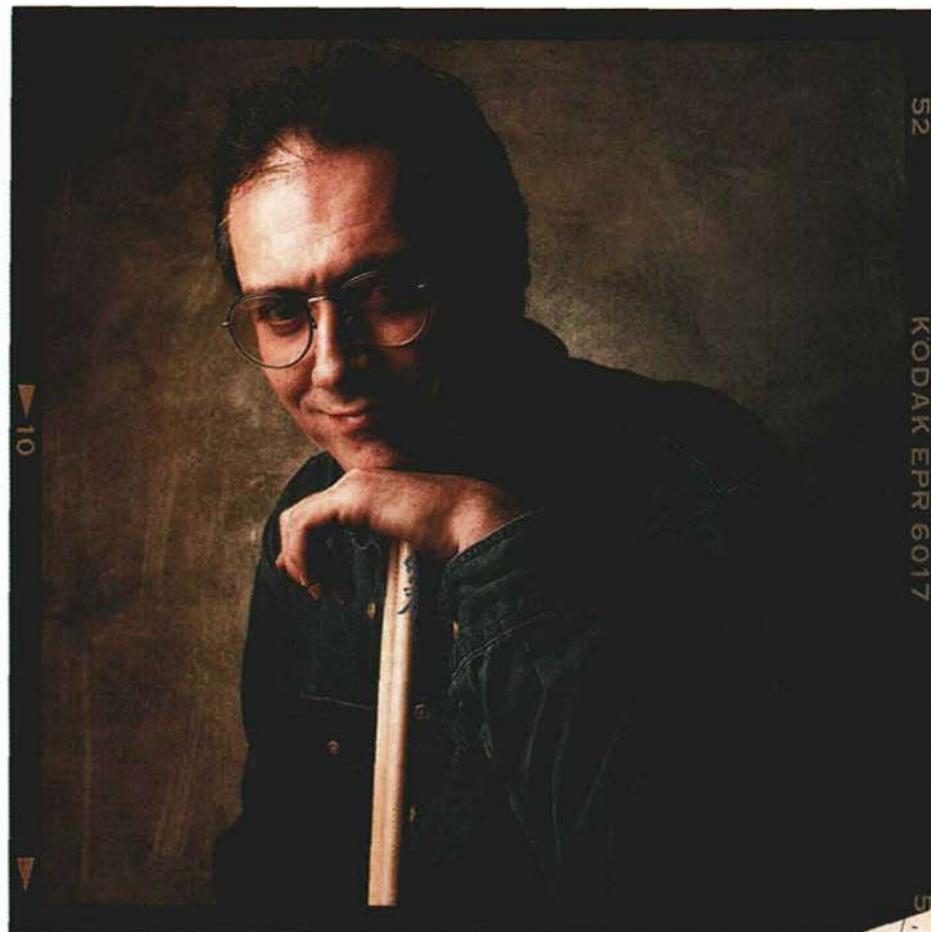


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OUT OF THIS WORLD.

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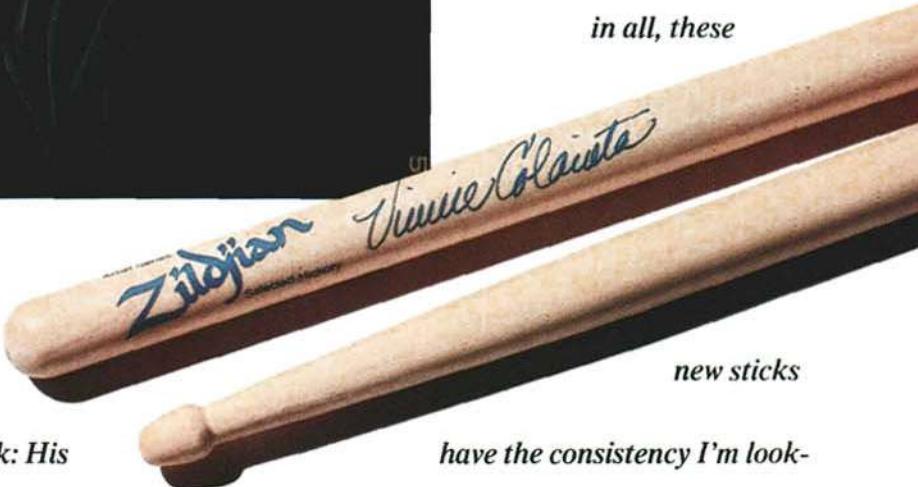


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KODAK EPR 6017

Over the years, Vinnie Colaiuta has put his signature on the music of countless artists, but only one drumstick: His own. "Until now, I hadn't found anything I liked better than a 5B," reveals Vinnie, currently the driving force behind Sting's versatile quartet. So what makes this one different? "The stick has a medium size shaft, with a gradual taper in the neck to give it more bounce," explains Vinnie. "I also added a little



thickness in the neck to reinforce it for heavier playing, and to keep the top end from feeling too light. Then I rounded the small acorn style bead ever so slightly for better contact with the Ride cymbal. All

in all, these

new sticks have the consistency I'm looking for." But why just read about it in a magazine, when you could be playing it at your nearest Zildjian dealer. The Artist Series Vinnie Colaiuta drumstick. In his hands, it helps push the parameters of drumming. In yours, it could help you push your own.

**Zildjian**  
DRUMSTICKS

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## ASK A PRO

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### Carl Palmer

**D** I've seen all your performances in Montreal since 1977—with ELP and with Asia. It was a pleasure to see you perform again with ELP twice in the past six months. At those shows, you were at your best.

I was following your solo very closely, and I was trying to figure out: 1) When you start out your solo, what sticking patterns and combinations are you playing between your snare and toms? They were executed so fast it was difficult to decipher. 2) When you feature your double-bass playing, what patterns are you playing? I thought I heard five- or seven-stroke rolls in there. 3) Your cymbal work seems to be influenced by Buddy Rich. Could you discuss the sticking patterns and combinations you were playing on cymbals, starting from the hi-hat work?

Jeff Michael Knowles  
Dorval, Quebec, Canada

**A** To be honest, Jeff, I'm not sure of the sticking I use at the start of my solo, because it varies from night to night and I've no way of knowing what you heard. However, an approximation of what I *might* have done would be:

R L R L R L      R L R L R L

### Joe Morello

**M** First of all, I must tell you that I'm a great fan of you and your drumming. Recently I listened to you on one of Dave Brubeck's 1961 recordings, "Unsquare Dance," and I was completely amazed (once again) by your absolutely perfect timekeeping. I would like to know what the rudimental sounds (heard underneath the basic syncopative rhythm) are. Where or on what were they made? Who made them, and, if you did, how did you manage to do them while simultaneously keeping the basic rhythm? I would also appreciate some tips on developing the weak hand (which is one of my most frustrating problems) and on how to improve my timekeeping.

Marie Seneca Bush  
Caracas, Venezuela

**A** Thank you for the wonderful compliments, Marie. The song "Unsquare Dance" was an idea that Dave had. When I'm playing in 7/4 time, the count is 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3, etc. I think of the rhythmic line as being one continuous extension. Regardless of the length of the rhythmic line (1-2-3-4...20, etc.), the defining element is the pulse. You can count 7/4 time in two ways: 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3 or 1-2-3, 1-2-3-4.

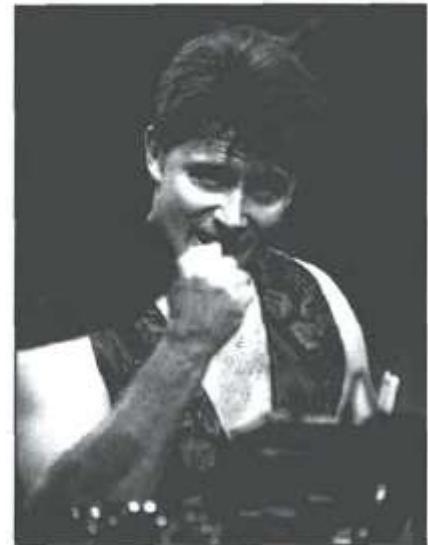
As far as the improvisation on the song is concerned, it was done on a music stand next to my floor tom. I wanted to achieve a "down home" kind of sound. The strokes that I used were basically singles and triplets.

Many drummers have problems with a weak hand, and need to work on

Double-bass playing has been very important to me over the past couple of years. The two drums have become effortless for me to play—which is important, because I don't like hard work! My DW pedals have been great as far as helping me with speed. I do try to play groups of five...six...seven...you name it. Another trick of mine is to hum to myself. This adds to the excitement of the playing and sometimes makes it more musical.

Many drummers played (or still play) the cymbals in the manner you mention—not just Buddy Rich. Louie Bellson is one, and Papa Jo Jones was another. If you get a chance, check out the film *The Gene Krupa Story*. There's some fine cymbal work in it, too. My sticking can be singles or doubles—I have no set pattern. I can tell you that when I cross my arms from one cymbal to the other, I'm using a triplet pattern.

Thanks for all the kind words!



improving it. I suggest that you get a good metronome and practice, using books like Stone's *Stick Control* or my own *Master Studies*. My students have had good results with these books. They are strictly technique books, and I recommend them as a tool to use in order to reach your musical goal.

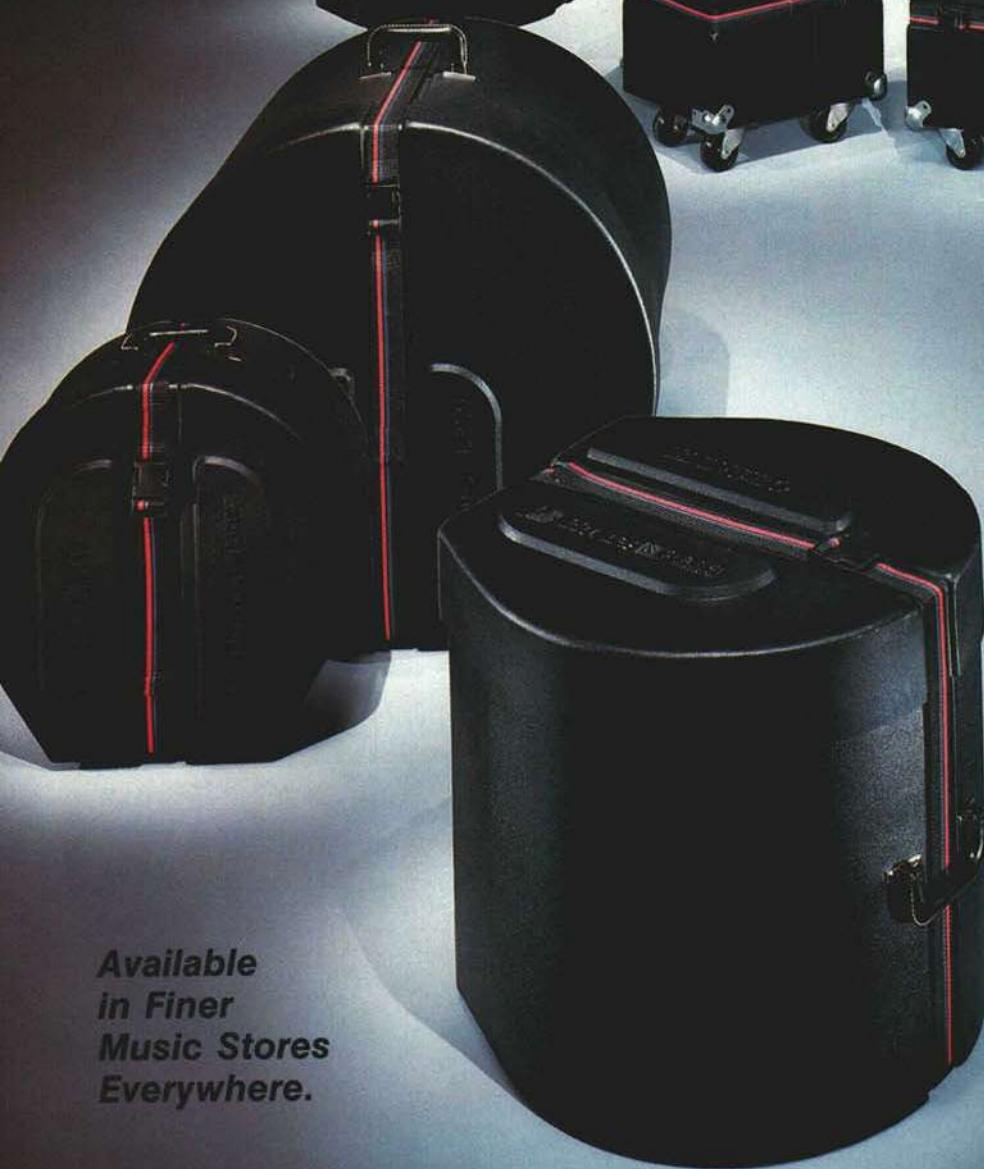
I'm pleased that you enjoyed listening to "Unsquare Dance." If I can be of any assistance to you in any other way, please do not hesitate to write to me in care of *Modern Drummer*.

**NEW!**

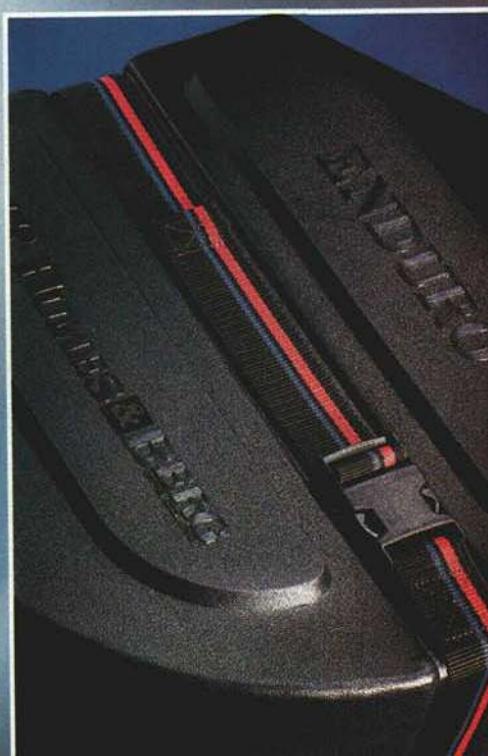
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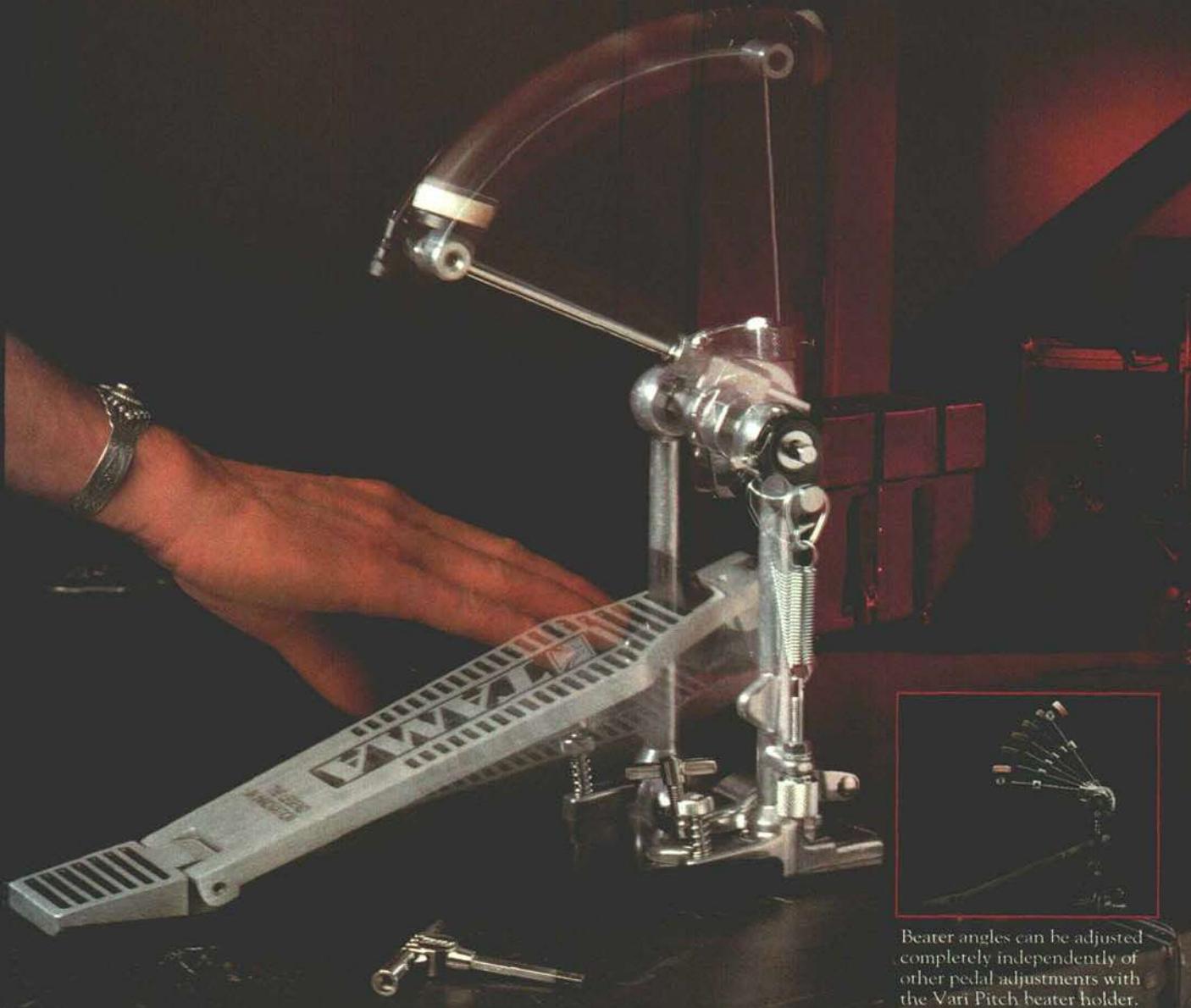
# The Beauty of **IRON COBRA**

**JEFF CHONIS AND HARRY McCARTHY** of

**Drum Paradise** discuss the versatility and durability of Tama's Iron Cobra

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## I R O N

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"Also, while it may be a cliché, time is money. A good pedal should set up quickly and be flexible," adds partner Harry McCarthy. "With standard pedals, when you adjust one parameter, something else changes--which is time-consuming. But the adjustments on the Iron Cobra are completely independent so setting up to anybody's style takes almost no time at all."

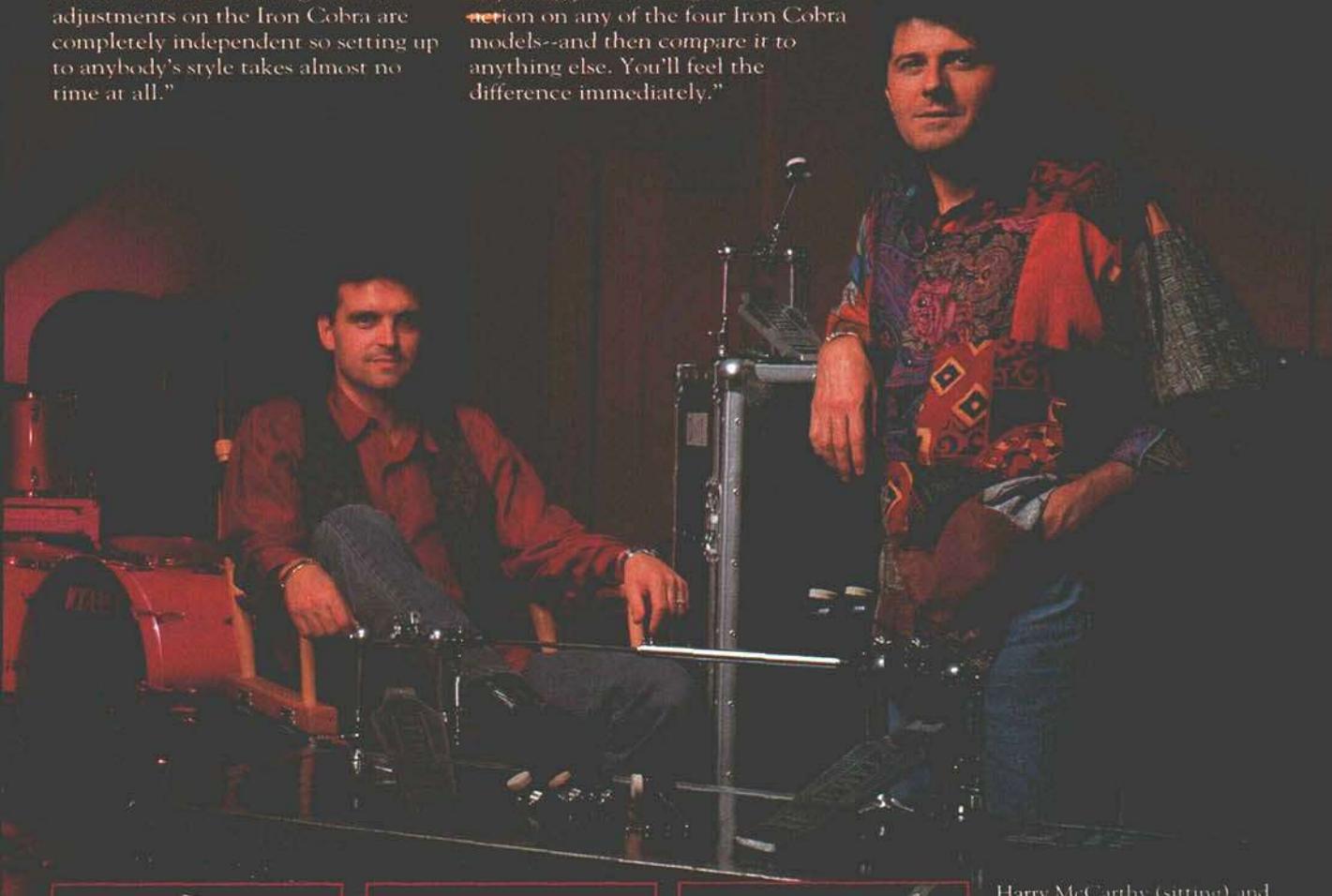
"Another major plus is...well, the only word I can think of is *changeability*," says Jeff. "If someone wants a quick change of kick drum sound, Iron Cobra has three different beater styles. Even the cams are interchangeable! I can't think of another pedal where you can so easily transform the style of pedal from one type to another."

"But the bottom line is you have to experience a pedal like this to really appreciate how smooth and fast it is. Try using just one finger to test the action on any of the four Iron Cobra models--and then compare it to anything else. You'll feel the difference immediately."

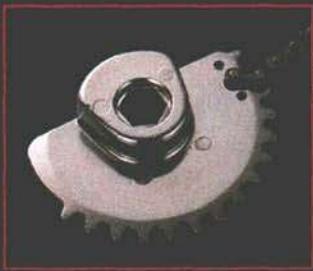
Finishes Harry, "We've seen just about every pedal made...and these pedals represent a major advance. Every serious drummer needs to experience them."

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Harry McCarthy (sitting) and Jeff Chonis. Drum Paradise is located in Los Angeles, CA.



# C O B R A

# IT'S QUESTIONABLE



## HPD INFORMATION

**A** There was mention made in your May '93 issue of HPDs (Hearing Protection Devices) offered by Etymotic Research. I'd like to get more specific details about these products—specifically about the ER-25s mentioned in the article. I'd also like to know where they can be purchased.

Ryan Pehr  
Williamsburg VA

**A** To answer your second question first, HPDs from Etymotic Research are generally purchased through a hearing specialist known as an audiologist. You can contact audiologists via references from a doctor (especially an otologist [ear, nose, & throat specialist]) or a hearing clinic. For specific information on the products offered by Etymotic Research, contact the company directly at 61 Martin Lane, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007, (708) 228-0006.

## CYMBAL HISTORY

**A** I have a pair of Krut hi-hat cymbals, which were made in England. I'd like to know some of their history.

Matt Nerbonne  
Englewood CO

**D** A friend of mine was recently given an old cymbal whose sole manufacturer's mark was a small "Alegian" pressed into the metal. The cymbal has a marvelous "dirty" crash sound, not unlike that of an old K Zildjian. What can you tell me about the origin of "Alegian" cymbals?

John Perry Penn  
Houma LA

**A** We referred both questions to Robert Zildjian, president of Sabian cymbals and an authority on cymbal history. These are his responses:

"Of the several budget cymbal series introduced by the Premier Drum Company in England, Krut ('Turk' spelled backwards) was their cheapest line. In the late '70s the name was

changed to 2 Star Zyn, bringing it into the family of Zyn cymbals, which was a popular series of models that was discontinued in the mid-'80s. Hugo Pinksterboer's *Cymbal Book* contains a brief section on Krut cymbals (see 'Series' pg. 174), but I suggest that you contact Premier in England for more in-depth information on the history of these cymbals.

"Alegian was a brand name given to second-line Zildjian cymbals—cymbals that 'didn't make it' into the Zildjian product line. We used to sell them as 'Zilcos' to Ludwig and as 'Alejians' to Slingerland. Bud Slingerland always insisted on that name, because it ended in 'ian,' which made it look like a real Armenian deal. Prior to 1968 the cymbals were made at the Zildjian plant in Norwell, Massachusetts. From 1968 until they were discontinued in 1975, they were made at what was then the Canadian Zildjian plant and is now the Sabian factory.

"So what you have is a second-line Zildjian cymbal, which, due to its age, is probably sounding much better. On a lot of the Zilco/Alegian cymbals, what one person thought was a bad sound would be good for another person. So you probably have a good deal there: a Zildjian cymbal that was rejected not because of any manufacturing defect, but only because it didn't meet the acoustic 'trends' of its day."

## FILLING HOLES IN SHELLS

**A** I own a Pearl drumset, and the tom mounts allow the tom holders to go into the shells. I want to put RIMS tom mounts on my toms. What is the best way to cover up or fill in the holes drilled into the shells to accommodate the tom arms? I read in a previous *MD* that Bill Detamore used pieces of hardwood dowel to complete a similar job on an old Ludwig kit. Is using dowel the best way to do it? Are there any other methods?

Chris Light  
Freehold NJ

**A** Bill Detamore replies: "Congratulations on using the RIMS mounts, Chris; they'll make a big difference. Regarding your question on plugging holes: Hardwood dowels are the best way to fill up most holes in drumshells. Putty is very messy and almost always winds up falling out due to vibration. Dowels can be cut to length, put in the holes, and glued with a very strong glue.

"The problem with Pearl mounts, particularly, is the large size of the hole. It may be difficult to find hardwood doweling in that diameter. (I think the end grain of a dowel that big might look pretty cheesy, anyway.) For that situation, I use a doorknob drill on an old shell and cut a piece that I call a 'plug' to custom-fit the hole. I then stain the plug to match the shell, put it in, and glue it.

"If you try any of this yourself, please be very careful. Some of the tools are dangerous, and you can ruin a drum real fast. Call a pro for some help, if at all possible."

## PLEXIGLASS PARTITIONS AND STUDIO HEADPHONES

**A** I've been watching late-night TV shows recently, and I've noticed that many of the drummers in the guest bands play with clear acrylic partitions in front and on both sides of their kits. What is the purpose of this? What kind of effect does this have for live situations, if any? Why don't *all* the drummers use them, and especially why don't the drummers in the show's own bands use them? On another subject, when a band is recording a song, why does each member wear headphones? Are they listening only to themselves, only to the other instruments, or some combination?

Dean Meacham  
Deatsville AL

**A** Clear acrylic partitions such as you mention are used for the purpose of containing, controlling, and/or isolating the sound of the drumkit. In some cases, it's merely a matter of reducing the

*continued on page 52*

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# VINNIE

Ten years ago, at the time of our first interview, Vinnie Colaiuta was not exactly what you would call "focused." "Exuberant," yes, but with an unbridled energy that seemed somehow unsettled.

These days, having a conversation with Vinnie can be as intense an experience as watching him play, he analyzes, ponders, and makes analogies with almost every utterance, making sure he's expressed himself clearly and fully. Reflected by his short, dark hair, now peppered with gray and looking quite distinguished, his maturation is evident. He no longer searches for words—immediately articulate, he knows what he wants to communicate and pulls no punches.

Ten years' time has seriously focused the articulation of Vinnie's playing as well. When we first met, he had just come from having worked with Frank Zappa. His session career was unsteady; it couldn't really be established until producers believed his energy to be a little more bridled. He certainly gained a reputation for having mega stuff—for being beyond creative. Some producers even fell



**By Robyn Flans**

**Photos By Michael Bloom**

# COLAIUTA





into the trap of hiring Vinnie for his stuff even if the track didn't require that kind of performance. At times even Vinnie felt his own inappropriateness. After a time, though, the powers that be began to realize an artful balance, and Colaiuta's place in the studio became secure. In fact, over the past ten years Vinnie has racked up over six hundred record and soundtrack credits.

With such a successful studio career, it would seem highly unlikely that Vinnie would get involved in any long-term project with any one artist. But a couple of years ago, guitarist Robben Ford recommended Colaiuta for the Sting gig. "Robben called me and asked if I'd be up for doing it, and I said, 'Are you kidding? I wouldn't go out of town with anybody except Sting or Peter Gabriel.' It just had to be musically on that level of real in-touch music.

"Months went by, and it didn't happen," Vinnie continues, "so I wrote it off. But then all of a sudden I got a phone call from one of his managers. He said, 'We represent Sting and he would like you to come to England to play with him. Are you into it?' I said sure and he said, 'Would you be willing to pay your own way over here?' I said, 'I'll tell you what, if you're auditioning me, I'll pay my way if I'm not the chosen person.' They bought me a round-trip ticket, and I don't want to jump to the end of

the story, but I didn't have to pay them back for the ticket.

"When I got there, the first thing we did was go eat some lasagna," Vinnie recounts. "Then the manager gave me a DAT of the mixes of *Soul Cages* to listen to for about forty-five minutes. I listened to the record once, and we sat down and played. The first things we played were 'Every Breath You Take' and some other Police material. Then we started playing material from *Soul Cages*. We played about an hour and a half—just Sting, guitarist Dominic Miller, and myself—and we had a great time. It was the same sort of thing that happened with Frank Zappa when I got that gig. Sting said, 'You've got the gig, but I have to honor some other appointments that I have.'

"I didn't tell anybody because the word wasn't definite," Vinnie explains, "but a day and a half later, the management called to make it official. So I went to England, we rehearsed for five days, and about two days into rehearsal, Peter Gabriel showed up. We were scheduled to do some gigs in South America for Amnesty International, and Peter rehearsed with us and then played the gig in Chile with us. It was great.

"So I got to work with both of them—the only two guys I would have gone on tour for."



**RF:** You'll have to suspend your modesty for a minute, but what do you think Sting needed from a drummer that you were able to fulfill?

**VC:** Just somebody who felt good to play with, who conceptually played for the music and at the same time had an identity of his own. I know he didn't want somebody to be Stewart Copeland particularly—or Manu Katche, Omar Hakim, or anyone else he's used. He just wanted somebody who felt like the right guy, for whatever those instincts are that you can't intellectualize.

He obviously had a set of criteria, though at that time I didn't know what that consisted of. Later, as I began working with him, the criteria became more evident. I think because I was a new guy and this was a new band, he may have said certain things to me in order to mold the band the way he wanted to have it initially, and then have it take on its own life from there. Instead of my just playing anything and then letting it develop from there, he would say to me, 'On this song, I don't like fills going into the chorus,' little things that I would start to notice. I finally realized that was how he was

going to define his group sound; that's how he wanted his music to be approached—with those basic building blocks, those basic parameters. Once you understand how he thinks for each song—and then his concept as a whole—you can start to develop in a manner that works. If you don't know, you may do some things that you may think are great but that he doesn't.

Another thing is if you're playing an arena, you can't play things that are not going to read, because it sounds too sloppy. There's a built-in challenge to try to say more with less. Then when you're in theaters or places you like, you can stretch out. You can hear everything, and you know that the audience can hear everything. Plus, you're already equipped with knowing what those parameters are. For us, it's gotten to the point where we don't really think about what we are or aren't allowed to play; we just play.

**RF:** Let's talk about how some of the songs on *Ten Summoner's Tales* came about—how they were presented to you, how you came up with the ideas for them. First, "If I Ever Lose My Faith In You."

**VC:** Quite a bit of time before we actually went in to record, I went into a studio with my drums and

## Intensive Listening

Here are the albums Vinnie says he listens to most for inspiration.

Artist	Album Title	Drummer
Miles Davis	Nefertiti	Tony Williams
John McLaughlin	Live At The Royal Albert Hall	Trilok Gurtu
Weather Report	Live In Tokyo	Eric Gravatt
Tony Williams	Ego, Emergency, Believe It	Tony Williams
The Meters	Rejuvenation	Zigaboo Modeliste
Mahavishnu Orchestra	Inner Mounting Flame, Birds Of Fire	Billy Cobham
Herbie Hancock	Flood	Mike Clark

plus, any James Brown, Elvin Jones, Led Zeppelin, Jeff Watts, Al Foster, Joey Baron, Peter Erskine, Dennis Chambers, Steve Smith, Steve Gadd, "and all of the brilliant players that gave and continue to give so much to music."





## Vinnie's Sting Setup

**Drumset:** Yamaha Maple Custom

- A. 4 x 14 Vinnie Colaiuta model snare drum
- B. 10x10 tom
- C. 10 x 12 tom
- D. 12 x 14 tom
- E. 14 x 16 tom
- F. 18 x 22 bass drum

**Hardware:** Yamaha with a Yamaha rack system, DW hi-hat stand, and DW Turbo double pedal

**Sticks:** Zildjian Vinnie Colaiuta model (with wood tip)

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

1. 14" *Platinum Quick Beat* hi-hats
2. 20" *Oriental China Trash*
3. 17" A *Custom* crash
4. 6" A splash
5. 8" K splash
6. 10" A splash
7. 20" *Platinum* ping ride
8. 13" A *Custom* hi-hats
9. 15" A *Custom* crash
10. 18" A *Custom* crash

**Heads:** Remo coated *Ambassadors* on top of snare and all toms, clear *Ambassadors* on the bottoms of toms, *Pinstripe* on bass drum

some drum machines and computers. Jeremy Smith engineered, and Bino Espinosa was his assistant. Sting was there for maybe two of the five days. We played bass and drums together. He wanted to get some ideas for grooves. I'd have a click on one track, and then I would make loops that I would create on the machines. I'd either layer it with drums, layer just the machines, or just use the drums. I did different things like that. From what I understand, "Faith" was at least partially inspired by one of those grooves.

**RF:** So when he wrote the songs, how were they presented back to you? What did he ask of you?

**VC:** On "Faith," I can't remember if I heard a demo or if we just started playing it. Most of them were demos. He had gotten together with Dominic, and they had made some demos together. They were very sparse—little machine tracks, guitar and bass, scratch vocal, and drum machine. He had other stuff on the Synclavier, with all the parts there. He'd play demos and it was, "This is what it is now, but let's play it and see what happens."

**RF:** He didn't present completed versions at all?

**VC:** Some of them were pretty straight-ahead, like "Heavy Cloud, No Rain." The song "She's Too Good For Me" originally started as a shuffle where we were really blowing all over the place. It ended up as a rockabilly kind of song. Admittedly we were saying, "Wow, this is great, this shuffle is really burning," but it almost sounded like a fusion-y shuffle. A lot of times when you infuse that character into a song too much, it can detract from what the song is about. It's like, *here's* the song, and *here's* the style.

We ended up playing it more in character with the song. I layered some things separately. I played bass drum and snare drum and then overdubbed some cymbals, and I multi-tracked another snare drum just to give it a thickness that you feel more than hear. The record had an interesting quality because it was so sparse. Sometimes we would play the songs with very few alterations to our "live" versions. Other times we would play and it would change a lot. We were averaging about one and a half tracks a day. We cut fourteen tracks in ten days.

**RF:** Let's talk about "Seven Days." It's in five, but the listener isn't really struck by that. Was it intentional to mask it a little?

**VC:** Yes and no. It wasn't so much to disguise it for the sake of disguising it. I phrased it by playing over the bar line, so the hi-hat pattern resolves every two bars. That smooths it out and gives it a regularity that 4/4 has. There's a brush overdub in the middle of one of the verses of that song, too. I overdubbed it to make it chug a little more and differently.

**RF:** Where did the country chorus come from in "Love Is Stronger Than Justice"?

**VC:** The idea was to make it very repetitive and simple. Again, it's that over-the-bar ride cymbal, where the ride cymbal is playing sort of quarter notes. The pattern is real static. That's what he wanted. What that does is solidify that seven so strong that it creates more of a contrast when that sort of hillbilly chorus comes in. That's part of the comedy of the song. His idea was to get imbedded in that seven and then suddenly go off.

**RF:** What about "Saint Augustine In Hell"?

continued on page 56

# Something's A Bit Odd

Vinnie Colaiuta is a recognized expert on many aspects of drumming, but when it comes to odd meters, he's an *animal*. His work with Frank Zappa in the late '70s is almost legendary—and a real challenge to figure out. (Check out *Joe's Garage* for a taste of Vinnie's brilliance.) If you've had the chance to hear *Ten Summoner's Tales*, Sting's recent release, you've heard Vinnie bring his odd-meter expertise to some of the pop superstar's music. (See the examples at the end of this sidebar.)

Vinnie recently sat down with long-time friend Vito Rezza (a Toronto-based drummer and composer), and the two had an off-the-cuff chat on the topic of odd meters. The following conversation, which took place while Vinnie was on tour with Sting, gives a brief look at his feelings on the subject.

Vinnie: What do you want to know about odd meters? If you're playing in four, you've got four beats to the bar. If you're playing in seven, you've got seven beats to the bar. What's the big whoop? [laughs]

Vito: No big whoop. But is it just the matter of finding the pivot?

Vinnie: What do you mean by "pivot"?

Vito: I suppose the pivot is where the odd meter is subdivided in the measure. Once you have the subdivision, it's simple—you just fill in the blanks.

Vinnie: Exactly. And yet it has a lot to do with perspective. Our perspective is 4/4. We feel it without having to count it. That's what drummers should be able to do with odd meters: They should feel it and not count it. Look at people who play Greek weddings. They're not counting those odd bars, they just feel it, they feel the "hump."

Vito: Before you can feel it, though, you have to figure it out. Odd meters can all be broken down into groups of 2s and 3s. A measure of five can be broken into a group of 2 plus 3, or seven can be broken into a group of 2 plus 2 plus 3. And where those subdivisions fall is where the "pulses" are felt. While playing odd meters do you listen for those series of pulses?

Vinnie: Yes. Again, everybody can easily hear when a bar of 4/4 is going to resolve. There's no reason why we can't condition ourselves to hear odd meters, like a seven broken into 2, 2, 3, which is fairly common. We should be able to do it for five, seven, nine, eleven, thirteen...whatever.

Vito: For me, one of the best ways to get comfortable with odd meters is to play in 4/4, but play odd groupings over the 4/4. For example, in 4/4 you have sixteen 16th notes. If you superimpose groupings of seven 16th notes over it, you'll end up with two groupings of seven (equaling fourteen 16th notes) in a bar of 4/4, with two 16th notes left over. It just becomes math, figuring out how many times you'd have to play the seven-note groupings to end up back on beat 1. That gets you used to hearing the pattern and thinking over the bar line.

Unfortunately, too many guys get hung up on the mathematics. Here's a story about Elvin Jones that gets right to the heart of things: Elvin was playing a session with Barney Kessel, and at the end of the session Barney approached Elvin and said, "Hey Elvin, man, you sounded beautiful, but I was counting through your eights [eight-bar solos], and sometimes we weren't coming out at the same time." Elvin responded in his low growl, "Yeah man, that's because sometimes my eights take a little longer." [laughs] My point is, we're not dealing with mathematics here.

Vinnie: Good point. I've had a lot of guys show me transcriptions of things I've done—especially odd meter stuff I did with Frank—and they'd want to know if the transcriptions were accurate. Many

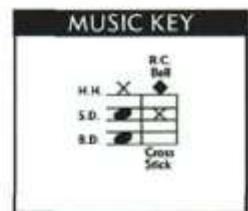
times they were, but sometimes they weren't. And I found that they often made mistakes during sections where I might have been playing in an odd meter or odd grouping, but I was *playing* with the time—maybe playing a little on top or a little behind the beat. That's something any drummer might do to affect the groove or feel in 4/4. If you hear someone playing triplets, you'll recognize that they're triplets even if they're played on top of the beat—you'd know it wasn't 16ths. You see, they weren't familiar with hearing what the odd meter was supposed to sound like, so when I played with it a little bit they assumed it was something else.

Vito: So you're saying that every player dictates what the rhythmic rules are going to be depending on his or her groove?

Vinnie: Absolutely. That's a player's identity—that's a player's heart.

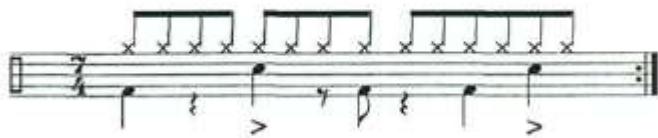
## Three Summoner's Beats

The following odd-meter examples are from *Ten Summoner's Tales*. The patterns that appear are the basic beats Vinnie plays (he elaborates on these basic grooves with ghost notes and slight alterations to the bass and snare patterns), but they give a good look at some more "straightforward" odd-time examples.



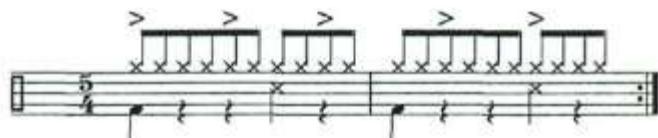
## "Love Is Stranger Than Justice"

This 7/4 example is the basic verse groove of the song.



## "Seven Days"

While this two-bar, 5/4 pattern from the verse of the tune may look simple, the way Vinnie phrases the hi-hat pattern over the bar line is very musical (and a little tricky).



## "Saint Augustine In Hell"

Here's another clear example of Vinnie phrasing over the bar line. While the kick and snare dutifully stay within the 7/8 meter, Vinnie keeps the quarter-note pulse on the ride cymbal, even as it seems to reverse itself, switching emphasis from downbeats to upbeats.



# HIGHLIGHTS OF MD'S FESTIVAL

MD's  
DRUMMER Publication



*Modern Drummer's* Festival Weekend '93—held on Saturday, May 15 and Sunday, May 16—was unprecedented in its level of enthusiasm and excitement. Both days of the show were sellouts, and the standing-room-only audience was treated to the largest and most varied roster of artists in Festival history. For the sixth time, Montclair State College, in Upper Montclair, New Jersey, saw travelers from across the U.S. and as far away as Israel gather together to enjoy the educational value and the camaraderie of this unique drumming event.

The show got off to a rousing start with Hip Pickles, a drum corps ensemble from Long Island, New York consisting of Chet Doboe and Gary Gonzalez on snare drum, Chris Sherer on multi-toms, and Jesus Figueroa and Chris Lopez on tri-bass. The group incorporated the intricate playing styles of drum corps—both marching and on a large variety of mounted percussion instruments—with dynamic choreography, hip vocals, and a good deal of humor to create a dazzling performance. The audience—many of whom were seeing drum corps playing for the first time—cheered their approval. Hip Pickles appeared through the courtesy of **Stingray Percussion** and **Paiste Cymbals**.

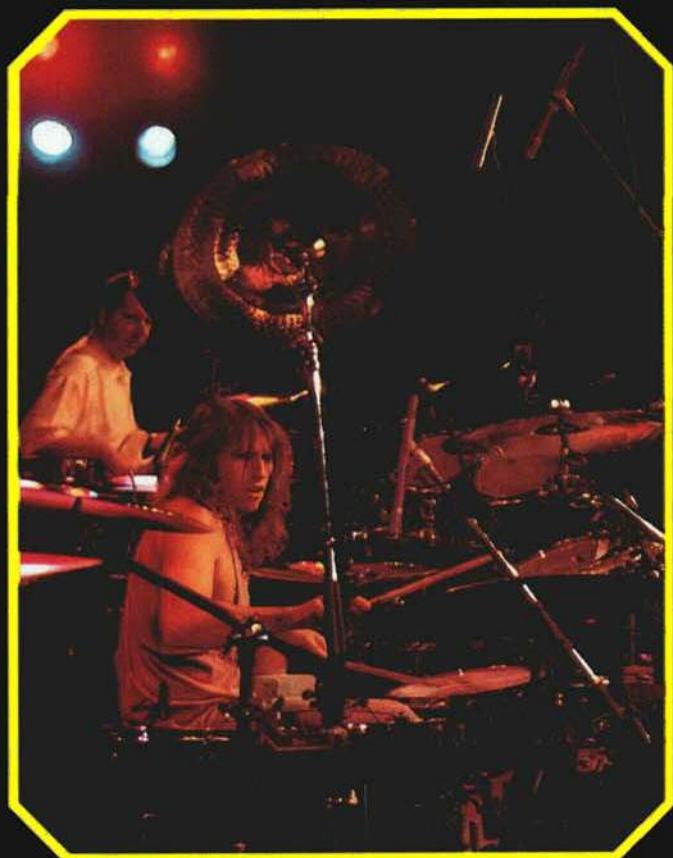


# WEEKEND '93

Photos By Ebet Roberts



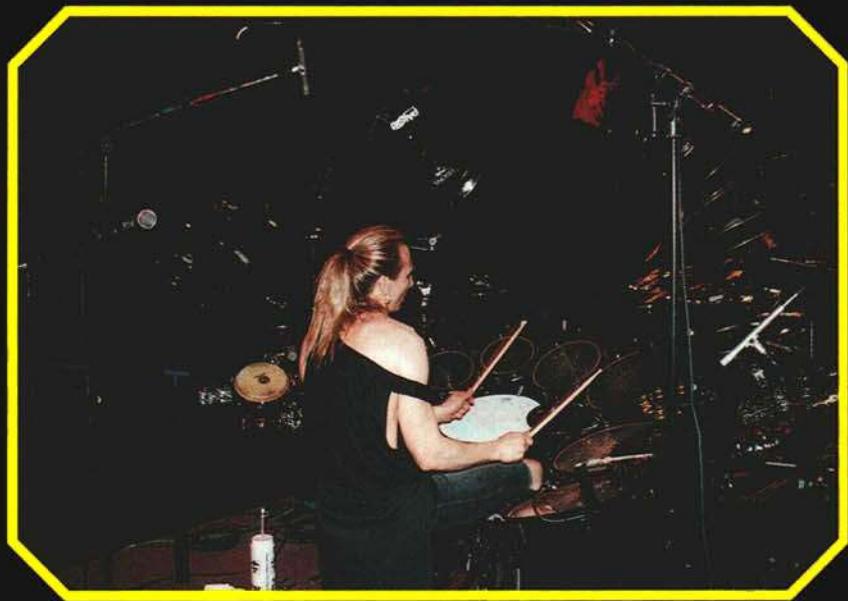
**Rob Affuso** was the first drumset artist on the program. Known for his powerful rock drumming with Skid Row, Rob made a point to display his skills at other types of music. With the Chris Parker jazz band, he played a mid-tempo Latin tune, switched to a swing mode for "Take The A Train," then launched into a Chris Parker original with a heavy funk groove. After offering some practical playing tips and advice for success, Rob returned to the kit to conclude his portion of the show with Rush's "YYZ," accompanied by John DeServio on bass and Skid Row's Dave Sabo on guitar. Rob's well-received performance was sponsored by Sabian Cymbals.





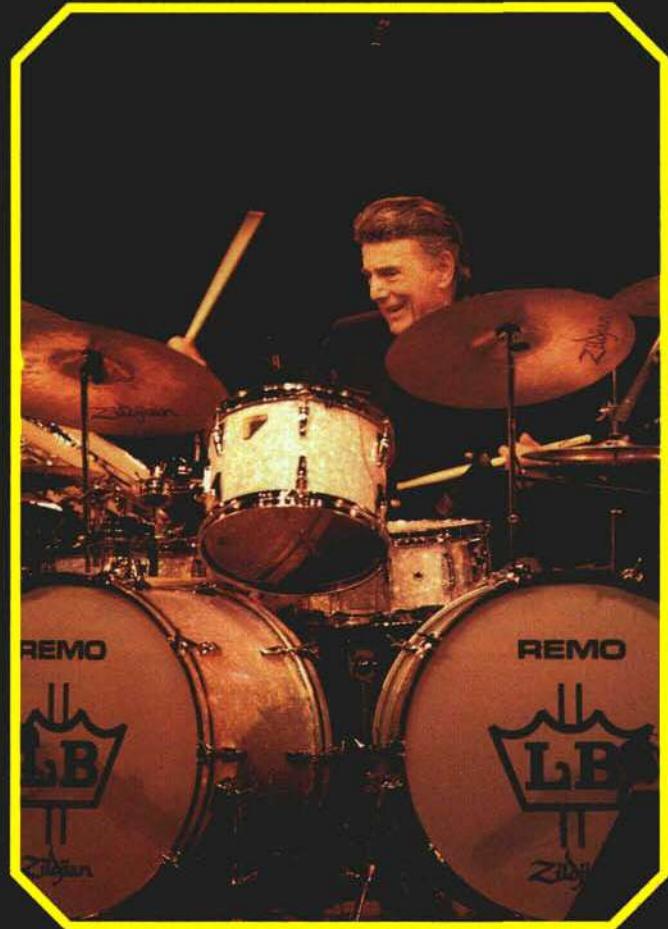
During his set, **Mickey Curry** ably displayed the qualities that make him so in-demand for both touring and studio work. To illustrate those qualities, Mickey outlined the grooves on several tracks on which he has drummed—first playing the mastered track, and then demonstrating what actually went on with the drum and bass parts (with the help of bassist Hugh McDonald). Mickey's advice to the audience was that "Less really is more. It's important to keep your part basic and as supportive of the singer and the song as possible. That's what keeps you working." Mickey's performance was presented by **Yamaha Drums**.





**Terry Bozzio** came on stage to a standing ovation, and proceeded to absolutely mesmerize the audience with a twenty-minute solo based on four ostinatos—displaying his superb abilities and double-bass mastery. Warm and articulate, Terry took pains to explain his philosophy on solo drumming, in which the various parts of his extensive kit serve as the sections of a miniature orchestra—allowing him to "orchestrate" his solos in the most musical manner possible. Said Terry, "Rhythm is basic to all of us, and melody is inseparably linked to rhythm. If we play musically on the drums, we can imply harmonic movement." The audience listened to Terry in awe as he gave them playing advice and shared with them both his talent and his incredible energy. Terry appeared through the courtesy of **Paiste Cymbals** and **Pro-Mark Drumsticks**.





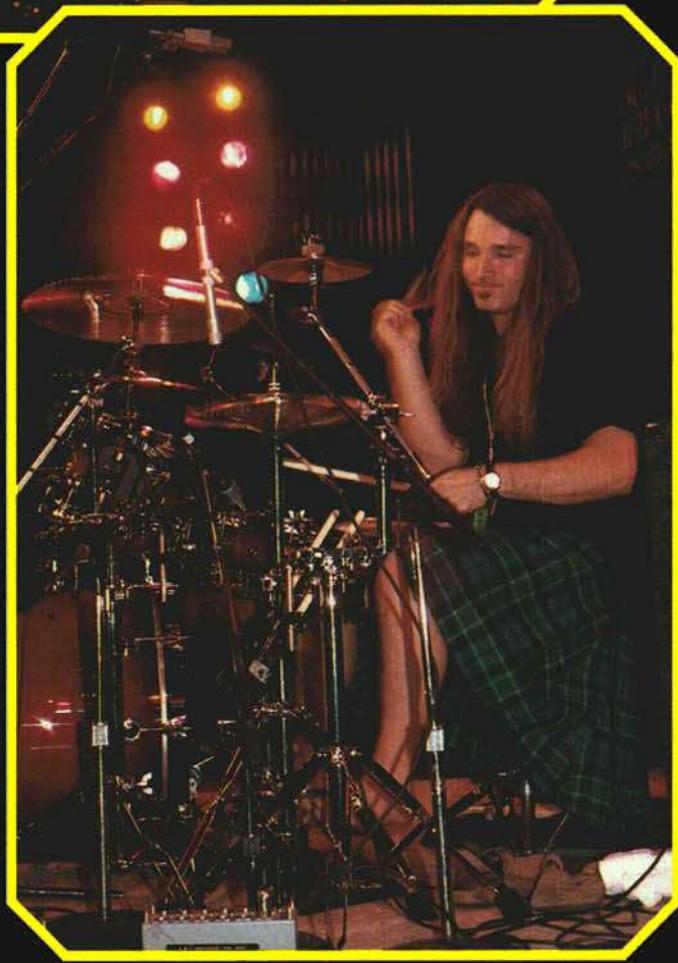
Saturday's show came to a rousing conclusion with a dynamic performance by **Louie Bellson** and his Big Band Explosion. Louie's upbeat personality—and his willingness to share his knowledge and experience with any interested drummers—made him a favorite with audience members throughout the weekend. When it came time for his set, they greeted Louie with a standing ovation as a token of respect. But his impeccable musical performance with the band—along with his legendary soloing technique—brought them to their feet again at the conclusion of his set, cheering with unreserved enthusiasm. Louie and his band were jointly sponsored by **Remo, Inc.** and **Zildjian Cymbals**.

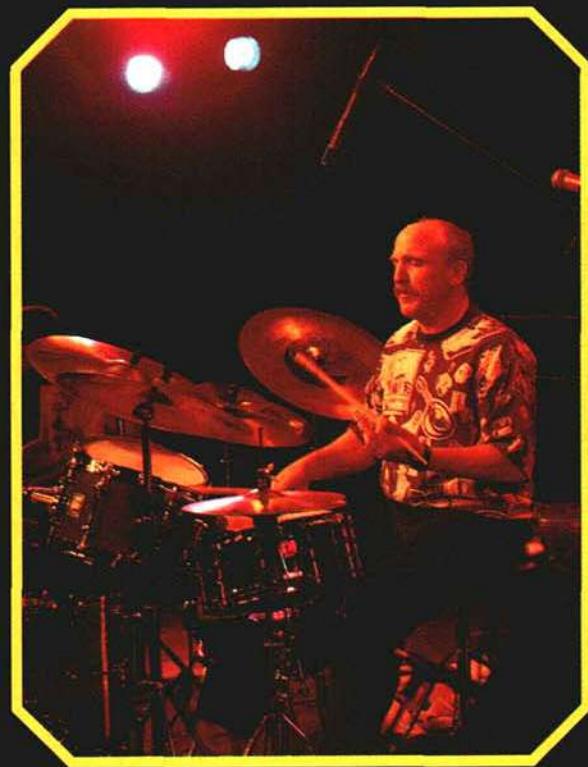
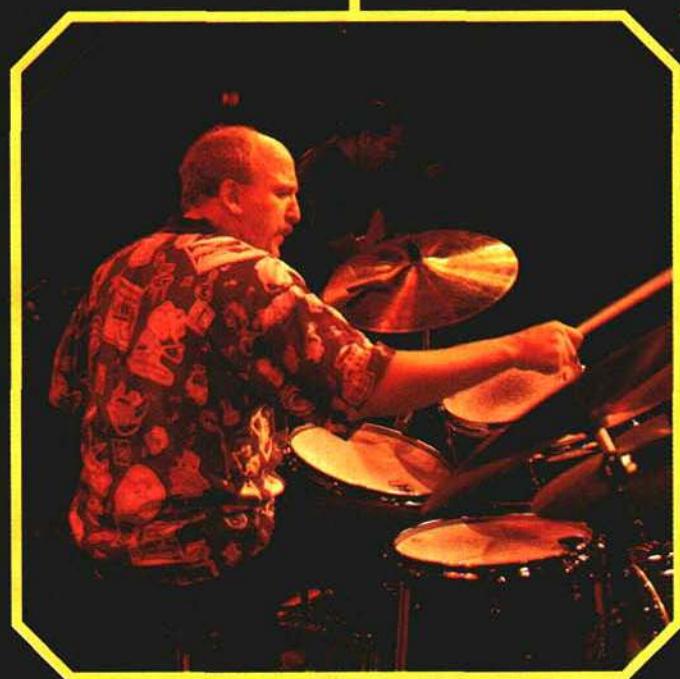


In a Festival first, Sunday's show was opened by a foreign act: The Drums Of Black Bottle, from Glasgow, Scotland. Led by drum major Jackie Houlden—and resplendent in Highland regalia—the ten-man troupe demonstrated the technical patterns involved in Scottish pipe-band drumming. After impressing the crowd with their intricate sticking patterns, they then incorporated two drumsets, cymbals, hi-hats, and cowbells into their routine to demonstrate the relationship between traditional and contemporary rhythms. Their unique performance generated an enthusiastic response from the Festival audience. The Drums Of Black Bottle were co-sponsored by Sabian Cymbals, Remo, Inc., and Vic Firth Drumsticks, with additional equipment support from Darwin Drums, LP Music Group, and Pearl.



Pearl jam's **Dave Abbruzzese** proved extremely popular with the Festival audience. After literally spending hours socializing with the crowd on Saturday, Dave appeared for his set on Sunday in bare feet and a kilt borrowed from the Black Bottle troupe. Relating to the audience in a casual and humorous manner, Dave advised them to stamp their own personalities on the music they play—without stepping on the other musicians' parts. He then demonstrated this concept by playing along to tracks from Pearl Jam's upcoming album. Dave also stressed the importance of avoiding hand and wrist injury due to improper technique, and disseminated literature covering warm-up exercises. Dave was sponsored by **Drum Workshop, Inc.**

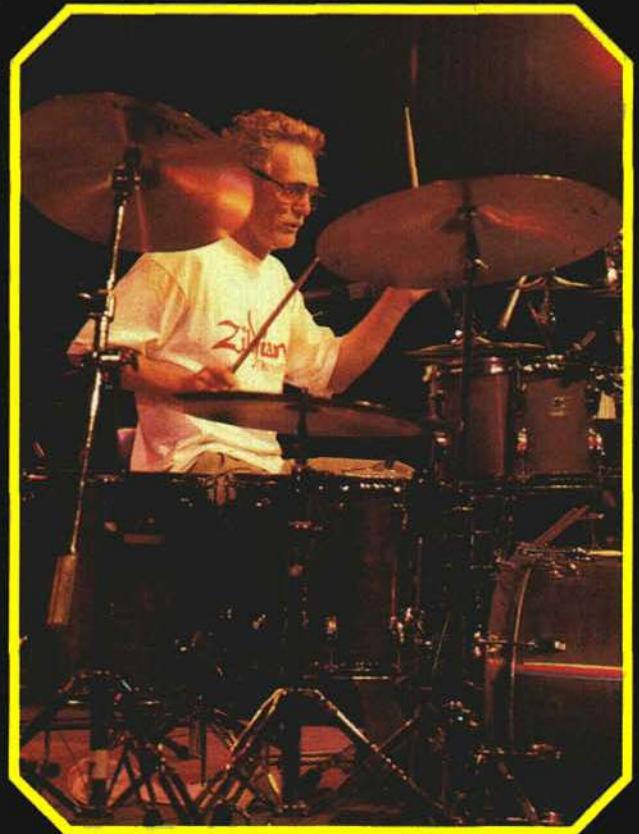


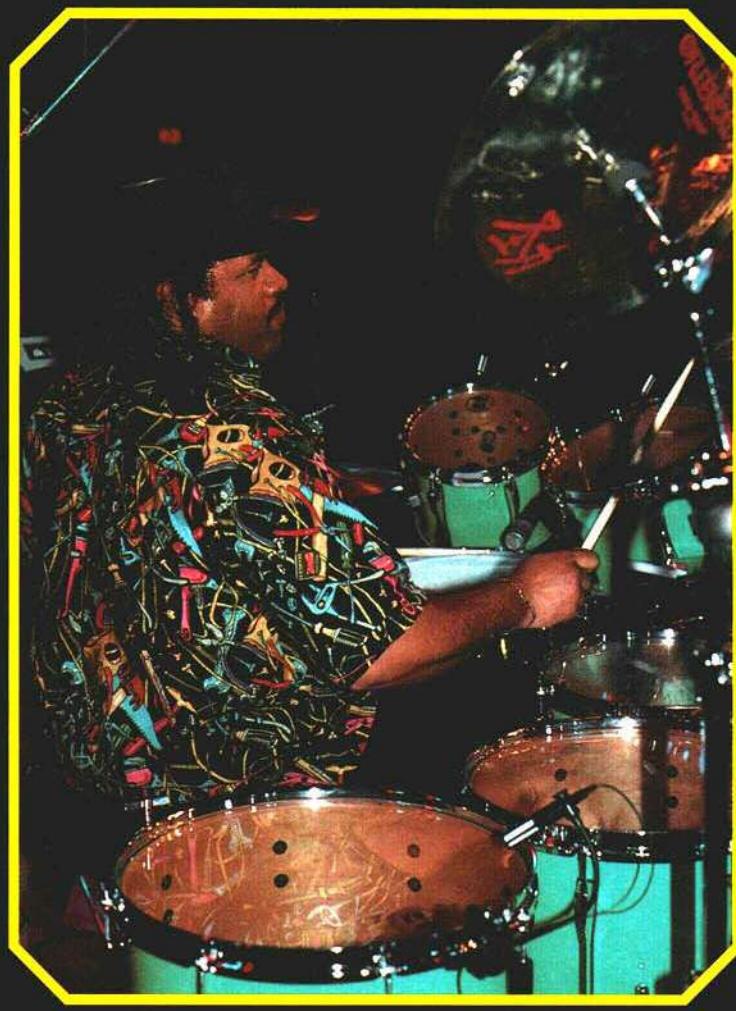


Contemporary jazz drumming was well represented by **Adam Nussbaum**, who began his set with a demonstration of how music can be made on anything by playing with a pair of brushes on a newspaper and whistling "Tea For Two." Then, joined by guitarist John Abercrombie and keyboardist Dan Wall, Adam displayed his great sense for melodies and musical form. A strong educator as well as an outstanding musician, Adam stressed "balance"—in terms of playing dynamics (loud versus soft, busy versus basic), the various voices of the kit, and physical posture. He also pointed out that music is a collaborative effort, saying, "When I'm playing, I'm thinking of nothing; I'm a blank piece of paper up here. A band has to create the music *together*." Adam's performance was presented by Sonor Drums.



The legendary **Ginger Baker** opened his set with a trademark eighteen-minute solo that featured the thunder of rhythmic tom-tom and double-bass patterns combined with a fiery rudimental snare attack. Totally absorbed in his playing, Ginger still managed to loosen a wing nut and remove a splash cymbal that was in his way without missing a beat—offering a lesson in professionalism, and eliciting a cheer from the audience. Ginger next answered questions about his playing style—and about the many rumors associated with his career—with candor, graciousness, and good humor. His advice to drummers focused on his vision of what drumming is and how it should complement the music of which it is a part. Throughout Ginger's performance, which was sponsored by **Ludwig Drums**, the audience—as well as many other Festival artists—listened and looked on in awe.





The culmination of the Festival was the performance by **Dennis Chambers** and the members of Grafitti: Haakon Graf on keyboards, Gary Grainger on bass, and Ulf Wakenius on guitar. While playing exciting electric jazz/funk pieces composed by Graf, Dennis's power, imagination, and ability to groove radiated from the stage. He also offered a blistering solo that left jaws agape and heads shaking—both in the audience and backstage—and provided a high-energy close to the weekend's performances. Dennis Chambers and Grafitti were co-sponsored by **Pearl Drums**, **Evans Drumheads**, and **Calato/Regal Tip Drumsticks**.



# *Behind the scenes of the Festival*



The capacity crowd gathered early, eagerly anticipating the show to come.



Dave Abbruzzese spent hours signing autographs and greeting the audience.

**Current and past Festival drummers joined with visiting artists to share the camaraderie and conviviality backstage.**



Rob Affuso demonstrating the lack of rivalry between Festival performers (with Terry Bozzio)



Terry and Dave swapping stories



Bassist Hugh McDonald, Mickey Curry, David Beal, Joe Franco, and Sandy Gennaro



Joe Morello, Ginger Baker, Dennis Diken, Terry, and Mickey



Jackie Houlden, Louie Bellson, and Dennis Chambers



Van Romaine, Dave, Rob, and Dom Famularo



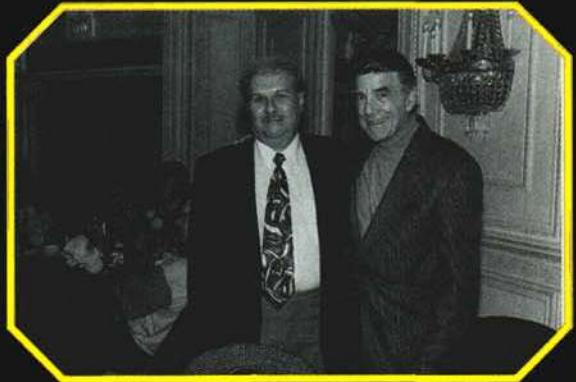
Dave shared a laugh—and some Highland wardrobe—with members of The Drums Of Black Bottle.

### The good feelings continued at the after-show gathering.



The MD staff: (top row) Tracy Kearns, Kevin Kearns, Adam Budofsky, Joan Stickel; (middle row) Isabel Spagnardi, Rick Van Horn, Ron Spagnardi, Susanne Losquadro; (bottom row) Lori Spagnardi, Scott Bienstock, Bob Berenson. (Not pictured: William F. Miller.)

MD Editor/Publisher  
Ron Spagnardi and  
Louie



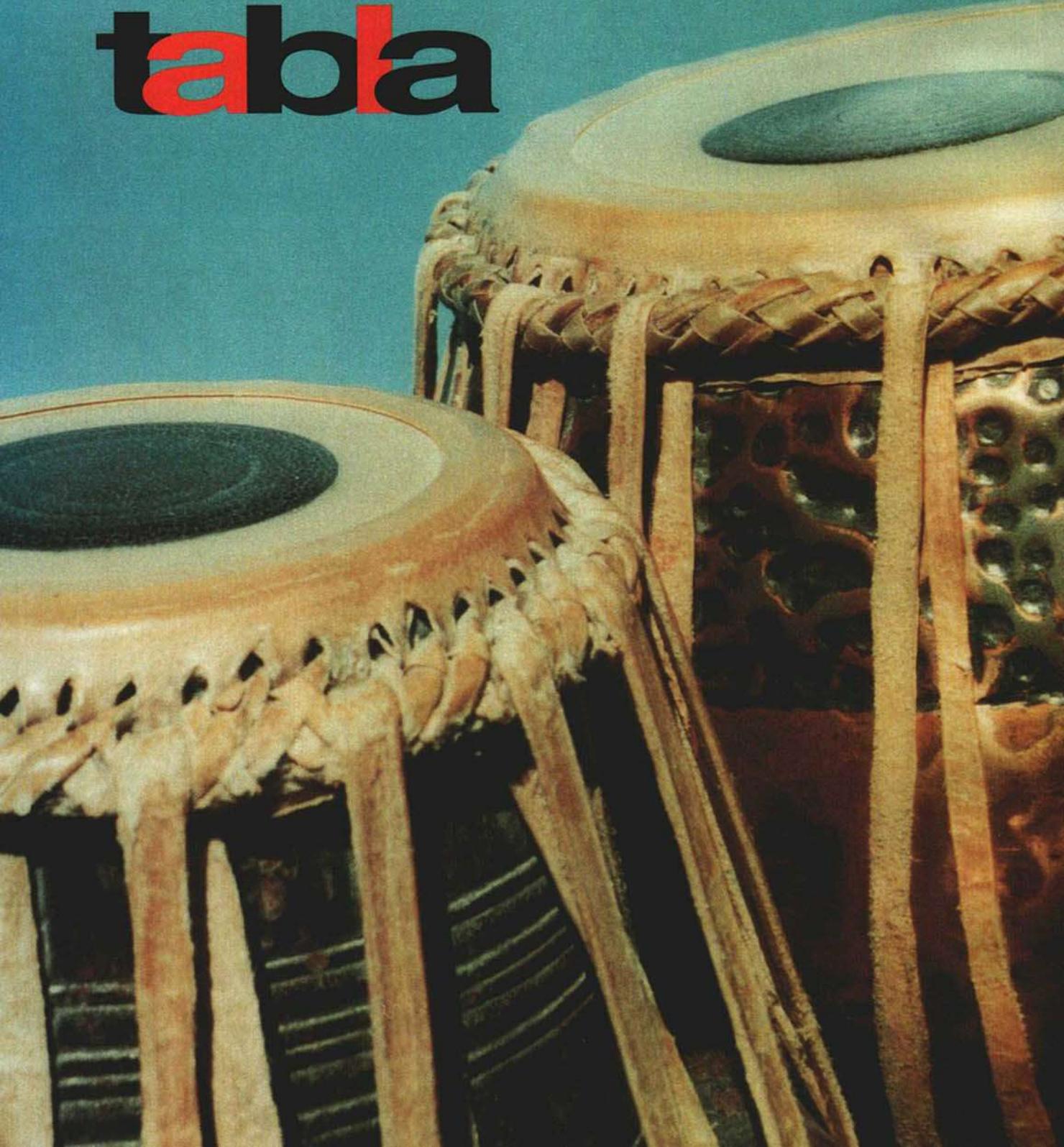
Terry, Adam Nussbaum, Dennis, Louie, and Ginger



Over the course of the Festival, audience members were given the opportunity to win thousands of dollars' worth of door prizes. This year, for the first time, those door prizes included four complete drumkits, along with snare drums, cymbals, hardware, microphones, videos, and a wide variety of accessory items. MD also continued its tradition of recognizing those drummers who traveled the farthest to reach the Festival by presenting them with "Duron Johnson Commemorative Long-Distance Traveler Awards"

(named in honor of the Anchorage, Alaska drummer who has never missed a Festival). Many of the Festival performers—as well as a host of visiting drum stars including festival alumni Joe Morello, Jonathan Mover, and David Beal—spent time with the audience signing autographs, offering tips, and sharing the good feelings that are always a part of this annual get-together of the drumming community. A good time was had by audience and performers alike, and the watchword of the show was, "I can't wait for next year!"

# **an introduction to tabla**



**I**ndian music has fascinated the West for many years. The tabla in particular has attracted the attention of a number of American and European percussionists.

**Tabla has actually been used in popular music continuously since the '60s. For our particular purposes as drummers, it's beginning to be acknowledged that the study of tabla can enhance our perspective of rhythm.**

**Many percussionists shy away from this instrument, though, for various reasons. Tabla teachers are hard to find; the instrument itself is not readily available; and learning how to play it seems very difficult. While these are legitimate concerns, they certainly are not insurmountable obstacles.**

**In this article, we will address the concerns of a musician just wishing to get started in tabla. By looking into the theory of Indian music, how to purchase tabla, and some basic techniques, the job of getting started on tabla should seem much less scary.**

Indian music is one of the oldest musical traditions in the world, with roots in the Vedic chants of the first few millennia B.C. Although the mechanics of the music have undergone tremendous changes in the last few thousand years, the essential characteristics of awe, respect, and devotion have remained unchanged.

One strong remnant of the Vedic tradition is the method of learning. One does not learn tabla from books (or articles in *Modern Drummer*, for that matter), but from a guru, or teacher. The strong bond between teacher and disciple is considered essential for the continuation of the musical tradition. Indeed, the tradition of teacher and disciple is considered to be at the very *core* of Indian classical music.

We Westerners tend to use the expression "Indian music" rather loosely. But there are actually many different styles of Indian music. For instance, there are two systems of classical music—one of northern India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, and another that is found in southern India and Sri Lanka (Ceylon). There is also the popular music used in the thriving Indian film industry, which is comparable to American Top-40 music. And there are innumerable folk music traditions.

Most people in the West think of tabla from the standpoint of the north Indian tradition. This is from exposure to great artists such as Zakir Hussain, Mahapurush Misra, Alla Rakha (Ravi Shankar's accompanist during the '60s), and a host of others. Although this is not the only genre to which tabla is important, it is a reasonable starting place, since this is the style that created tabla and that provides the most systematic

**By David Courtney**

theoretical base for its performance practice. With this in mind, we'll examine tabla throughout this article from the north Indian perspective.

The north Indian system is based upon two major concepts—"rag" and "tal." Rag may briefly be considered the melodic or modal aspect of the music, while tal is the rhythmic. Both rag and tal occupy an equal and inseparable position in this system.

Tabla has a position in both rag and tal. When numerous tabla are tuned to the notes of the scale, entire melodies may be played. This is called "Tabla Tarang." But the most important use of tabla is providing the tal. It is in this capacity that most people think of the instrument.

The word "tal" literally means "clap." The clapping of hands may be the oldest form of rhythmic accompaniment. Today, a system of claps and waves forms a conceptual common ground. It is common to the way instrumentalists, dancers, and vocalists think of rhythm.

There are similarities between Western and Indian rhythms, and by realizing this, we should be able to get into Indian music more easily. Western rhythm may function at the level of beats, measures, or even longer cycles. The same is true of Indian rhythm. Let's look more closely at the different levels in Indian music.

The most fundamental unit is the "matra," which translates to "beat." In many cases the matra is just a single stroke. However, just as 8th or 16th notes may be strung together to make a single beat, so too may several strokes of tabla be strung together to have the value of one matra.



**Photo 1—A Tabla Set**

This is a complete tabla set. It consists of: (back left to right) danya, banya, (middle left to right) banya cover, chuttas, danya cover, (front left to right) hammer, talcum powder.

The next higher level of structure is the "vibhag," meaning "measure" or "bar." These measures may be as short as one beat or as long as five or more; usually they are two, three, or four matras in length, though. These vibhags are described in terms of claps and waves. A vibhag that is signified by a clap of the hands is said to be "bhari" or "tali." A vibhag that is signified by a waving of the hand is said to be "khali."

Let's use a common tal called "tintal" as an illustration. It has sixteen beats divided into four vibhag of four beats each. Its clapping arrangement is: clap, 2, 3, 4, clap, 2, 3, 4, wave, 2, 3, 4, clap, 2, 3, 4.

This brings us to the concept of the overall cycle. This cycle, called "avartan," dominates the highest level of looking at the rhythm. Unfortunately it does not really have a Western equivalent. Although the cycle is found in Western music, any sort of flexibility is not allowed in Indian music. If one is playing a structure of sixteen, one must *maintain* that structure throughout.

The importance of the cycle gives special signifi-

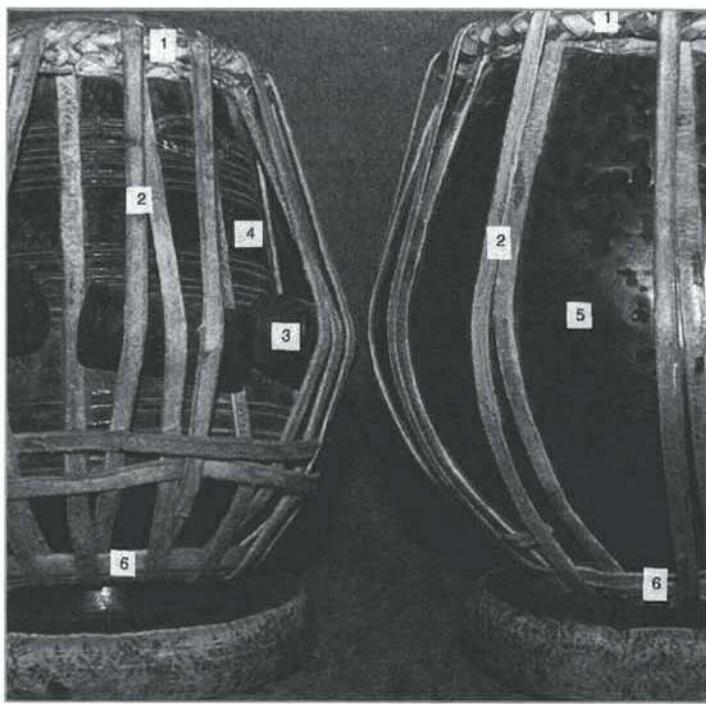
cance to the first beat. This beat, called "sam," is a point of convergence between the tabla player and the other musicians. Whenever a cadence is indicated, it will usually end on this sam. This means that the sam may be thought of as the beginning of some structures as well as the ending of others.

The mnemonic syllable called "bol," which represents the various strokes of the tabla, is a very important concept for

the tabla player for two reasons. First, the bol allows the musician to remember complicated fixed compositions. Second, the musician uses the bol to perform the mental permutations to know if an improvised passage or "lick" will work. Although these bols are supposed to represent the strokes, there is not a one-to-one correlation. This variation is often attributed to differences in "gharana," which may be thought of as a school, approach, or dialect of tabla. Many years ago, transportation and communication was not good in India. In this environment different places developed their own regional variations in technique, bol, and overall philosophy. Consequently, there are six acknowledged gharana of tabla: Dilli (Delhi), Farukhabad, Benares, Lucknow, Ajrada, and Punjab. Most musicians today trace their lineage to one or more of these established schools.

Although each of the gharanas has its own minor variations, there are two major approaches—Dilli and Purbi. The Dilli style derives its name from Delhi and is characterized by a strong emphasis on rim strokes and use of the middle finger. The Purbi style derives its name from the Hindi word "purab." Purab means "eastern" and reflects the fact that this style was popular in Lucknow, Benares, and other eastern parts of the country. The Purbi style is characterized by open hand strokes and a strong emphasis on material from pakhawaj, an ancient barrel-shaped drum from which tabla was derived.

It may be appropriate to review the important aspects of theory before moving ahead. We pointed out that there is a cycle (avartan), a measure (vibhag), and a beat (matra). The vibhags are specified by a series of claps and waves. The overall cycle is given prominence. The first beat of the cycle (sam) is especially important because it marks a point of convergence. The various strokes of the tabla are shown with a system of



**Photo 2—Parts Of The Tabla**

1) puddi 2) tasma 3) gatta 4) lakadi 5) pital 6) kundal

mnemonic syllables known as bol. These concepts should be understood before we turn our attention to the tabla itself.

We have used the term "tabla" quite loosely. What is tabla? What are the various parts? If I buy a set, what can I expect?

Besides allowing us to communicate with importers and musicians, familiarizing ourselves with the parts of the tabla also gives us the necessary background to get started playing. Let's take a look.

Photo 1 shows what constitutes a complete tabla set. First there is the "danya" (smaller wooden drum) and the "banya" (larger metal drum). There are the two covers that protect the tabla when not in use, as well as two doughnut shaped cushions (chutta), a tuning hammer (hathodi), and talcum powder. Let's look more closely at the two drums.

Photo 2 shows the major parts of the tabla. These are the puddi (head), tasma (leather thong), gatta (wooden dowels), lakadi (wooden shell), pital (brass shell), and kundal (counter hoop).

The puddi (drumhead) has special significance. (See Photo 3.) The four parts that we need to be concerned with are the syahi (black spot), maidan (main membrane), chart (annular membrane), and gajara (leather braid).

Now that we know what a tabla set consists of, it's time to buy. Fortunately tabla is quite inexpensive; a pair usually retails between \$150 and \$275. However, you normally can't just go into any music store and buy them; one usually has to order by mail. (A partial list of suppliers is shown in the table, on page 84.)

There are many decisions that must be made during the time of purchase. It would be impossible to predict all of the options, but here are a few common ones.

Sometimes you'll need to decide between traditional rawhide lacing and metal screw tuning. The metal turnbuckle can be hard on the hands, so it is almost never used by the professional

tablist. Buy the traditional rawhide lacing! Also be certain that the lacing is rawhide. Tablas from Delhi, the Punjab, and Pakistan sometimes use leather instead of rawhide. But leather will break very quickly. It is easy to tell which is used, because leather is a deep brown while the rawhide is a light beige.

One should also be careful about tablas that come from Bengal or Bangladesh. Although these tablas often have a sweet sound, the poor quality of the lacing

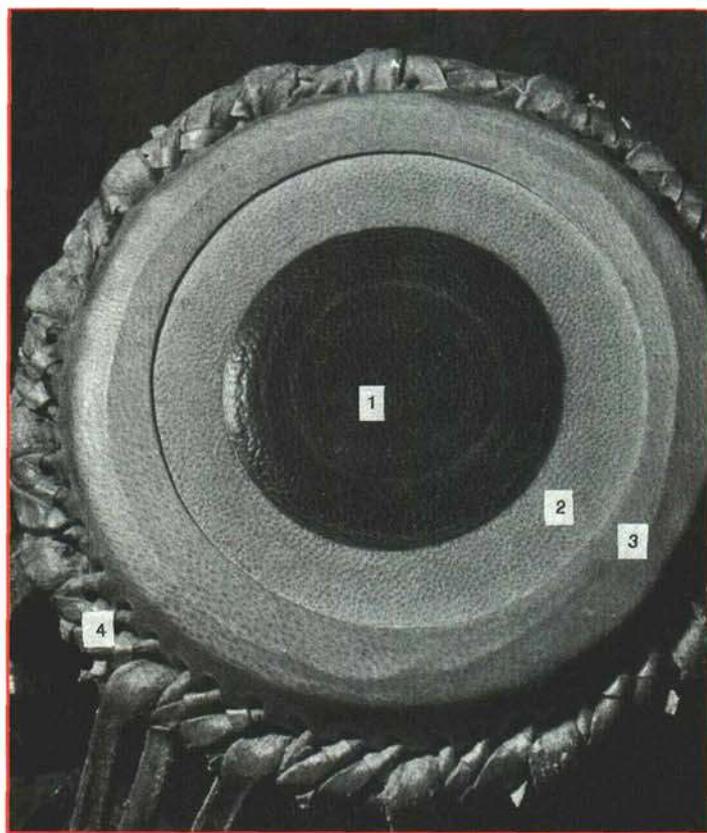


Photo 3—Parts Of The Puddi  
1)syahi 2) maidan 3) chart 4) gajara

means that there will always be problems with it.

The best tablas usually come from Maharashtra or Gujarat (western India). This area has a ready supply of shisham (rosewood), which is tight-grained and very heavy. There is also a good supply of the special powder used to make the syahi. The rawhide also tends to be much heavier in this area. The availability of good materials and skilled craftsmen give these two states a very high proportion of excellent tablas. Unfortunately, most dealers have no idea where their instruments come from. But it's still important to clarify what you're getting as best you

can. I have seen dealers sell only sets of two drums. But you should expect the *entire* set, such as in Photo 1. Only the talcum powder is not usually given. Make sure that the set is complete!

Tabla requires some consideration that we don't normally find for most Western drums. One of the first things we need to know is how to take care of our instrument.

The most important thing is to keep the black spot (syahi) dry. It is very sensitive to moisture. This is one of the reasons we use talcum powder when we play. Even a small amount of sweat on our hands is enough to damage the tabla. Above all, keep the tabla out of the rain! In fact, never expose it to extremes of temperature; excessive heat may split the skin, and sudden exposure to cold may cause moisture to condense in the syahi, thereby causing damage.

Tabla should also never be played with drumsticks. Using wooden sticks will shatter the syahi and force you to replace the entire head. I've actually had to do a fair amount of repair on drums that have suffered major damage due to being played with sticks. Also, try to keep the tabla in tune. This will avoid a lot of problems and make the instrument more reliable on stage.

It is easy to tell if the banya (metal drum) is in tune if you know how to play. But for novices it is difficult. If the tabla has been sitting in a warehouse for a while it is highly unlikely that it will be too tight. One then has to decide whether it is correct or too loose. A rule of thumb is that if you can press the center of the banya and the skin displaces  $1/4"$  before the pressure becomes great, it is probably acceptable. If one can displace the skin in excess of  $1/2"$ , it probably needs tightening. In the event that the banya needs tightening, simply get a wooden dowel with a diameter slightly greater than a common pencil, cut it into approx-

continued on page 76

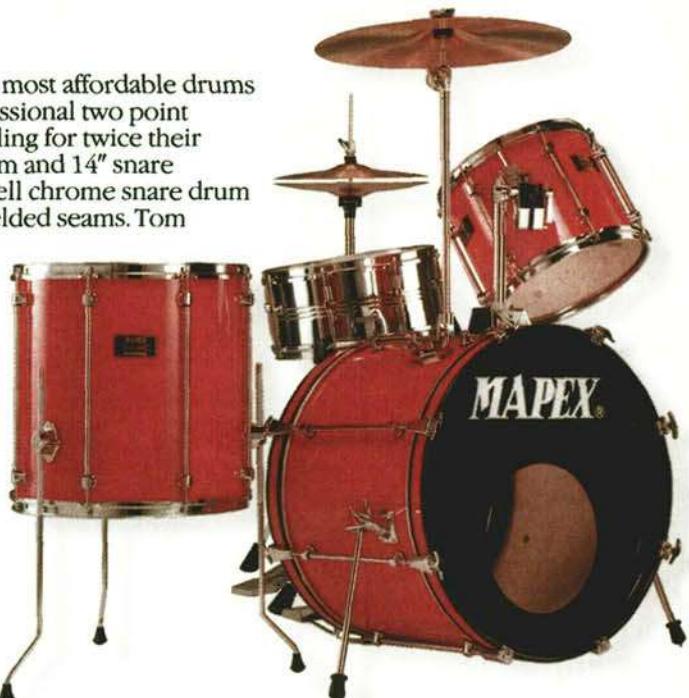
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## Mars or Mars Pro Series

### M4 Mars (Shown in Guard Red)

The most popular series in the Mapex line. Mars represents the most affordable drums in the world that feature diagonal ply maple interiors and professional two point contact lugs. The Mars series crisp clean sound rivals drums selling for twice their price. The M4 kit with 16 x 22 bass, 10 x 12 tom, 16 x 16 floor tom and 14" snare represents the cutting edge of the Mars Series. The seamless shell chrome snare drum ensures perfect roundness without any dead spots caused by welded seams. Tom mounts are fully exterior so there is no shell penetration. Everything about the Mars series is designed with an eye for what the future professional needs. Stands are made strong yet compact. Pedals have tempered small link chain drives for fast action and the hihat has geared tension adjustment. The M4 features a fully adjustable compact bass drum cymbal holder. The multi-position snare stand with Pro Lok levers provides maximum security in any playing angle.

The engineering quality that went into the M4 is an example of why artists like Gil Moore of Triumph pick Mapex.



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### M522P Mars (Shown in Guard Red)

This five piece Mars power kit with maple lined shells features 18 x 22 bass drum for maximum low end projection. The M522P still retains a balanced sound because it comes with squared 12 x 12 and 13 x 13 mounted toms and 16 x 16 floor tom. The deluxe seamless 14" chrome shell snare drum with fully adjustable strainer completes the kit. All stands and hardware are Mars 300 Series. This means strong single braced legs, mini-link chain drive pedals, adjustable tension hihat action, boom and upright cymbal stands with Pro Lok levers. The professional two point contact lugs and exterior mount tom holder allow the M522P's power size shells to vibrate freely and really cut through.

Mapex is known for a power sound which is why it's the choice of players like Carmine Appice.



Available in metallic based colors: Smoke Chrome, Jet Black,  
Snow White, Wine Red, Yellow Flash, Guard Red.

# MORE ALTERNATIVES!

## MP602 Mars Pro

(Shown in Pearl White)

This fusion design kit with maple lined interior and exterior is finished in natural lacquer. It features 20 x 16 bass drum, 10 x 9 and 12 x 10 mounted toms with 14 x 12 and 16 x 14 aero toms. This combination plus two point contact lug design allows for maximum shell vibration giving the MP602 a big sound in a very compact kit. The MP602 features deluxe double braced stands and includes the all new TS510 exterior mount aero tom stand. These toms project better than those using conventional floor legs plus they give drummers more positioning options for faster tom rolloff patterns.

The MP602 is available in striking colors that have a dynamic on stage look. Its rich look and stage quality were the reasons Mike Terrana, drummer with Yngwie Malmsteen chose Mapex.



Mars Pro colors; Polished Black, Pearl White, Candy Apple Red, Candy Cobalt Blue, Blueburst, Redburst, Black Shadow, and Slate Blue.

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602/296-3479	999/658-7261	Westoverford CT	515/782-5123	708/968-8700	410/825-2558	Music House	B-Sheep Music Co. Inc.	Music Land	Linden Hills NY	503/773-7537	The Drums/Keyboard/Guitar Shop	Beecroft's Music
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602/275-0564	805/485-1181	904/387-4527	813/938-ROCK	815/682-8332	815/948-7478	Geithseburg, MD	612/781-6838	Everbright Music	Red Bank NJ	210/682-4341	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
Excuse Music	Anaheim Bond Instruments	Nice House of Music	Orlando Park FL	West Music Co.	Jim Sterkey Music	Portland Percussion	708/747-4315	Rockford Music	Portland OR	503/226-0036	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
Auburn CA	Instruments	Thompson Music	Orlando Park FL	Cedar Rapids IA	Portland ME	Portland ME	718/957-4606	States Island NY	Newburgh NY	512/476-6927	DP's Music Center	Music World
916/889-0514	Anaheim CA	Center	805/999-5015	515/269-2221	816/423-2551	816/423-2550	914/561-0202	St. Charles MO	Onondaga NY	717/738-1020	Levittown PA	Tacoma WA
Guitars Plus	Leaves DE	Music Headquarters	813/938-9001	Music Headquarters	Music Warehouse	Music Villa	609/691-6611	St. Joseph MO	Onondaga NY	717/738-1020	710/682-4341	802/946-0338
Pleasant Hill CA	West LA: Music	Ft. Myers FL	813/938-9001	West Music Co.	Louisville IL	Livonia MI	816/232-6101	802/946-0338	Orlando FL	717/738-1020	710/682-4341	802/946-0338
510/682-2152	Los Angeles CA	Academy of Orlando	813/938-9001	Corvallis IA	502/454-4730	813/477-9130	816/232-6101	802/946-0338	Portland OR	717/738-1020	710/682-4341	802/946-0338
The Music Connection	Mailand FL	Wallow Reed	319/351-2000	Ray Freeman's Drums	Trudell's Drum Shop	Fred Pierce Studio	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	North Country Piano	Music World	717/738-1020	Music World
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916/638-2373	Gordons Music & Sound	Duluth GA	319/351-2000	Cedar Falls IA	Kanner LA	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	Onondaga NY	802/946-0338	717/738-1020	717/738-1020	717/738-1020
The Music Source	Fairfield CA	Academy of Ft. Lauderdale	319/351-2000	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
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415/588-2502	Tracy Music	802/946-0338	Anderson Music Inc.	Music Man	Music Villa	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
Golf Music	Tracy CA	Northbrook IL	404/436-3765	Ypsilanti MI	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
Redwood City CA	407/439-6202	708/291-7777	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
415/365-8878	Grande Music	Music Man of Jacksonville FL	802/946-0338	Mr. Bill's Music	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
Pass Music	Colorado Springs CO	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
999/192-1446	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
Centre City Music	Denver CO	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
802/939-7033	Pro Sound Music	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
802/526-3047	Barbers Music	Barefoot Music	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338	802/946-0338
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Gibson U.S.A., 1818 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37210

**MAPEX**

# Drum Workshop Collectors Series Drumkit

■ by Rick Van Horn

**These drums take the definition of "premium quality" to a whole new level.**

What do you do if you're a drum company whose products enjoy a reputation and prestige virtually unparalleled in the drum market? If you're Drum Workshop, you take a step back, examine those products, and see if you can't make them even more impressive. That's precisely what DW did in introducing their new *Collector's Series* drums. Re-designed ply configurations, totally new drumheads, and a host of minor—but noteworthy—detail improvements combine to make what have always been good things even better. Let's look at the components of this remarkable kit.

### Drumshells

The fundamental difference between this drumkit and previous DW models is in the ply configurations of the shells. In the past, DW's shells have always been six-ply maple with six-ply reinforcing hoops. But drum designer John Good now feels that better acoustic results can be achieved from different configurations. As a result, the 7x8, 8x10, and 9x12 toms on our test kit featured five-ply shells with three-ply reinforcing hoops. The shells of the 12x14 and 14x16 toms and the 18x22 bass drum were six-ply (for additional strength), with three-ply hoops. The 5x13 and 6x14 snare drums had ten-ply shells and six-ply hoops.

When I interviewed John Good for the "DW Revisited" article that appeared in the November '92 issue of *MD*, he explained his theory regarding shell construction for toms and bass drums: "The little reinforcing hoop provides stability at the beginning of the cut of the drum sound. Then the thin shell really exploits the lower fundamental—fast! So you get the cut and you get that fatness—simultaneously. The colorization of the drum grows dramatically with the velocity of the stick impact, but the drums don't run into each other."

Snare drum shells are constructed essentially on a reverse principle, as John explains: "Increase the shell's plies to ten, and you get a timbre that is dramatically higher [and thus excellent

for snare drums]. Manipulating plies really does make a big difference in all the various types of drums that we make."

Along with their attention to the construction of their shells, DW also employs their unique "timbre matching" procedure when putting kits together. John feels that every raw shell has its own resonant frequency, and he tests every shell personally to find this pitch. Naturally, each shell also produces overtones, but the fundamental pitch is what the drum will ultimately want to project. Once that pitch is determined, it is rubber-stamped into the shell—accomplishing two things. First, it allows the person selecting shells for a given kit to meet any specific requests of the buyer, and also to make sure that the kit will have a complementary pitch range from drum to drum. Second, it gives a reference point to the player for tuning purposes—on the theory that if the heads on the drum are tuned to the fundamental pitch of the shell, the entire drum will work with itself to produce the optimum sound. (In order to test this theory, I tuned the 12" tom well *off* the pitch marked inside it—taking care to tension the heads evenly and well-matched to each other. After playing the drum that way, I re-tuned it—this time as closely as possible *to* the marked pitch. The improvement was obvious and quite remarkable.)

DW also has particular theories about cutting bearing edges in order to allow a drumhead to "marry" with the edge, yet leave room for sound reflection between the head and the edge of the shell. Bass drum and snare edges are cut differently from those on toms, because with toms you generally want lots of sustain and decay, while with bass drums and snares, you don't. In terms of construction quality, the edges on our review kit were finished as smoothly as were the exteriors of the drums, with absolutely no discernible flaws anywhere.

### Performance

The best analogy I can make for the performance of this kit is that playing it was like driving a vehicle that was half Grand Prix racer and half old family jalopy. It would do absolutely anything I wanted it to do, and it made me feel amazingly comfortable while doing it. I've never had to work so little to get so much out of a set of drums.

The toms were fitted with DW's new *Coated/Clear* drumheads—another of John Good's creations. John always liked the attack and cut of coated heads, but he also knew that many drummers liked the sustain and tonality of clear heads. So he asked Remo to create a clear, one-ply head with a circular ring of coating material to add control and clarity of attack. The result, in combination with the performance qualities of the drums themselves, is a set of toms that are both sensitive and powerful—able to respond *musically* to the slightest touch or the strongest whack. (The *Coated/Clear* heads are available only on DW drums at the moment, but the company plans to offer them as retro-fit items for other drums in the future.)

I took the kit out on a couple of Top-40 club gigs on which I

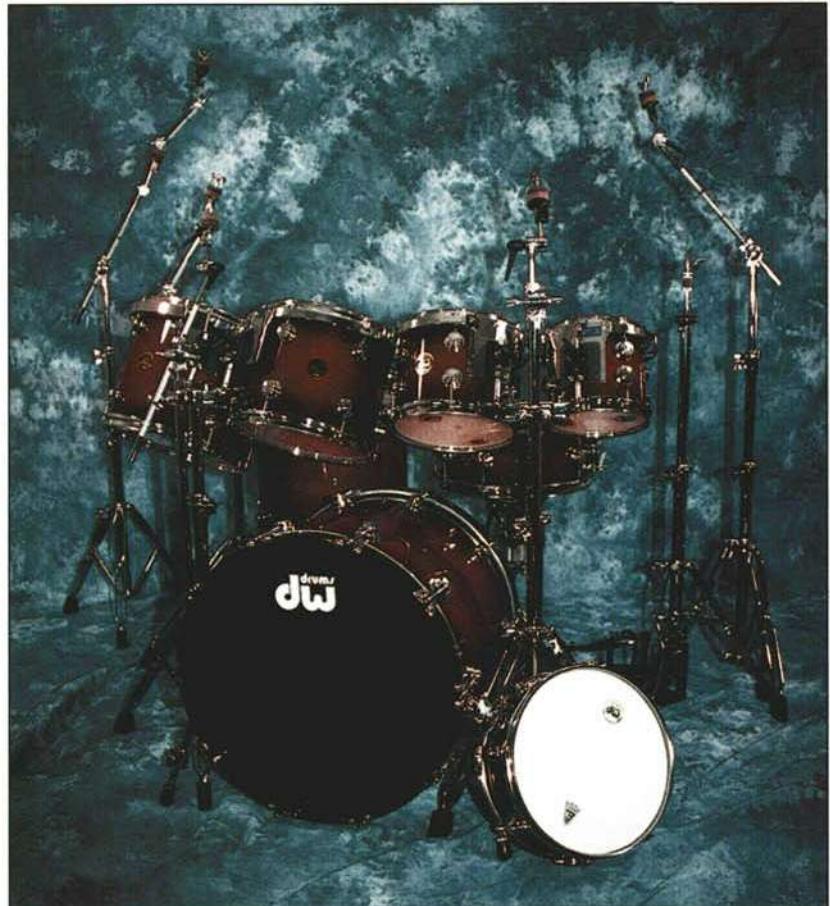
played everything from dinner music to high-energy dance rock, and through it all the drums sounded fantastic. Then, at MD's recent Festival Weekend, Dave Abbruzzese used the same kit for his performance. Dave definitely upped the impact level by several notches—and the drums went with him all the way!

The bass drum was also fitted with a *Coated/Clear* batter head, along with a black DW logo front head, and an hourglass-shaped muffling pillow already installed inside. I played the drum without cutting a hole in the front head, and I loved the deep, round sound it produced—still with plenty of punch and attack. Dave Abbruzzese cut a hole in the front head when he played the kit so that a mic' could be placed inside the drum. That, too, sounded terrific. In this case, control of the over-ring was the issue, not the tonality of the drum.

The snare drums (with *Powerstroke 3* batter heads) were both powerful, crisp, sensitive, and everything else you would expect from a premium drum. But while the 6x14 was an outstanding, all-purpose drum that performed equally well under any circumstances, the 5x13 was the drum that both Dave and I preferred. It just had a voice all its own. It wasn't a classic "piccolo" sound (owing to its 5" depth), nor was it the "soprano" sound produced by 5x12 drums. This was a drum that could work well as a primary snare, with a full-bodied sound that just happened to be in the higher register. You couldn't use it as a "fatback" snare—but that would be about its only limitation. In keeping with my feeling about the whole kit, I found this snare drum an absolute joy to play.

### Features And Details

Along with their quality of construction and unique acoustic performance theories, DW is noted for their innovation and attention to detail. Our review kit offered multiple examples of these attributes, from relatively minor items—like a key-clip on the bass drum pedal, felt linings on all the bass drum claws, and foam-packed tuning lugs—to functional conveniences—like memory locks on virtually all adjustment points on cymbal and drum stands (including boom arms and cymbal tilters), key-operated bass drum tension rods, cymbal holders that adjust from below (so that wing nuts can be locked down to prevent them from working loose), and RIMS mounts for all the toms to take maximum advantage of their resonant qualities.



The 9999 Tom/Cymbal stand

### Hardware

The stands supplied with the kit included two 9934 double tom stands (all the toms were suspended), two 9700 straight/boom cymbal stands (along with one 909 cymbal stacker), a 5500 Turbo hi-hat (with a removable third leg), and a 9500 snare stand. All of these items are super-heavy-duty and very easy to work with. My only criticism is that, considering the abundance of memory locks on the stands, the one place they *don't* have them is the tripod spread adjustment on the shaft of the stand. Since all the other adjustments won't mean a thing if the tripod isn't set to the same spread each time, it would be nice to have a

memory collar on the shaft to establish this adjustment consistently. (In fairness, no company I know of *has* such a memory lock. I'd like to see it on *everybody's* stands.)

This kit also featured DW's new 9999 combination tom/cymbal stand, which is essentially a double tom stand with an adjustable cymbal boom stand fitted to one of the tom L-arms. The beauty of this system is that the boom stand is thus adjustable on a ball-and-socket joint—making it much more flexible in its positioning than a boom arm attached to a straight stand with a standard multi-clamp would be. For example, I was able to mount a ride cymbal quite low, with the "vertical" section of the boom stand positioned almost horizontally and away from me, and the boom arm returning back toward me. The large cymbal was well counterbalanced by the 14x16 "floor" tom I mounted on the tom mount.

The kit was supplied with a 5002A Accelerator double pedal. This pedal has been reviewed in *MD* before [Jan. '92], so I'll only say that it's among the quickest, most responsive double pedals on the market. DW popularized the double pedal in the first place, and this model incorporates both their tradition of quality and their penchant for innovation.

I must say that—although they work just fine—I find DW's tom-mounting brackets rather bulky. This characteristic, when combined with RIMS mounts, makes the drums more than a little oversized when it comes time to pack them up. You'd need a case at least one size larger for each tom-tom, or a bag probably two sizes larger (since bags tend to fit pretty snugly). This isn't

a major problem, but it is something to be aware of when it comes to protecting your investment in these instruments.

### Cosmetics

Our review kit was finished in a burgundy sunburst finish that went from medium to very deep color saturation. The finish was complemented by the black hoops on the bass drum. DW's finishes employ a ten-step process of hand-spraying micro-fine layers of polyester lacquers, which are then hand-polished to a deep, high gloss. The result is nothing short of exquisite.

### Conclusion

"Okay," you say, "enough with the gushing praise. What's the other side of the coin? Aren't there *any problems* with these drums?" No, there aren't—at least not physically or acoustically. The major problem with DW drums is that they are hard to come by, in terms of both time and money. Delivery time on a custom-ordered kit is likely to take three to four months or more, depending on its complexity. And the substantial investment of dedication and attention to detail that goes into every DW kit requires a correspondingly substantial investment on the part of the buyer. Our review kit, including both snare drums, would carry a retail list price of around \$7,800. But for that price you would be getting an instrument of unparalleled quality, one-of-a-kind appearance, and a built-in awareness of what it takes to make a drummer both comfortable and creative.

## New Zildjian Cymbals

■ by William F. Miller

**Tasty splashes, funky hi-hats, and some very evil Chinas—all new from those busy cymbal makers.**

### A Custom Splashes

Zildjian recently introduced some splash cymbals to their very successful A Custom line, and the sounds of these little beauties won't diminish the drumming public's opinion of A Customs! (Just to refresh your memory, the general concept for the A Custom series is to offer cymbals that sonically fall somewhere between As and Ks. That's a rather simplistic description, because, due to the way they're manufactured, the sonic properties of the A Custom line are a bit more complicated than that implies.)

The new splashes come in 8", 10", and 12" sizes, and while they each have their own personality, they do share some common sound characteristics. For instance, all three are very "splashing," meaning they have a lot of sibilance—that nice "sss" sound—without any annoying overtones. The splashes all seem very thin, which I'm sure contributes to their interesting sound. I was a little concerned as to whether or not they could stand up to some heavy playing, yet I smacked the hell out of them for a month without causing them any noticeable stress; they seemed to "give" without breaking.

As for their individual properties, the 8" splash we received for review had a surprisingly low pitch for that size, yet it still had a lot of cut and presence (and a bit more sustain than the couple of 8" K splashes I've owned). The 10" also had a low pitch, and its beautiful splash sound just cut right through the band. As for the 12", it had even more sustain, was low-pitched, and spoke with a lot of clarity.

I've owned a lot of different splash cymbals over the years, and I use two in my current setup—but the A Customs offer something a little different sound-wise than other splashes. Again, it's that unique combination of low pitch with a lot of high-end cut. (That reads like a contradiction, but it's not!) The 8" lists for \$104, the 10" for \$120, and the 12" for \$138.

## K Custom Combination Hi-Hats

Zildjian introduced the idea of cross-matching different "lines" of cymbals for their hi-hats quite a while ago, and the subsequent popularity of their K/Z combination cannot be denied. Now the company is offering a new bottom cymbal from their K Custom line in combination with either a K top, a Rock top (both in 14" diameters), or a Quick Beat top (in the 13" size).

The K Custom bottoms (in both sizes) are very heavy, and they have a *Brilliant* finish. They also feature what Zildjian calls "cut-outs": four half-circle indentations evenly spaced around the perimeter of the cymbal to eliminate air-lock and allow for a cleaner "chick" sound.

Starting with the 13" *Quick Beat* top with the K Custom bottom, the actual "chick" sound was very cutting and high-pitched. And yet as a nice contradiction, the "splash" sound (both cymbals played with the foot and held open) had an interesting—and rather surprising—low tone. When the hats were played with sticks, the sound seemed a bit brash—very loud and a little "plate-y." This combination seemed a little heavy for 13"s (for me, at least), but would definitely be appropriate in louder musical settings.

The 14" K on top of the K Custom also had that characteristic cutting, high-pitched chick sound with a low-pitched splash sound. Yet here the splash was even *lower*—and just gorgeous. Playing these cymbals with sticks really was a lot of fun, because they had the low pitch of a jazz-type hi-hat—but with much more volume! Up till now, drummers working in louder situations were pretty much limited to heavier, high-pitched hi-hats just because they needed that power to cut through. But here are some loud hats with a low pitch—very nice.

The 14" *Rock* top/K Custom bottom combination was very loud. The chick sound was tremendous, the splash was a bit lower-pitched than expected, and the stick sound was a bit "clanky." However, for drummers in *very* loud settings these might be a nice change of pace from the usual fare.

The list price for the 13" *Quick Beat* top/K Custom bottom is \$336, the 14" K top/K Custom bottom lists for \$408, and the *Rock* top/K Custom bottom lists for \$377.

## Oriental "Trash" Chinas

Zildjian's new Oriental "Trash" Chinas are the result of a lot of time and energy spent on the development of China cymbals. According to Zildjian product specialist John King, "We experimented a great deal and discovered that we had to develop completely new hammering and shaping methods in order to capture that authentic un-pitched sound. Though the *China Boy* models



we currently offer in our A, K, and Z ranges offer unique Westernized interpretations of the China cymbal, they all have identifiable pitch." This research has resulted in a new line of Chinas, in 14", 16", 18", 20", and 22" sizes.

So, how do they sound? Well, these are the closest thing to imported China cymbals that I've heard. They're very trashy, with a short sustain, an explosive attack, and a dark, almost *evil* sound. But what's the advantage of these new cymbals? According to King, "The problem with cymbals made in China today is that they break very easily." Zildjian claims their new Chinas are much more durable. That's a hard feature to test with only about a month of playing, but in that short amount of time I certainly tried my best to abuse a few of these cymbals, and they all held up.

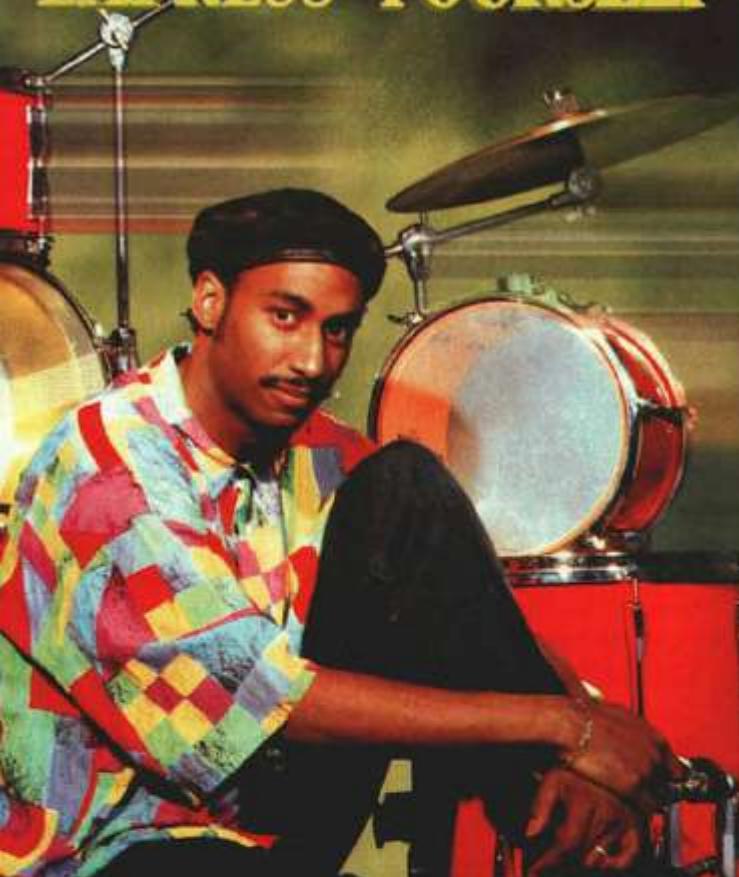
Getting back to the sound: The smaller models, from the 14" to the 18", all had a very penetrating sound that was just explosive. They'd be perfect for quick and loud punctuations. As for the 20", it was versatile, working as a full-bodied crash or as a dark ride sound mounted right-side up or up-side down. By the way, the bells on these cymbals are not as knob-like as those on traditional Chinas, although they permit the cymbals to be mounted on stands nicely from either direction. (And while the bells are not meant to be played and are a little tough to hit, I must say that the 20" had a very cool-sounding bell!)

As for the 22", if you're looking for a China to ride on, this is it—the ride sound is beautiful. I played it in rehearsal with a band that records its practice sessions, and on playback this cymbal was incredibly funky. Its short sustain made all the notes distinctive, yet it filled up the time and wasn't obnoxious. It worked for this R&B band, and yet with a lighter touch (and sticks) it would be perfect for a quiet jazz setting. And as a crash, it was simply huge.

Following are the list prices for the Oriental "Trash" Chinas: 14" - \$204; 16" - \$232; 18" - \$263; 20" - \$295; 22" - \$342.

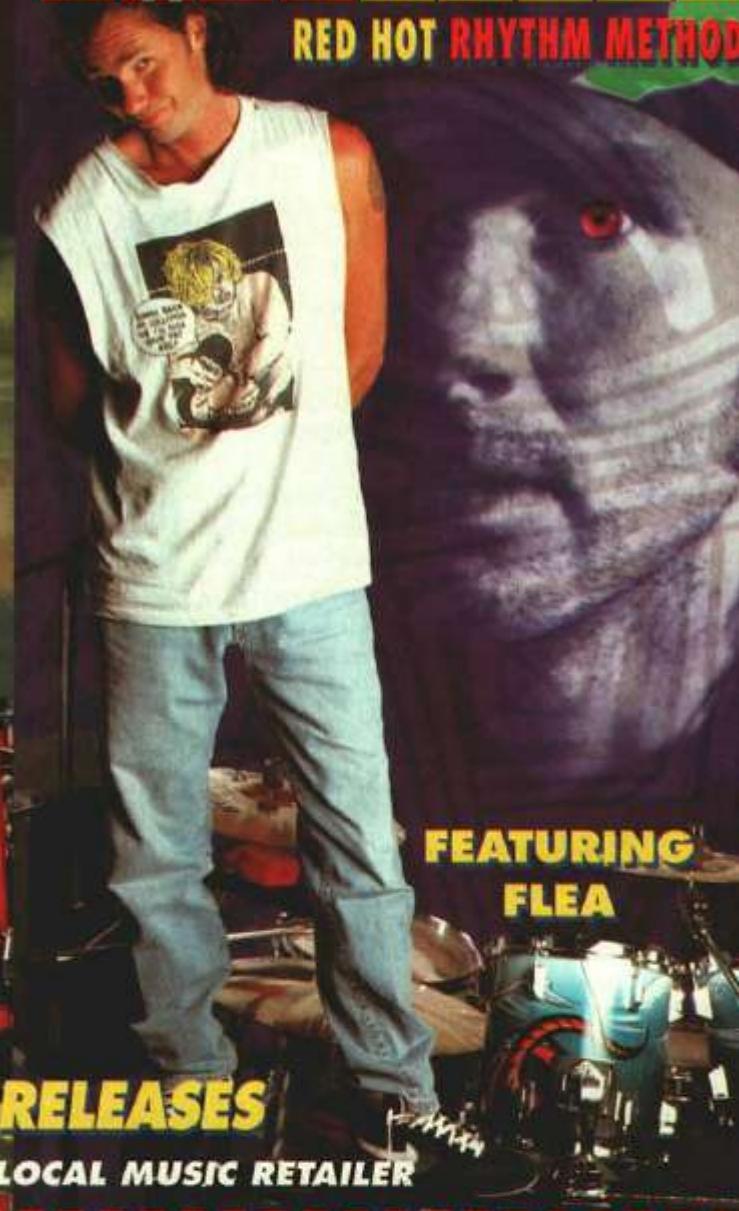
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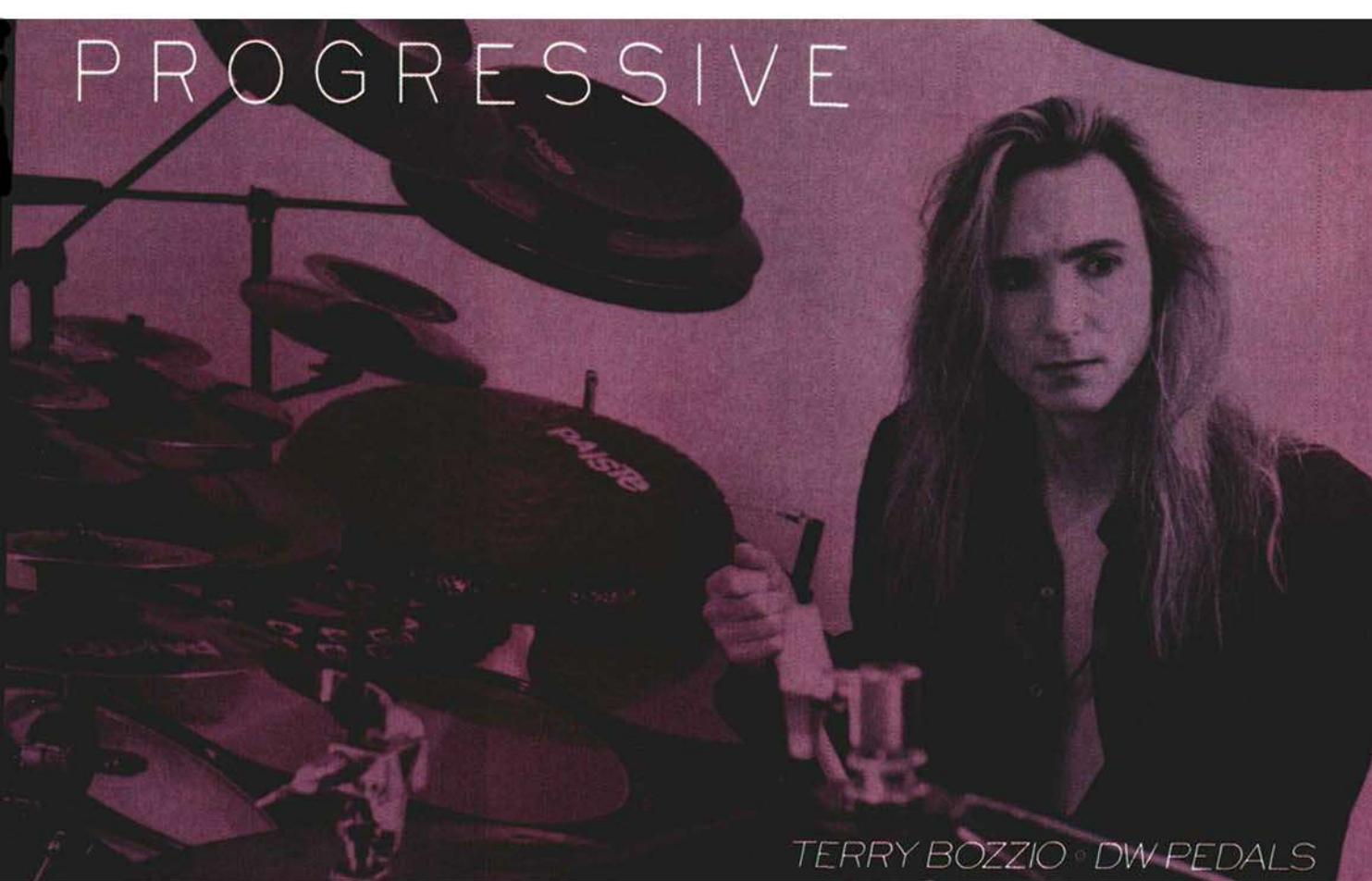
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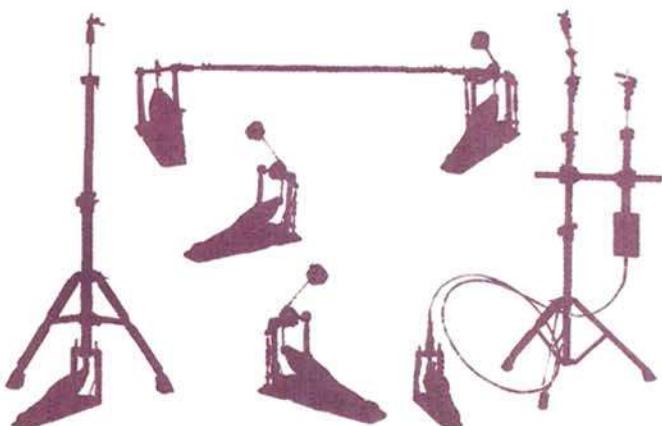
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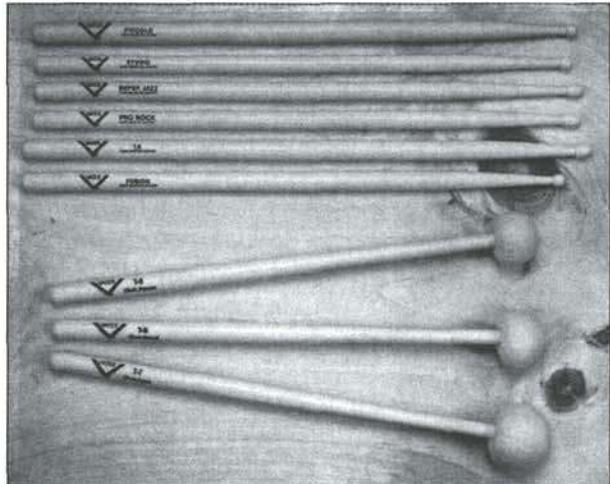
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To receive the latest DW Pedals catalog send \$5 (for postage and handling) along with your name and address.

## New Vater Sticks



Vater has introduced six new stick models and three new timpani mallets. Stick additions include: the 1A (hickory, 17" long, 5B grip, triangular tip), the Pro Rock (hickory, 16 1/4" long, 5A-style grip, oval tip, sturdy neck), the Fusion (hickory, 16", between a 5A and 5B grip, round bead), the SuperJazz (hickory, 16 1/4", jazz-style grip), Studio (hickory, 15 7/8 ", barrel tip), and the Piccolo (maple, 16", 2B-style grip, gradual taper, small, round bead). The 1A, Pro Rock, and Fusion models all come with either wood or nylon tips; other styles are only available with wood tips.

Vater's new timpani mallets all feature tapered shafts and a new round, felt-head design. Available models are the T-5 *Classic Staccato* (medium felt), T-6 *Classic General* (medium hard), and T-7 *Classic Legato* (soft). **Vater Percussion, 28 Burnley Road, Norwood, MA 02062.**

## Magstar Custom Drums



Magstar is a complete drum repair, restoration, and custom building service. The company constructs the drums from raw shell to finished product, specifically tailoring their sound, pro-

jection, and looks to a customer's desires. Shells are all-maple with staggered seams and feature either 6-, 8-, or 10-ply, cross-laminated shells. Number of plies, bearing edge cut, head type, and type of finish (including hammered-metal look, custom lacquer, or a choice of over thirty-five coverings) are all the choice of the customer. Shell interiors are hand-sealed and lugs and hoops are black wrinkle powder-coated. All Magstar drums are satisfaction-guaranteed, and free estimates and technical advice are available. **Magstar, P.O. Box 591, Shutesbury, MA 01072, (413) 259-1004.**

## Ludwig Vector Marching Drum Improvements

Ludwig has made improvements on their *Vector* marching snare drum, including adding wide-angle snare guards, which are securely attached to the drum's bottom hoop. The guards also act as feet to stabilize the drum when resting on the ground, and they also protect the bottom head and

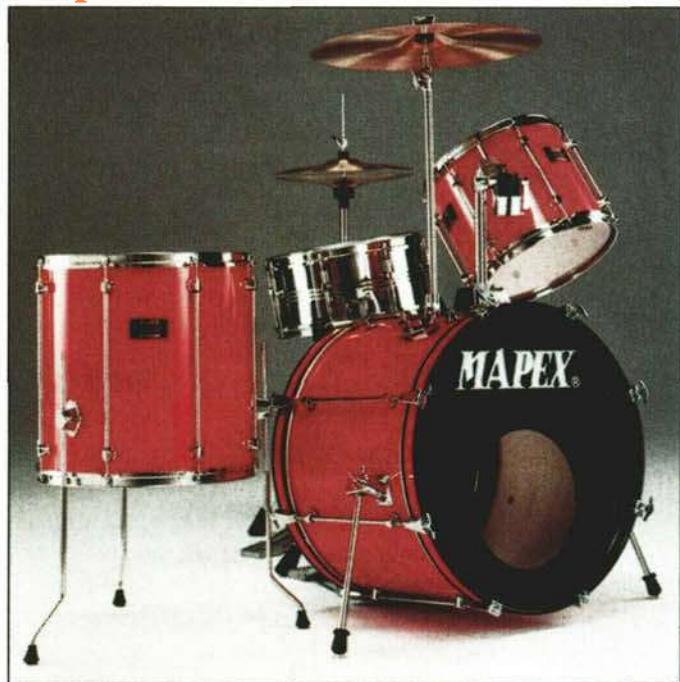
snares from touching the ground. A rubber gasket has been added as well to isolate resonance between the lugs and shell. New *Vectors* also incorporate polished aluminum die-cast hoops, which add strength but make the drum lighter. **Ludwig Industries, P.O. Box 310, Elkhart, IN 46516.**



## Ryzer-Rax

The Makers of *Ryzer-Rax* claim that their system is the first combination drum riser/rack system/transport case. *Ryzer-Rax* come in two models: The *Stage* model is for single-bass acoustic or electronic drumsets; the *Tour* model is for double-bass kits. Both feature fold-away racks and legs, making them compact and portable, with all parts remaining attached during transport. In addition, when folded, the *Stage* model has storage space for hardware, while the *Tour* model can store hardware and drums. Both models will hold bass drums up to 24" and have a maximum height of 68". *Ryzer-Rax* are made of square aluminum tubing and will accommodate Pearl pipe clamps, but are also available with standard round tubing. They may also be purchased without the upper or lower rack sections. **Ryzer-Rax, c/o CSS, 9823 Hilaro Springs Road, Little Rock, AR 72209, (501) 565-7998.**

## Mapex Mars M4 Kit



Mapex Percussion has added a new configuration to their *Mars* series of drums. The new *M4* set is equipped with a single 10x12 rack tom and a bass drum ride cymbal mount. Also new in the series are non-penetrating tom holders and Mapex's *Headliner* heads. The *M4* set consists of a 16x22 bass drum, the aforementioned rack tom, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 6 1/2x14 chrome snare drum. The kit's single-braced hardware includes cymbal, hi-hat, and snare drum stands and a bass drum pedal. Shells are 8-ply hardwood with a maple inner ply, and full-length tubular lugs touch the shells at only two points for added resonance. **Mapex Percussion, c/o Gibson USA, 1818 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37210.**

## Firth Billy Cobham Signature Stick

Vic Firth has introduced their *Billy Cobham Signature Series* drumsticks. *Cobham* sticks come packaged in a two-pair set. One pair is 16 1/4" long, is made from hickory, and features a full, round tip and a prominent "little finger" groove at the butt end for gripping security and balance. This stick was designed for strong, aggressive playing. For lighter playing, though, a second, maple pair is available, measuring 1/4" shorter. **Vic Firth, Inc., 323 Whiting Ave., Unit B, Dedham, MA 02026, tel: (617) 326-3455, fax: (617) 326-1273.**

## Left-Handed AXIS Double Pedal

Engineered Percussion has introduced a left-handed version of their *AXISA-II* double bass drum pedal. The *A-IIIL* can be purchased as a complete double pedal, or as an upgrade kit, which converts *anyAXIS* single pedal to a complete left-handed double pedal.

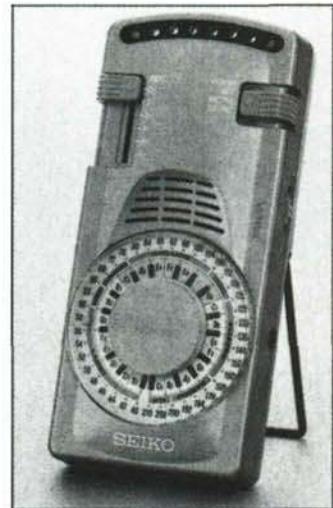
Engineered Percussion also now offers a new toe-stop for all *AXIS* pedals that attaches directly to the footplate via allen screws. **Engineered Percussion, 24416 S. Main St., #310, Carson, CA 90745, tel: (310) 549-1171, fax: (310) 549-7208.**

## New Royce Congas

Royce Pro-cussion has introduced their *CF 400* 10" and 11" fiberglass conga set. The congas feature two-band reinforcements to the shells, as well as steel rims (as opposed to the *CF 450* model's die-cast rims) and a cradle. The congas also come with a three-year warranty. **Royce Pro-cussion, 3451 W. Commercial Ave., Northbrook, IL 60062, tel: (708) 498-9850, fax: (708) 498-5370.**

## New Seiko Metronome

Seiko's new *SQ88* metronome features a wide range of sounds, including chime and clave sounds, as well as a bank of six round LEDs designed to simulate the motion of a swing pendulum. **Seiko, c/o Kaman Music Corp., P.O. Box 507, Bloomfield, CT 06002, tel: (203) 243-7941, fax: (203) 243-7102.**



## Meinl "Extra" Cymbals

Meinl has added several extras to their *Livesound* and *Raker* ride, crash, and hi-hat cymbal "additions." With each purchase of a ride cymbal addition to a Meinl cymbal set, a cymbal bag is included as a "free bonus." Likewise, crash additions include a pair of 12" medium *Sound Wave* hi-hats, and hi-hat additions include a free 8" splash. **Meinl, c/o Gibson USA, 1818 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37210.**



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### IT'S QUESTIONABLE

continued from page 16

volume that reaches the microphones. In other cases, it's important to prevent "bleed-through" of the drum sound into vocal mic's used by artists standing directly in front of the drumkit—as often happens in both TV and live stage situations. Many drummers enjoy the freedom that such isolation provides, because they know they can play with full energy and still keep the sound engineer and the artist happy with the volume level of the drums. Some drummers have commented that the bounce-back of the drum sound gives them a feeling of even greater power and sensitivity, and they wind up not playing as hard.

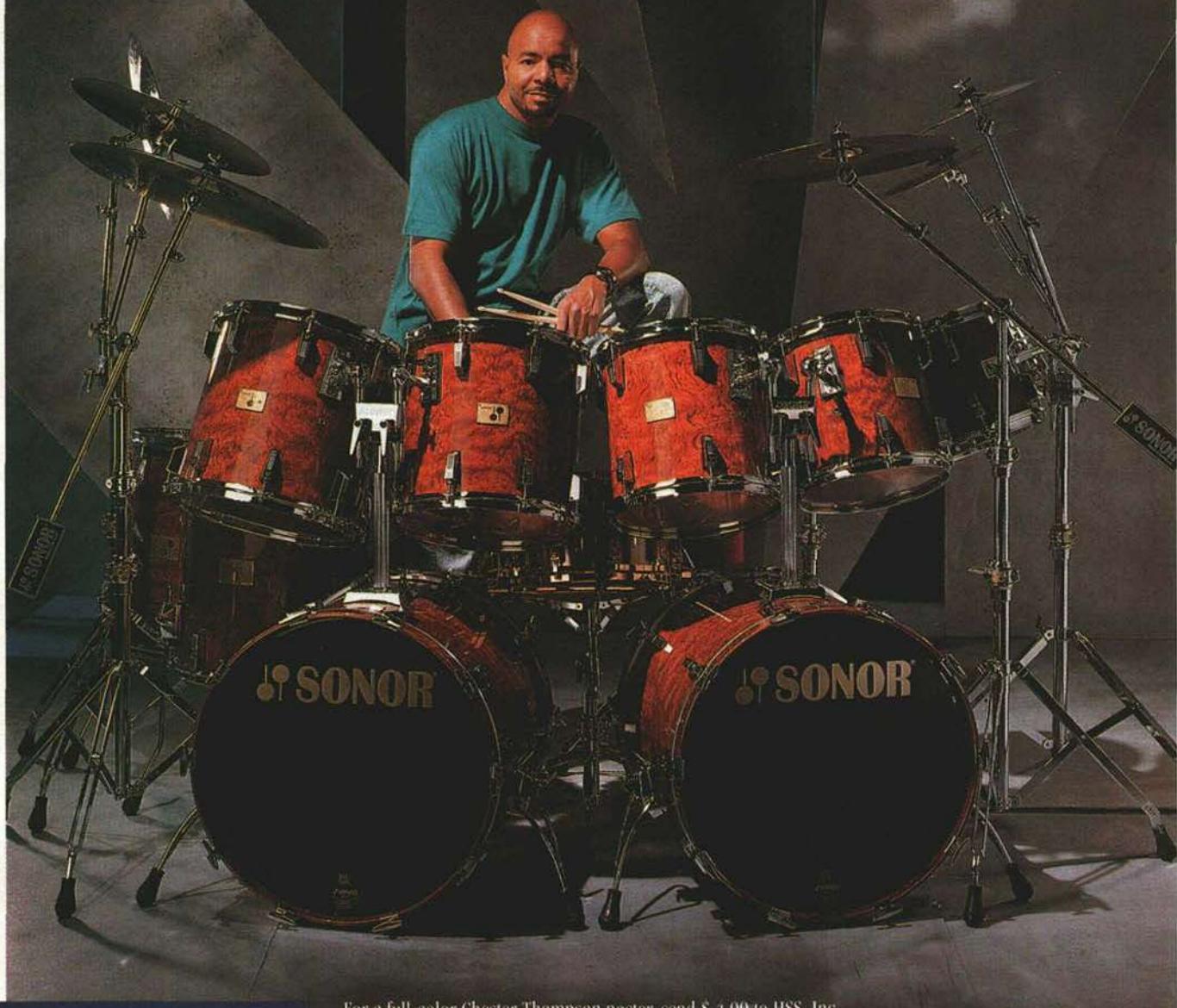
The reason that most of the drummers in the shows' own bands don't use such isolation methods is that the engineers on those shows have more time to set up and work with the drum mic's. Additionally, the arrangement of the various instruments in the band can be adjusted until all of the mic's are in "safe" places. You'll also note that rarely, if ever, does any vocalist work directly in front of the drummer in these bands.

In regard to headphones, they are worn in the studio in order to allow each player to clearly hear what other players are doing—or have already done, in the case of pre-recorded tracks. In many cases, instruments are recorded directly into the sound board, with no amps playing into the studio at all. In those cases, without headphones there would be nothing for the musicians to hear. As to how the sound in the headphones is mixed, that's usually up to the individual musicians. For example, some drummers like to hear very little of their drums, but a lot of bass. This is especially important if those two instruments are laying down a basic rhythm track. Other drummers like to hear a "scratch" vocal, so that they can get an idea of the emotional quality of the song at any given point. Sometimes, drummers will ask to hear a strong level of the drums, so that they can play with sensitivity and not overplay. In other cases, they'll reduce the drum volume, in order to be able to attack the drums without ruining their hearing. It all depends on the player, the style of music, and the nature of the recording that is taking place.

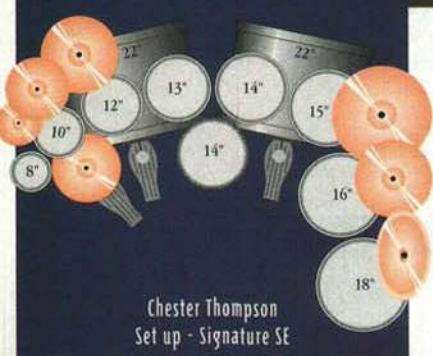


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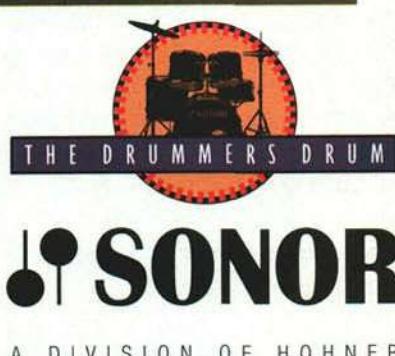


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# Steve Smith On...

■ by Ken Micallef

"I'm trying to establish this group so I can have a consistent outlet for my personal musical statement," says Steve Smith about his latest Vital Information release, *Easier Done Than Said* (Manhattan). "I'm looking for a level of success whereby the group can sustain itself. Obviously, this is not the kind of music that I'm going to make a lot of money from. My main motivation is more that it establish itself so it can be a living, breathing entity."

With long-time cohort Tom Coster on keyboards, Frank Gambale on guitar, and Jeff Andrews on bass, the album features Steve's trademark lush groove/hefty chops arsenal aided by the streamlined injection of the Andrews-Gambale power supply. Shifting among swing, shuffles, fusion-funk, and one treacherous 12/8 blues, *Easier Done Than Said* is Steve Smith at his most aggressive and outgoing to date.

## ...Shelly Manne

Shelly Manne Quintet: "The Real American Folk Song" (from *Manne That's Gershwin!*)

Manne: drums; Jimmy Zito: trumpet; Monty Budwig: bass; Frank Rosolino: trombone; Bud Shank: saxophone; Ross Freeman: piano

**SS:** I don't know who that is; I've never heard it before. I thought the arrangement and writing were amazing. A great piece of music. It was interesting in how it showcased the drums, yet left a lot of space. The drummer had a beautiful touch and a nice feel. His swing felt really strong. He didn't have a lot of chops as far as speed goes but he had good ideas—like Mel Lewis, maybe. It didn't have any Buddy Rich blazing technique, but it's a great piece of music. Shelly Manne, perhaps.

## ...Kenwood Dennard

Pat Martino: "Line Games" (from *Joyous Lake*)

Dennard: drums; Pat Martino: guitar, synthesizer; Delmar Brown: keyboards; Mark Leonard: bass

**SS:** That's Pat Martino. I recognize his guitar playing. And the drummer is Kenwood Dennard. During the head I had trouble identifying who it was; I thought it was some European fusion group. I thought it was a Gerry Brown-produced record at first. Even the drumming sounded a little like him—a heavily damp-



Photo by Rick Malkin

ened sound.

The drumming was exciting—really going for a lot. The execution was slightly on the sloppy side, but really pulling off some great playing. But not with the kind of precision of a Billy Cobham, or more currently, Weckl or Vinnie. Once I realized it was Pat Martino I remembered Kenwood had done a record with him. This was really impressive. He played this very complex head masterfully. In the solo section he played in a very complementary manner with Pat and never got out of context. I've seen Kenwood's drum clinics where he does his Meta-Rhythm Orchestra. He's inhuman.

## ...Chad Wackerman

"Fearless" and "Go" (from *Forty Reasons*)

Wackerman: drums; Allan Holdsworth: guitar; Jim Cox: keyboards; Jimmy Johnson: bass

**SS:** Is that Gary Husband? I'm pretty sure that's Holdsworth on guitar. The drumming reminded me of Cobham, stylistically—the same kind of melodic movement on the tom-toms and a similar feel and inflection. The snare drum roll wasn't as crisp as Billy's. The music was very interesting and strange. I liked it a lot. Maybe Chad Wackerman.

**KM:** Correct.

**SS:** That's some of the best playing I've ever heard him do. A really cool drum sound. His feel has so much more depth than I've heard previously. It doesn't sound like the same drummer who played with Zappa. I didn't realize he had this depth of vocabulary.

## ...Bill Stewart

Joe Lovano: "The Owl And The Fox" (from *Landmarks*)

Stewart: drums; Lovano: tenor sax; Ken Werner: piano; Marc Johnson: bass

**SS:** I don't know who that is. I really like the composition. Really challenging and swinging and smooth. Interpretation was fantastic. I heard Roy Haynes in the touch on the cymbal and snare drum, the ruffs, and the displaced hi-hat. Some of the tom fills remind me of Tony Williams—more of a modern swing feel. It's less influenced by triplets than by even 8th notes. Definitely a black drummer.

**KM:** Why do you think it's a black guy?

**SS:** Because of the looseness. It didn't have the "perfectness" of execution that I've heard from white drummers. Not to say that it was sloppy; it was a *nice* looseness. There was a lot of highly proficient playing, but done uninhibitedly. I'm totally stumped.

**KM:** Bill Stewart

**SS:** I've heard of him. Great playing.

## ...Frank Katz

Brand X: "Mental Floss" (from *Xcommunication*)

Katz: drums; Percy Jones: bass; John Goodsall: guitar

**SS:** Brand X? Oh, yeah, this is Frank Katz, who teaches at Drummers Collective. Frank's drumming is incredibly impressive. The feel of the groove is very slinky. His touch on the hi-hat and the ghost notes on the snare are phenomenal. I've heard very few people who are able to play with that kind of control. He never loses the pulse of the swing. Really strong and flowing. Intricate patterns and phrasing. I hear a lot of influences, but it's still a unique approach.

I didn't like the tune very much, though. As a composition it wasn't very interesting—purely a vehicle for the players to go nuts. And the guitar playing was all Shreddie Kruger. Unlike the Pat Martino piece, which has a solid foundation in jazz, this music comes from listening to '70s fusion records.

### ...William Calhoun

**Living Colour:** "This Little Pig" (from *Stain*)

Calhoun: drums; Vernon Reid: guitar;

Corey Glover: vocals; Doug Wimbish: bass

**SS:** [After four bars of sampled voice and guitar intro] Living Colour.

**KM:** How'd you know it was Living Colour even before a downbeat?

**SS:** The little sound-bite. There's something about the social commentary of the samples they choose. And the guitar gave it away. [laughs]

**KM:** Why are you laughing?

**SS:** 'Cause it's funny! The wild recklessness is kind of punk/heavy metal/thrash. I like it for its uniqueness; it has a lot of integrity. I generally don't like thrash playing, but this was done with good musicianship. When they switched from half- to double-time, the tempo stayed real smooth.

The drumming was great—far better than on their first couple of records. Will's tempo and feel were a little suspect then. I liked the intensity then, but his execution was not so even. It was difficult for me to get past that. I have a certain inner monitor, and if the music is loose but doesn't feel right, it's like a friction that bothers me. This feels radically different. Maybe it's the influence of the new bass player. He played with Tackhead, from London. In any case, Will is obviously maturing. He has a recklessness that's exciting.



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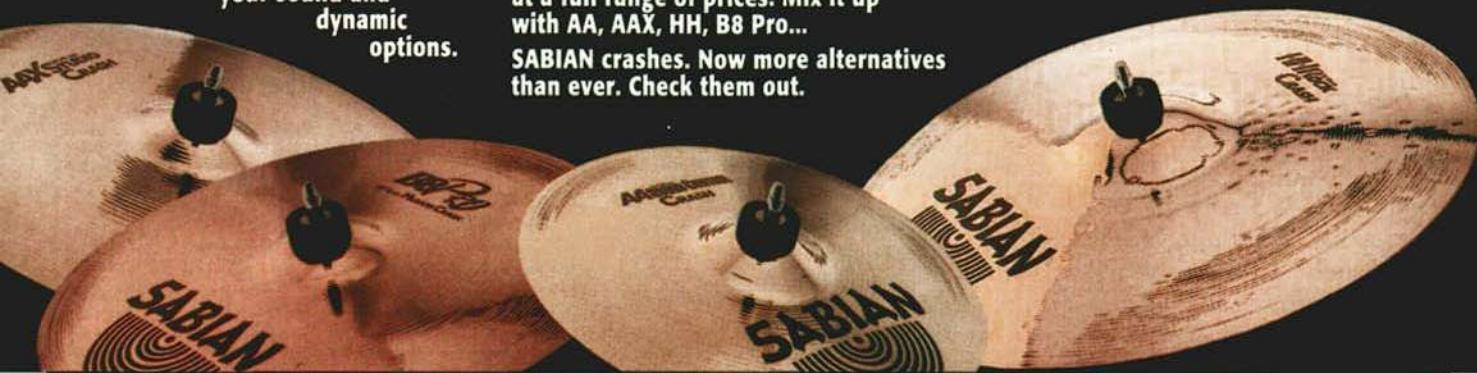
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## VINNIE COLAIUTA

continued from page 24

**VC:** The same kind of thing. These patterns in seven are very similar. Again, he wanted it to be pretty static, instead of varying the bell patterns and all that. The cymbal bell is playing quarter notes over the bar. Actually, in "Love Is Stronger Than Justice," it's not quite the same, because in the intro it changes up into a kind of 4/4 for a bar. It's a little quirker. His idea is to have the listeners locked into the seven as easily as they would be in four. For the most part, people aren't used to hearing songs in seven. I really relate to Sting's approach, because when I play odd times, I like to smooth them out, too. The way Zappa delivered the odd times was a little more angular.

**RF:** Were the tracks on *Summoner*'s played live for the most part?

**VC:** We played these tracks live, but like I said, I ended up overdubbing some stuff, like cross-stick and bass drum on "It's Probably Me." We played the tunes like a band and then embellished later.

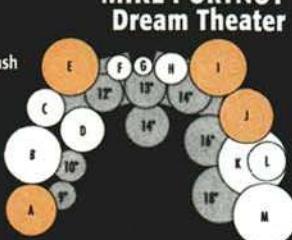
**RF:** I was reading back over our previous interviews. In our first one, you were really against the electronics. In the second article you were kind of 50/50 on it. It seems like you've gotten much more involved in the last few years.

**VC:** I am, and I think from the onset I had to make the decision whether it was going to be a friend or foe. It's not the technology that is inherently good or evil. It's the application of it and the perception of the people who use it. That's where the prob-

# ALTERNATIVES.

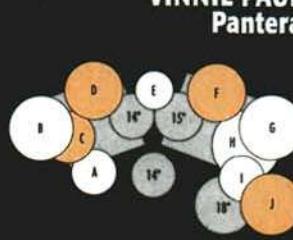


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 L 12" AA Mini Chinese  
 M 20" HH Thin Chinese



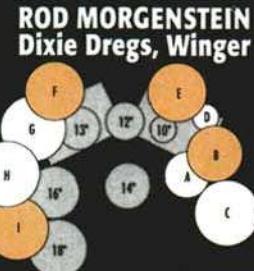
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**ROD MORGESTEIN**  
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lem or solution lies. In reality, I've been exposed to it and involved in it from the beginning, from the very first Simmons drums, and before that I was using Snares with Frank Zappa. Because it was new and there was an imbalance, it was not being used discriminately.

**RF:** During our last interview, you said you were critical of your left hand. You said you wanted more even strokes, more control.

**VC:** I think it was inherent in the kind of technique that I had at that time with my left hand, which may have catered to more subtle strokes. There's nothing wrong with that, but physically, the left hand in a traditional grip operates with different muscle groups. So rather than look at that as a limitation—which would prevent me from ever achieving any kind of uniform strokes between my hands - I try to derive a solution out of other laws of physics, like using different kinds of leverage and strokes for different volumes.

I also had to consider my grip. I realized that if I wanted to achieve a lot of volume without wearing my hand out, I would have to find out exactly how to use the grip to my advantage. I would tweak my hand and my arm position a little bit, practice it, and develop those muscles to get used to the leverage used. I started honing that a little more when I practiced so that I wouldn't have to think about it when I played. I noticed that it would work its way into my playing, without my having to think about it. And it helped.

Specifically, I started leaving a little more of a gap in my right hand where, if I just clasp my index finger and my thumb together and lift the fingers away from my hand, there is much

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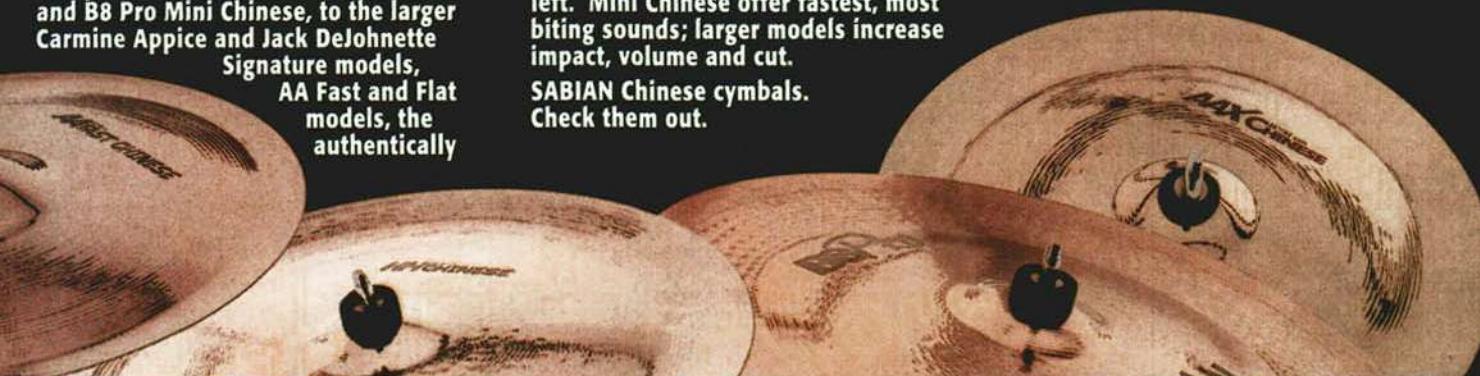
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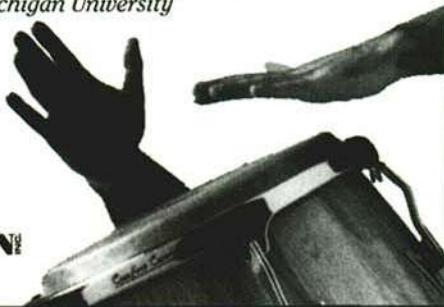
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more of a described circle that you can see through. And the fingers lay on the stick in relation to that. I started changing that around and questioning how much, if any, pressure I should apply between my thumb and index finger. What angle should I hold the stick at, how much arm movement should I use, and if that is good for that kind of stroke, why doesn't it work for other strokes? Is it too much of a change to make, and can I find a middle ground? That's the kind of thing that I did.

It's a constant thing because, first of all, it's something that you have to maintain, and secondly, your playing changes and your physical thing changes too. A lot of guys who are playing real complex funk patterns between their hi-hat and their snare drum get a real strong "pop" and a backbeat without lifting the stick up too high. When you're playing intricate patterns between the snare and the hi-hat, you can't lift your right hand off the hi-hat in order to bring your left hand up to come back down on the snare, so you find a way around it.

That also ties into the concept of not using an excess amount of motion. And a lot of guys teach that way, where the actual volume is derived from the velocity at which the stick strikes the drum, rather than the height from where it begins. I find that to be physically true in a lot of ways. Bruce Lee could knock a guy back six feet flat on his butt with the starting point of his punch being an inch away from the opponent's body. He had a technique called the "one-inch punch." He generated an internal force without winding up.

Now, I do describe exaggerated motions sometimes just because of the physical movement of my body. I try not to exag-

# HOICES.



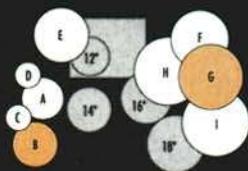
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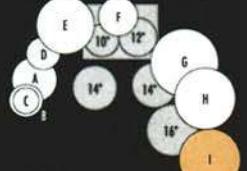
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- H 19" AA Rock Crash
- I 19" AA Chinese

**CHAD SMITH**  
Red Hot Chili Peppers



gerate things very much, though, and I place my drums close together so I don't have to reach too far for things. You have to work on it and maintain it, just like anything else. I had a lot of reasons for it. I didn't want my hands to become fatigued. I didn't want to beat myself up, and I wanted to find a way that felt right so I could feel more at one with my instrument.

I also wanted to be able to make quick dynamic changes without feeling like I was doing something awkward, and without consciously doing it rather than doing it because at that moment I was at one with the music.

**RF:** Do you find the live gig uses different muscles in general?

**VC:** It does in a way, because by the nature of it—I'm playing for a couple of hours nonstop—I have to develop a certain kind of stamina. In the studio you can start and stop, which gives your muscles a chance to rest, allowing you to use different finesse things. I find that stretching before I play and loosening my muscles is important. I do various exercises that will stretch the muscles in my fingers and my hands and get the blood into my hands. I start very slowly, warming up to a peak and using strokes on a surface that doesn't have a rebound, utilizing my arms. In a set, I'll play real loud and then all of a sudden have to play finesse strokes. Practicing those things keeps that balance. I do notice that if I'm on the road for six weeks, I've got the volume thing down and my muscles are more developed.

**RF:** How much time specifically would you dedicate to practicing this sort of thing?

**VC:** I just practice with as much patience as I can and enjoy it while I'm doing it. I was practicing eight hours a day, and one

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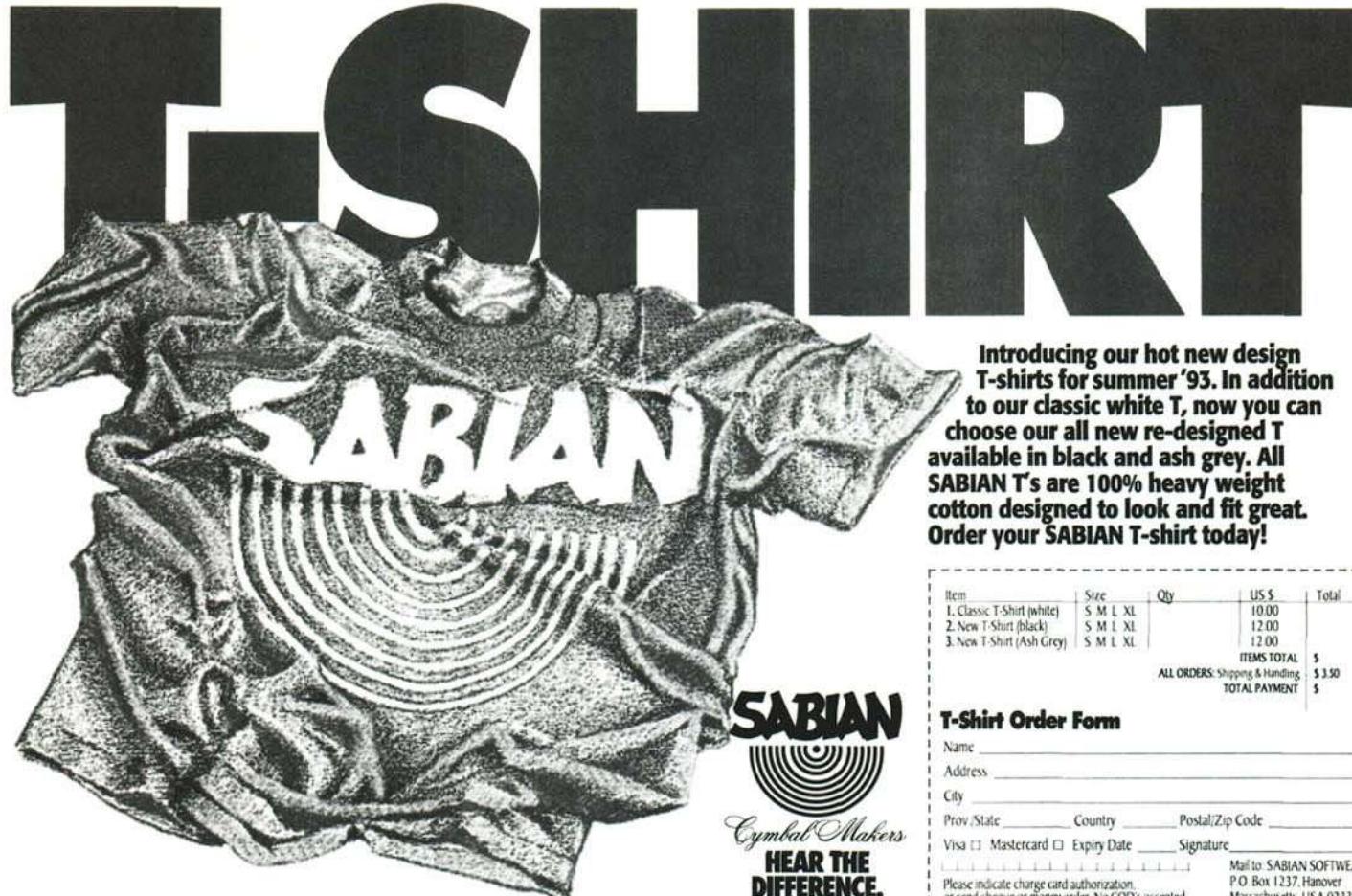
day I asked Billy Cobham how much he thought I should be practicing. He said not to think in terms of time. He said, even though you have something difficult to work on, enjoy it while you're doing it, instead of thinking how long it's going to take you to get it together.

**RF:** What gigs have you learned most from and what did you learn?

**VC:** I think I probably learned something from almost every gig that I've done, not only because each occurred at a different phase of my development, but because each one had something different to offer. Ideally, you should be able to get something out of everything, positive or negative. And if it's negative, try to turn it into some kind of learning experience. I learned a lot with Frank. It was a way for me to develop rhythmic ideas that both he and I had, and I developed in terms of musical skill, knowledge, and concept. I was also able to infuse my identity in it.

With Sting, I learned what it's like to work with someone who is a combination of a muso and a songwriter. I learned how he defines his parts for the song and makes them work with us, how he builds things and disciplines the band. He is the songwriter, but he plays with us and has a direct kinetic relationship with the band. He wants things played in a certain way because it's his music, yet he does let us stretch. If it gets too out, then he pulls us back in. Also I learned when to determine who is going to drive the car, me or him, and when. It's a collective experience.

**RF:** With the drum/bass relationship being so important, and



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Sting having so many other roles to deal with besides playing bass, does that ever get in the way of the music?

**VC:** It can get in the way when the energies are divided, but not if I keep my role. If he's going to wear three hats, it's his choice to wear those hats, and I work around them. I define my role based on that.

There are a lot of situations I've learned from, even from doing a movie date and having to sit in a room with a full orchestra. It was tough trying to make something sound like it's really smoking, having to just barely touch the drums because the sound was leaking into all the string mic's. I just tried to do that by playing with a certain amount of mental intensity. Probably the most amazing drummer I've ever seen doing that was Billy Hart. I saw him playing with Stan Getz once in Boston, and I couldn't believe how somebody could burn so hard at such a low volume level.

I've learned about how less is more and how sometimes the more simple something is, the harder it is. I did Madonna's "This Used To Be My Playground," and I had to come in and overdub. There was just a basic drum machine, an orchestra playing all long tones, and a *Mini-Moog* bass that intentionally wasn't quantized in order to get a feel. I had to find my middle ground, and every note counted. It was like an eternity. It was strange—just a call I got. I didn't even know what it was, and I was done in an hour and a half, but it was a valuable experience.

**RF:** Speaking of sessions, with all of this work with Sting, is the studio still a large portion of your life?

**VC:** I'll know that when I get back in town. I'm not worried



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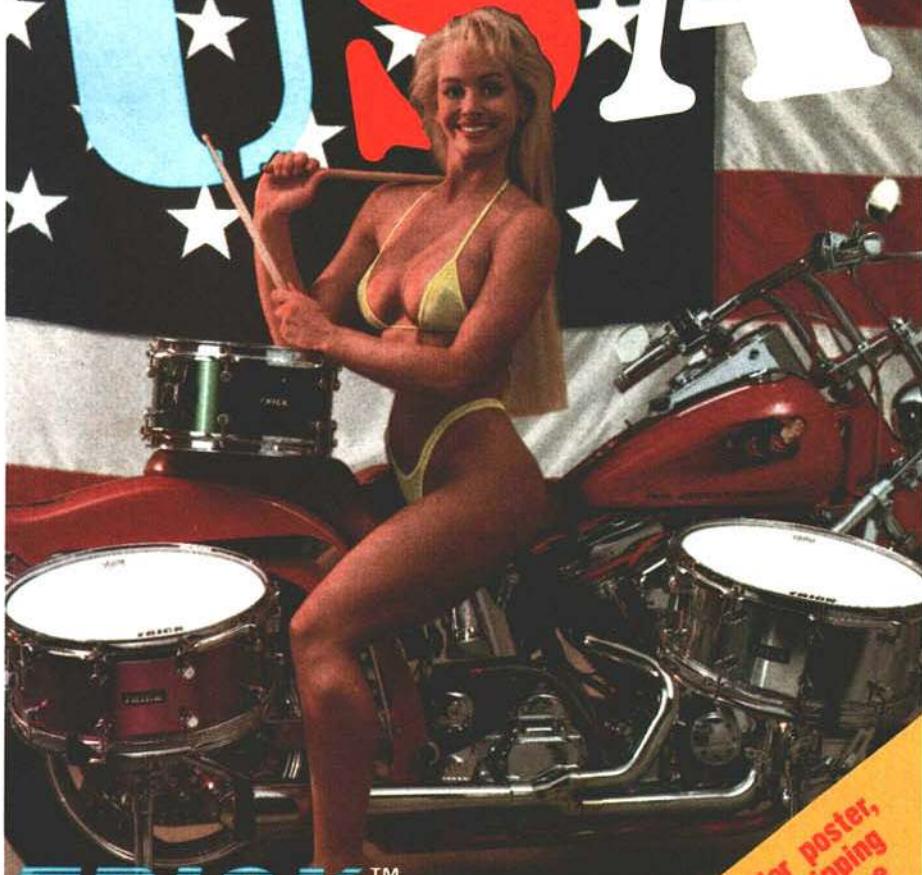
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about it, but I would like it to be. It's a part of me because I've done it for ten years.

**RF:** Can we talk bluntly about some of the studio beefs you might have?

**VC:** Bad headphone mixes. Let's say you're supposed to play a really mondo track, but the headphone mix is just bad. You go into the control room and it sounds great, but in your cans it's so bad that it actually inhibits your ability to organize a concept for the tune. A lot of times this could be remedied if the engineer would simply put on a pair of phones to see what the guys are hearing. You'd be surprised at how many engineers don't do that.

Then they're plugging and unplugging instruments in and out of a patch bay, and all of a sudden, you get this excruciating sound in the headphones. They don't warn you to take your headphones off—and those things can really be career-enders. Then you get an 'I'm sorry,' or 'What was that?' It was about 120db of a 9k tone with distortion, that's what it was!

Then there's the subject of too many

## WANTED:

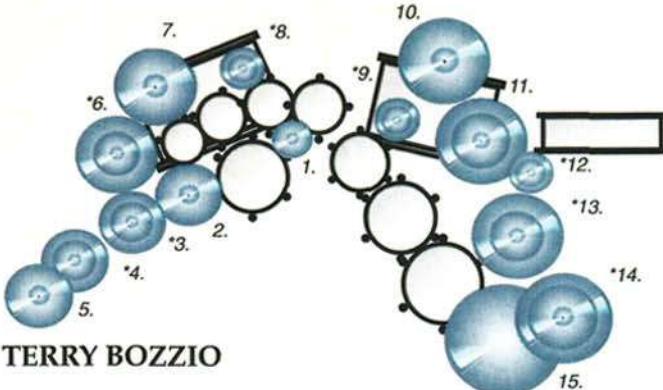
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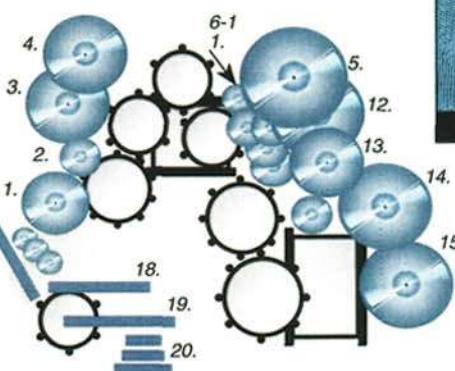


## TERRY BOZZIO

Early on, Terry developed his originality from playing Latin music with Pete Escovedo to jazz with Eddie Henderson. At 25, Terry's legendary work with Frank Zappa began, resulting in 10 albums and the ground breaking "Black Page" solo. His performances on The Brecker Brothers "Heavy Metal Be-Bop", with GROUP 87, The Missing Persons, and the Grammy Award winning "Guitar Shop" with Jeff Beck show his amazing musical vision. Terry's solo drum videos propel drumming art into the future.

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- 12) 13" 602 Heavy Bell/Cup Chime
- 13) 8" Rude Splash(2), as Hi-Hat
- 14) 12" 602 Heavy Bell/Cup Chime



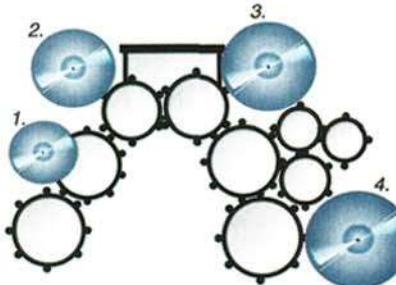
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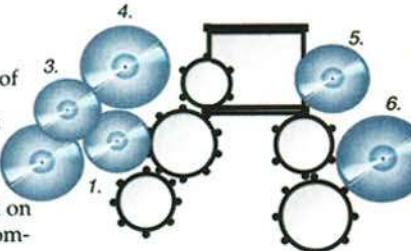
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producers. Let's say you've got a producer, an arranger, the artist, maybe the songwriter...and then somebody who isn't even in any particular capacity but has this urge to constantly speak up. You have all these conflicting opinions floating around the room. The direction *should* come from the producer. If an artist has a beef about what the producer is doing, they have to iron that out to where the artist trusts the producer's objectivity. The producer has to be an objective liaison and a psychologist

between what is being delivered and what the artist wants. Compromising to satisfy two people seldom works.

**RF:** Have there been any studio situations that haven't worked or things that you didn't succeed at?

**VC:** The classic example that many may know about was when I was working in the group Pages. We had been playing together for quite some time, the music was great, and we had a great rapport as a band. By the time we went in to cut this record, we had rehearsed these songs and

pretty much figured we had them nailed. Jay Graydon was the producer at that time. That was when Jeff [Porcaro] lent me his drums to use on the session.

We were cutting these tracks and we were so ecstatic at how it was coming off that we were throwing socks around the studio and dancing. We didn't elicit much of an emotional response from Jay, though. We were doing take after take, and I couldn't figure out what it was that he was looking for. I don't think any of us really knew. The next thing I knew, I got fired from the project: "Don't come in tonight." The record ended up with three other drummers on it. What constituted my getting fired? Don't ask me. First of all, the irony of it was that there were that many other drummers on it as opposed to just one other drummer.

**RF:** It sounds like he didn't know what he wanted.

**VC:** I don't know if it was that he didn't know what he specifically wanted as much as he just didn't communicate it to me. Even if he thought what he wanted was something I couldn't give him, the only time I found out about it was when I

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was told not to come in. Or else he *did* know what he wanted and felt he could get it out of one drummer for this song and another drummer for that song. The truth of the matter is that he could have gotten Jeff Porcaro to play on every one of those songs and they would all have been brilliant. It's not that the other guys didn't do a great job—Mike Baird and Ralph Humphrey played great.

**RF:** Have you worked with Jay since?

**VC:** No, and I have no regrets about it. It's not a personal reflection on Jay, but I

haven't and I just don't care one way or the other. My career is just fine and I've proven myself, so to speak, in the studio.

**RF:** How did you feel early on in your career when you'd be replaced?

**VC:** You have to learn how to roll with the punches. After a while, I think the main thing is not to take it personally. You can't be everything; *nobody* is everything. You just do what you do, and you try to do that as well as you can. And if somebody doesn't like it, too bad.

As far as the Pages thing, I was

crushed. I was in a band, everything was burning, and the producer didn't say anything. All of a sudden, I'm thinking I'm shit. Thank God for Jeff. He peed in Jay's bag to defend me! [laughs] But I had to look at it and figure out what I did wrong. And this was right after being with Gino Vanelli for six hours. I was recording his record during the time I was doing the Pages sessions with Jay Graydon. It was Gino for *Nightwalker*, noon to six, and then Graydon from six to midnight for a month.

**RF:** And Gino works his musicians hard.

**VC:** Big time. And this was my initiation into the studio realm. It was like doing two Steely Dans a day for a month. It was the most anal-retentive that you could possibly get.

**RF:** Are there any other times you can think of that you got fired?

**VC:** There was the time when I was fourteen on a polka band—they thought I played too much. I learned how to play every kind of style there was, and I wanted to blow. Here I was, fourteen years old, like a wild horse.

**RF:** With all you have recorded, which

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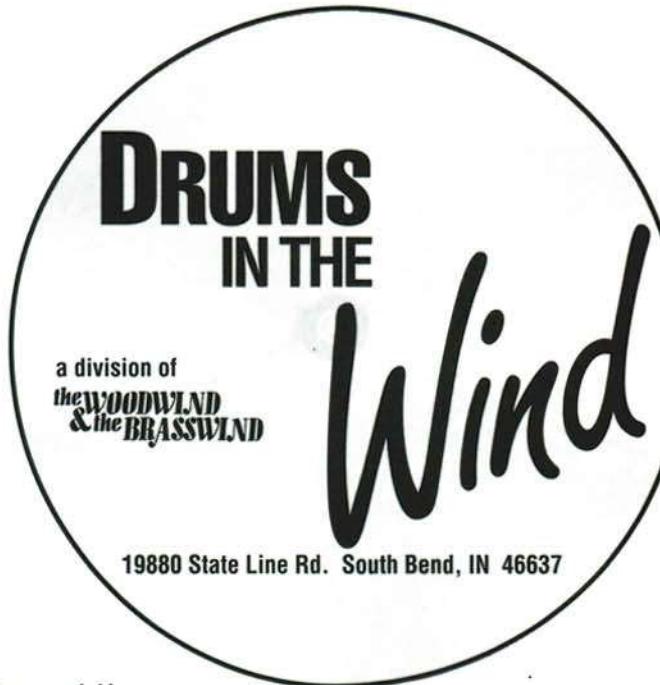
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songs are most representative of you?

**VC:** "City Nights" off of Allan Holdsworth's *Secrets*, because it was spontaneous. It was a first take and it was my introduction to recording with him. It indicated a lot of experience for me in terms of being able to become what the music needed me to become—instantly—and just playing completely uninhibitedly. It was a nice, transcendent kind of feeling of arriving somewhere collectively. Most of that stuff was first and second takes, and we just had to choose between the two.

**RF:** Song number two.

**VC:** "Seven Days" from Sting's *Ten Summoner's Tales*, 5/4 time. It represents a cumulative painting of me now. In that situation I just reacted and pretty much did what I thought was appropriate at the time. I like the attitude, the character, and the mood of the song. I feel what everybody contributed to the song is very valid for it, and that the balance between the amount of structure and improvisation in my playing is good. And dynamically, we were very synergistic as a group. Also, it was indicative of the amount of time we spent together as a unit. That added another ingredient to that recipe, which can only come with time. You can't rush the years. If somebody wanted me to play like I was ten years younger, I would say, "Go find somebody ten years younger." I didn't have ten years ago what I have now.

**RF:** Can you pinpoint what that is?

**VC:** Time....that's my answer. There are many things that are inclusive in that. Ten years of experience is an accumulation of everything that I've learned, experienced, and become, which is evident when I play—good or bad.

**RF:** Song number three.

**VC:** I played on half of Jeff Beale's *The Three Graces*. Dave Weckl played on the other half. That was a good experience for me because it represented, to me, a time when we experienced a really beautiful kind of spontaneity in the studio together as a unit. His compositions were structured in such a way that a special kind of life was breathed into them with the right combination of musicians, attitude, and atmosphere. We felt that it really came to life in a satisfying, beautiful way. At that time I had been playing a lot of improvisational music, and that was

sort of the apex of that time for me.

I can't particularly single out any one piece of music on that record. One was called "Jazz Habit." The irony of that whole session was that there was only one piece of music that was, for me, a little labored in terms of trying to find what it was. Wonderfully enough, it didn't turn into a huge problem where we were trying to find it so much that it never happened. I think that was part of the whole beauty, where the attitude of the whole day dominated the ability of that song to come together quickly. Instead of getting way inside of it to try to find it—and then getting negative over it—I just let that go. That was another case of the synergy of the musicians.

**RF:** Tune number four.

**VC:** There's a real slow tune on Zappa's *Joe's Garage* that is in 3/4. I can't remember the name of it. There's another called "Lucille," which was kind of pivotal for me because we had just sort of discovered reggae. We played our version of it without any regard to observing any kind of tradition. We just absorbed what we thought was the concept and the kind of rhythmic feel of it and integrated it into what we were playing so that it felt good to play. We weren't trying to sound like traditional Rastafarians. It was a great song to play.

**RF:** Would you talk about your strengths and weaknesses?

**VC:** I think one of my strengths is my adaptability. I enjoy different kinds of music and I enjoy changing a lot. Weaknesses—I'm easily bored. Now, that adaptability and being easily bored act off one another. Because I get easily bored, I try to change. Another strength—and thank God—is that I still have a passion for what I do. Drumming still feels like a part of me, and it gives me the drive to continually know that there's no end to it.

Another weakness is that I'm lazy. I let things happen. I might discover something like that, but if I see that I have to work on it, sometimes I'll put it off and never get to it.

**RF:** What are your present goals?

**VC:** I just want to continue developing as a musician. I love playing. I also want to be more involved in composing, doing my own thing. I hope to continue to be in different situations that I can nurture and that will nurture me.

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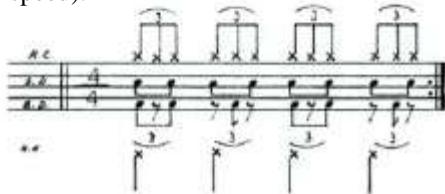
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## INDEPENDENCE EXERCISE

Here's a useful practice tip that gives all four limbs a good independence workout and provides a basis for some interesting fills and rhythms. It's based on the 3-against-2 polyrhythm. Any two limbs play 3 against 2, while the other two play 6 against 4 (that is, 3 against 2 at double speed).



In this example, the ride and snare are played 3 against 2, while the bass drum and hi-hat play the pattern at half speed. Try switching the various parts around. I developed this myself, and have found it very beneficial when it comes to thinking in triplets in a 4/4 time signature.

Justin Davey

Cape Town, South Africa

## SECURING CLAMP PARTS

One of the most useful innovations in hardware has been the accessory clamp. Until, that is, you open your hardware bag or trap case to find the wing nuts, springs, and assorted other pieces of the clamps rattling around at the bottom. To prevent this problem, place a short section of wooden doweling in the open end of each clamp and tighten it before packing up. Dowels are available at any home supply outlet and come in the sizes of various drum tubes. They easily prevent the loss of clamp parts, while making set-ups and break-downs much simpler.

John Perry Penn  
Houma LA

## BLOW OUT THOSE DENTS

One day, after I'd come home from my band class at college, my father overheard me lamenting over some dents my teacher had put in my drumheads while trying to show me the groove he had in mind. (He's not a drummer, and his attack is comparable to that of a falling ice pick.) Being the vast fountain of wisdom that my dad is, he asked me what drumheads are made of. "Mostly Mylar" was my reply. He then lead me into the bathroom with drum in hand (and head still securely in place) and proceeded to pull the dents out with a blow dryer. Only a minute amount of retuning was necessary, and the resonance of the head was regained. Be careful not to hold the dryer in one spot on the head for too long. This also works great on snare-side heads.

Marty Rosamond  
Lancaster CA

writing, eating, brushing my teeth, bouncing or throwing a ball, etc.—all with my left hand. Within a week I noticed a substantial difference. My grip improved, along with my form and speed. I still use my left hand whenever possible, and I plan to continue.

Kimberley Dicker  
Union City CA

## I'LL HAVE A MEDIUM CRASH WITH EXTRA CHEESE

A good cymbal bag is fairly expensive—anywhere from \$80 to \$150. Not any more! Cruise down to your local pizza place and ask if you can buy some new or old pizza, delivery bags. It's possible to purchase them for around \$10 apiece, and some places will give you the used ones for free. The bags are plenty big for any sized cymbal, and are definitely road-worthy.

John Sudduth  
Warrensburg MO

## SCRUB SUPPORT FOR CYMBALS

Polishing cymbals is a pain in the neck, and few of us like to do it. Cleaning the top is fairly easy, but cleaning the bottom causes headaches because one has to hold the cymbal in place with one hand while trying to scrub it with the other. So here's the tip: Go to your local tire store and pick up an old, useless car tire. The tire, laying on its side, will cradle any cymbal that is larger than the inside diameter of the tire, so the smaller the tire is, the better. The cymbal will stay put while you scrub the bottom or the top.

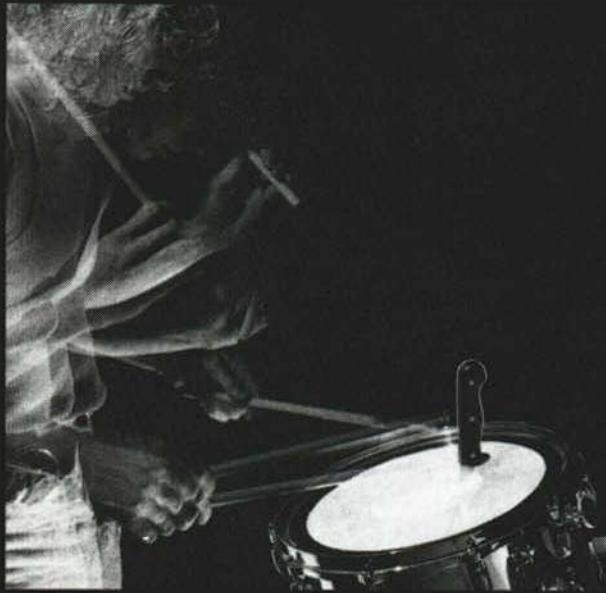
Chuck Strawhand  
Stone Mountain GA

## FIRST AID FOR MUFFLING PROBLEMS

Playing in a Top-40/country band puts me in a variety of playing situations, and every room has a different sound. I've found that carrying a can of Band-Aids really helps. They work wonders for muffling, from the large 2" pads to the small strips. They stay on great, and they peel off even better. Try different size combinations and positions.

Michael White  
Buffalo NY

*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.*



This is an actual photo of a drummer playing on a Hi-Energy snare drumhead with a knife in it to demonstrate its durability and resistance to splitting. This drumhead also has a great sound.

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#### Texture Coated with Power Dot Underneath-

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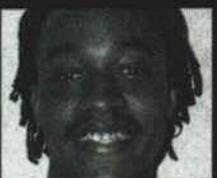
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Mark Geary (Dangerous Toys) says, "This head has the attack, durability and depth of sound that I like. I tried lots of heads but this one is definitely the best for me."



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Joe Franco (studio) says, "I've tried all different snare drumheads for recording. I can crank this one up to get the "crack" I want and still get a full sound. Sound engineers love this head."



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# Ludwig DFS

■ by Harry Cangany

John Aldridge and I were recently discussing the drum pictured in this article. (For those who don't know him, John is the nation's preeminent expert/collector of Ludwig *Black Beauties*.) The one-of-a-kind drum is known as the *DFS*, and in John's opinion it is the most collectible *Black Beauty* in existence.

Ludwig, Leedy, and Slingerland were the big three manufacturers of black nickel snare drums in the late '20s. Within ten years, these drums were discontinued due to their high cost of manufacture. But in the pre- and early talkie period—before the Great Depression—drummers were willing to spend \$50 and up to buy a showy, engraved metal snare. These early models were hand-engraved, like Ludwig's current *Black Beauty* (which is considerably more expensive—twenty times the original cost, to be exact).

Ludwig called their drum the *Ludwig De Luxe*. Leedy used the term *Black Elite*. And Slingerland's drum was the *Black Beauty*. It's ironic that the Slingerland name is historically connected to their arch rival's drum.

Why are these drums so collectible? Well, the visual appeal is clear: Black nickel with the strong brass design is simply beautiful. But the power is really in the *sound* of the aged brass.

I decided as a collector that I did not want to horde drums, so I own only two *Black Beauties*. The *DFS* is a 6 1/2x14 *Super-Sensitive*. In those days, a *Super-Sensitive* was a drum with two sets of snares: a parallel mechanism for the bottom head and a second set under the top head. This setup was considered perfect for brush work. (The *Super Ludwig* was essentially the same model, only with just the parallel unit.) I sold an earlier-issue 6 1/2" *Black Beauty* to buy my *DFS*. That drum was with John Phillip Sousa, and was used in Indianapolis in the '50s for Elvis Presley's first live stage show in Indiana. But the *DFS* was just too good to pass up.

In 1990, Bill Ludwig, Jr. invited me to see his collection and purchase anything I wanted. Part of his motivation was that he wanted people to see what he and his father had built. Exhibiting the *DFS* at my Drum Center in Indianapolis (the "Crossroads of America") would allow drummers to see this treasure. It's an *un-restored* drum from about 1930. Since chrome became available in 1929, this is one of the few models I have seen that does not use an imitation-gold "Deluxe Finish"



on the tube lugs, strainer, and hoops. Like Leedy's "Nobby gold" and Slingerland's "Artgold," the "Deluxe Finish" was a brass plating with a lacquer coating, and could wear off with the constant rubbing from legs. Chrome, on the other hand, does not wear off.

The history of this unique drum begins with a former Ludwig & Ludwig employee. This man, whose name has been forgotten, did not play drums but still wanted to own one of Ludwig's best instruments. So around 1930 he bought this *Black Beauty*. But first he had his initials ("DFS") put on the shell by the same engraver who did the pattern, an action that forced a temporary shut-down of the assembly line. Apparently Bill Ludwig, Sr.—the ever-vigilant owner/inspector—found out. Sherman marching through Georgia was quiet compared to Ludwig marching through the factory.

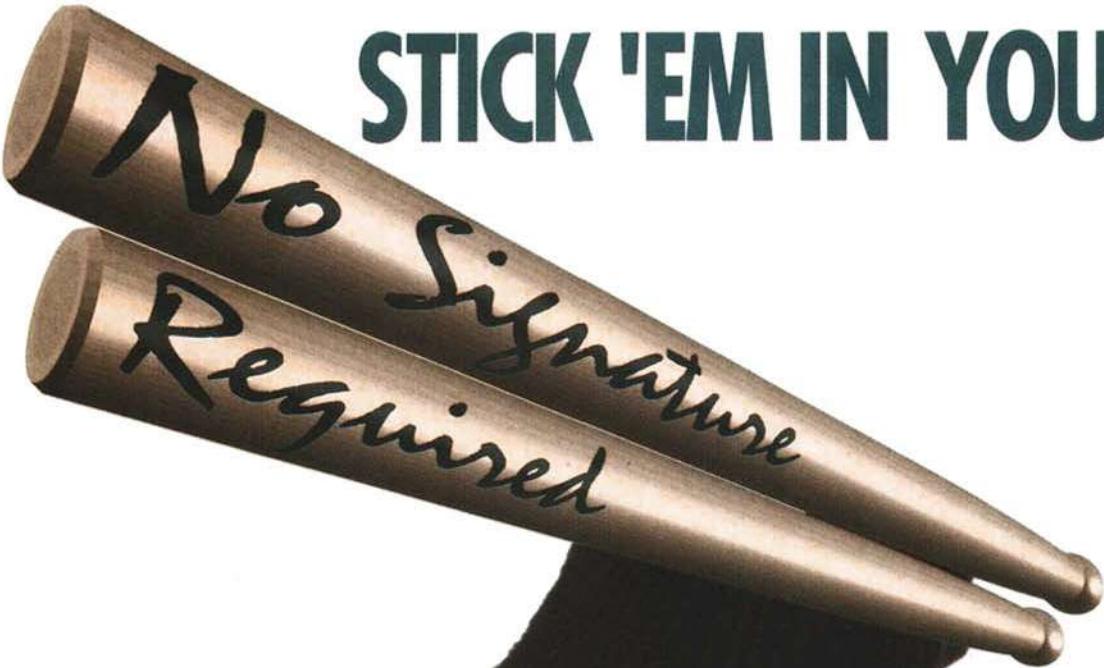
Fifty years later, Mr. DFS contacted Bill Ludwig, Jr. and gave him the drum. It looks like it sat in a case for all that time—only the heads have been changed to plastic Ludwig heads. Bill Jr. used the drum in the Wheaton Community Orchestra until I bought it and moved it to its glass case.

The museum-quality *DFS Super Sensitive* is the ultimate *Black Beauty*. And the *Black Beauty* is the ultimate collectible. If you find one, keep it. But *don't just keep it*—bring it out every once in a while and *play* it. Then take a minute to thank the Ludwigs for making this true American collectible—and the former owner(s) for cherishing it.

Excellent examples of Ludwig *Black Beauties* should retail for \$700 to \$2,500. The most sought-after sizes are 6 1/2x14 and 4x14. Ten-lug models are very prized, as are the dual-snare models: the *New Era* and the *Super-Sensitive*. The most common *Black Beauty* is the eight-lug 5x14.

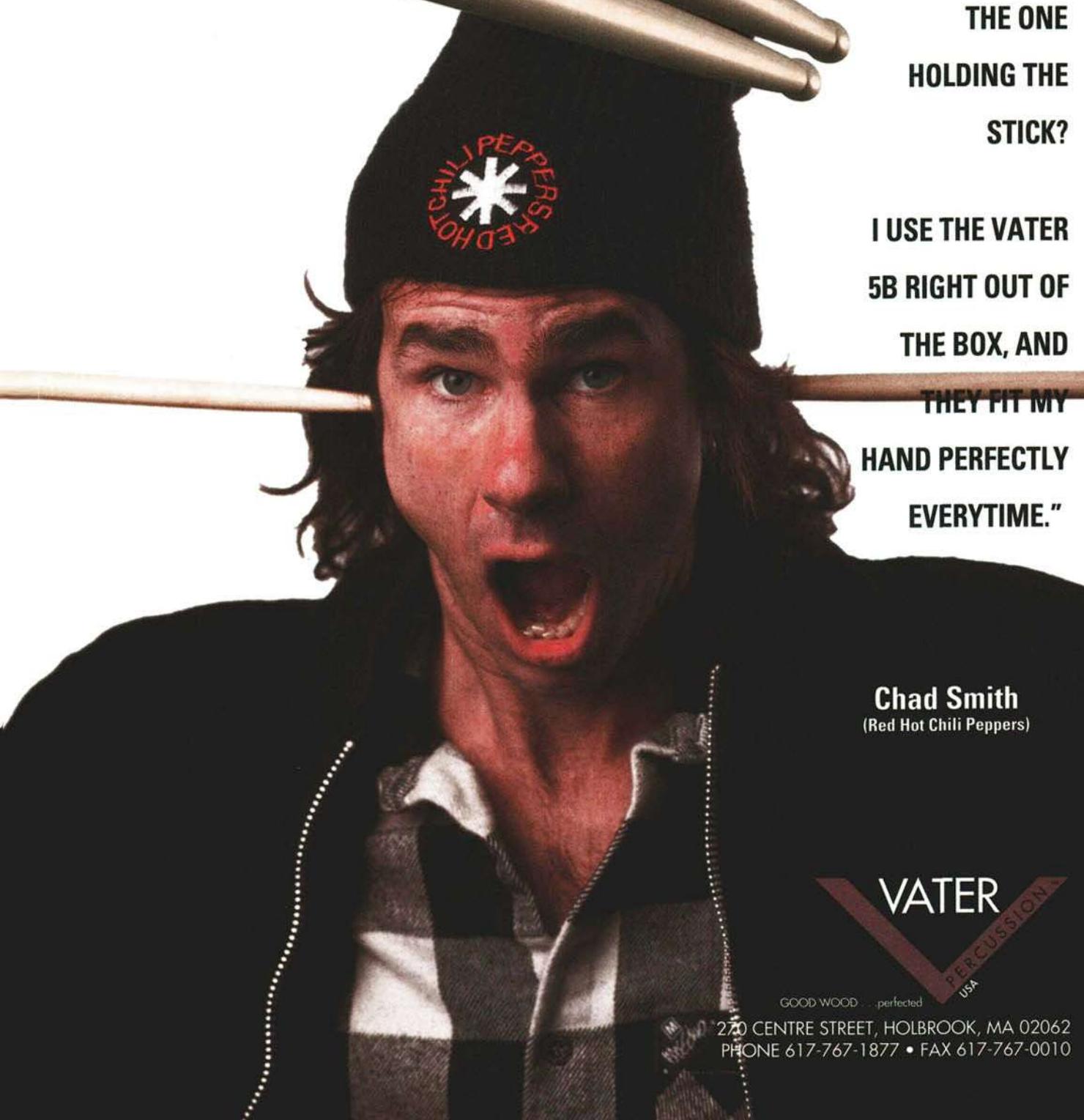


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# Double Bass Grooves: Part 1

■ by Joe Franco



## MUSIC KEY



Here are some double bass grooves that are based on 16th notes, many of which are from my book *Double Bass Drumming*. In the book, I use a system to play 16th-note and triplet rhythms that I refer to as the "Single Stroke System." The system is based on the single-stroke roll led by the main bass drum (BD 1). For example, look at the 16th-note roll led by BD 1:

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

Now play a rhythm on two bass drums as if the rhythm were part of the 16th-note single-stroke roll. In other words, BD 1 plays all of the 8th notes (1, &, 2, &, 3, &, 4, &) and BD 2 plays all the "e"s and "a"s. Using this concept, you can play any 16th-note rhythm on two bass drums in a consistent-sounding way. You can complement a musical line even if it's too quick to play with one foot.

Some of these grooves were written with a bass or guitar line in mind. For example, in #6, the bass drums are playing the guitar riff from Aerosmith's "Walk This Way."

Check out these grooves and then experiment with some of your own. (If you really want to piss off your guitarist, start playing all his guitar lines on double bass!)

1

2

3

4

5

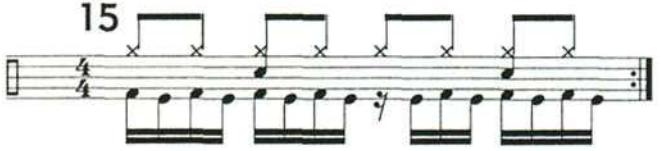
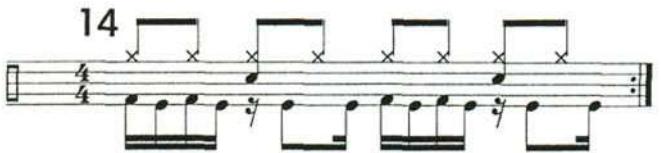
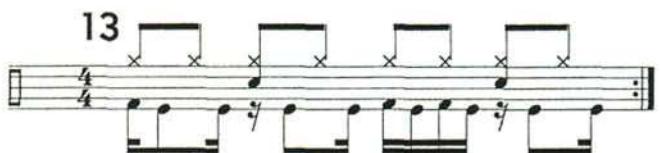
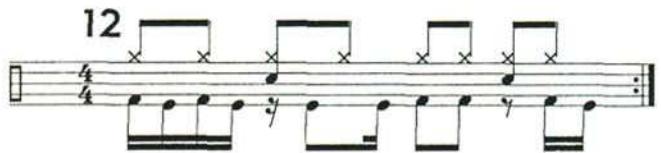
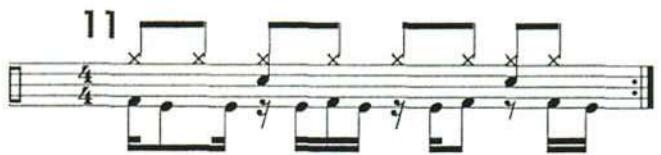
6

7

8

9

10



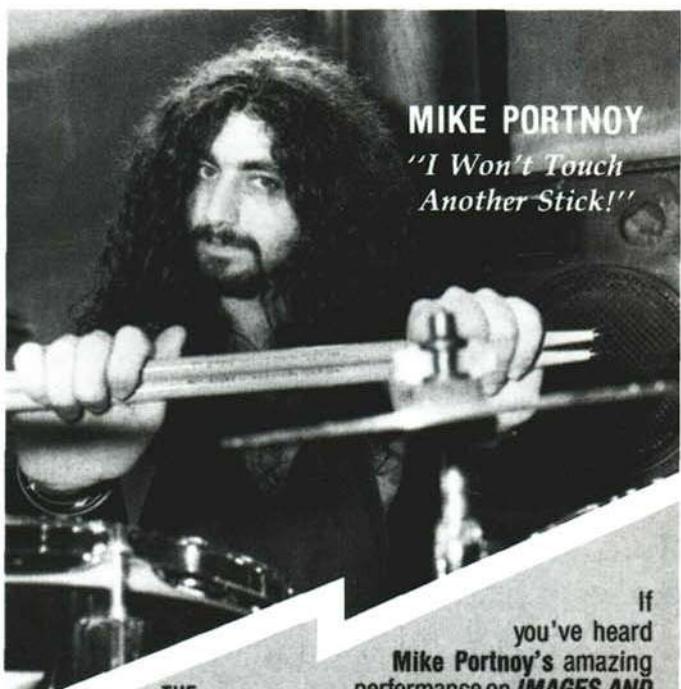
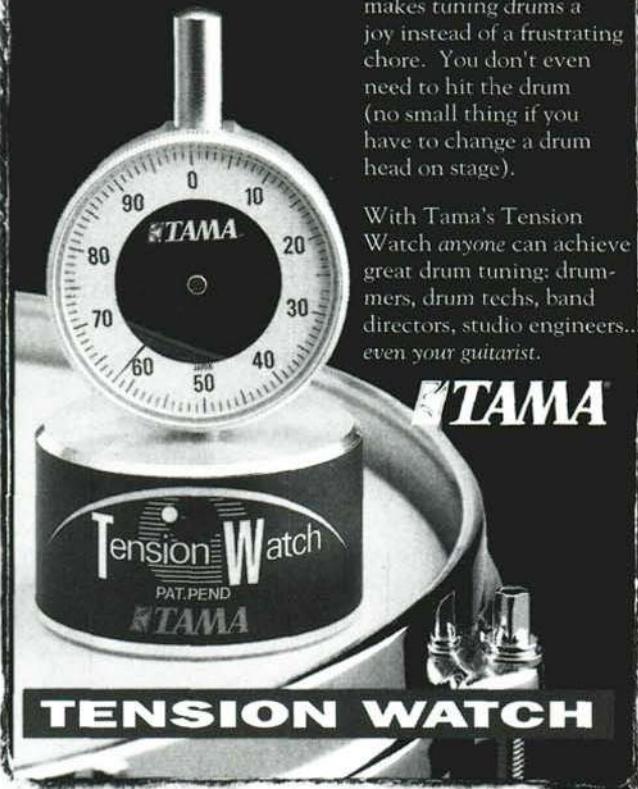
The previous grooves were written with an 8th-note ride. Once you play them as written, try cutting the ride in half, playing quarter notes. Another way to play these is by playing 16th notes (with both hands) on a closed hi-hat, bringing your right hand over to the snare drum on beats 2 and 4, like so:



To challenge yourself even further, try playing the bass drum rhythms along with a single paradiddle played with your right hand on the ride and your left on the snare, accenting the 2 and 4, like so:



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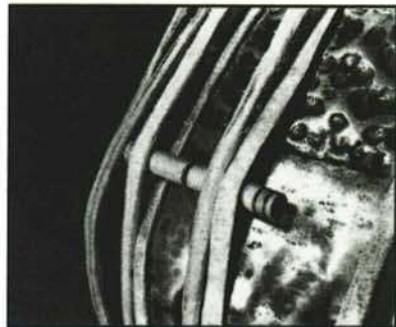
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continued from page 41

**Photo 4—Gatta For The Banya**

If the banya needs tightening, one should place a dowel between the tasma and the shell. It may be wedged under one, two, three, or even four of the straps (tasma).

imately 3" lengths, and wedge the pieces between the metal shell and the thong (Photo 4). Eight lengths should be enough to raise the drum to the proper pitch.

The danya (wooden drum) has the most stringent requirements for pitch. The following table is a list of diameters and recommended tunings. There are three things one should keep in mind.

### Recommended Tuning For Tabla

SIZE	PITCH
4 3/4	D#
5	C#
5 1/4	B
5 1/2	A
5 3/4	F
6	G

The first is that the diameter is measured from the rim, not from the braid. The second is that a danya is sufficiently flexible to go a step in either direction. The final point is that this table has not taken thickness of the skin or syahi into consideration. Therefore, look at this merely as a rough guide.

The major job of tuning is performed on the gajara (braid). It is tightened by striking down with the hammer and loosened by striking from the underside. If the gajara does not respond to the hammer, then the gatta (wooden dowels) must be struck. Hammer the wooden



**Photo 5—Correct Sitting Position**  
This position gives good control over the instrument.

dowels down to increase the tension and hammer them up to loosen. Once the gatta have been moved, return to the gajara for further tuning. (It is very important that one strikes only the gajara with the hammer. An accidental strike against the wooden lip will irreparably damage the tabla!)

Hopefully our tabla is now in tune. Now let's learn how to play.

The first thing one must learn is how to sit. Photo 5 shows us the correct position for playing tabla, in a cross-legged position. For a right-handed person, the

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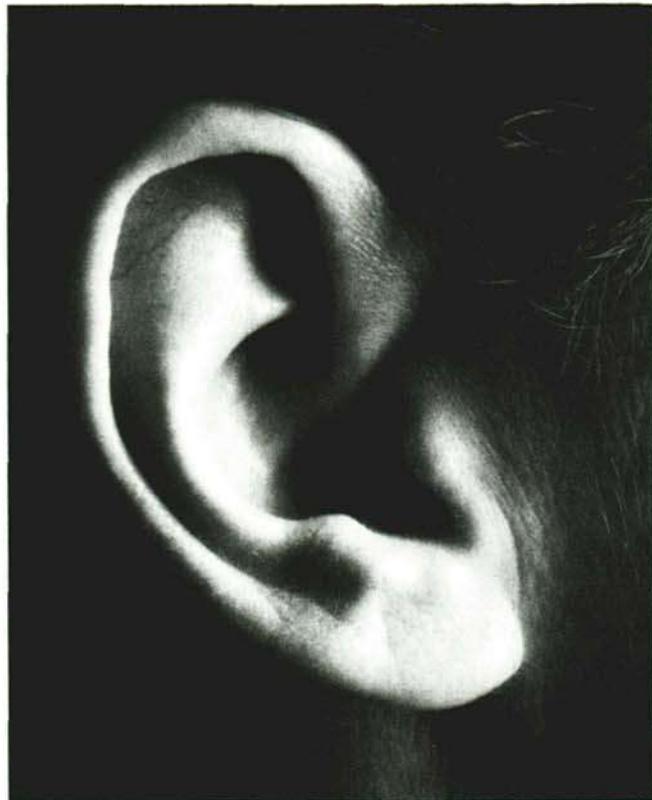
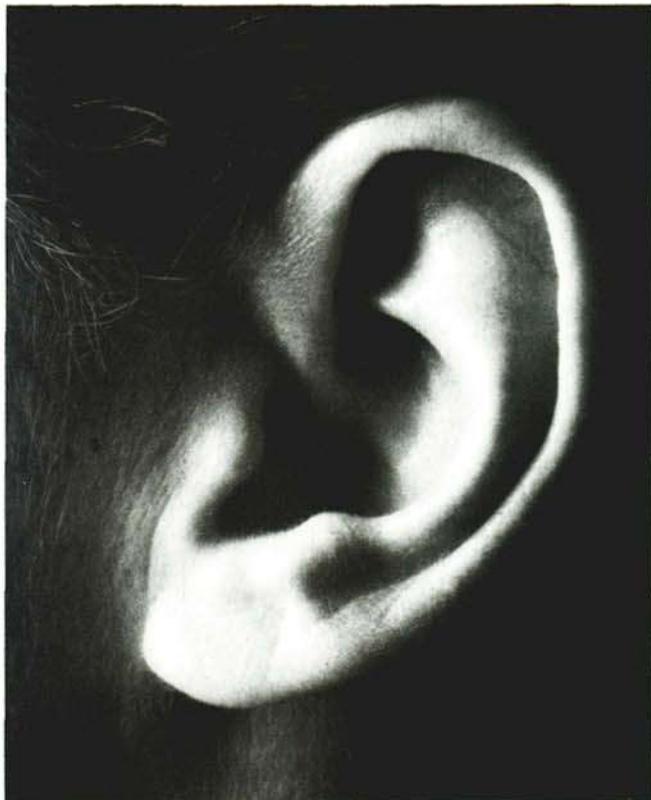
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Photo 6—Ka, Ke, or Kat

A muted, non-resonant stroke of the left hand

danya (wooden drum) should be on the right and the banya (metal drum) should be on the left. It is important that the danya is tilted slightly forward. The banya is arranged so that the syahi (black spot) is kept away from you. This position allows for good control over the instrument and ease of producing the strokes.

There are a number of strokes and bol for tabla. Here are the common ones:

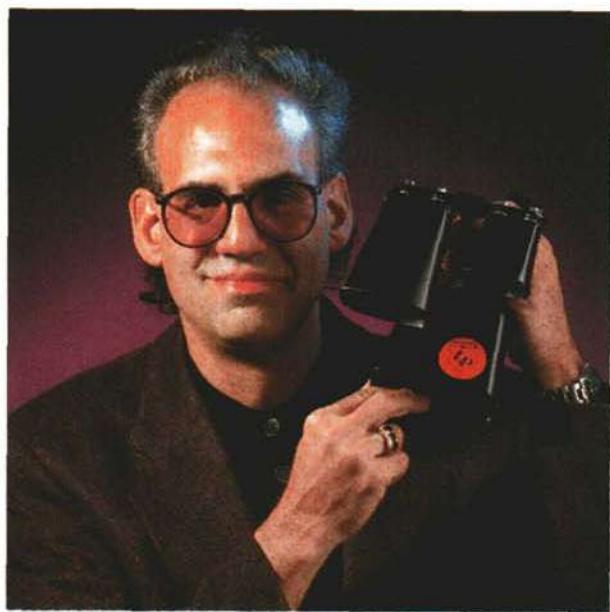
Ka, Ke, or Kat (Photo 6) is undoubtedly the easiest stroke. It is a flat, non-resonant stroke of the left hand. Notice that the tips of the fingers extend slightly over

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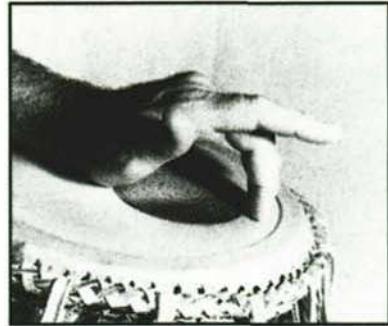
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**Photo 7—Na or Ta (Dilli style)**  
A resonant stroke of the right hand



**Photo 8—Ga or Ge**  
A resonant stroke of the left hand

the edge of the drum.

Na or Ta (Dilli style, Photo 7) is a very common stroke of the right hand. It is played by keeping the last two fingers lightly against the syahi; the middle finger is extended and kept up, while the index finger strikes against the chart (edge). This stroke should be sharp and piercing. Na is the bell-like sound that most people associate with tabla.

Ga or Ge (Photo 8) is a resonant stroke of the left hand. The palm is placed in the center of the banya, while the hand reaches over the syahi and strikes the

maidan. The middle finger and ring finger are used to strike while the index finger is held up out of the way. One should be careful that both fingers strike simultaneously. Occasionally one will see people play with just the middle finger, but this is considered poor technique.

An alternate form of Ga is played with the same hand position, but the index finger is used to strike the drum. The alternation of these two strokes is a technique that allows considerable speed.

Ga is a difficult stroke for many beginners. The problem is that the student is

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**Photo 9—Tin or Ta (Purbi style)**  
A resonant stroke of the right hand

keeping the fingers down too long. This chokes the sound and does not allow the drum to resonate. This stroke should be thought of as a ricochet.

Tin (Photo 9) is a resonant stroke of the right hand. The last two fingers of the right hand rest lightly against the syahi, and the middle finger is kept extended and out of the way. The index finger lightly strikes the edge of the syahi with a ricochet stroke. Tin should be light and soft to bring out a mellow quality. If it is played loudly it becomes Ta, as would be played in a Purbi style.

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**Photo 10—Tu, Tun, Thu, or Thun**  
A resonant stroke of the right hand



**Photo 11—Tak or Kat (Purbi style)**  
A non-resonant stroke of the right hand



**Photo 12—Dha**  
A common combination of "Na" and "Ga"

Tu, Tun, Thu, or Thun (Photo 10) is a very resonant stroke of the right hand. It is played by striking the center of the syahi with the index finger in a very light, ricochet motion. No other fingers touch the head. This stroke is open and not muted.

Tak or Kat (Purbi style, Photo 11) is a non-resonant stroke of the right hand. It is played by slightly cupping the fingers and striking the drum in the center of the syahi. Tak is the common bol, but it is occasionally pronounced as Kat in the Purbi style.

Dha (Photo 12) is a combination of Ta and Ga.

Dhin (Photo 13) is a combination of Tin and Ga.

Ti Ta or Te Te is a single bol that is composed of two strokes played sequentially. The first stroke (Ti or Te) is played by striking the center of the syahi with the middle finger (Photo 14). The second stroke (Ta or Te) is played by striking the center of the syahi with the index finger (Photo 15). Both of these strokes should be muted and non-resonant.



**Photo 13—Dhin**  
A common combination of Tin and Ga

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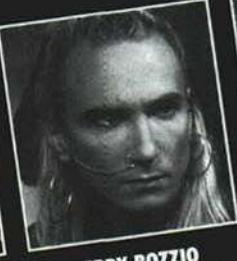
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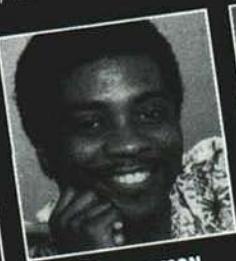
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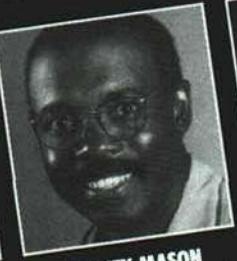
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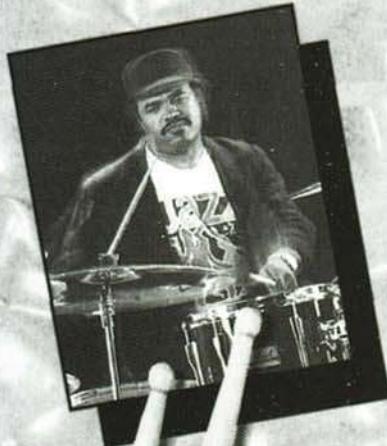
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**Photo 14—Ti**

A non-resonant stroke of the right hand, usually used in phrases like Ti Ta or Ti Ra Ka Ta

Ti Ra Ka Ta or Ti Ri Ki Ta is a single bol that is produced by playing four strokes. The Ti is produced by striking the center of the syahi with the middle



**Photo 16—Ta**

A non-resonant stroke of the right hand, found in phrases like Ti Ra Ki Ta

finger (Photo 14); Ra is produced by striking the center of the syahi with the index finger (Photo 15); Ka is produced by striking the banya with a flat hand (Photo 6); and Ta is produced by striking the syahi with the last two fingers of the right hand (Photo 16). All of these strokes should be muted and non-resonant.

To move beyond the basics of tabla we've discussed here, you'll need the guidance of a good teacher. (Things like music notation and composition definitely require actual lessons.) But hopefully we've whetted your appetite and given you a foundation on this vast yet fascinating instrument. Take it farther, and you just might find that the study of tabla will open musical doors you didn't even know existed.



**Photo 15—Ta or Ra**

A non-resonant stroke of the right hand, usually used in phrases like Ti Ta or Ti Ra Ki Ta

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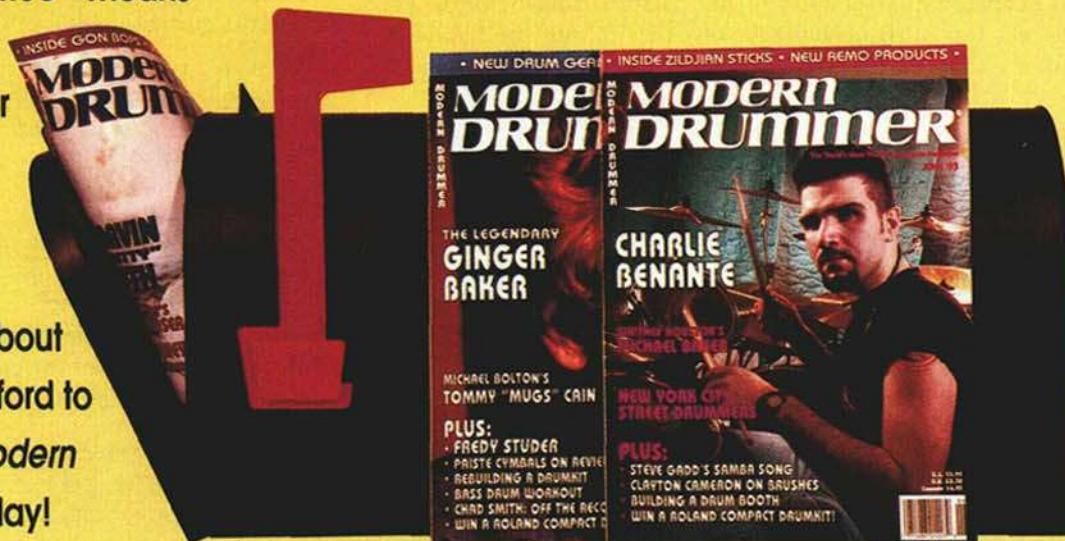
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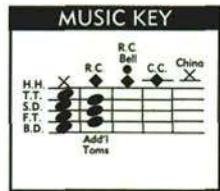
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# Winger Revisited

■ by Rod Morgenstein



Winger recently completed record number three, and the beats, fills, and patterns that follow are excerpts from this recording. I hope they will shed some light on how I approach playing this style of music. I like to start with simple yet effective hard hitting, and then add my own signature to it without losing the focus of the song.

Example 1 is the beat from the chorus of "Junkyard Dog." To keep the quarter-note hi-hat pattern from being interrupted, the third measure involves switching the hands in order to crash on the China.

Example 2 is the beat from "Blind Revolution Mad." The 8th-note cymbal pattern alternates between the bell of the cymbal (on the downbeat) and the body of the cymbal (on the upbeat) to keep things moving.

Example 3 is from the first half of the guitar solo in "Blind Revolution Mad." The drums kind of interplay between the bass and rhythm guitar backing figures.

In example 4, this one-measure drum intro doubles the guitar part on "In My Veins."

Example 5 is the beat to the verse of "In My Veins." Having the drums match the syncopated guitar/bass riff adds a funky

feel to the section.

Example 6 is from the bridge of "Spell I'm Under," which leads to the guitar solo. It's a mix of a simple beat and a fill.

Example 7 is the drum pattern from the bridge of "Ritual," which occurs just before the guitar solo. I tried to spice it up a bit in measures five and six. (Gotta get those licks in when you can!)

Example 8 consists of the three parts that make up the "tribal" background at the end of "Ritual," over which the drumset jams.

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# Cecil Brooks III

## Hangin' With The Juggler

■ by Ken Micallef

*The city of Pittsburgh might not top most people's lists of "great jazz cities." Yet a remarkable wealth of drummers has in fact sprung from Steeltown. An Blakey, Beaver Harris, Joe Harris, Kenny Clarke, Roger Humphries, Billy James, Jeff Watts, and Vinnie Colaiuta all drew from its unique environment. Cecil Brooks III, another native, has a good explanation for this rhythmic dynasty. "Pittsburgh is a hard town," says Cecil. "To survive as a drummer you have to play so people can feel what you're doing. I was taught that you can play anything, as long as the crowd can snap their fingers to it. The dance element has to be there."*

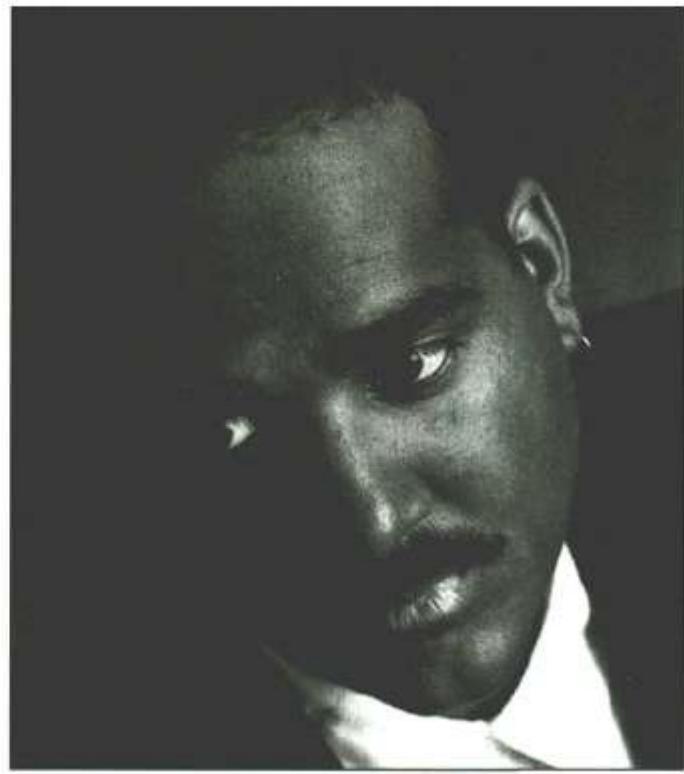
*Brooks' latest album, Neck Peckin' Jammin, adheres to the philosophy established on his first two releases, The Collective and Hangin' With Smooth ("Smooth" being his father's nickname): Surround yourself with excellent musicians, guide them through a meaty course of original compositions and modern arrangements of bebop gems, kick their butts rhythmically, and keep the tape rolling.*

*Brooks not only plays many styles well, he also has a head for business. Who would've thought to line up Geri Allen, Lonnie Plaxico, Gary Thomas, and Greg Osby (musicians from the Brooklyn-based M-Base, a jazz think-tank bent on advancing the music) for his debut—and have them bust their chops playing straight-ahead, mean-swinging bebop? The Collective was hailed by critics as a landmark.*

*Cecil came to Manhattan in the mid-'80s and started working—though not as often as he would have liked. Not content waiting for the phone to ring, he created work for himself, using his likable personality and keen business savvy. The easygoing musician parlayed his skills into a recording contract with Muse Records and also became a producer, concert coordinator, and clinician. Brooks juggles all these hats while performing or recording with artists as diverse as Vanessa Rubin, Oliver Lake, the Charles Mingus Big Band, Jack Walrath, the Enja All Stars, David Murray, Stanley Turrentine, Terrance Blanchard, Kenny Burrell, and Benny Green.*

**KM:** Your latest album is a big leap forward for you, both technically and compositionally. Do you view it as a breakthrough?

**CB:** When I work on an album, I don't really think in those terms. I just hope it shows growth and improvement. I surround myself with players I like, and we go for it.



**KM:** Yet your drumming has become more articulate and swinging. Did you do a lot of shedding as preparation?

**CB:** I concentrated more on being a part of the music, as opposed to dealing with technique. A slick drum pattern for its own sake doesn't make any sense. I tried to design the grooves, the fills, and all the drum parts to relate to the actual chord progressions and melody lines. I wanted to fulfill my role as time-keeper while thinking totally about the music.

In terms of my own musical growth, in the time between records I had the opportunity to play with more people. For example, I was influenced by the music I played with the Mingus Big Band. Mingus incorporated gospel, funk...it all fell under one umbrella as creative music. My covering Wayne Shorter's "One By One" as reggae comes out of the Mingus-styled thing. Also, I'd been playing with Etta Jones and Houston Person, and I did a lot of straight-ahead records—Richard Groove Holmes, Jack McDuff, and a couple of blues records—where your function is keeping the groove. I had that foundation. As far as hearing different passages goes, I think I've grown a lot.

**KM:** Did you concentrate on one thing in particular?

**CB:** The bass drum is an important part of my playing. I use the same dialog with my bass drum as you'd use when comping with your left hand on the snare drum. I use it to make kicks and accents, creating a lot of tension and release. Sometimes I can actually control the time with the bass drum. If things move up top tempo-wise, you can hammer it back down with the bass drum. If there are any gray areas with the time, a bass drum

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•accent will center the band. A lot of older musicians will gravitate to drummers with a foot. Before funk and rock, no one really developed their bass drum foot; they were playing very light 4/4.

**KM:** Speaking of bass drums, let's talk about your equipment.

**CB:** I play Pearl drums: a 14x18 bass drum, 8x10 and 8x12 toms, sometimes a 9x13 for the floor tom, and a 5" brass *Custom Classic* snare drum. My Sabian cymbals include an 18" flat ride, a 22" HH *Classic* ride with three rivets, an 18" HH crash/ride, 14" hi-hats, a 20" China with four rivets, and a 10" AA splash. I use Dean Markley sticks, Rhythm Tech accessories, and Remo heads.

**KM:** When I saw you with Oliver Lake recently, you played staccato, tom-oriented fills. Is that a reflection of his music?

**CB:** With Oliver, I was putting that polyrhythmic, African-drumming aspect on it.

**KM:** You used a flat, almost Ralph Peterson type of tuning.

**CB:** Tuning high caters to bebop—high and fast, with quick decay. It also makes moving around the set easier, because everything is high and tight. When the tuning is low, flat, and dead-sounding, you have a space that puts a blanket over the sound. It warms it up and gives it a flexibility in between funk and jazz. When you make a roll you get this modern tonality. It brings on another attitude.

**KM:** You also played more "out" or avant-garde than you do on your own records.

**CB:** Melodically, Oliver allowed me to explore that side of my personality.

**KM:** How do you gauge how far out you can go while still being musical?

**CB:** I let the music dictate that. I try to give 100% of myself to the music, being honest and unselfish. But being honest can be perceived as being selfish, in the sense that I don't try to deny myself, either. It's a balance. How far out is too far? I don't know. It's all perspective.

**KM:** Instead of presenting yourself as a hungry young cat when you came to New York, you put out a solo album. Why?

**CB:** I feel that there's nothing wrong with documenting your growth. I was one of the hungry guys. Plus, *The Collective* is a great record. Not so much because of me—you can't find another record with "out" guys like Gary Thomas, Lonnie Plaxico, Greg Osby, and Geri Allen playing straight-ahead. The media perceived it as an M-Base vehicle for playing swing.

**KM:** Each one of your records features very strong, diverse line-ups. What have you learned from being both producer and player on these dates?

**CB:** I've learned more and more about the level of respect that has to be given to drummers. Take the same four guys I mentioned above, put Dennis Chambers on drums, and you'd get a different-sounding record. Put Dave Weckl on drums and it'd be different again. Drummers can make or break a session. You can get through a session with an average bassist or pianist, but the drummer must be consistent.

**KM:** What did you want to deal with on the latest record?

**CB:** I wanted to deal with swing and groove, incorporating interesting melodies that would allow me to put my personality

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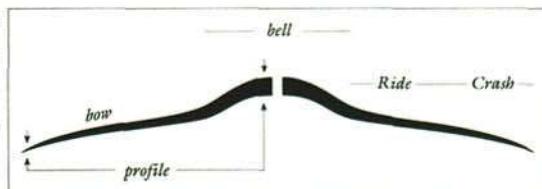
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between the cracks. Most of my compositions are a vehicle for what I want to play. I did "One By One" to explore a Latin/reggae thing. "Mood Swings" is a 3/4 Elvin-ish thing.

**KM:** Your music is not retro; you're covering adventurous compositions and applying different rhythms. What do you think of the classical jazz movement?

**CB:** Look at classical music: It's preserved; they'll play it for hundreds of years. The jazz of the '50s and '60s was so great, playing it today can't be dismissed as just rehashing the past. If you can even come close to that level—and then build from there—anything is possible. If everyone had the ability to play the way Tony Williams did in the mid-'60s they'd do it—and no one would say they were rehashing the past. But no one talks about that because Tony's playing was so phenomenal. Modern drummers have yet to deal with that.

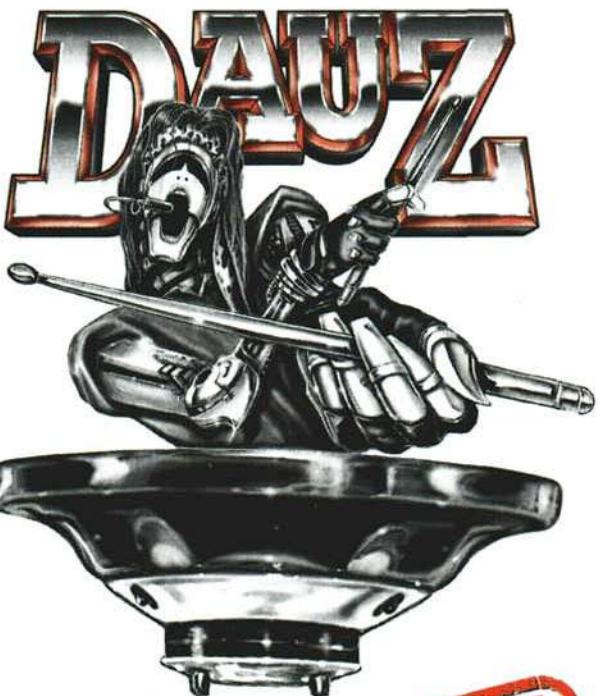
**KM:** So you have to go back to the roots.

**CB:** You have to deal with Cozy Cole, Sid Catlett, Davey Tough, Papa Jo Jones, Max, Philly, Joe Morello, Buddy Rich, and Gene Krupa. When you understand their place in drumming, then you can see what's possible. All those guys pushed drumming ahead.

**KM:** Are the contributions of Rich and Krupa as important to the history of drumming as those of Catlett, Jo Jones, Elvin, or Philly Joe?

**CB:** C'mon man, Buddy was bad! And Gene Krupa on "Sing, Sing, Sing"...the intensity was there. That was an important move for the business of drumming.

**KM:** You produce records for other artists, you produce con-



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certs [most recently the Mellon Jazz Festival in Pittsburgh], and you have your own licensing business. What prompted you to explore these interests?

**CB:** A musician's career is like a graph: it fluctuates up and down. It made sense to try to do something with the down time. In Pittsburgh I played drums, but I was also the entertainment director for different clubs. I was always dealing with the business side of music, and I didn't have to work as hard at that as I did at being creative. To really let go of that side of the brain and give yourself up to the music is a special quality that few have. Some people are gifted; the rest of us have to work at it.

In the early '80s I had a group in Pittsburgh that I booked. When I came to New York, I got with Houston Person, who was a good businessman. I learned from him. People started approaching me with ideas, and that began generating work for me. In jazz, everything is dependent on the phone. If it's not ringing and you're through practicing, you've got to get into something.

**KM:** So what are your businesses?

**CB:** I have a multi-purpose entertainment company called Ciladren, and through that I have B3 Music, my publishing company.

**KM:** What records have you produced recently?

**CB:** I did a session for Swing records with guitarist Kevin MacNeal with Rufus Reid, Yoron Israel, Donald Harrison, and Jim McNeely. I think drummers make the best producers since the main objective is to get that special groove. It's especially easy to produce when *you're* the drummer on the session,

because you're in the driver's seat. You can turn it where you want to go. Producing definitely helps my playing, because I can see how other musicians view things from the opposite side of the glass. It gives me a bigger vocabulary to draw from.

**KM:** On your records you play straight-ahead, funk, reggae, and blues—all with equal ease. How did you develop uniformity between styles?

**CB:** When I first started playing, all I dealt with was pocket and groove. For one thing, my father's a drummer. He'd take me around to all the clubs, and I'd sit in on his gigs. I was playing funk and rock with my friends, but I knew how to play jazz, because of how I'd been exposed to it. The ride thing, the hi-hat, the swing...they were there. Unfortunately, playing jazz came so naturally to me that I never did any serious shedding until I got to college. When I was younger, I did my practicing on the gig with my dad. But when it came time to comprehend the rhythms that Tony Williams and Jack DeJohnette were throwing off, I felt insecure. So I went into a heavy shedding thing.

**KM:** Did Pittsburgh have a vibrant jazz scene when you were young?

**CB:** The '60s and '70s scene in Pittsburgh was on fire. I met Art Blakey when I was ten years old. Max Roach and Philly Joe Jones would always be around. Jeff Watts and I would hang out together.

My father worked with Carmen MacRae and Lou Donaldson, and he grew up with Ahmad Jamal, Ray Brown, and Paul Chambers. They're all from Pittsburgh. I've always thought that

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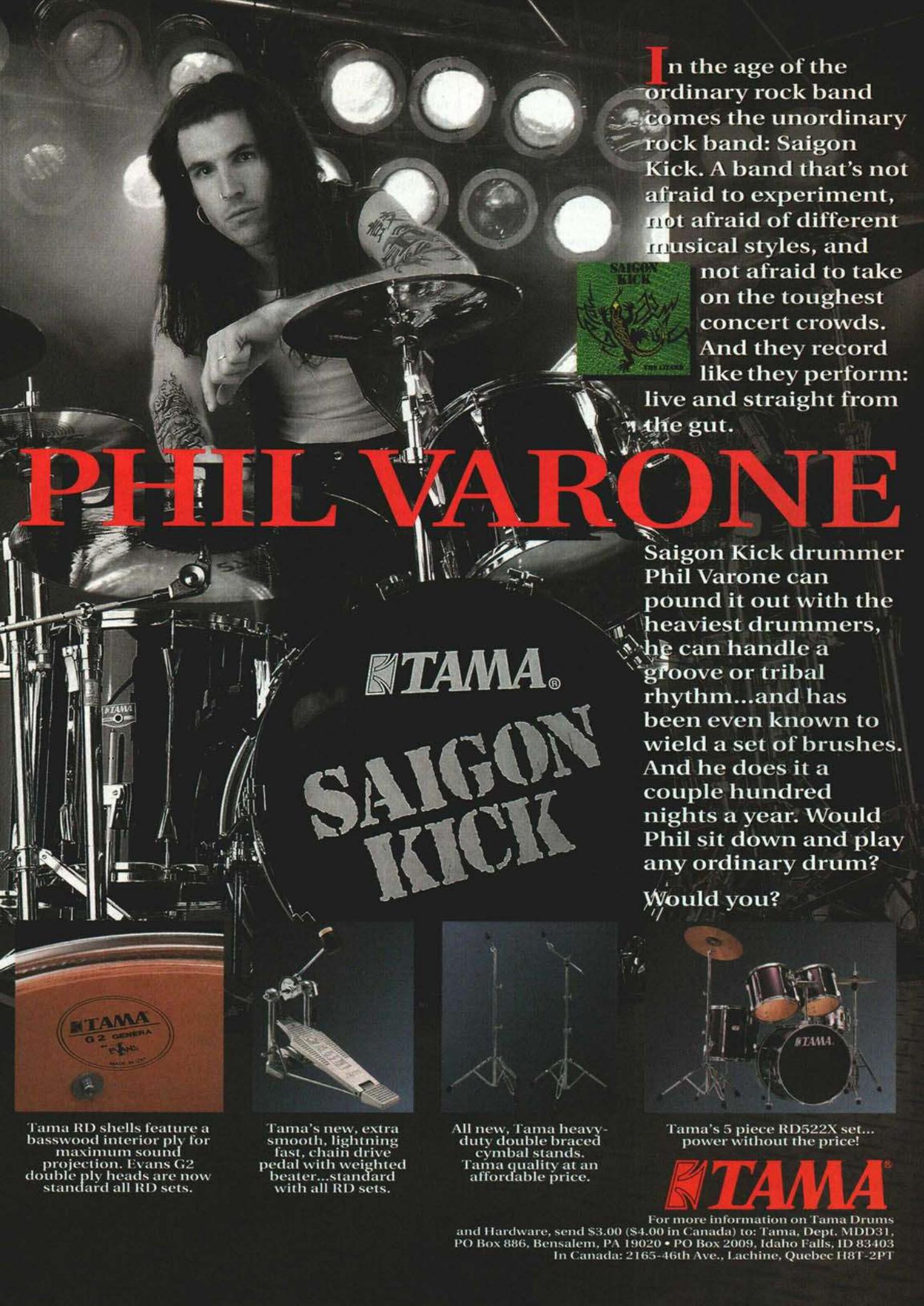
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if you want to be a musician in Pittsburgh, you must *really* want to be a musician. There's nothing feeding it. It's the "pressure makes diamonds" concept, 'cause great people came from Pittsburgh.

**KM:** You're involved with jazz clinics in public schools.

**CB:** It's called "Spotlight On Jazz." We explain improvisation to the kids so they can understand that jazz isn't just a lot of notes coming from the sky. I talk about how polyrhythms can involve the drumset. We establish a good, basic framework of jazz.

**KM:** Do you have goals for your music?

**CB:** I want to gain more control over my destiny. I want to be able to play *when* I want to play, while still keeping myself open for different situations where I can learn. I want to be a part of quality projects.

**KM:** As a musician with good business sense, what advice can you give to musicians determined to achieve their goals?

**CB:** People who know what they want should be persistent and intelligent enough to keep dealing with the issue at hand. Let's say that the issue is my moving a cup from here to there. Suppose you stick your arm out to prevent me from moving it. My motivating thought will still be on the cup—not on the fact that your arm is in the way. The moment I focus on you, it gets personal—and I've drawn my attention away from my goal. All that is important is to move that cup.



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## RECORDINGS

**MICHEL CAMILO***Rendezvous*

Columbia CK 53754

**DAVE WECKL:** dr**MICHEL CAMILO:** pno**ANTHONY JACKSON:** contrabass gtr

Tropical Jam; Caravan; El Realejo; Rendezvous; As One; Remembrance; Blacky; Albertina; From Within

Yet another plug for the prolific Mr. W? True, we all know by now that the man can play, but this release deserves notice. As the title suggests, this CD marks the long-awaited reunion of Camilo's original trio. Many of my favorite Weckl moments hail from his pre-Chick days with this trio when the then-emerging drummer bonded with his groove-match-made-in-Nirvana, Anthony Jackson. Today, many years and road miles wiser, Weckl is reapproaching Camilo's music at new angles.

• Jeff Potter

In its early years the group was known for high-energy Afro-Caribbean jazz grooves played with a flawless sharp attack. The clean snap is still present, but now it's more internalized; each musician is freely stretching around the compositions more than ever. The trio's clean, grooving ball bearings are now swimming in a satisfying coat of grease and grit. (Note Dave's N'awlins-influenced brushes on "Caravan.") And the solo sections' interplay is more daring than on previous releases.

After having lived with the new material on tour, the trio proved at a recent New York stint that their adventurous spontaneity has in fact surpassed that heard on the CD. More than a rendezvous on Memory Lane, this is the trio's arrival at a new crossroads.

**IDRIS MUHAMMAD***My Turn*

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**IDRIS MUHAMMAD:** dr**BOB JAMES, CHARLIE ERNST,****JOACHIM BECKER:** kybd**GROVER WASHINGTON, JR.: sx****RANDY BRECKER:** trp, flghn**RALPH MACDONALD:** perc**HIRAM BULLOCK:** gtr, vcl**WAYNE BRATHWAITE:** bs**LALA BROOKS, JAMOL FANTASIA,****PAULEtte PALIN,****DOROTHEA HALLMON:** vcl

Piece O'Cake; Free; There Is A Girl;

Dark Roads; Dracula; This Love;

Happenstance; Stranger; Where Did We Go Wrong?

• Hal Howland

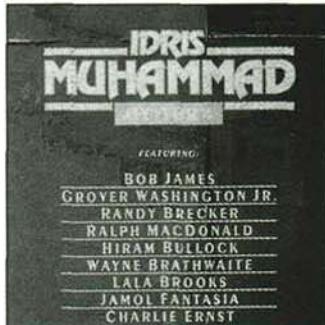
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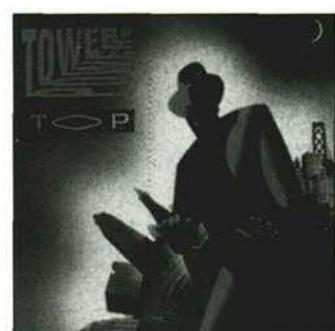
Soul With A Capital "S"; It All Comes Back; Please Come Back (To Stay);

The Real Deal; Come To A Decision; Cruise Control; The Educated Bump Part I; Mama Lied; Quiet Scream; I Like Your Style; You; South Of The Boulevard; Come On With It; The Educated Bump Part II



The mere fact that Idris Muhammad (Leo Morris) was born in New Orleans in 1939 fortifies his claim that he was one of the first drummers to bring the rock beat to New York. (He has played with everyone from Larry Williams, Dee Clark, Lloyd Price, and Jerry Butler to Lou Donaldson, the Hair house band, and Roberta Flack.) One thing is for sure: No one plays with more authority, and on *My Turn* Muhammad calls in some old favors.

As the personnel suggests, this is masterly, unpretentious radio funk—the kind of warm, relaxed groove you might associate with Steve Gadd. With a skintight rimshot, a gorgeous ride cymbal, and two perfectly matched hands,



There simply isn't another band like Tower Of Power. The sound is half R&B groove, half big band, and it takes a talented drummer to provide the percussive foundation for such a sound. Russ McKinnon has that talent—in spades. Drumming for Tower

often means laying down a rock-solid groove that the rest of the band can weave around. But at other times, it means dealing up some hot, syncopated patterns (along with ultra-funky bassist "Rocco" Prestia) or catching the punches and kicks of the most expressive horn section in contemporary music. It also means playing in a wide variety of feels—from driving 16th-note funk, to hip-hop shuffle, to soulful ballads, to R&B swing. Through it all, Russ provides an outstanding demonstration of how to be tastefully creative within a very tight ensemble format.

• **Rick Van Horn**

### ZACHARY BREAUX

*Groovin'*

NYC 6003 2

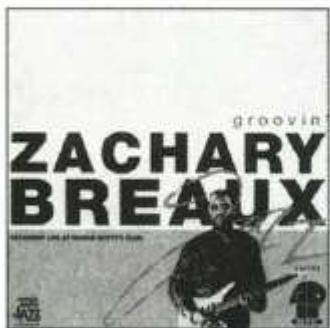
**ZACHARY BREAUX:** gtr

**DENNIS DAVIS:** dr, perc

**DONALD NICKS:** bs

**REX RIDEOUT:** kybd

Coming Home Baby; Impressions; Picadillo; Alice (Down In Parks, Louisiana, August 1906 - August 1991); Where Is The Love; Red Black And Green; Lagos; Thinking Of Alexis



This well-titled collection of jazz, blues, and funk, recorded live at Ronnie Scott's in London, introduces the individual guitar voice of Zachary Breaux. (The Texan's credits include Donald Byrd, Jack McDuff, Noel Pointer, Stanley

Turrentine, Brook Benton, Jean Carne, Dee Dee Bridgewater, and Roy Ayers.) The playing here, like the repertoire, is soulful and timeless.

Drummer Dennis Davis provides mature, sensitive accompaniment, choosing his moments with taste and assurance—and as a result his well-developed technique stands out all the more.

After a congenial acoustic walk through the classic "Coming Home," Coltrane's "Impressions" gets a bright new coat of techno-color (thanks to a digital backing, a Marvin Gaye "What's Going On" ambiance, and Breaux's full, silky tone) and Tito Puente's "Picadillo" is animated and smoothly in control, capped with an intelligent drum solo. Other nice moments occur in Ralph MacDonald's "Where" and in the leader's pretty "Lagos." All in all, *Groovin'* is a promising, well-deserved debut.

• **Hal Howland**

### BRUCE HORNSBY

*Harbor Lights*

RCA66114

**BRUCE HORNSBY:** pno

**JOHN MOLD:** dr

**JIMMY HASLIP:** bs

**PHIL COLLINS:** perc

Harbor Lights; Talk Of The Town; Long Tall Cool One; China Doll; Fields Of Gray; Rainbow's Cadillac; Passing Through; The Tide Will Rise; What A Time; Pastures Of Plenty

John Molo, the original drummer with Bruce Hornsby & the Range, is still the pianist's stickman of choice, and after hearing his graceful grooves on *Harbor Lights*, it's easy to see why. This is Hornsby's most diverse set of material, and Molo is aggressive and always delightfully

musical. He nails the hip-hop groove on "Talk Of The Town" and punctuates the syncopated "China Doll" with stinging cymbal blasts. He adds classy time to the heady, pop-influenced "Fields Of Gray," playfully turns the beat around on "Passing Through," and stays right with the leader's McCoy Tyner leanings on "Long Tall Cool One."

Molo isn't afraid to mix it up, but he also leaves space for magically inventive bassist Jimmy Haslip, on loan from the Yellowjackets. Guitarist John Bigham of Fishbone sticks in some nice funk licks, Branford Marsalis, Jerry Garcia, Pat Metheny, and Bonnie Raitt contribute nicely in places, and Phil Collins deserves credit for a couple of good tambourine parts. But regardless of who happened to wander by Williamsburg, John Molo stands very tall on *Harbor Lights*, maturing into a dynamic all-around player.

• **Robin Tolleson**

### VIDEO

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Magicians and musicians have a lot in common. They both do things that seem impossible, but once you learn the "tricks," you find that they're based on simple ideas. A crucial difference, however, is that magicians won't reveal their secrets, while musicians (especially drummers) can't wait to show everyone what they do and how they do it.

Bissonnette's latest produc-

tion features five songs from his solo CD, *Siblings*. Each tune is given full performance by Gregg along with his bassist brother Matt, a guitarist, and a keyboard player. When you first hear Gregg's drum parts, they seem incredibly complex, with intricate arrangements and speed-of-light licks. But Bissonnette dissects each drum part, showing how to construct a "road map" chart to get through an arrangement, while breaking down some of the figures he uses to construct solos. The tune is then repeated while Gregg leads the viewer through the chart.

Discovering that some of Bissonnette's flashiest licks are based around five-stroke rolls and paradiddles helps make them more accessible, but to dismiss the skill involved in the way he applies them to the kit is like saying that Shakespeare merely copied words from the dictionary.

• **Rick Mattingly**

### HERLIN RILEY

*Ragtime And Beyond:*

*Evolution Of A Style*

### JOHNNY VIDACOVITCH

*Street Beats:*

*Modern Applications*

DCI Music Video/CPP Media

15800 N.W. 48th Ave.

Miami FL 33014

**Price:** \$39.95 each

**Time:** Riley: 68 minutes

Time, Vidacovich: 65 minutes

DCI's three-part "New Orleans Drumming" series kicks off with these two fine videos, each featuring a resident master discussing his craft with an interviewer. Both sessions are shot in a New Orleans studio, where the drummers are accompanied by fellow native musicians of note.

After a charged-up modern jazz opener, Riley takes us back to the roots, demonstrating how drum styles evolved from military snare beats to New Orleans street beats, then ragtime, swing, and modern jazz. In one band highlight, "Didn't He Ramble," Herlin shows how early kit drummers texturally "orchestrated" sections; he switches from rims to snare to washboard, all the while maintaining that pumping, joyful, rag-tag feel. Both drummers illustrate the importance of snare press rolls in achieving the legato, loping swing so essential to the local style.

Whereas Riley focuses on the traditional, Vidacovitch concentrates on how he uses the various elements of his upbringing in a modern mix of jazz, funk, and R&B. "I never turned down a gig," he claims. "I just tried to play everything that was thrown at me." And it shows. In the tune "Bongo Joe," his smooth groove makes the unusual pairing of zydeco and reggae beats seem natural. Also enlightening is "New Orleans Cake Walk," in which Vidacovitch demonstrates what he calls an "open shuffle" feel, or a straddling between triplets and 8th notes.

The most lasting impression of the two releases is a drum video first: Riley duets with his pianist/vocalist mother for some rousing Gospel numbers. What better way to remind us that, above all, the New Orleans sound is home-grown roots music?

• Jeff Potter

## BOOKS

### TRAINING THE EAR FOR THE IMPROVISING MUSICIAN

by Armen Donelian

Advance Music

D-7407 Rottenburg

N. Germany

Price: \$39.95

This text/dual CD set draws on Armen Donelian's twenty-five years as a pianist with such jazz heavyweights as Chet Baker, Lionel Hampton, Sonny Rollins, and Paquito D'Rivera, as a composer and bandleader, and as an educator at the New School For Social Research in New York. It directly addresses the needs of jazz players, but will benefit all musicians by providing fundamentals many times overlooked in our often narrow pursuit of technical excellence. Drummers in particular can profit from these concepts to combat the "dumb drummer" stigma, and to gain a richer, more musical approach to our playing.

*Training The Ear* covers diatonic and chromatic intervals, scales, chords, inversions, dominant cadences, voice leading, and some basic progressions. Exercises require the student to hear, sing or tap, name, read, and write melodic and rhythmic figures, promoting what the author calls a "balanced aural-visual-technical facility."

The book's twelve lessons overlap, each building on previously presented concepts, rewarding diligence with a kind of exponential progress curve. Most material is performed on the two CDs, a medium whose direct track access is ideally suited to skipping and repeat-

ing particular lesson points.

Although less advanced than the more widely known text by Jamey Aebersold, *Training The Ear* requires a grasp of basic musical concepts, including standard music notation and note values. Ranging from elementary to intermediate levels of difficulty, it will challenge players without extensive music theory training and reinforce the comprehension of those who are more advanced.

*Training The Ear's*, text is dry and academic, but its clear organization of concepts and handy CD support make it a noteworthy tool for those seeking to expand and fortify the foundation of their musical knowledge.

• Rich Watson

### SALSA GUIDEBOOK FOR PIANO AND ENSEMBLE

by Rebeca Mauleon

Sher Music Co.

P.O. Box 445

Petaluma CA 94953

Price: \$20

Ms. Mauleon has tackled an ambitious topic and succeeded with a definitive volume. Her guidebook clarifies the specific rules that define the various musical styles grouped under the broad term "salsa." In textbook terms, it could be titled "Introduction To Salsa Rhythm Section Theory 101."

The hefty 268-page book opens with an exploration of the music's cultural/historical roots and its traditional instruments and ensembles. After the clave and its evolution are analyzed, the bulk of the book focuses on percussion, bass, and piano patterns and their relationships to clave.

A section on styles and structures follows; several previously covered patterns are applied to full band chart excerpts, demonstrating how the rhythm section and horn parts "line up" and how the patterns shift in accordance with traditional compositional structures. Diverse styles are covered from early forms such as danzon to contemporary songo.

Added bonuses to this well-researched work are the glossary, wonderful collection of photos, and outstanding discography.

Although this is not specifically a drum/percussion book, it is ultimately more valuable than if it were. Because salsa depends on an essential "locked in" rhythmic style, developing awareness of all surrounding parts is more helpful to a player than a drum book offering isolated hot licks.

Salsa's rapidly rising influence on today's music, from jazz to fusion to pop, makes this book indispensable to drummers more than ever before.

• Jeff Potter

### CORRECTION

In this past August's *Critique* column, we ran an incorrect address for 9 Winds Records in the Brad Dutz/Submedia CD review. The correct address is P.O. Box 10082, Beverly Hills, CA 90213.



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# Tribal Drum Dancers

## An Ultra-Modern Ancient Drumkit

■ by Rick Van Horn

Richard William Blake, of Higher Trewoofe, Lamorna, Cornwall, England, is both a musician and a conceptual artist. In 1992, after four years of development, he completed what he terms a "Multi-Dimensional Sound Sculpture Instrument" that combines the most primitive aspects of percussion with contemporary creative design. The result is unique as both a musical instrument and a work of art. Richard has named his creation Tribal Drum Dancers.

"Tribal Drum Dancers," says Richard, "was created for the making and projection of modulating, tuned, variable sound waves of a percussive nature, where tonal color may be expressed through the richness of natural harmonic resonance. This is afforded by the use of natural materials, such as wood in its naturally grown form, and various animal hides."

The "drumset" that is Tribal Drum Dancers is comprised of ten English elm logs that have been hollowed out and shaped to form horn-like "sound resonators." Each sound resonator is mounted at its nodal points and supported either on legs or tripod stands formed from padauk (an African hardwood). Above the midrange resonators are five "pentatonic horn drums." These are supported by an extended nodal support system and mounted on a tripod stand. "The various elm drums," Richard explains, "are tuned to the natural resonance of each shell—each one having its own voice. The higher pentatonic horn drums, as the name implies, are tuned to the pentatonic scale, commencing with F sharp. Owing to the horn mounting, the

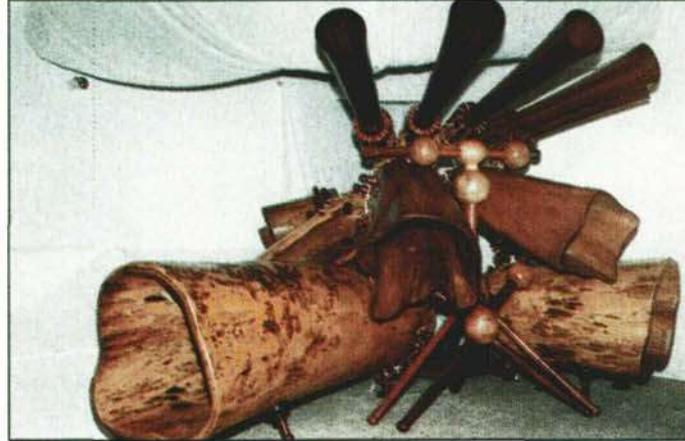
dominant note can be sustained."

Each of the large resonators is fitted with a bull-hide head, while the heads on the pentatonic horn drums are made of goatskin. The heads are tensioned by ropes attached to pegs positioned below the heads and taper-locked into the "shells" of the drum resonators. The resonators are positioned in a fan configuration in order to place their heads within easy reach of a pivoting throne placed at the rear of the "kit." At the base of this throne are several foot-operated drum beater pedals. All of the drums can thus be played by a single person seated on the throne.

Explaining his design concept, Richard Blake states, "The use of hollowed elm logs focuses attention on the natural beauty of the forms of nature. Contrasting with this are the supporting stands, which are designed to resemble scientific models of molecules. These stands permit the unifying trajectory of modulating sound—from the lower bass drums through the midrange, to the higher pentatonic horn drums."

"When the Tribal Drum Dancers drums are played," Richard continues, "hidden voices reveal themselves. The whole is greater than the sum of the individual parts, and certain rhythms invoke melodic tunes, which are not only heard, but also felt. The two largest bass drums—which are mounted to allow them to resonate at contra-bass level—produce a warm sensation that is felt more than heard, from the feet to the solar plexus. Those bass harmonics flow into the midrange and ultimately up to the higher resonance of the pentatonic horns. The whole process culminates in an expression that is part intuitive and part rational—but very pleasing, overall."

Far from being a static sculpture, Tribal Drum Dancers is in all ways a performance instrument. In June of 1992, Richard Blake performed on Tribal Drum Dancers (with several African master drummers) at the Glastonbury Festival in England. December of that year saw a performance at the World Of Music And Dance at the Brighton Center (with master drummer Kayinda Mukala, from Zaire). The year closed with a performance at the Essex Arena on New Year's Eve, including a



satellite link to Canada.

Richard's future plans include the completion of other instruments based on xylophone and Egyptian harp principles, which—together with Tribal Drum Dancers—will create a full percussion ensemble. "I have many ideas," says Richard, "in the areas of instrument design. I also take a modern alternative approach to musical production and performing that I believe could be a refreshing alternative to the constraints of computerized 4/4-style music. I do believe in using modern equipment for such things as sampling, recording, and amplification. I want to combine the variety of intonation available from a hands-and-feet approach—using ancient-style instruments for visual impact—with the full spectrum of possibilities for expression offered by modern technology. I want to maximize the mediation between the spirit of the known and the unknown. The areas of music and art are wide open to all kinds of fantastic possibilities—and always have been. Through these creative areas, one may see into the past—or the future."



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# Finger Control

■ by Joe Morello

Transcribed by Marvin Burock



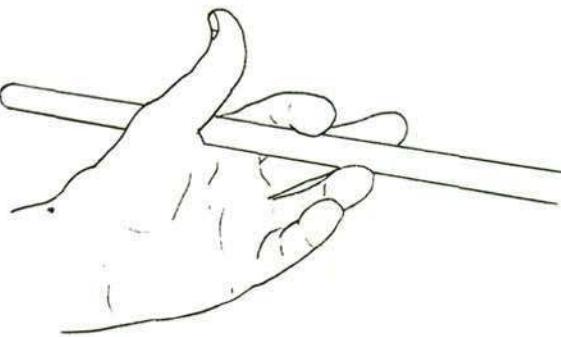
Finger control is a technique employed by manipulating the drumstick with the fingers. This is a rather controversial subject; many drummers say that they play with their wrists, while others claim to use their fingers. Still others maintain that they use their wrists and forearms. Actually, a drummer should use all three.

I like to teach by first having the student develop the wrists. This is important because the wrist acts as the motor. Once the student has developed a certain proficiency with his wrists, we then begin to develop the forearms. At this point, we coordinate the two, and then add the fingers.

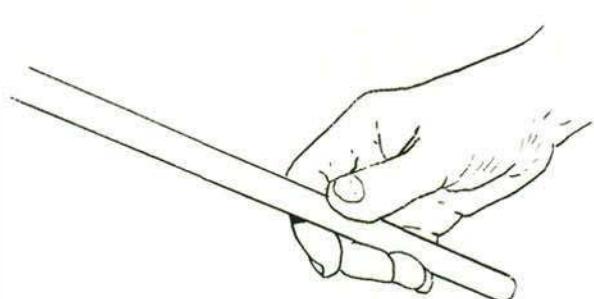
One of the great exponents of finger control is Louie Bellson. Louie actually introduced it to me many years ago, when he was with the Tommy Dorsey Band. Other drummers who have used this technique successfully are Jim Chapin, Buddy Rich, and Roy Burns. Another gentleman I consider to be one of the true masters of finger control was Billy Gladstone, who I had the pleasure of studying with.

The following illustrations show the "before" and "after" positions of the left and right hands. On the "after" picture of the left hand, notice that the index finger is pulling in. On the "after" picture of the right hand, all of the fingers are on the stick, but they're pulling in with the middle finger. This is where the control comes from.

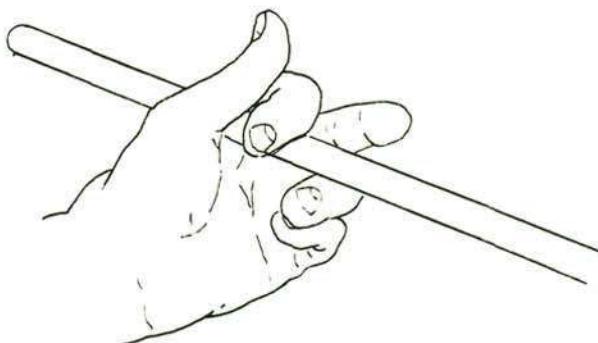
**Left Hand—Before**



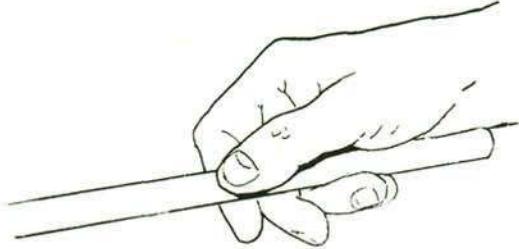
**Right Hand—Before**



**Left Hand—After**



**Right Hand—After**



The following exercises are designed specifically to strengthen the fingers. ("W" stands for wrist, "FB" stands for finger bounce.) In the following examples, the primary stroke is made with the wrist. Then the wrist remains relaxed while the stick is manipulated with the fingers. On the 16th notes you let the stick rebound, and on the quarter notes you pull in and then release immediately. Louie Bellson used a similar exercise, which he called "Squeeze and Release." This exercise is excellent for developing fingers.



In my book *Master Studies*, there are several exercises you could apply the concept to, such as exercises 1, 2, 3, and 4 on page 7 and exercises 1 and 2 on page 13. George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control* is another excellent source of material for developing the fingers. You can use many of the exercises on page 5, such as exercises 5 and 13.

*Master Studies*, page 7 (with accents removed)

1

2

3

4

*Master Studies*, page 13 (with accents removed)

1

**2**

*Stick Control, page 5*

**5**

**13**

These exercises can also be practiced using matched grip. Several drummers who play matched grip, such as Billy Cobham, have developed tremendous finger control.

All of these exercises should be done very slowly at first to develop a feel for them; gradually you can begin increasing the tempo. Again, I must stress that before attempting these exercises, the student must have a strong foundation with the wrists and forearms, because this is where the power comes from. The fingers are used for playing delicately.

(Illustrations by Steve Forster)



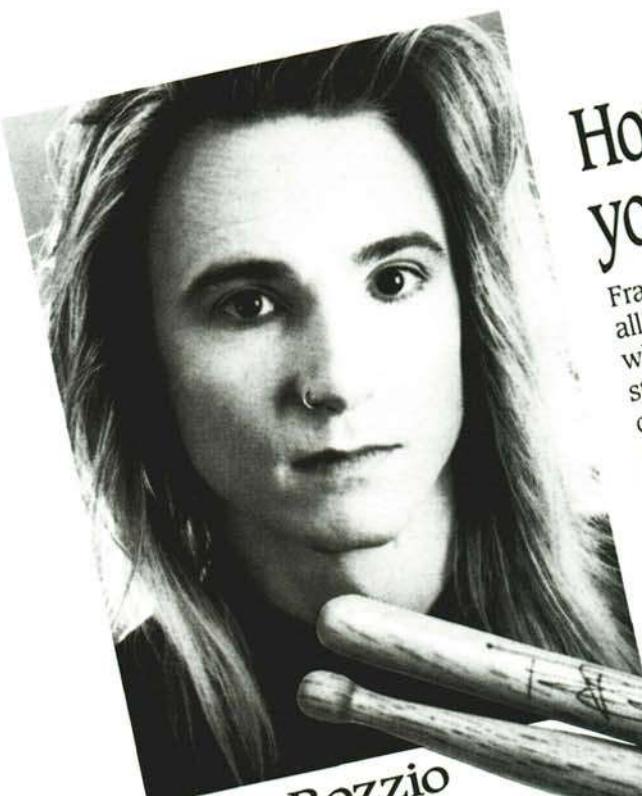
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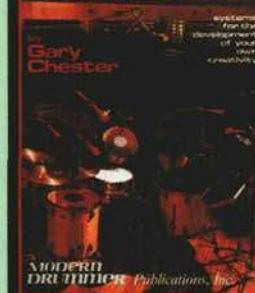
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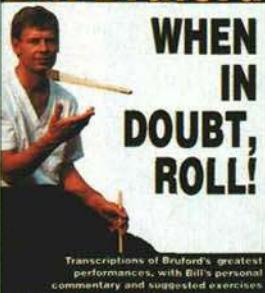
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# Alice In Chains'

## Sean Kinney

### Dirt



Photo by Eber Roberts

#### "Them Bones"

Last year's *Dirt* rocketed this Seattle band to the top. Sean Kinney is an important part of AIC's success, his drumming a nice combination of groove playing and short bursts of fills spread around the kit. On this particular track (which is in a refreshing seven), Sean plays the following pattern in the intro and verse sections. The hi-hat is given a good thrashing, Sean playing it slightly open.

#### "Dam That River"

This is the basic groove Sean plays, which he varies slightly in the ride pattern, playing it with either his hi-hat, ride, and even his crash cymbals.

#### "Junkhead"

The first pattern is from the verse section of the tune, and is slightly swung. The second is from the chorus and is played *straight*.

#### "Hate To Feel"

This two-bar phrase is played in the intro and outro sections of the tune.

#### MUSIC KEY

Open	O	R.C.
H.H.	X	
T.T.		
S.D.		
B.D.		



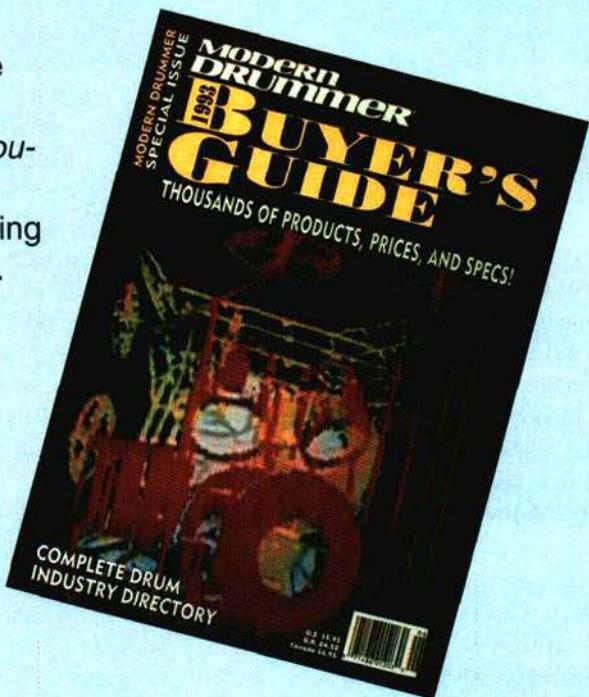
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# The Conceptual Drummer

■ by Ron Hefner

As with most young drummers, it was the sight and sound of the instrument that affected me most. For years I worked on rudiments and tried to emulate older, more experienced drummers. But it would be many years before I'd develop an appreciation for *concept*.

My obsession with drums continued into my mid-teens, when a life-changing epiphany occurred. I'd been practicing with an older tenor player, and one day he looked me in the eye and said, "You have good time, good chops...and no concept." Confused, I asked him to elaborate. "Get into Coltrane and Elvin," was his off-handed reply. And so, as if seeking the Holy Grail, I hastened to the record store and bought the first John Coltrane album I could find.

Hearing that music for the first time was bewildering. There was an emotive, expressive aspect to it that seemed to take precedence over technique. Sure, Coltrane, Tyner, Garrison, and Jones had chops, but the music wasn't focused on that. Instead, there was the sensation of a group concept in which the statement of the art was the prevailing element.

I struggled to comprehend what Elvin was doing. He was so different from anything I'd ever heard. He seemed to break all the rules I'd worked so hard to obey. Even his drums sounded different, and I found that no matter how I tuned my drums, I was unable to attain that sound. I had truly reached an impasse. I had discovered the existence of the *muse* from which all art springs, but was unable to comprehend it. Furthermore, I realized that my approach of practicing rudiments and copying Buddy was of little value in

helping me to attain what Elvin had.

Not knowing what else to do, I began copying Elvin's licks (those that were technically feasible), and I tried to incorporate them into my own playing. At the same time, I realized how sadly uneducated I was. It was time for me to do my *homework*. I began seeking out jazz books and magazines, and for the first few years, whatever money I made wound up in the cash register of my local record shop.

Little by little, I started making connections. I began hearing things in Elvin's playing that could be traced to older drummers. I made similar connections listening to greats like Art Blakey, Roy Haynes, and Philly Joe Jones. I heard the ghosts of Baby Dodds, Sid Catlett, and others in their playing—yet all these drummers had been able to build on their models and create something that was uniquely their own. For me, something was still missing. Even though I realized that drumming was a continuum of tradition, how could I incorporate that knowledge to form a concept of my own! It wasn't enough to simply copy other drummers.

I began seeking out jam sessions around town. First I sat and listened to the local drummers. To my amazement, virtually all of them seemed to have their own unique concept. One drummer played only quarter notes on the cymbal, but implied all kinds of syncopation. Another could propel the music without ever playing 2 and 4 on the hi-hat. Eventually I got up enough nerve to sit in, and though I could maintain ade-

quate time and show a modicum of technique, my playing seemed to be a sad and confused amalgamation of Elvin, Art, and Philly Joe. At some sessions the musicians were kind enough to indulge and even encourage me. At others, I was ushered off the bandstand after a couple of tunes.

Much later, I attended a jazz seminar in upstate New York, and one of the classes was conducted by a prominent tenor sax player. The drummers would take turns in the rhythm section, and one day the instructor asked if anyone knew "Take The A Train." Having played it many times, I held up my hand, sat down at the drums, and played the tune.

"Even though I realized that drumming was a continuum of tradition, how could I incorporate that knowledge to form a concept of my own?"



and sloppy." As far as I was concerned, this was no contest. I had played correctly—he had not! But at the end of the tune, the instructor had a big smile on his face. "That's what I want to hear," he said. "Be yourself."

I was dumbfounded. Be yourself? How ridiculous. I was myself. I took a mental inventory of what I'd played. My time had

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been good. I knew the form of the tune, and I had played some slick licks. I spent the next few days reliving that humiliating experience. Nobody had ever accused me of not "being myself." What had I been thinking about when I sat down to play? But then, in my heart of hearts, I realized just what had gone through my mind: *I've got to impress this famous sax player, which in turn will impress the other students.* I was stricken with shame at this realization.

The next day I sought out the drummer who had outclassed me, and I asked him what he was thinking about when he played. "I'm not thinking about anything," he replied. "I just play what I feel." Still I pressed further. "But don't you think about your technique, and the things you've learned from other drummers?" His reply is still *indelibly* etched in my memory: "I spent years practicing rudiments and copying other drummers. Now when I get on the bandstand, I forget about all that and just play."

How utterly simple, and yet, how utterly profound. I realized that my quest had been totally misdirected. All the homework in the world had not lead me to formulate a concept. The hours spent listening to Elvin and Buddy, the hours of practicing, merely provided the latticework upon which a concept could rest. The elusive concept, I now realized, must be sought within one's inner being.

I thought about musicians like Albert Ayler and Sunny Murray, whose work showed little evidence of *correct technique*, but was profound in its emotional impact. Was the technique not there? Yes, it was there, but it wasn't the source from which their inspiration was drawn. The source was their *souls*, which had been imbued by their creator with the talent and the *concept* to make a unique statement.

I can't begin to describe how deeply this revelation affected me. Each time I sat down to play I examined my motives. I'd tell myself to erase from my consciousness all the criteria I'd imagined were necessary to play well, and relegate

them to my subconscious, where they belonged. At the same time, I began paying attention to the *aura* of the music and the other players. I began to learn how to interpret a tune emotionally, rather than intellectually. And I began to have more fun when I played without worrying about trying to impress anyone.

This change did not happen overnight. Old habits die hard, and it took a lot of conscious effort. But the rewards were numerous. I began taking chances in my playing, and creating things that were truly my own. Sometimes I failed, other times I succeeded. In time, however, I became more relaxed and succeeded more often than not.

I also found that the inner concept functions separately from the mechanics of a given playing situation. It truly exists on its own, and it works just as well on a dance gig or jingle session as it does on a jazz gig. Best of all, the inner concept is not static or finite. It continues to grow and flourish—as long as you continue to listen.

The lessons I learned made me realize that a concept is not an object that can be sought. Instead, it's a process of listening to our inner creativity and transmuting it through our instrument. In reality, my frustrating quest led me back to square one: my real self—not as seen through the eyes of others—but as seen from within.



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# The Cockpit Concept

■ by John Perry Penn

Sit in the pilot's seat of any aircraft, whether it be a Piper Cub, a 747, or an F-15. The cockpit layouts are much the same in each. Vital systems, dials, and switches are easily seen and within easy reach. Little effort is required to reach even rarely used systems or components. The overall design of the cockpit permits the pilot to control the craft with both efficiency and safety.

Drummers are, in a sense, pilots. They must control their instruments in a manner that produces the greatest possible musical creativity for both themselves and for their groups. To maximize their performances, drummers might benefit from setting up in a manner that I call the "Cockpit Concept." This concept suggests that a drumset (or percussion set, for that matter) should be structured in order to maximize the six "C's": comfort, convenience, coordination, control, confidence, and creativity.

## Comfort

A drumset must be comfortable for the drummer who plays it. In over twenty years of drum teaching I've seen countless students spend a small fortune on their drums and cymbals—yet leave the music store with a "bargain" drum throne. Don't scrimp in this area; a comfortable throne that provides solid support is an absolute necessity. A firm foundation provides the balance upon which comfort is built.

The angles of arms and legs in relation

to the various parts of the set should be reasonable—neither too acute nor too obtuse. A good deal of experimentation may be required here, since no two drummers are built the same. Whatever the heights or angles chosen, the set should feel as if it were an extension of the performer. If something feels uncomfortable, it can only impair your performance. Change it.

## Convenience

A drumset is the most personal of all instruments. No two drummers ever find

**"Drummers are in a sense, pilots. They must control their instruments in a manner that produces the greatest possible musical creativity."**



exactly the same setup convenient for their needs. For example, I set up very low, while a friend of mine sets up quite high. Yet we both find all the pieces on our sets to be where we need them when we need them.

A good rule of thumb might be to divide your kit into two classifications of instruments: primary and secondary. Primary instruments would be those used on virtually every number. (Bass drum, snare, toms, ride cymbal, crash cymbals, and hi-hats should fall into this category for most of us.) Secondary instruments would be those used less extensively (cowbells, splash cymbals, gongs, woodblocks, small or concert toms, RotoToms, etc.). Primary instruments should be within easy reach so that you can play each one on its "sweet spot" without having to overextend or put your balance on the set at risk. Secondary instruments may be mounted so as to facilitate their playing as easily as possible when required, but not so that they interfere with access to the primary instruments.

## Coordination

Drummers are like athletes in many ways—not the least of which is their need to possess a high level of coordination. Individual instruments should be logically positioned so that movement from one to another is smooth and coordinated. Ideally, you should be able to move around your set equally well in either direction, holding cross-overs to a minimum. (For this reason, it is not unusual to see players of large sets duplicating a favorite cymbal type in more than one position on the set.)

When it comes to playing cymbals or toms placed 90° to either side, many drummers find it easier to reach those items if they are mounted low, rather than high up. Try lowering that crash cymbal that you have over your last floor tom. I believe that you'll find a quick, short strike at that cymbal at the end of a fill a much better-coordinated act than reaching up high to smack that hard accent.

## Control

Control should be an outgrowth of combining comfort, convenience, and coordination. Keep in mind that any part of the drumset that is difficult to reach is consequently difficult to play well. A splash cymbal that must be played at arm's

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length, for example, can be struck with neither the touch nor the proper stroke (to prevent damage) that is required. Each instrument in your setup demands certain techniques in order to be played for its greatest effect. Without the proper control, such techniques are impossible to achieve.

### Confidence

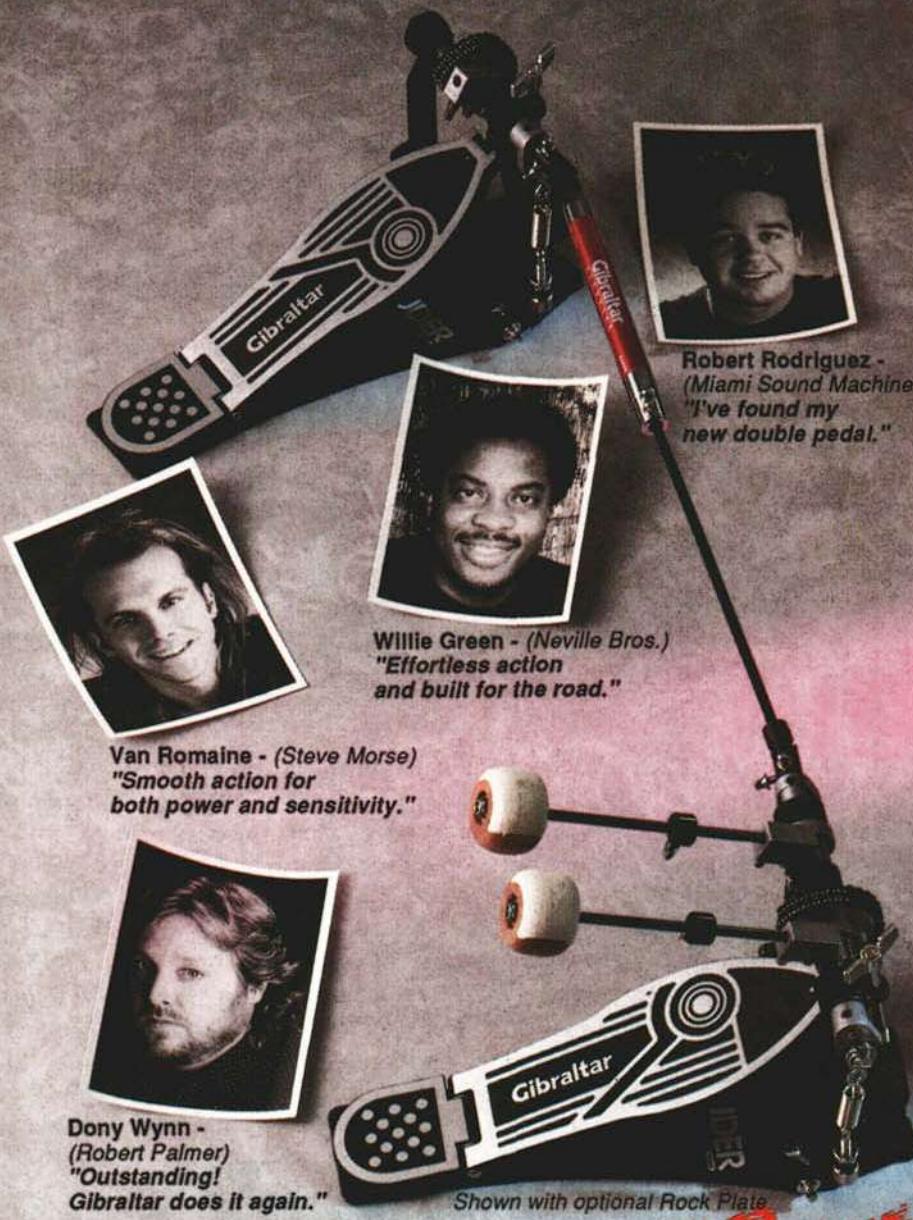
Confidence comes with knowing your equipment and playing situation well. If your overall setup is comfortable and the parts of the set are in convenient locations, you can better play with coordination. Coordinated motions around the set lead to total control over your instruments. Confidence then becomes a logical outgrowth. If you can sit at your set and play with your eyes closed, you have gained the confidence that you need to perform at your highest level of ability. A confident drummer quite literally "becomes one" with the drumset.

### Creativity

Creativity is the ultimate goal of any musician. And since they are frequently restricted by the requirements of the music being played, drummers often feel the need to be creative more deeply than do others who play more lead-oriented instruments. To be truly creative, drummers must be able to devote the whole of their consciousness to the music at hand. This is impossible if extraneous matters constantly enter into one's thinking. Any problem with the drumset itself can stifle creativity. By feeling totally "at home" with your drum setup, you can maximize your creativity.

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# The First Time In Being Prepared For The Studio Experience

■ by Michael Blair

Unlocking the deep, dark secrets of recording is a trial-and-error, search-and-destroy experience. For every rule, there are exceptions. Put enough exceptions together, and you get new rules. For the novice, walking into the studio for the first time usually feels like entering someone else's church.

In this article, we'll touch on a number of issues concerning working in the studio. Concepts such as punctuality, discipline, instrument setup, and cooperating with the artist/producer/engineer are good places to begin. The procedures and solutions may seem obvious, but the opportunities for misunderstandings and mistakes are endless.

When is it okay to speak up and when should you shut up...how do you discuss money...what little tips can help strengthen and focus your sound and your ability to perform...? Hopefully, we'll ask more questions here than we'll answer. Your experiences will be your own, and your choices will depend on your needs, observations, and personality. But there are enough common situations that, if confronted, will become signposts rather than land mines.

## Thinking Ahead

Before you even get a call for a studio gig, you should have certain things under control ahead of time that will make recording days go infinitely smoother. At a club you might not hear (or care about) details like rattling hardware. But under the microscope of the recording studio, every rickety stand, loose screw, or faulty cord can make unwanted sounds. Check all your hardware for rattles. When I produce a band, I ask the drummer to tighten, tape down, and re-tune everything that distracts from the music. This sonic discipline won't cramp your style; on the contrary, it will enable you to make all the noises you want to make. That's important.

Cymbal stand joints—the felt/cup holder, for instance—are notorious for coming loose and jingling. Also, pack all the drum lug springs. They vibrate and can drive an engineer completely crazy (or "around the twist," if you're in England). And personally, I hate cymbal stands and tom holders attached to bass drums. They put needless pressure on the drum itself, and they always make noise. (Sympathetic reverberation among the cym-

bals and heads is bad enough when the stands are separated.) I'm also addicted to Purecussion's *RIMS* mounts. And, even though I think some of them look stupid, drum and hardware rack systems give players many positive space/sound options.

Another important point: Do not, repeat, *do not* wait until a recording session to learn how to tune your drums. It's your sound, and *your* responsibility to find out what to do. Whether you have to sit in a practice room experimenting for hours on end—or ask John Good at Drum Workshop to explain his acoustical theories—you must do the homework. Drumming is not just hitting things. As far as I'm concerned, if you act like a jock and don't "go for tone," you might as well just stay home and lift weights.

As for the actual music you'll be playing, whenever possible, get a tape of the material before the session. That way, you can do your homework and walk into the session with some options. If that isn't possible, be mentally prepared for anything and everything.

For instance, find out whether the session requires heavy sight-reading. If your reading isn't so great, it could be frustrating—or you *might* get fired. You do *not* want to be surprised by a music stand full of charts and lead sheets.

Also find out whether the project is collaborative. Will you be asked to contribute musical ideas? If you're uncomfortable improvising or being an idea factory, expect some difficulty. Processing an enormous amount of information is necessary under these circumstances.

## Money

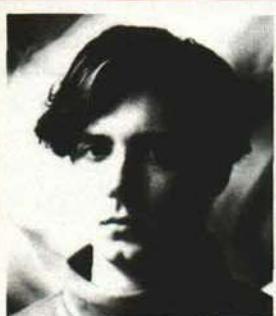
Money is an area that requires a certain amount of etiquette and knowledge to navigate through smoothly. How much does one charge? How do you represent yourself in negotiating even the simplest transaction? Every player confronts the dilemma of not wanting to under- or over-charge for a project. Demos are usually home-financed, and the artist has very limited funds. You must ask yourself, "Do I like the music? Do I trust the people involved?" Would you want to develop a relationship with the artist (which could lead to more work later)? Are you being asked to perform miracles for nothing? All of this matters, and it's up to you to figure it out.

A small fee and transportation money might be acceptable for a demo. You could ask for more if it is a record company-funded development deal, where they pay for recording and have first chance to accept or decline. A new-artist/first-record project may be able to afford union scale (based on a three-hour session rate); television and film scales are different. It's not unusual for players with a strong reputation and who are in demand (Keltner, Phillips, Chambers) to get double- or triple-scale. Don't expect this, though, as a newcomer (however hot), especially with today's tight budgets.

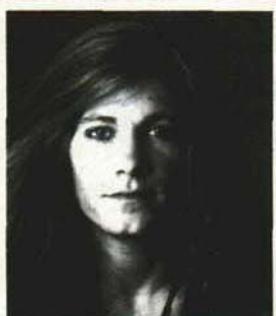
Some projects are called "spec" (as in speculation) deals. Services are donated (or provided cheaply) against a percentage



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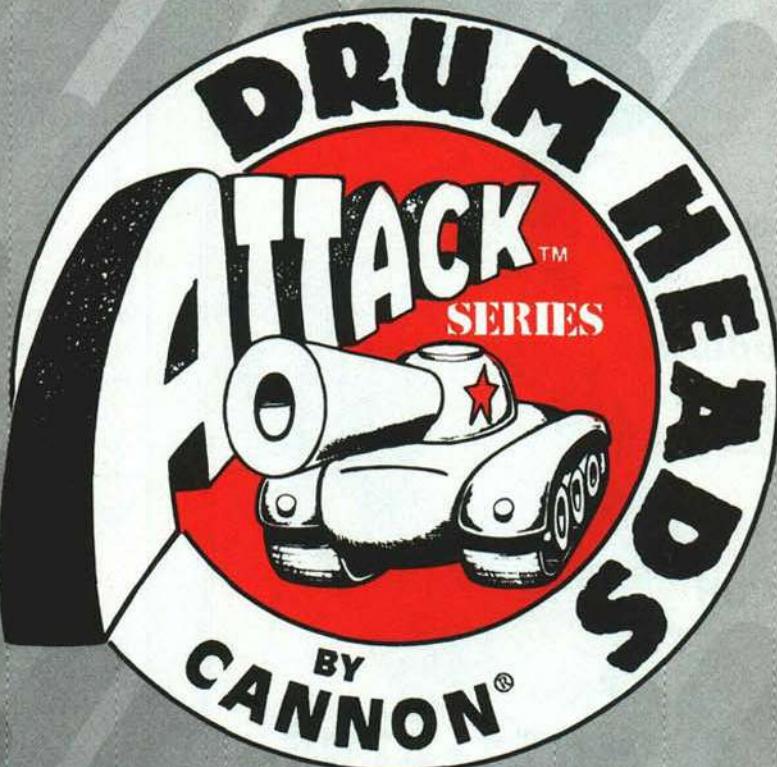


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You may decide it's worth it to be involved at the start of a project and gamble that your time, energy, and loyalty will eventually be rewarded. But be prepared for spec deals to fall apart or become legally confusing—or for people to promise you everything and give you nothing.

I have a fairly long list of folks who, in a perfect world, owe me nice pieces of cash. I've seen records released well after the demos were cut, and somehow (gee, whiz?!) I never got paid. It's not always worth the trouble to track them down, and it feels weird to have complicated contracts at the beginning of a "friendly" project. I just hope they rot in hell. As corny as it sounds, though, it's called "paying your dues." So let me just say that having an entertainment lawyer you trust can come in very handy.

#### Casing The Joint

Okay, now that you're satisfied that all the preliminaries are taken care of and you've accepted the gig, it's time to ask logistical questions: When and where is the session? Is it a home studio or professional establishment? Is there a freight elevator? If so, does it run 24 hours a day? Only stairs? (Ouch!) How wide are the studio doors? Will your cases fit through *all* access

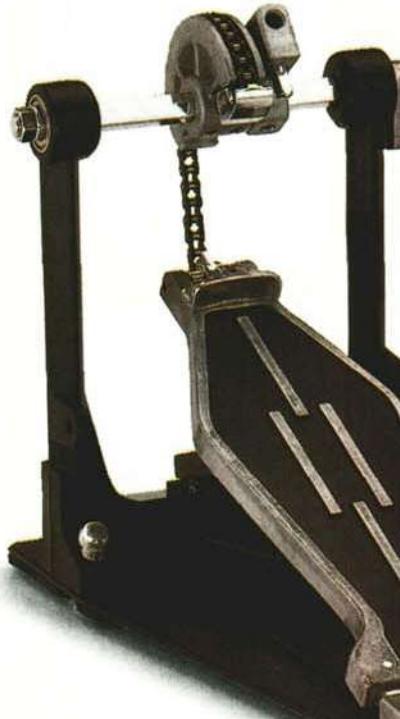
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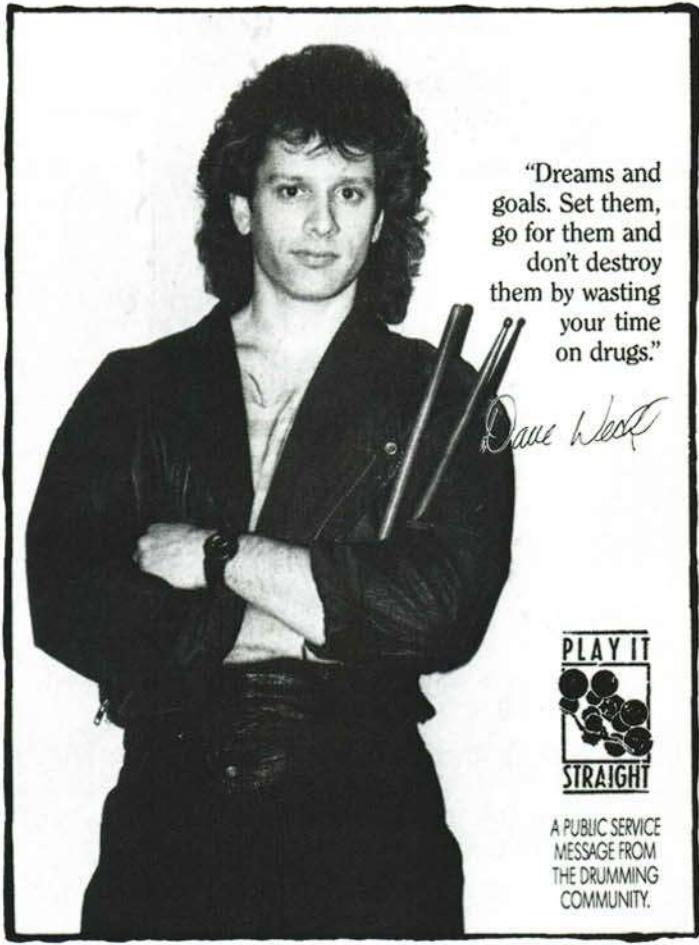
P-887TW

ways? Don't laugh, not being able to get your stuff in is *not* funny.

The people at my cartage company in New York (Big Mike Productions, no relation) constantly curse my oversize cases. I couldn't afford two sets of road/airplane-worthy boxes, so I opted for larger sizes that can fit and protect my drumkits and the handmade instruments I've collected from all over the world. Now, in Los Angeles, nearly all studio entrances have double doors at street level, so there's no problem. But in New York, where space is at a premium and people work piled on top of each other, it's a different story. Thank goodness I can pay my lovely moving guys to get my stuff into tiny elevators. But they *don't* like it.

So when you invest in expensive road gear, talk to people who work with the stuff every day. Call your local cartage/rental service. Ask them what sizes fit anywhere. If you make your own cases, find the best wheels, corner protectors, latch/locks, and board. My cases cost a lot of money (to me), and loading-dock wizards at airports have put forklifts right through them.

Okay, back to the studio. It's desirable to keep anxiety down to a minimum, so you want to be able to set up without rushing. Go to the studio before the first day of recording, if possible. See the layout. Is there a special drum room or drum riser? Find out whether someone will be at the studio on recording day to let you in long enough before the session starts. "Case



"Dreams and goals. Set them, go for them and don't destroy them by wasting your time on drugs."

Dave Weckl

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the joint." (It certainly works for burglars!)

Think in terms of what kind of tape or record is being made—hard rock, country, dance, jazz, avant-garde, commercial jingle? What characteristics of the studio will help or hinder getting the sound you want? Look at the floor and wall surfaces.

A hardwood floor will give you very different sound reflections than carpet or concrete. A closed-in space with lots of sound-absorbent wall coverings and a low ceiling will *not* help you get a huge stadium-rock drum sound. Conversely, a big open room with linoleum floors and high hard walls would make pop-perfect isolation difficult if a band were tracking live. As always, try to choose the right tool for the job.

### The Big Day

For the actual session, arrive early. (Being late, of course, is a death wish and a ticket to a very short career.) Everyone is a little nervous before a recording day. Time/money pressures and merely being psyched up to perform raise the tension. If the session team knows you are there and ready to go, it's one less thing for them to worry about.

Make sure your equipment arrived, if it was sent for you by someone else. If you brought everything yourself, be very careful about lifting things. Take your time—but keep working—and don't strain your back. Drumming is physical enough. I constantly go to acupuncturists, chiropractors, and health clubs to undo injury and stress built up from years of lifting

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gear. One of my New York chiropractors, Dr. Roy Siegel, is a drummer himself, and he cringes when he hears about my carrying heavy things around. This is not about being an asshole rock star, this is about your health (*and* mine).

Back to set-up: It's a good thing to establish a positive working environment. You want the engineer on your side, so find out where he or she likes the drums placed. The drums need to take advantage of the room acoustics; they also need to be in a spot where visual communication is possible with all the other musicians *and* the control room. (Having to always rely on headphones is a real pain.)

Also, being set up and settled in gives the engineer more time to choose and adjust microphones. You want to help him or her do their best. Plus, you can more comfortably socialize with the other musicians, which is especially helpful if you have not met previously.

A lot also depends on the needs of the music and the engineer's recording habits. If you're in a studio with staff engineers, hopefully some important mistakes have already been made and corrected. To have a team that is technically proficient and musically communicative is a real gift.

### Your "Place"

The studio vibe is a mysterious, almost sacred thing. It changes from project to project and producer to producer. Keeping all communication channels open and positive is a worthwhile pursuit.

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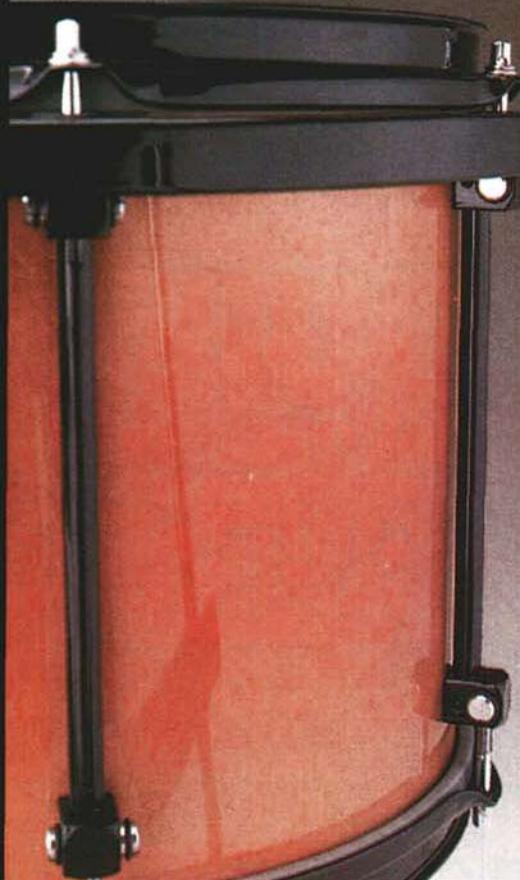
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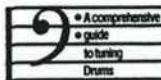
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and respectful to the job at hand. If you are making a jingle, the producer and engineer are *not* going to spend time and money arguing about sound. As difficult as it might be, the wise move may be to just shut up and play. Selling toothpaste is not about art anyway, and advertising people want workers, not prima donnas.

I've worked on records where everyone was quite talented, but where every moment was another train wreck. Maybe the artist was having a bad day and not talking to anyone. The producer might be under pressure from the record company. Perhaps the engineer wished he or she were the producer. Things can go frighteningly out of whack pretty fast. But as a beginner, it might not be your place to try to straighten them out.

As you gain experience and develop your own sound, though, don't be shy about offering suggestions or solutions to problems. An obstacle may come up that you can help move away. Your insight

could inspire a breakthrough. Keep in mind that you *may* run into engineers who are quite set in their ways. Any true professional has a basic process/outlook that serves as a point of departure. But if you have questions about something, speak up. Recording is a collaboration. Just try not to be a jerk.

If you are in a band where decisions are made by committee, you have an opportunity (and responsibility) to experiment and learn about the recording process—and make suggestions based on your acquired knowledge. The more you play and learn, the more confident about your own choices you will become.

When I was recording *Magic And Loss* with Lou Reed, I never knew what the next day would bring. I had to be ready whenever Lou needed me. That meant playing computer games for hours, waiting for my turn on the tracks. For some songs, we acted like a team, making choices together. Sometimes I just left



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#### 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.

## Copying Is Better Left To The Xerox Machine

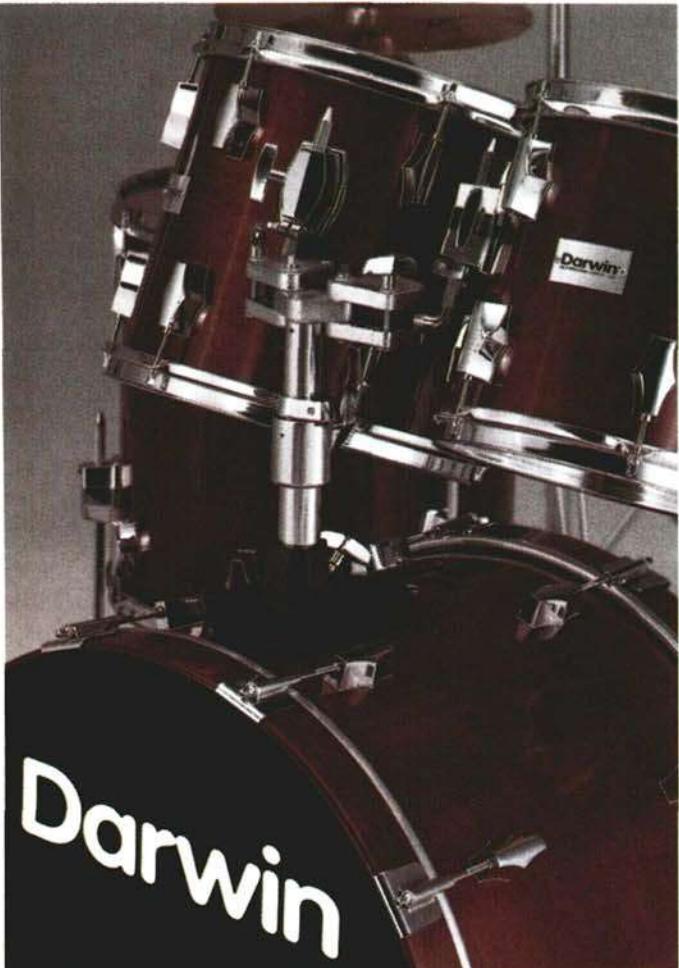
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## NDA News

The National Drum Association recently topped the 21,000 mark in membership, making it, according to representatives of the organization, the largest drum club in the world.

The NDA has also announced plans for two tributes to be held later this year as part of its ongoing "The Memory Remains" series. In these installments, jazz pioneer Gene Krupa and rock legend Keith Moon will be honored for their long-lasting contributions to drumming and as part of the NDA's efforts to promote drum history. Both shows are slated to be broadcast on the NDA's satellite network to drum shops and music stores world-wide. For more information call the NDA at (212) 768-DRUM.

## Festivals And Clinics

The Polynesian Cultural Center (PCC) and the Institute For Polynesian Studies are organizing the first **South Pacific Drumming Festival** at the PCC in Laie, Hawaii, this coming October 18 - 30. The festival will consist of traditional drumming performances by drummers from the Cook Islands, Fiji, Hawaii, Marquesas, New Guinea, New Zealand, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tahiti, and Tonga. All drummers, members of Polynesian dancing troupes, and artisans are encouraged to attend. For more information, contact the PCC at 55-370 Kamehameha Highway, Laie, HI 96762, tel: (808) 293-3163, fax: (808) 293-3036.

The **1993 All One Tribe Fall Drumming Workshop Series** will include the following clinic/performances: September 18, starting 10:00 A.M.: Nigerian drum master Babatunde Olatunji, African drumming, dance, and "boogie" workshops; October 13, 6:30 - 10:00 P.M.: world music composer/drummer Brent Lewis, Earth tribe rhythms; November 10, 6:30 - 10:00 P.M.: Aztec drummer/singer/artist Mazatl Galindo, Aztec rhythms; December 8, 6:30 - 10:00 P.M.: drum maker/teacher Joe Roberts, West African drumming. Call (800) 442-

DRUM for locations, fees, and other information.

One hundred eighty percussionists from the United Kingdom, Spain, and the Netherlands attended the first **Day of Percussion** held at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England this past May 2. Among the day's events were clinics on drumkit, cymbals, Latin percussion, and percussion ensemble and a concert by the RNCM Percussion Ensemble. Sponsoring companies included Sabian, Remo, Impact Percussion, Grover Enterprises, and Adams-Pustjens Musical Instruments.

This past June 3, the Drum Pad of Palatine, Illinois and Paiste cymbals hosted a clinic by **Terry Bozzio**. The event, which attracted several hundred drummers, showcased Terry's use of Paiste's new *Vision* cymbal line.

**Liberty DeVitto** recently conducted a clinic in front of 150 drummers at Montello's function hall in Quincy, Massachusetts. The clinic, which was co-sponsored by DiCenso's drum shop and Sabian cymbals, was later aired on QCTV channel 3. In addition to the clinic, a slide presentation on cymbal-making was conducted, as well as a brief history of the Sabian company. Two Sabian cymbals were given away as door prizes as well. Other Sabian clinicians busily conducting events around the country recently include Rob Affuso, Chad Smith, Van Romaine, Mark Shulman, Bobby Rock, Sonny Emory, Vinny Appice, and Dom Famularo.

## Endorser News

Recent additions to Darwin Drums' endorser list include **Mark Danzeizan** (Little Ceasar, Gilby Clarke), **James Kottak** (CC DeVille), **Del Gray** (Little Texas), **George Lawrence** (Larry Stewart), **Rick Diaz** (Young Turk), **Barry "Frosty" Smith** (Soul Hat), **Mark Horn** (Blue Chieftains), **Randy Walker** (Richie Havens), **J.J. Zeller** (Rival Suns), **Michael Young** (Great Plains), **Waldo Latowsky** (Suzy Bogguss), **Chuck Cummings** (Dakota),

**Keith Mellington** (Toby Keith), the *Nashville Now* show on TNN, **Eddie Tuduri**, **Roy Watts** (Hank Flamingo), and **Johnny Miles** (Jerry Reed).

**Clint de Gannon** is using DW drums, Zildjian cymbals, Pro-Mark sticks, Gibraltar hardware, and ddrums.

**Randy Antlep** using Vic Firth sticks.

**Ignacio Berroa** playing Yamaha drums.

Among Vater drumsticks' recent endorser additions are **Chris Layton**, **Joel Rosenblatt**, **Mel Gaynor**, **Phil Hart**, **Michael Bland**, **Joey Heredia**, **Richie Garcia**, **Wild Mick Brown** (Lynch Mob), **Michael Barsimanto**, **Willie Green**, **Dave Lewitt** (Mark Wood), **Brannen Temple** (Sheena Easton), **John O. Riley** (CPR), **Jeffrey Hawkins** (Reba McEntire), and **Noel Okimoto**.

Recent Aquarian Power Sleeve drumstick endorsers include **Dave Grohl** (Nirvana), **Mark Geary** (Dangerous Toys), **Ricky Parent** (Enuff Z'nuff), **Chad Rager**, **David White** (Moth Macabre), **Brad Kemp** (Machines Of Loving Grace), **Bill Green** (No Stranger), **John Seastrand** (St. Thomas), and **Henry Damian** (Ransom).

**Winston Grennan** (Ska Rocks Band) and **Boo Boo McAfee** playing with Pro-Mark sticks.

Recent Purecussion endorsers include **Tre Balfour** (Color Me Badd), **Charlie Benante**, **Sterling Campbell** (David Bowie), **Lynn Coulter**, **Will Donovan** (the Platters), **Jack Faust** (Firebrand), **Rick Ferrusi** (D.O.A.), **Scott Garrett** (the Cult), **Glenn Graham** (Blind Melon), **Tom Grignon** (Darryl & Don Ellis), **Waldo Latowsky** (Suzy Bogguss), **Bryan Owings** (Delbert McClinton), **Alfred Taylor**, **Jeff Vee** (Bigger Than Ed), **Randy Walker** (Richie Havens), and **Dean White** (Explode-O-Tones).

Bison drums are now being used by **William Calhoun**, **Harvey Mason**, **Paul Wertico**, the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra**, the **New York Philharmonic**, and the **President's Own**

**Marine Corps Band.**

Nick Menza, Rob Affuso, and Chad Smith are now using DW pedals. Aynsley Dunbar, John Molo, Michael Baker, Nick Mason, Erin Davis (Bloodline), Grant Young (Soul Asylum), Ricky Parent (Enuff Z'nuff), Vik Foxx (Vince Neil), and David Uosikkinen (the Hooters) using DW drums, pedals, and hardware.

Jeff Hale (Waylon Jennings), Herman Rarebell (the Scorpions), John Dittrich (Restless Heart), and David Charles using LP equipment.

Jonathan Moffet, Ed Thigpen, Aaron Comess, and Michael Baker using Gibraltar hardware.

Among Kaman's Toca Percussion endorser list are Daryl Burgee (Patti LaBelle), Tre Balfour (Color Me Badd) Michael Bruno (Yanni), Ndugu Chancler, Bill Cobham, Tim Cornwell (En Vogue, Janet Jackson), Debra Dobkin (Bonnie Raitt), Sheila E., Sonny Emory, Jim Hamilton (Boyz II Men), Billy Hulting (Lou Rawls), Tris Imboden, Brian Kilgore, Richie Morales, John Oliva (Strunz & Farah), Gumbi Ortiz (Al DiMeola), Rafael Padilla and Robert Rodriguez (Miami Sound Machine), Joe Porcaro, Emil Richards, Jose Rossy (Robert Palmer, Weather Report), and Michito Sanchez (Glen Frey, Crosby, Stills & Nash).

Jim Cooper using Mike Balter Mallets.

Jason Patterson (Cry Of Love), Roel Kuiper (Ten Inch Men), "Boo" Duckworth (Animal Bag), and K.C. Kasin (My Hero) using Stixonic drumsticks.



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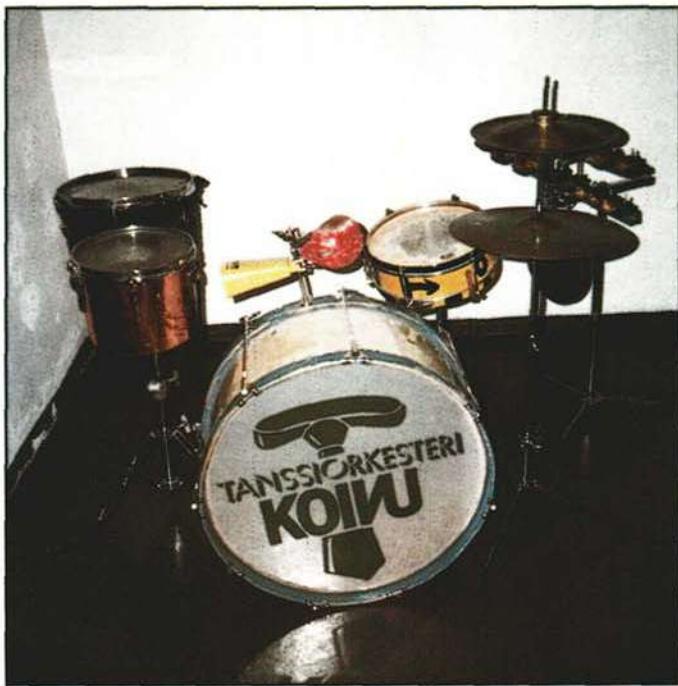
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From Keijo Puumalainen, percussionist with the Finnish National Opera Orchestra, comes this shot of a kit that combines a "less is more" philosophy with a reminder that contem-

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If you think that your kit is unique in its look, arrangement, finish, or construction, *MD* invites you to send us a photo. Our criteria for selecting photos that appear in this department will be kits that are **visually interesting** and/or **musically unusual**.

#### 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. 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.

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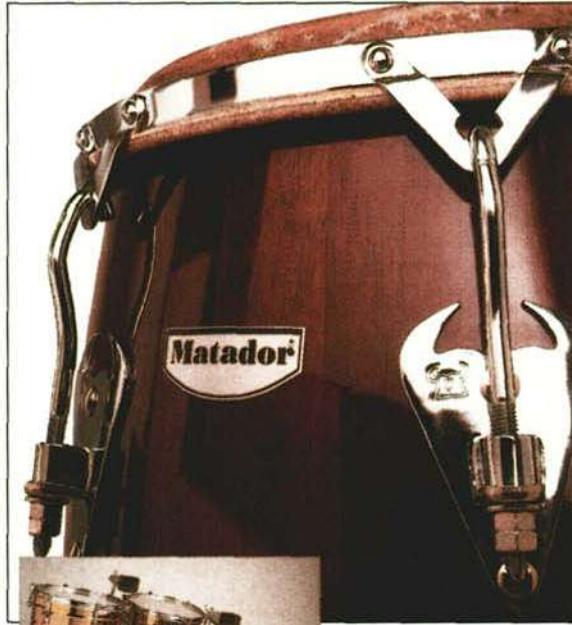


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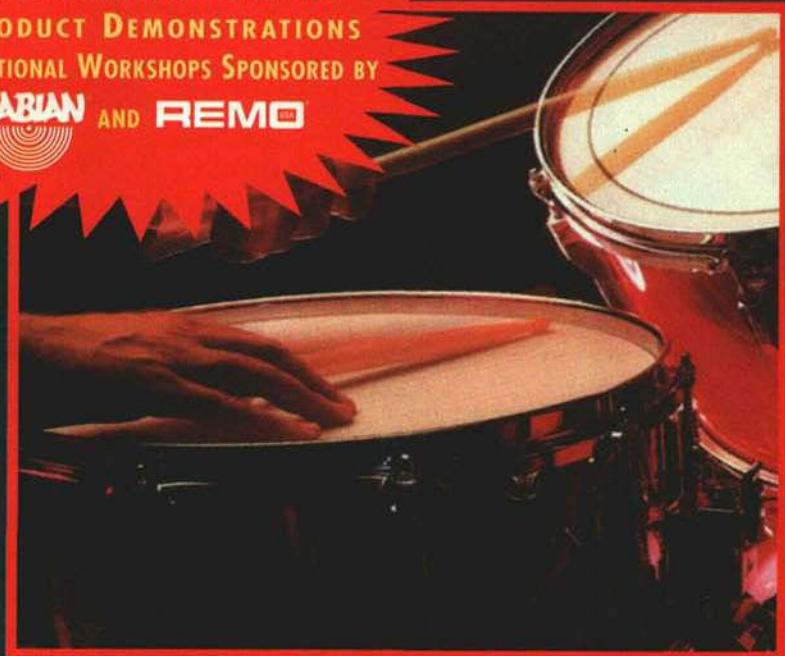
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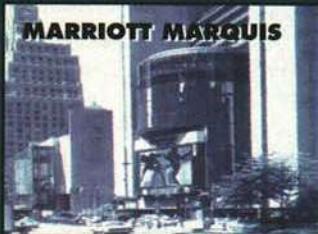
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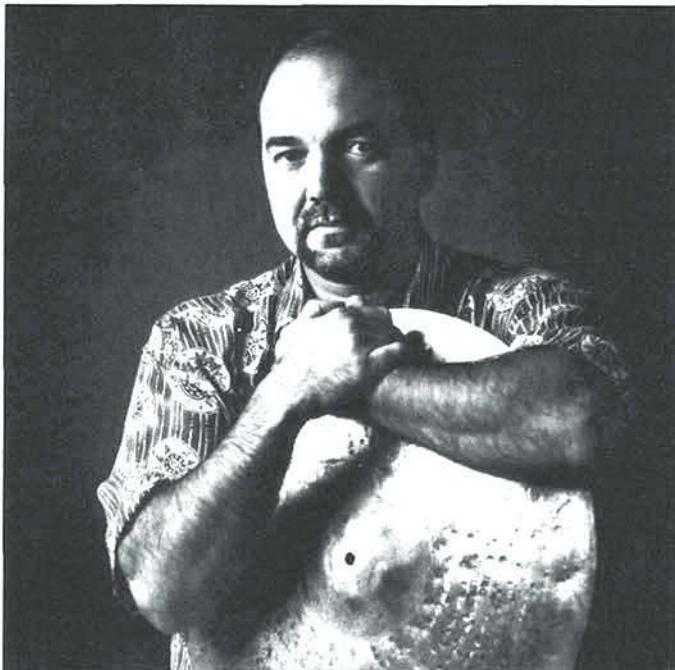
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