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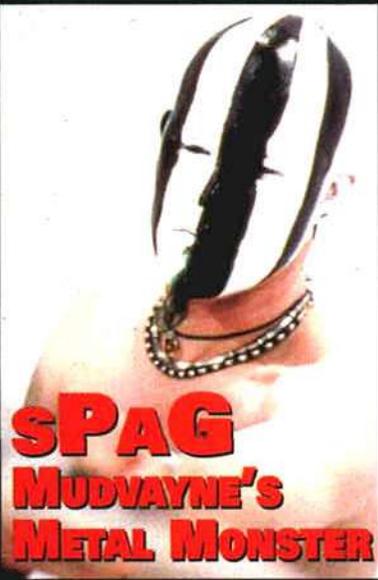
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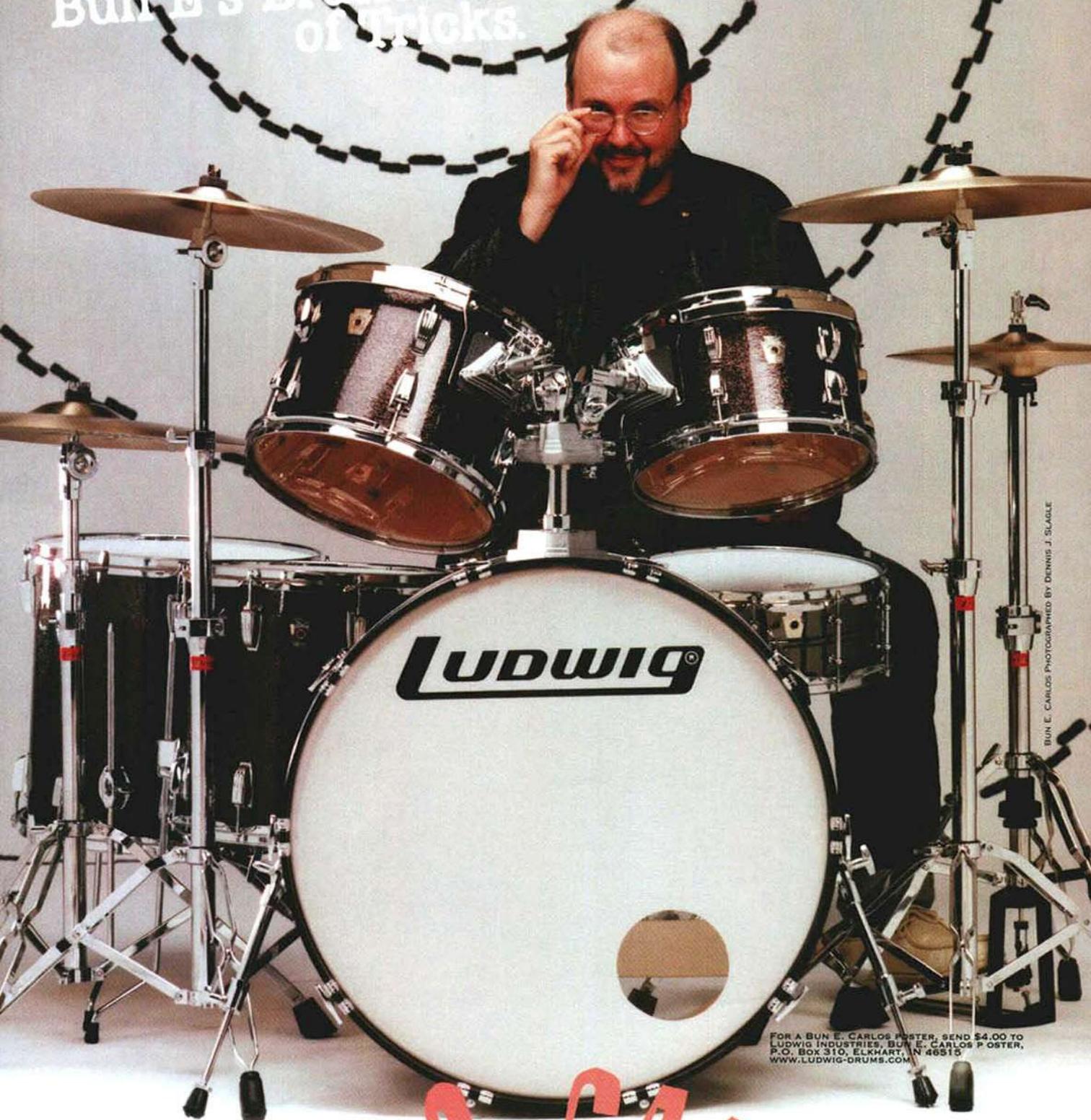
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Michael White (George Benson, Rhythm Logic, Steely Dan, songwriter, producer)

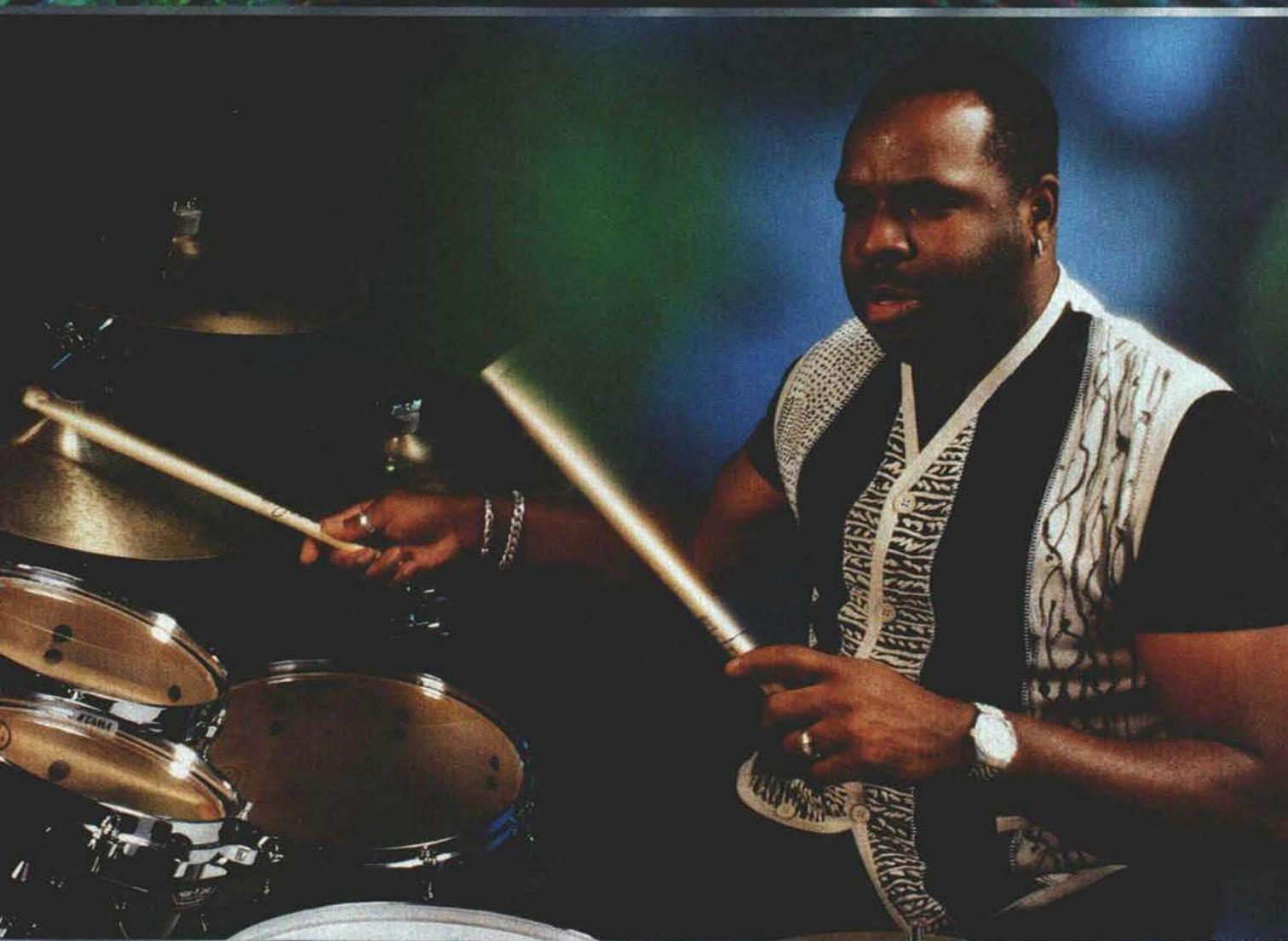
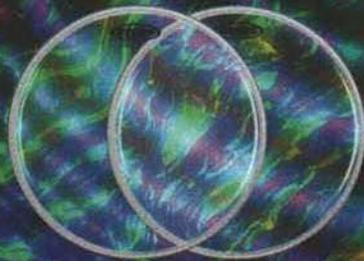


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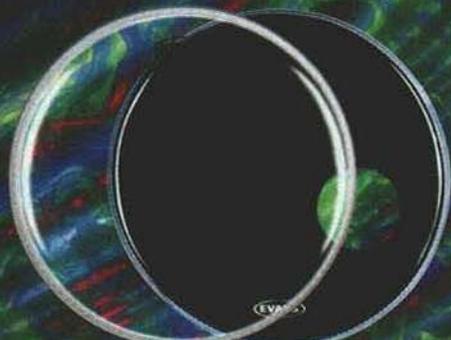
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"I'd like to think *Lateralus* will break down all the barriers, start a whole new revolution in music." We do believe the man's got a point.

by Ken Micallef

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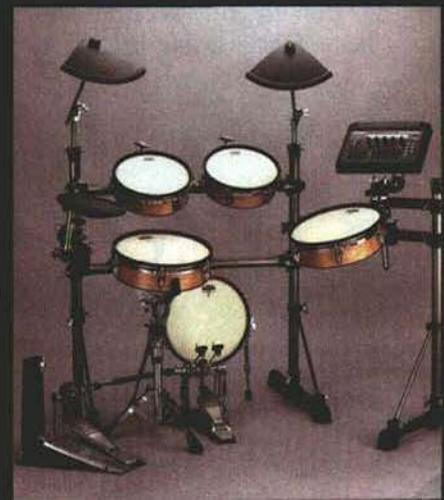
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And The Winner Is...

Can someone tell me just when the art of drumming became an athletic event? Over the past year, I've noticed several major events designed to determine the fastest hands, the fastest feet, the fastest single strokes someone can play in a minute's time. What's next? The fastest paradiddles? The fastest ride cymbal beat? Who can play the last page of the Chapin book the fastest? How about an award for the guy who can set up and break down his gear the fastest? Now *that* would be different. Is it just me, or is this getting out of control?

Seriously, we all know that having the chops to play anything that may come into our heads is important. But is it so important that we need to make a competition out of it? Are events that put the emphasis on how much faster I can play than you distorting the goal of becoming the best *musician* we can possibly be?

The legendary Joe Morello, one of the greatest technicians of all time, has said, "Technique is only a means to an end. It helps you express your ideas. But just to see how fast you can play doesn't make any sense if you can't use it musically. If you're just going to machine-gun everyone to death—that's not it!"

It's also impossible in a discussion such as this to overlook the contributions of those players who actually offered little in the way of technical mastery, but whose musical sensitivity, time feel, and groove more than compensated for any technical deficiencies. Placing such extreme importance on the athletic aspect of drumming in the minds of young drummers sends out the wrong message—and ultimately ignores what we're supposed to be striving for.

For years we drummers have battled the old "second-class musician" status. But we've made incredible headway, thanks to the superb musicianship of the current crop of players who've altered that perception. Let's not get so caught up in this "who's the fastest?" thing that we negate the progress we've made and put the old stereotype back in the minds of our fellow musicians.

The point is, drumming is not an Olympic event. Let's leave that to the athletes. We're serious musicians, plying our craft on a serious musical instrument. Let's keep a clear focus on that, rather than on athletic prowess. In the final analysis, it'll mean a lot more.

MODERN DRUMMER

Volume 25, Number 6

The World's Most Widely Read Drum Magazine

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DAVE WECKL



What a wonderful job of informing us about the latest in the life of Weckl The Wonderful! Dave is one of my all-time favorite players. I was lucky enough to see him play many times at Catalina's while I was performing in LA with *Riverdance*. Dave also came to our show, attended our opening-night party, and chatted the night through with many of the *Riverdance* musicians. He is a master

at his craft, and he is a really wonderful guy—something that I feel many people may not know. Congratulations to *MD* on another fine issue, and thanks for keeping those of us in this part of the world up to date on all aspects of drumming.

Vinny Osborne
Dublin, Ireland

HAN BENNIK

Thank you so much for the March 2001 feature on Han Bennink, probably *the* most unusual player anywhere. I first became aware of Han in the mid-1970s, and then got a chance to see him in a duo performance at the 1985 North Sea Jazz Festival. He did some of the things described in your article, like setting a fire in his hi-hats and sending smoke signals, wrapping a rope around the kit, running over to the piano, playing it, and then pulling on the rope so the cymbal stands collapsed onto the drums, and sitting on the stage playing with tree branches.

I've been fortunate enough to see Han perform several times since then. To my mind he represents everything that's missing in today's music: creativity, inventiveness, humor, wit, swing, and most of all, joy.

Garry Checora
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

JACK GAVIN

I was excited to see your March feature on Jack Gavin, since he's one of my favorite drummers. As luck would have it, Jack came to town with Tracy Lawrence barely two weeks after I read the piece. I'd seen Jack several times with The Charlie Daniels Band, but this time was special. I talked my wife into going around to the side of the stage on Jack's hi-hat side, at close range. *Wow*. This guy plays with major conviction. When Tracy told the crowd he was going to do "a little country and a little rock 'n' roll," Jack made sure he meant it.

Congratulations, Jack, on your new role as band director. And thanks for inspiring me.

Jimmy Brock
Lutz, FL

VIRGIL DONATI'S "DOG BOOTS"

Thanks for the March 2001 *Rock Charts* transcription of Virgil Donati's drumming on "Dog Boots" by Planet X. (Thanks, as well, for providing an audio link on your Web site.) Someday I hope to be able to pull off the 16th-note bass-drum insanity running through that track...with my *hands*. If anybody out there still needs proof that this Donati creature is not of this earth, there you have it.

Peter Spaulding
Burlington, NJ

THE ENERGETICS OF DRUMMING

I want to thank you for Jennie Hoeft's delightful article in your March issue, "The Energetics Of Drumming." When I saw the title I knew right away that she was not talking about stamina. I, too, carry a strong inner conviction that drumming is essential to our planet and the folks who live on it. No other instrument carries this honor and responsibility.

For me, drumming creates an opening like no other experi-

GINGER FISH

It's obvious that *Modern Drummer*, which I once cherished as a trustworthy source of information and education, is fast becoming all about the money. Why should you, I, or any other drummer who has an ounce of respect for the art and heritage of drumming care about what Ginger Fish has to say? [*Reflections*, March 2001 *MD*] Do you really think his comments about how Louie Bellson seems so relaxed when you talk to him make sense? What about Louie's *playing*? Oh right, as Mr. Fish puts it, "He just starts screaming out beats."

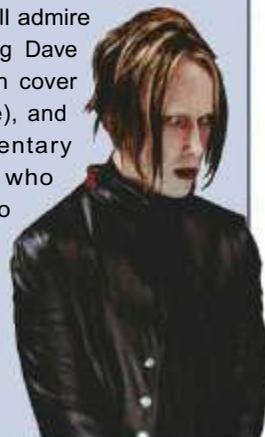
How about Mr. Fish's commentary on

Dave Weckl? "There is one track, I can't remember the name, I think it's a Latin thing, it makes me feel good." Wow! That ought to give a young player reading this article some good solid direction. Could he have been any more vague? Or how about his critique of Elvin Jones? "He doesn't have to do anything, just sit behind his set and hit the hi-hat for one second and it sounds good." C'mon, are we talking about *drumming* here?

Modern Drummer is the most read and referred-to periodical in the world of percussion. But while an article by Ginger Fish might sell more magazines

to teenagers, it is also helping you lose the respect of many loyal and long-time subscribers. How about putting drummers we can all admire on the cover (seeing Dave Weckl on the March cover was a nice surprise), and featuring commentary from drummers who have something to say that might interest someone over eighteen.

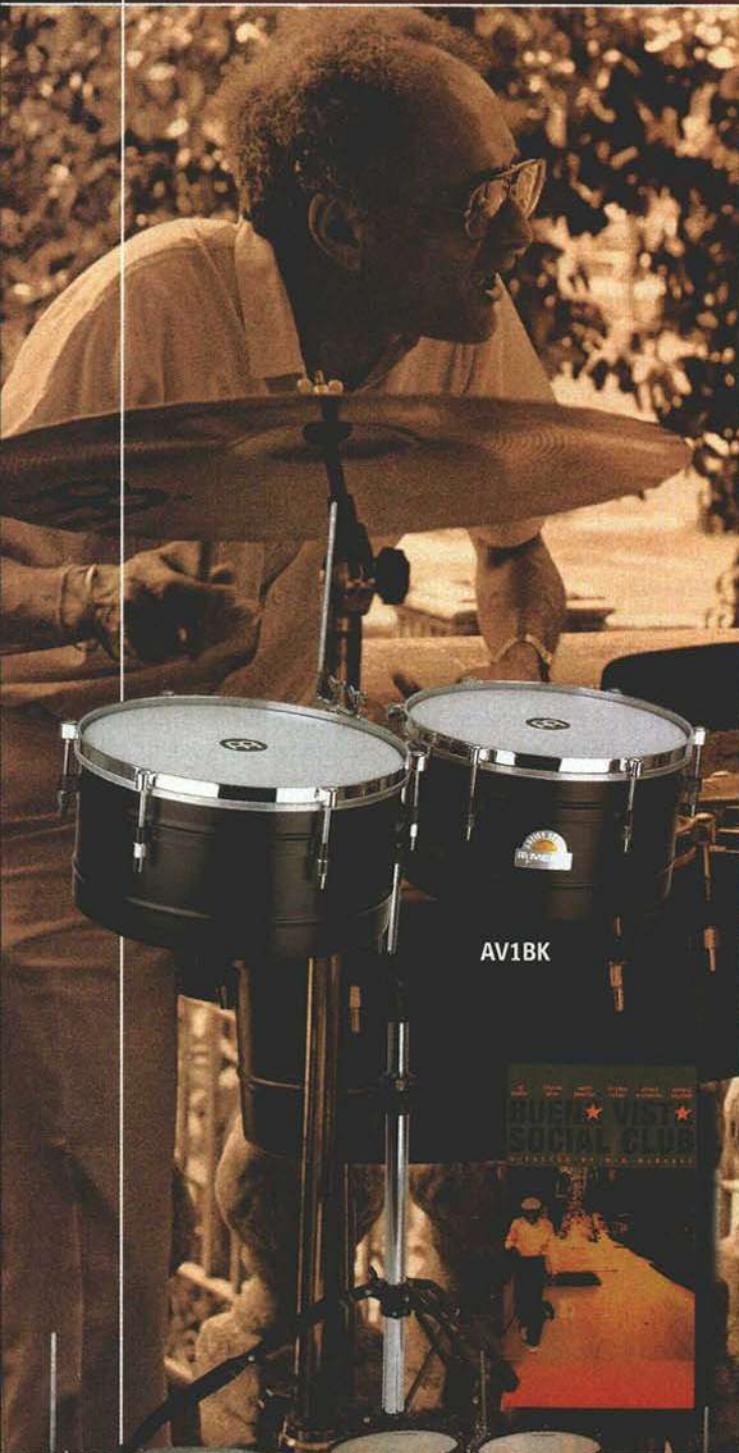
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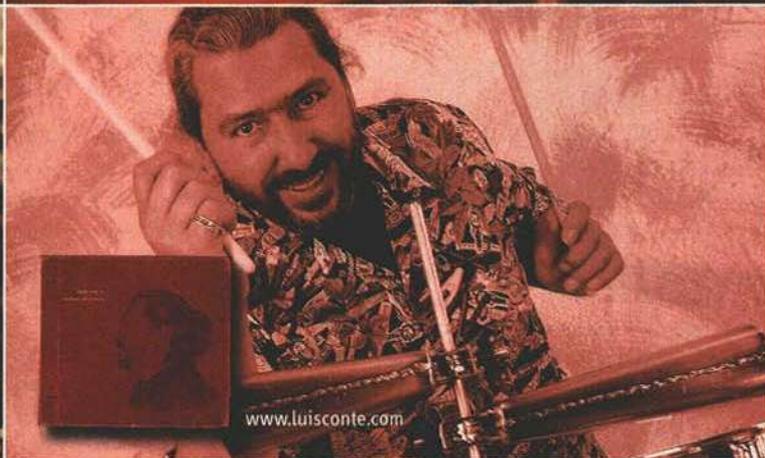
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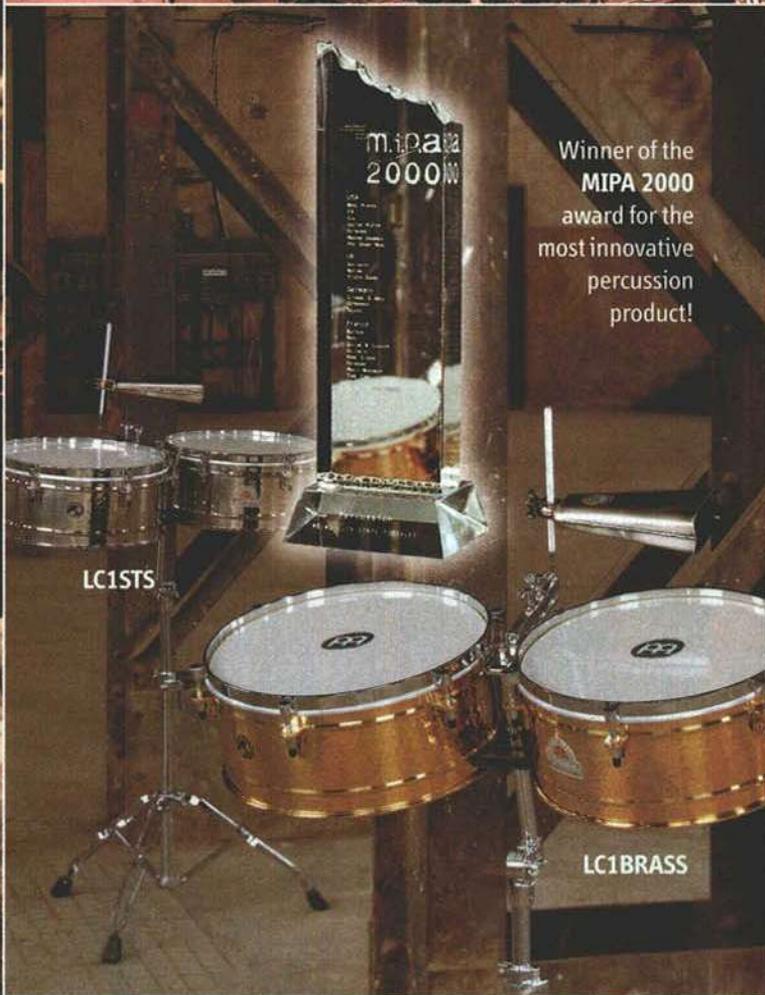


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ence: vulnerability, connection, service, healing...all mixed in with some pretty cool rimshots. It would be wonderful to hear more about how the various drummers you interview experience and express their spirituality through their drumming.

Thanks a bunch for taking the risk of running an article with such important content. I hope we'll see more in the future.

Jim Smith
Belleville, WI

IN THE STUDIO

I would like to set the record straight with regard to my March 2001 *In The Studio* article, "Studio Diary: Chill Out And Play Music." In that piece I stated that the vintage Sonor kit now owned by The Tragically Hip's drummer, Johnny Faye, was once used by Larry Mullen on a U2 album. This is not the case. I regret the error, which was perpetrated in good faith, and I apologize to Mssrs. Faye and Mullen.

Incidentally, the toms sustained for days!

T. Bruce Wittet
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

DISABLED DRUMMERS ASSOCIATION

In December of 1996 a viral infection rendered me totally disabled and completely unable to play. My drumming career of more than forty years came to a screeching halt. My wife and I were newlyweds, and I spent our honeymoon in a coma. When I awoke, I felt my life was truly over. If I couldn't play, I didn't want to live.

During my therapy/recuperation period I came to rely on *Modern Drummer* to stay connected to the drumming community. One day I spotted an ad for the Disabled Drummers Association. Reluctantly, I gave them a call. After getting "talked down off the ledge," I enrolled in this global yet tightly knit organization, whose members are those of my kind. So I thank *Modern Drummer* for giving me something to hold onto during this crisis, and for giving me my life back.

While playing professionally again is still far off, I no longer feel like ending it all. Today a strong sense of belonging to a fam-

ily once again fuels my spirit. Being so close to death has definitely influenced my approach to playing. I no longer drill on sticking patterns or concentrate on timing. Today it's a more artsy "forget all the rules and just express yourself type of playing.

Recently I became the president of the Disabled Drummers Association. To anyone out there who feels in desperate straits: Don't jump! Your life *isn't* over. We're here for you. We can be reached at: Disabled Drummers Assoc., 18901 NW 19th Ave., Miami, FL 33056, tel/fax: (305) 621-9022, email: DDAFatherTime@aol.com.

Steve "Father Time" Katz
President, DDA
via Internet

MD RADIO

I have been listening to MD Radio for the last few days, and I must tell you that I am in *hog heaven*. I read your magazine every month, and I've always wished that I could hear all of the music you write about. But that has never been possible—until now. This is exactly what I want from the World Wide Web. Bravo!

Michael Petiford
via Internet

Editor's note: Due to a situation beyond Modern Drummer's control, MD Radio has been temporarily shut down. We are committed to delivering the finest radio station for drummers to your computer, but unfortunately this service has had to be suspended for a short time due to the failed business of a third party. We at Modern Drummer are already working on rebuilding the MD Radio station. Please go to www.moderndrummer.com for further MD Radio developments. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

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It's OK. There was a time when they hadn't heard of us either.



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Omar's choice is
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Vinnie Colaiuta



Q I first heard you on Sting's *Ten Summoner's Tales*. I was amazed at the fluidity of your playing in the various time signatures. Your control on the kit is simply breathtaking. I have most of the albums you've played on, but what about videos of you playing live? (I already have all the Sting videos, along with the *MD 2000 Festival Highlights*.)

Also, how do you play in odd times so easily? What way do you count? I've tried playing tunes in 7/8 where the right hand is playing 8th notes on the ride—accenting the quarter notes—and the left hand plays on every third and seventh quaver on the snare. I have difficulty in the second bar (playing the snare and not accenting the ride as the ostinato continues). I find that as my left hand comes down to play the snare, my right hand comes up away from the ride and I don't play the unaccented note on the ride at the same time as I hit the snare. "St. Augustine In Hell" is an example of this. Have you any tips on how to play patterns where the ostinato keeps going on top of the odd time?

Stephen Matthews
Ireland

A First, thank you so much for your kind words. Unfortunately, I can't think of any commercially available live videos that I've played on other than those you already have.

Practicing playing in 7/8 the way you're doing right now sounds like a pretty good "built-in" way of working out the independence necessary to get comfortable with it. You're playing all the 8ths on the ride, accenting every other one. That will help you to feel when and where the hands fall. The only other thing I could suggest is slowing it down as much as necessary until it falls into place. Then, you could eliminate every other 8th on the ride. Or you could eliminate one of the backbeats. Or you could eliminate the

bass drum. You can add them later as you get more comfortable.

As far as how I "think" goes, obviously counting first is good. But eventually I just feel the pulse, which is usually subdivided in one of several ways. Try different subdivisions to feel the difference. Above all, I reckon that the groove rules!

Q I've spent the past few days doing a MIDI version of your tune "I'm Tweaked," including the drum solo. When putting the track together, I realized that a lot of the phrases you play in the solo are bang-on with what the bass is doing. I'd like to know how you went about recording that solo. Was the bass put down first, after which you caught the phrases by reading them, or was the bass put in to fit around your solo?

Also, I saw you playing with Michael Landau and Abe Laboriel at the Baked Potato recently. Is any of the material you played that night on record? Thanks for being such an inspiration.

Joe Crabtree
Burnley, UK

A Thanks for the compliments. As I recall, I was the last one to overdub on "I'm Tweaked." Neil Stubenhaus had played the bass track before I recorded the drums. I wasn't reading it, but of course I had heard it quite a bit by the time I actually overdubbed. And, having written the song, I knew where things were going. So that bass-and-drums coordination you mention just kind of happened.

As for the Baked Potato band that you saw, there is a recording called *Mathieson, Laboriel, Landau And Colaiuta Live At The Baked Potato 2000*. It's available through Audiophile Imports at www.audiophileimports.com and through Greg Mathieson's website, www.gregmathieson.com.

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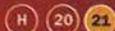
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Vinnie Colaiuta

Q I play and practice a lot, as I know you do. From time to time I get worried about tendonitis. Do you employ any exercise routine before playing, or do you have any other method of avoiding injury due to constant playing?

Rubin Nizri
New York, NY

A I just try to stretch a little before I play, and gradually warm up in as relaxed a manner as I can. Part of avoiding playing injuries is involved with how we move physically, as well as the mind-set that we are in. Trying to monitor ourselves carefully as

things may be happening could help, too.

Actually, a few years ago I did develop some playing-related physical problems. After that happened to me, I went and studied again to revamp my technique—my physical motion and so forth. I think it helped. I tried acupuncture treatments as well—with varying results. (Some not so great, but once with an amazing result.)

I hope these suggestions help you to avoid problems.

Would you like to ask your favorite drummer a question? Send it to Ask A Pro, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Or you may email rvh@moderndrummer.com. We will do our best to pursue every inquiry.

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—The Deftones' Abe Cunningham, September 2000



Alex Solca



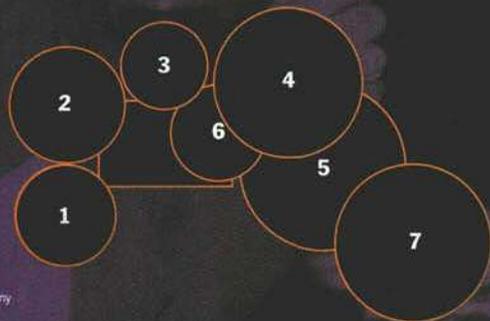
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Odd Tom Diameters

Q Here is a question for your history experts: Why are drums sized evenly except for 13" and 15" toms? Why aren't there 7", 9", and 11" sizes?

Tim Steggall
Rochester Hills, MI

A We can't tell you exactly why there haven't been drums of 7" and 9". But for a while Tama did offer 11" toms. They were available for several years, but they didn't prove popular and were ultimately discontinued. (For one thing, it was tough to get heads for them.)

Today's multi-tom setups would probably feature drums of all even sizes were it not for the fact that "traditional" four-piece kits predate them. And those earlier kits tended to have rack toms of 13" diameters to correspond to floor toms of 16" diameters. (Somebody decided back in the 1930s that those sizes created a good acoustic balance.) So 13" rack toms were the norm when the garage band boom of the 1960s happened, and they've just stuck around ever since. During the 1950s, when jazz was most popular, four-piece kits tended to shrink, using

20" (or even 18") bass drums, 14" floor toms, and 12" rack toms. Those diameters, too, have remained as "standards" among the manufacturers.

Fifteen-inch toms have a more questionable history. In the 1920s some "floor" toms were actually large-sized legless drums held on basket or tripod stands. These included some 15" models. Much later, during the craziness of the late 1970s and early '80s, when drummers were trying to fit as many drums as they could onto a kit, several companies offered 15" toms to fit into the last "rack-tom space" before dropping down to a 16" floor tom. A drummer could thus mount 6", 8", 10", 12", 13", 14", and 15" rack toms to get that "wall of drums" look. (A few kits even mounted 16" rack toms!)

Fifteen-inch drums might have gone away were it not for drummers like Steve Gadd, who decided to use them as "suspended" floor toms. These became popular during the early '80s, and have remained popular enough since then to be kept in many manufacturers' catalogs. But they tend to be sold in limited quantities.

Over the years, most drummers have come to believe that the best acoustic sep-



Charles Stewart

Steve Gadd was among the first to popularize suspended "floor" toms, including a 15" drum.

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aration (of pitch and tonality) is achieved when toms are at least two inches different in diameter. (Depth, of course, has become a whole different issue, with everything from ultra-shallow toms through "fast," "standard," and "power" depths available.) So today you'll see lots of kits with 8"/10"/12" rack-tom configurations, along with 16" floor toms (and perhaps a 14" as well). The exception is in the entry-level, packaged five-piece market, which still is dominated by a 12"/13"/16" configuration. But even that is changing, as companies like Pearl and Tama offer their entry-level kits with other tom options.

Cymbal Cleaners

Q I recently bought some of Zildjian's cymbal cleaner made specifically for my ZBT-Plus cymbals, and it works great. The cleaner doesn't require you to rinse the cymbals in water. Instead it requires that you buff them well, since it provides a special coating to protect the cymbal.

However, I just bought an A Zildjian 20" medium-thin crash. Can I use the

ZBT cleaner on this cymbal too, or should I get a different type of cleaner for it?

Chris Potter
Florida, via Internet

A Zildjian director of education John King replies, "The ZBT Cleaner is a light-duty cleaner designed to maintain the protective nature of the original polyurethane coating that is applied to all ZBT cymbals at the factory. The high copper content of that type of alloy makes it very susceptible to oxidation, hence the need to keep it from any moisture, and the additional need to maintain that coating. Your cleaner will in no way adversely affect any cast cymbals, such as A Zildjian models. However, it will tend to only remove light stick marks and fingerprints.

"For your 20" cymbal, I suggest that you use our Professional Cymbal Cleaner—for its deep cleaning potential—in combination with your ZBT Cleaner to avoid a quick buildup of fingerprints. Zildjian is actually in the process of creating a cleaner with a blend of those attributes, in order to address cleaning and protection needs for cymbals being used in states with consistently high

humidity. (Florida is one of the worst.) Stay tuned for further developments."

Mystery Buzz

Q I have a 16" Gretsch floor tom made in the mid-1980s. It has been played a lot but never abused, and has always been set up or stored properly (no undue moisture, heat, or light). For some reason, it developed a buzz several years ago, and I simply can't locate the cause. It seems to come from along the top rim somewhere. Changing heads (I use Pinstripes or coated Ambassadors) doesn't help, nor does tuning the head up or down. The tom stands on its three legs, using no special stand-mounts. My other drums are Gretsch, too, and they've never presented such a problem. Any advice for restoring the sound of this otherwise fine drum?

Steve Hamelman
via Internet

A The problem you describe can occur on any brand of drums. It isn't a Gretsch idiosyncrasy. But it certainly is aggravating. Since you say that changing the heads does not solve the problem, we'd speculate that the drum has gone slightly out of round at



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the edge of the shell, or a bearing edge has been damaged in some minute way. (It doesn't take much.)

If the shell has actually gone out of round, that means a drumhead cannot seat down on it properly. There will be some tiny gap between the shell and the metal hoop of the drumhead at some point, and this can allow the head to buzz at that point. Regrettably, there isn't much that can be done to put a drumshell back into round. That's why some drummers have to tune vintage (and other out-of-round) drums in an uneven manner, tightening some lugs much more than others in order to get the head to a point of more or less even tension. You've probably already experimented with this method.

Problems with the bearing edge *can* be addressed. You can check for trueness by placing the drum on a totally flat, smooth surface like a pane of glass or a smooth countertop. A *Formica*-topped table will work if there is no texture to the *Formica* pattern. Put a light source inside the shell, and look around the bottom edge where it meets the surface. If you see light leaking through, the bearing edges

are not true and flat.

Recutting bearing edges is a job that should be done by a skilled craftsman. But there are plenty of drumshops and custom-drum operations that offer the service. Most advertise in *MD*, or you can simply check the shops in your area. We can't guarantee that recutting the edges will solve the problem, but if they aren't true now, it's a likely bet that the edges are at least contributing to the problem.

You didn't mention whether or not your drums feature a covering. It can sometimes happen that the edge of a plastic covering can become detached at a small point along the top or bottom of the shell. If there's room enough between the shell and the rim of the drumhead, that detached edge can vibrate, causing a buzz. Be sure to inspect the edges of the shell for this possibility.

If the buzz you hear "up near the edge" is also near a lug, check the lug out to see if the buzz is coming from a spring or even a tiny broken piece inside it. It's an easy job to remove the lugs from the drum, pack them with cotton balls, and then replace them.

One of our editors adds that he's had stray

pieces of muffling tape make a nasty buzz. So make sure that the edges of the drums and the edges of the heads are free from any potential noise sources.

Stretching Drumheads

QI've been playing drums for five years. I just heard from a fellow drummer that you are supposed to allow new bass drum heads to stretch out over a twenty-four-hour period by tightening them. Is this true?

Eric Burger
via Internet

AThe practice of allowing a drumhead to stretch out for twenty-four hours dates back to the days of calfskin heads, when the seating of a head also involved the drying of the calfskin itself. Although a twenty-four-hour wait is no longer required with modern plastic heads, they should still be seated properly, which does involve a stretching process. However, this can usually be done in one of two fairly quick methods.

1. Put the head on the drum and tighten the lugs until they are finger-tight evenly around the drum. You want to make sure that the head is down evenly on the bearing edge all

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the way around the shell. Then continue to tighten the lugs, criss-crossing the drum and tightening each lug the same amount (usually 1/4 to 1/2-turn). Continue to tighten the head until it's well past the tension at which you would normally use it. As you do this, you will likely hear some "cracking" as the head pulls against its glue ring. You won't hear the plastic film actually stretching, but that will be happening, too.

Allow the over-tightened head to sit for a few minutes so that the plastic can stretch completely. Then back the lugs off until the head is fairly loose. From there you can retune the head to the tension and pitch you desire.

2. A faster—but less precise—method is to put the head on the drum and finger-tighten the lugs as above. Again, make sure the head is down evenly all the way around the drum. Put the drum on the floor, and put your knee in the center of the head. (On a bass drum you can actually sit on the head.) Put your weight into the head, causing it to stretch against the lugs. Again, you'll probably hear some cracking. While your knee is pressing into the head, use a free hand to put pressure against each lug position (between your knee and the rim of the drum). Once this process has been completed, you can proceed with normal tuning.

Drumming Origins

QI have a couple of questions. First, where and when did the effect known as "stirring the soup" with brushes on the snare drum originate? Was it meant to emulate another type of sound, or to create a sonic cushion (as riveted cymbals do), or for another purpose?

Second, where did the dreaded little "buh-duhmp, *ching*" drum fill, played after a joke (and usually poorly delivered) originate? These issues are not essential knowledge for being a proficient drummer, but they are nonetheless intriguing.

Louis McFarland
Boise, ID

AThe precise origins of the techniques you describe are probably lost to antiquity. But we can offer some general information.

"Stirring the soup" (playing a circular motion on the head) with brushes was most likely the low-volume equivalent of press rolls played with sticks. These rolls were played by the early New Orleans jazz drum-

mers to keep time within the music, long before the backbeat was popular. When even these rolls were too loud or dominant for the music, early drummers looked for other options. Some drum historians credit Baby Dodds with bringing a couple of small whisk brooms to the kit to play on the snare drum. In any event, whisking some sort of brush across the surface of the head became a popular way of keeping time at low volume or low intensity levels.

The drum/cymbal cue played behind the punch line of a joke originated in vaude-

ville, where virtually every comic wanted some sort of musical punch to underscore the gags. Often those gags involved pratfalls or other physical comedy, and the drums or percussion offered logical sounds to go along with the movements. As the nature of comedy became less physical and more verbal, the drum "punch" carried over to the verbal punch lines as well. It became standard practice, and has evolved into a cliché that has become a gag unto itself.



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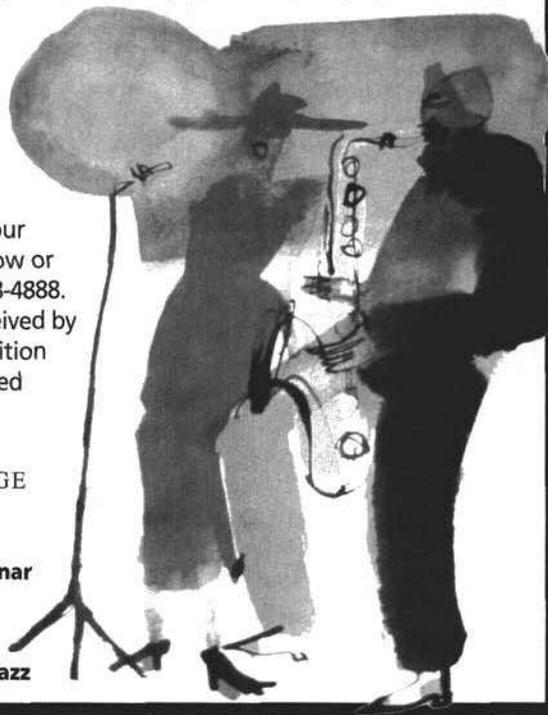
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update

Rocket From The Crypt's **Mario**



Rubalcaba

We Have Liftoff

After years of playing with San Diego indie-rock acts Black Heart Procession and Clickitat Ikatowi, Mario Rubalcaba (a.k.a. Ruby Mars) finally saw his opportunity to join one of the most intense and respected rock acts in the nation, Rocket From The Crypt. After original RFTC drummer Atom left the group last year, there was an open casting call for a new drummer—and Rubalcaba just couldn't resist.

"I was visiting home and heard they were trying out drummers," Mario explains, "so I left my number with John [Reis, a.k.a. Speedo, vocalist/guitarist of RFTC]. I came out for a weekend and tried out, and after that it was like, 'Where do we go from here?'"

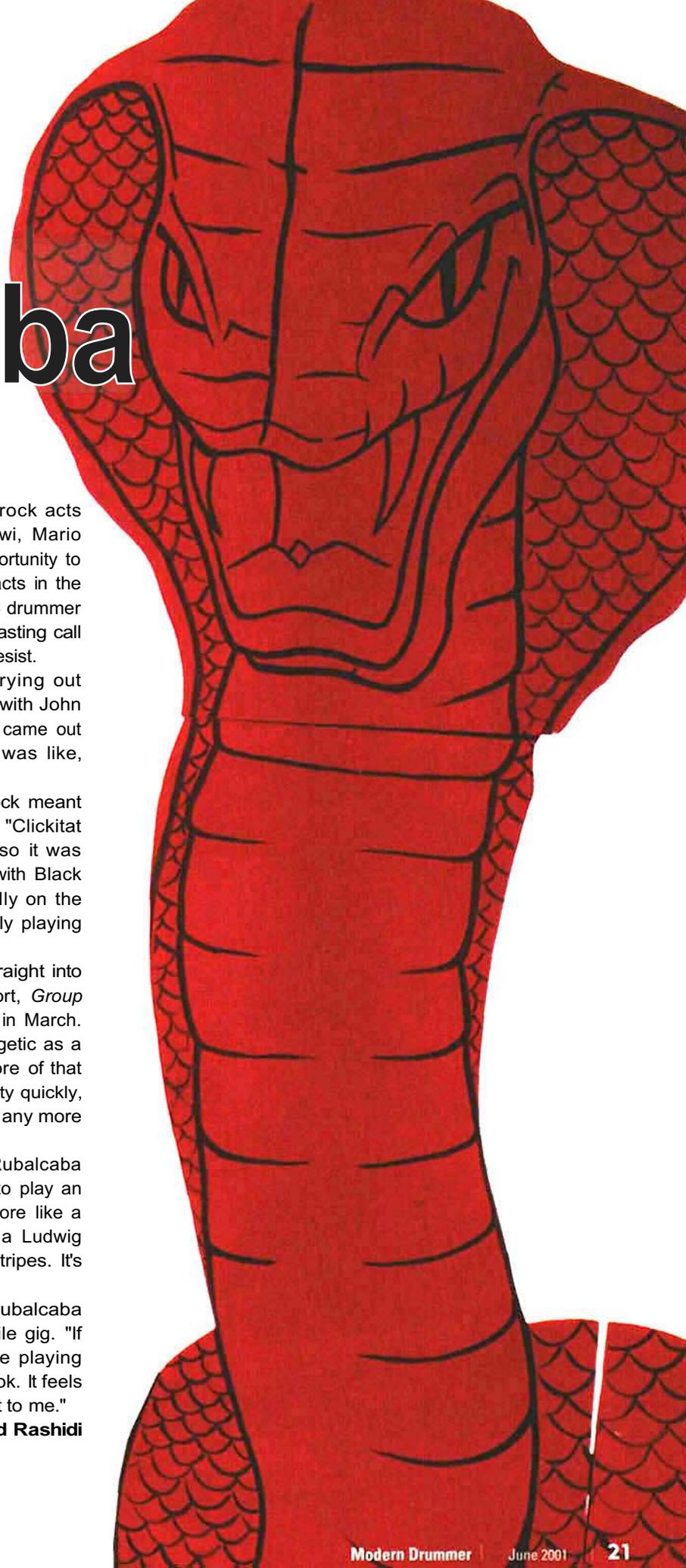
Rubalcaba's induction into the RFTC hall of rock meant putting in his notice with his now-former projects. "Clickitat was always something just for fun," he says, "so it was never too serious. And I loved the music we did with Black Heart, but I like to play a little more energetically on the drums. Once that band started touring, I was only playing on about half the songs in our set."

Shortly after joining RFTC, Rubalcaba went straight into the studio to record five tracks for their latest effort, *Group Sounds*, which was released on Vagrant Records in March. "Most of the songs we recorded were more energetic as a whole," Rubalcaba says. "We were going for more of that rougher, garagey sound. We banged 'em out pretty quickly, and I was done within a couple days. We didn't do any more than two or three takes for each song."

Changes were in order with the new band, so Rubalcaba had to make a kit switch. "In Black Heart, I had to play an early '70s Slingerland kit," he explains. "It was more like a jazz kit, with a 20" kick. But for Rocket, I have a Ludwig Vistalite. It's big and has clear shells with black stripes. It's totally crazy!"

Keeping a positive mental attitude has kept Rubalcaba from being intimidated about his new, high-profile gig. "If you don't feel comfortable with the people you're playing with," he asserts, "it can change your mental outlook. It feels natural to be in this band, and that's very important to me."

Waleed Rashidi



Pierre Favre Fredy Studer

Their Own Little

Swiss drummers Pierre Favre and Fredy Studer brought their duo, Drum Orchestra, to the States for a rare four-date tour this past November (including a stop at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention in Dallas). While Fredy is a frequent visitor to this side of the Atlantic, it's been fifteen years since Pierre was last here.

In the duo, Pierre writes most of the music, though Fredy has contributed one piece. "It's a lot of unison playing," Pierre says. "But whereas a

singer and pianist have different voices, that's difficult to achieve on drums. So we work to play the unison parts and find the space to allow us to improvise more. We have to listen so the theme stays with us when we improvise. This creates a stream in the music, especially with the phrases—there's a tension and dynamic."

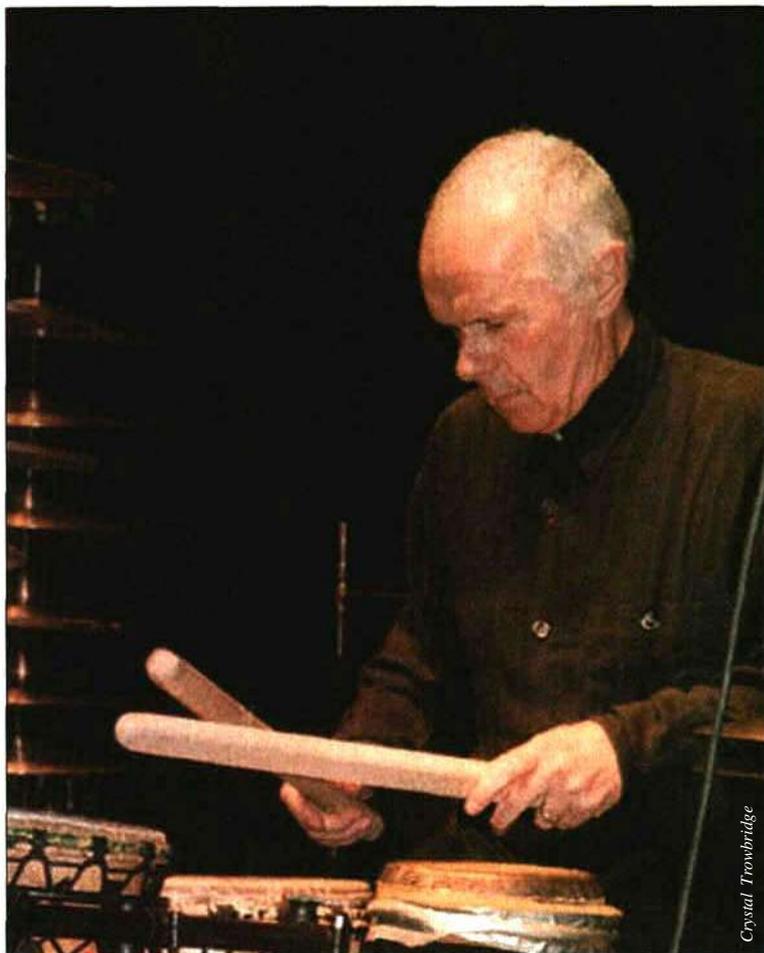
"We learn the parts by ourselves," Fredy offers, "and then play together, which is so different. You have to listen to how the other guy plays *and* listen to

yourself. We play as physically close together as possible. We did a concert in Switzerland last fall where the stage was large. We set up one meter apart, and it was too much! We're always watching and *feeling* each other. There's a theme or form, but it's best if we don't have to think. We use eye contact; it helps if you can see the movements you're hearing."

Watching the two on stage is a visual, as well as sonic, treat. Each of them is seated behind a veritable paradise of drums, cym-

bals, gongs, and small percussion. Their unison parts weave around each other, creating a dense percussive sound. With the nod of a head, or the blink of an eye, the duo can immediately change direction, taking their groove even deeper.

Though Pierre and Fredy clearly have an intimate musical relationship, each has their sticks in many fires. "Just after my return from the States," says Pierre, "I'll be playing in China again with a very interesting female musician. Her name is



Crystal Trowbridge



Orchestra

Yang Jing and she plays an instrument called the 'pipa,' a kind of Chinese guitar. She's a fantastic musician. We played some concerts in Europe, but it's been about a year and a half since we worked together. She is classically trained, but improvises. I will play in duo and solo."

Fredy also has another duet gig lined up. "After this tour I'm staying in New York to work on some remixes with DJ M. Singe [Beth Coleman] for a duo CD we recorded. That'll be a new experience for me." One assumes that will be miles away—at least technically—from an experience he had in Namibia, Africa, last September while working on a film project. "I played in an ensemble with local cultural groups," Fredy recalls. "One time three bushmen arrived, two men and a woman. They played so softly that I used just a snare with brushes. It was very delicate, and the feeling together was good. I started to dance and the woman joined me. They filmed us dancing to the groove. It was one of the strongest musical experiences I've ever had. It was something else."

You can keep up with Fredy's activities at www.fredystuder.ch.

Michael Bettine



Jeff Kathan

All Right Now With Paul Rodgers

Six-foot-four powerhouse drummer Jeff Kathan and his two bandmates carefully step into position on the dark stage. The audience ignites, and the announcer introduces one of rock's legendary singers: Paul Rodgers. All night long Kathan passionately kicks the band into solid grooves on classics like "Burnin' Sky," "Feel Like Makin' Love," "All Right Now," and other rock standards from the Rodgers songbook.

At forty-eight, Kathan is living his dream as a player in a national act. And he's doing it by backing the voice of Free, Bad Company, and The Firm.

Forty years ago Kathan got hooked on drumming after hearing a Gene Krupa record. Early dues were paid gigging with bands in the Seattle area. In the '80s Heart producer Mike Flicker enlisted Kathan to lay down tracks for major labels A&M and RCA, who were, respectively, backing bands Dixon House and Canadian group Trooper.

During those sessions Flicker recommended that Kathan audition for new talent Bryan Adams. The drummer grabbed the opportunity, did well, but lost out to a local Vancouver player. "That broke my heart," says the giant skinsman. "I knew Adams was gonna be big." But Kathan continued to woodshed. "I spent years playing with a click track," he admits. "And I was playing with a blues band the last two years before auditioning for Rodgers. It gave my playing a lot more feel, a lot more soul."

How did Kathan land the Rodgers gig? "I got the first call. Somebody that knew Rodgers' manager, Chris Crawford, saw me playing blues...and of all places, in Winthrop, Washington!"

And now the endorsements are rolling in for Kathan. "Vater was the first to give me their support," he says. "They were incredible. They gave me my first shot." Kathan is supplied with Vater gloves and his own signature stick: the Vater 2B wood. He also endorses DW drums, Sabian cymbals, and Remo heads. And Shure supplies Dual Driver in-ear monitors and mic's for his kit.

"I'm proof that dreams can come true. I never give up, and I always strive to be the best I can be." It shows. Kathan is one drummer who just *can't* get enough.

Rick Sloat

Oscar Seaton

Groovin' All Night Long

Need a reason to check out Lionel Richie? Two words: Oscar Seaton. No, three words: "All Night Long," the Lionel Richie Caribbean hit. With such an infectious melody, the song practically begs players to stretch out and maybe launch into a Cuban songo rhythm. And that's exactly what Oscar Seaton does. Then he reels it in with a thunderous and slick fill on two mounted floor toms. As he plays, you notice more than just a passing resemblance—physical *and* musical—between Oscar Seaton and his mentor, Omar Hakim.

Seaton's been with Lionel Richie since 1998. The former Commodore is a great boss, claims Seaton. "He never complains, even if I turn the beat around on him. If that happens, it's not because it's a jazz or fusion gig; I guess I'm just adding my own touch."

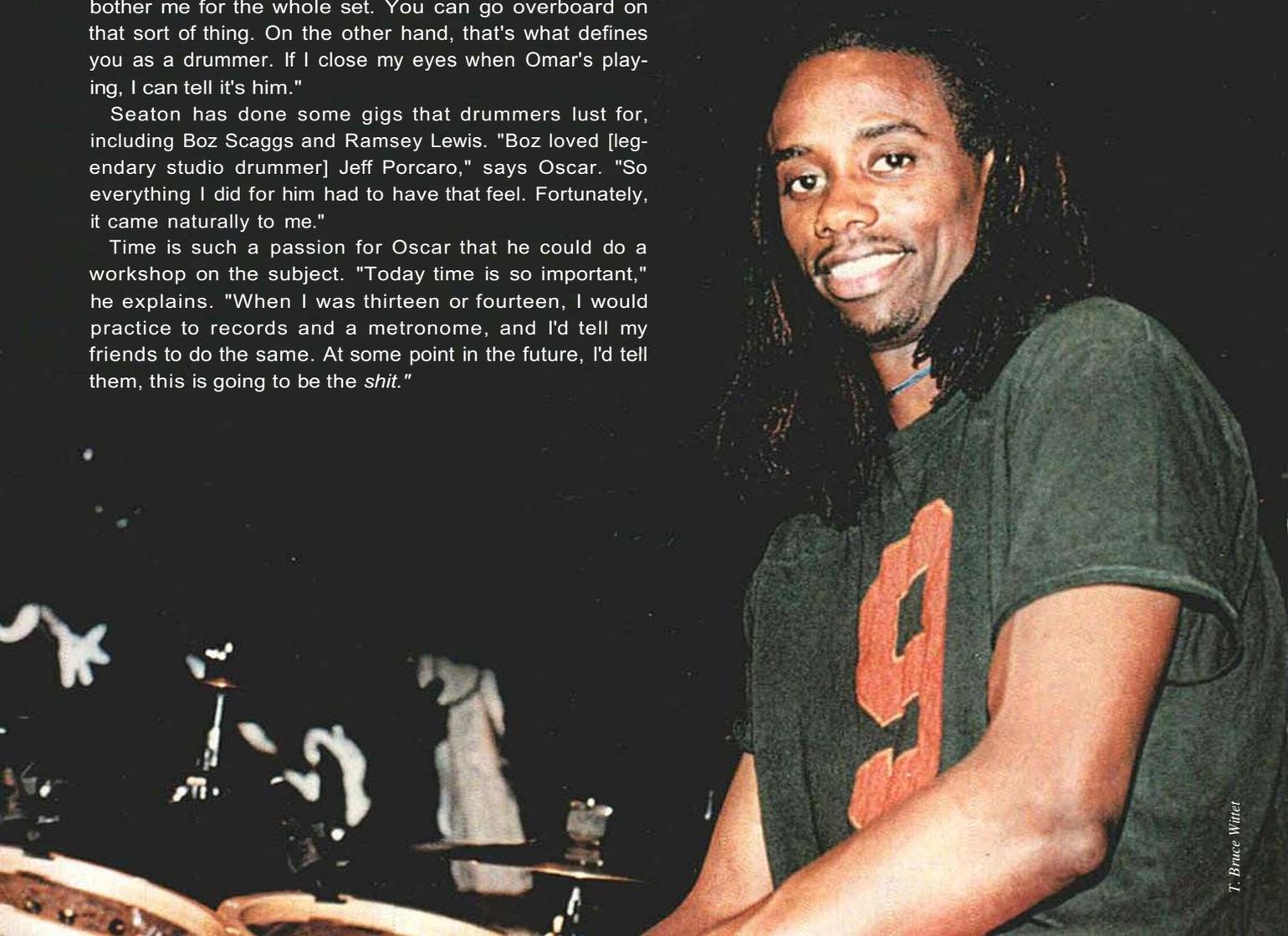
Seaton's got to be totally comfortable with his drum feel and sound. "If the toms are out of tune," he stresses, "it'll bother me for the whole set. You can go overboard on that sort of thing. On the other hand, that's what defines you as a drummer. If I close my eyes when Omar's playing, I can tell it's him."

Seaton has done some gigs that drummers lust for, including Boz Scaggs and Ramsey Lewis. "Boz loved [legendary studio drummer] Jeff Porcaro," says Oscar. "So everything I did for him had to have that feel. Fortunately, it came naturally to me."

Time is such a passion for Oscar that he could do a workshop on the subject. "Today time is so important," he explains. "When I was thirteen or fourteen, I would practice to records and a metronome, and I'd tell my friends to do the same. At some point in the future, I'd tell them, this is going to be the *shit*."

Prophetic or what? *Everything* Seaton plays with Lionel Richie is to sequences—not that you would ever guess by the way he plays so naturally on stage. "If I didn't have good time, I wouldn't be on this gig," he reflects. "I have to make the music feel like I'm *not* playing to a click."

T. Bruce Wittet



Allison Miller

Of Two Minds

Allison Miller's playing career is all about balance these days. First, she's the drummer in alternative-pop diva Natalie Merchant's band. She's also the drummer of choice for jazz keyboardist Rachel Z, touring behind her trio's tribute to Wayne Shorter, *On The Milky Way Express* (Tone Center). And Miller recently cut an album with tenor sax player Virginia Mayhew, with Kenny Barron, Harvey Schwartz, and Adam Cruz.

The twenty-six-year-old drummer understands the musical adjustment between those gigs. "With jazz," Allison says, "there's a certain way you play ahead of the beat a little. With pop, especially with Natalie's band, it's a different feeling. It's minimal. Rachel has said, 'When playing pop you have to put all of your soul into one note instead of ten.' You have to make that one note count. And you can't miss the snare on the backbeat when you're playing for 10,000 people.

"With Natalie, I want my feel to reach that person in the \$10 seat," Allison goes on. "The person in the back just wants it to feel good. So I

cut everything down in my mind and just play real solid. It's kind of nice when you get a gig like this, where you don't *have* to think as much. [laughs] Just try to have a good time—that's definitely the gig."

Recording *On The Milky Way Express* was something of a labor of love, says Miller, who was excited over the chance to do a tribute to one of her favorite composers—especially as a trio. "It kind of takes a lot of nerve to do a trio record of Wayne's music," the drummer says. "But Rachel's got a lot of nerve."

The group took the job seriously. "We rehearsed maybe four times a week, and we put a lot of time in...rehearsing, hanging out, listening. We wanted to get that feeling that they had in the '60s, where there was enough work out there to play every night. After we rehearsed a couple of months, we did a gig at Birdland and a few others, and then went into the studio. We did the whole record in two days, live-to-2-track. It was pretty quick."

Miller's first musical influences were Prince and the go-go music of the Washington, DC area. "Then once I heard Tony Williams on the *Miles Smiles* record, I was pretty much changed," she says. "That album, and *Nefertiti*. I also have to mention all of Ed Blackwell's stuff with Ornette Coleman. Melody is so important, and Blackwell's concept was all about melodic form. Another big influence is Zigaboo Modeliste of The Meters. I love that second-line New Orleans-flavored funk."

While traveling through Europe on the last leg of a three-month tour, The Rachel Z Trio stopped to record a track with Italian pop star Pino Danielli. "Each of us brings elements of different styles into the band," Miller reports. "We're not *just* into straight-ahead jazz. There are a bunch of influences, so it's fun."

Robin Tolleson



DRUM DATES

This month's important events in drumming history.

Chick Webb died in June of 1939.

Yogi Norton died on June 8, 1987.

Tito Puente died on June 1, 2000.

Chick Evans invents the polyester drumhead in June of 1956.

Keith Moon and The Who are on the charts in June of 1969 with their rock opera *Tommy* and a year later in June of 1970 with *Live At Leeds*.



Charlie Watts and The Rolling Stones reach Number-1 with their famous Andy Warhol-designed album, when *Sticky Fingers* tops the Billboard charts the weeks of June 5 and 12, 1971.

U2's Larry Mullen pens the Eire World Cup soccer team's official theme song in June of 1990. In June of 1996, Mullen and Adam Clayton pen the updated *Mission: Impossible* theme.

On June 3, 1967, **Mitch Mitchell**, Noel Redding, and Jimi Hendrix open with The Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper" (also released in June of 1967) at Beatles manager Brian Epstein's club, The Saville Theatre, in London.



Mitch, Jimi, and Noel looking very '67

Happy Birthday!

Remo Belli (June 22, 1927)

Vic Firth (June 2, 1930)

James Gadson (June 17, 1939)

Charlie Watts (June 2, 1941)

Bernard Purdie (June 11, 1941)

Ian Paice (June 29, 1948)

Joey Kramer (June 21, 1950)

Bun E Carlos (June 12, 1951)

Peter Erskine (June 5, 1954)

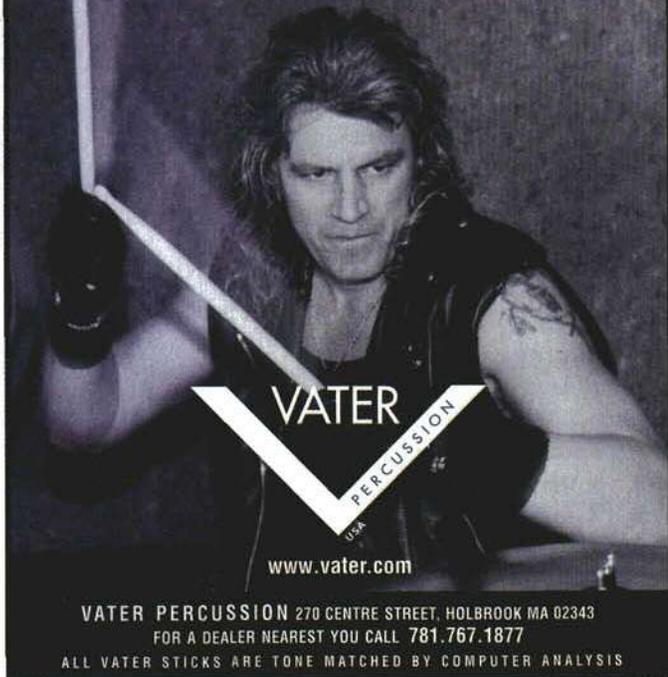
Mickey Curry (June 10, 1956)

Zoro (June 13, 1962)

Steve Shelley (June 23, 1962)

Eric Kretz (June 7, 1966)

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NEWS

John Riley is on new releases by Bob Mintzer (*Homage To Count Basie*), George Gruntz (*Expo Triangle*), and Bobby Paunetto (*Reconstituted*). You can check out all of John's activities on his new Web site, www.johnriley.org.

Dennis Diken is on Michael Shelley's new album, *I Blame You*.

Steve Smith is working on a video series on the history of rock 'n' roll drumming called *Legends Of Rock Drumming*, as well as *Vol. 1 Hoots Of Rock Drumming 1945-1964*. He can also be heard on *Count's Jam Band Reunion*.

Mike Cosgrove is on *ANTHology* by Alien Ant Farm. This is their cool sticker.



Bud Hamer has been mostly producing these days. His recent projects include Action Figure Party with an array of drummers—**Jose Pasillas, Brian Reitzell, Yuval Gabay, and Gary Novak**, as well as **John Molo** on percussion. He also produced Jeff Golub's *Dangerous Curves* with **Steve Ferrone** on drums and **Luis Conte and Sammy Merendino** on percussion.

Gregg Bissonette can be heard on *No Substitutions—Live In Osaka* by Larry Carlton and Steve Lukather.

Hard-rock quartet Britny Fox recently released their first live album, *Long Way To Live*, with **Johnny Dee** on drums.

Andrew Cyrulnik (left) is rocking hard on Factory 81's *Mankind*.



John Hofer is on The Mother Hips' ceaselessly catchy *Green Hills Of Earth*.

Andy Gangadeen is on tour with Jeff Beck.

Troy Luccketta has been doing dates with the reunited Tesla.

Drummer Al 3 has been working on a new Powerman 5000 album.

Freda Love is back with a reunited Blake Babies for a new album called *God Bless The Blake Babies*.

Bernard Purdie is on Laura Nyro's *Angel In The Dark*.

J.D. Blair has a new solo CD out called *Regulated*. Check his Web site (www.jdblair.net) for more info.

Dennis Merrick is on Earth Crisis's *Last Of The Sane*.

Dante "Taz" Roberson from Tony Toni Tone is working with producer Ivan Johnson and is also on Dwayne Wiggins' new solo CD and tour.

Brant Rackley is on Japancakes' latest instrumental Krautrock-abilly longplayer, *The Sleepy Strange*.



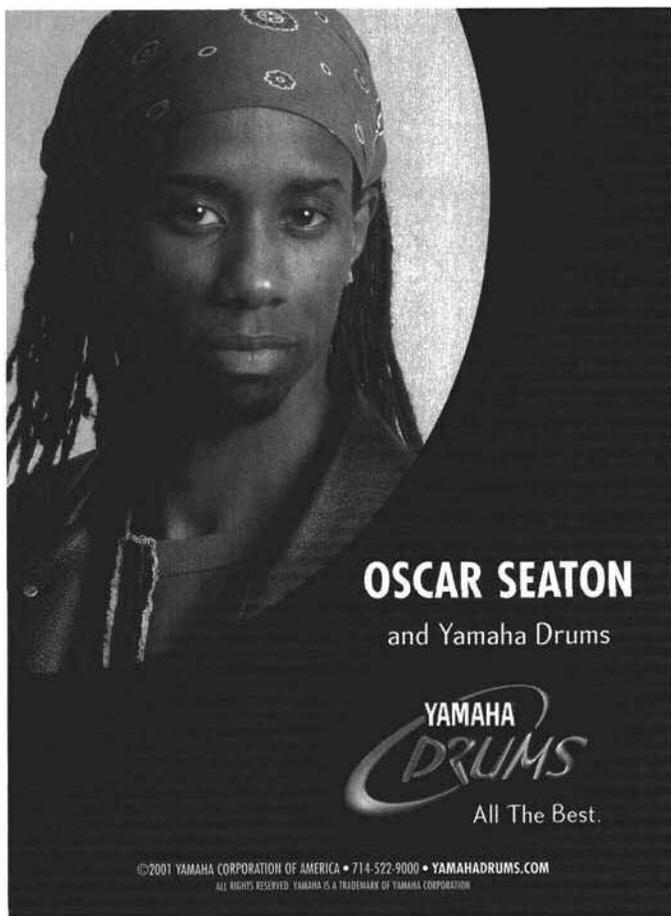
Brooke Rogers is on Llama Farmers' new hunk of Brit rawk, *El Topo*.

Paul Goldberg just recorded the soundtrack for Jackie Chan's latest flick, *Rush Hour II*.

Andrea Valentini has been touring with Dizzy Gillespie's daughter Jeanie Bryson to promote her new album, *Deja Blue*. Andrea is also on Juray Griglak's new CD, *Bass Friends*.

Steve Di Stanislao is on the road with CPR (featuring David Crosby) in support of their latest release.

John Ensminger is on Dog Fashion Disco's debut disc, *Anarchists Of Good Taste*.

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a Convert to Birch

Morgan Rose's (sevendust) Starclassic Performer Review Becomes A Revelation

We're always looking for ways to improve our drums, so we asked Morgan Rose of Sevendust to test drive a set of Starclassic Performer 100% birch shell drums. Morgan was interested, but set definite conditions: "The birch shells had to be the exact sizes of my main maple kit. I was adamant about that. I wanted to make it dead on to what I was used to using so I could really AB those things."

Performers are some of the finest drums we've ever made so we weren't really worried that Morgan wouldn't like them. But Morgan more than "liked" Starclassic Performer. What was supposed to be a review came off more like a revelation.

Morgan's first reaction at a rehearsal for a live performance in Orlando was positive enough. "I like them already. They feel much different when I hit them. I've been using maples forever and I can tell right now the sound of the birch shell seems crisper and the attack on these drums is much different."

But it was the live show that told the tale. "We hadn't done a live show for three months and then the radio station promoting the show sold so many tickets we had to move outside onto the street – not the most controlled situation. So, I was concerned, but the show was awesome. I don't know whether the stars were aligned right, but we just walked in and hit it. The crowd actually grooved through 40 minutes of new material they weren't familiar with. And the drums were ridiculous! It was unanimous: my drum tech, the monitor engineer – even our sound guy – told me 'those drums were killing people out there.'"

"There's always a very warm feeling about maple drums – it doesn't seem to matter what you do, even if you torque the heads all the way up. And that's cool, lots of drummers, myself included, have been very attracted to that feel and sound. So there was a real difference in going from that warm feel to birch – almost like I was lighting a fuse to something; you could just feel the crisp attack of the drums. If you want an aggressive drum, I don't think you could find a more aggressive sounding kit than the one I played last night."

"Up til now I really enjoyed the warmth of maple. But for the type of music we play and the type of player I am, I probably should have thought about birch from the very beginning. I guess I'm a birch guy at heart."



Morgan testing Starclassic Performer at
Trans Continental Studios in Orlando, FL.
Special thanks to Susan of Trans Continental
and her crew for the generous hospitality.

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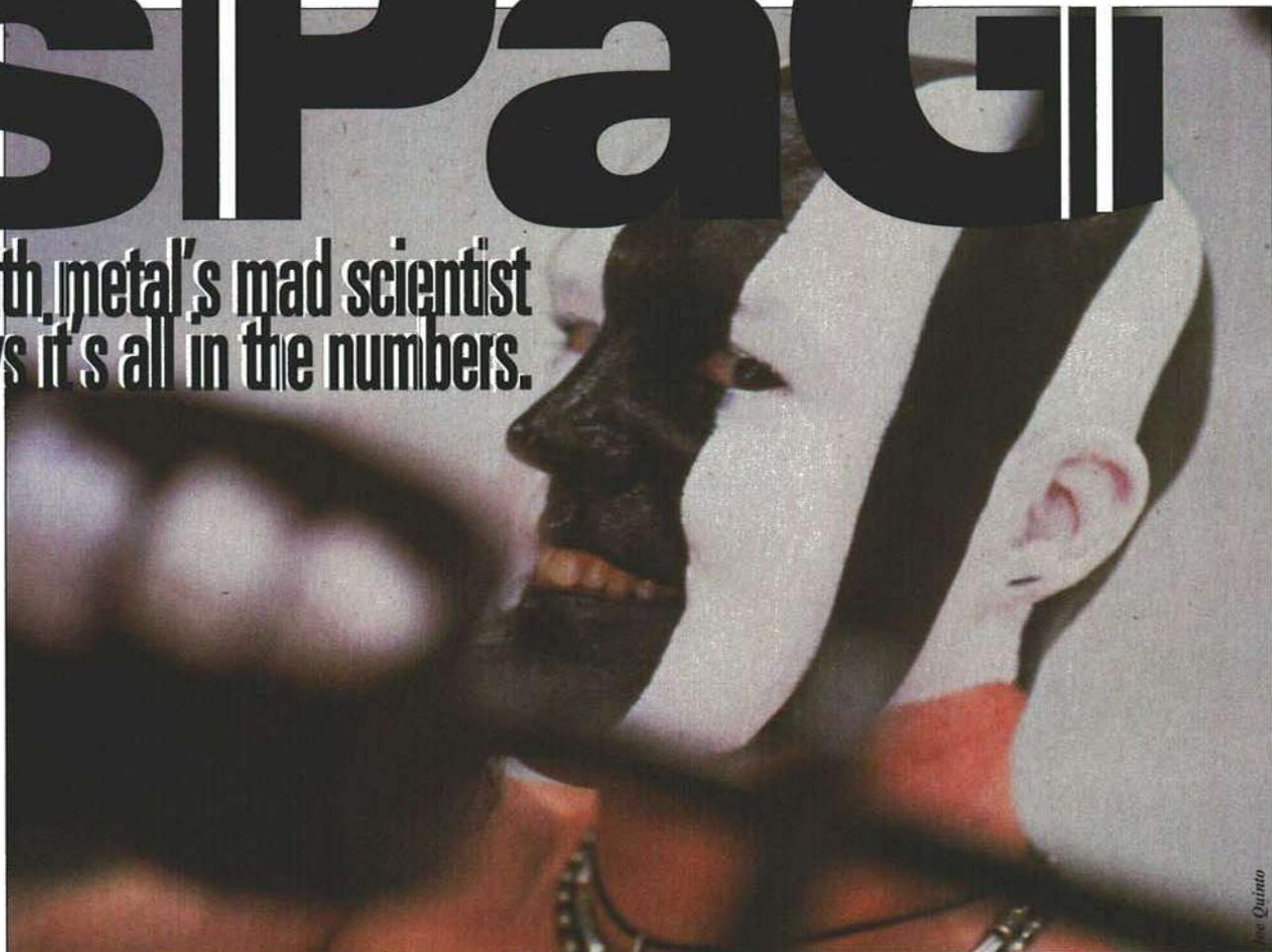
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sPaG

Mudvayne's

Math, metal's mad scientist says it's all in the numbers.



Matthew "sPaG" McDonough was born in Rockford, Illinois, but moved to Peoria at the age of seventeen. He took piano lessons in elementary school, and joined the band program when he started middle school. At thirteen he joined a drum & bugle corps, which is when he got serious about the drums. "I learned a lot in drum & bugle corps," says McDonough, "even though they don't give you lessons. It's a pyramid process, where you start out on crash cymbals and work your way up to the snare drum. My experience was that it was really up to you to study on your own and ask questions."

by Robyn Flans

As a teenager McDonough's interest in the metaphysical and in different philosophies helped mold the musical

approach that would eventually find a home in Mudvayne. Starting out in the local Peoria scene in 1996, the band was signed in 1999. Their debut album, *L.D. 50*, is interesting, challenging, and definitely *not* easy to define. Even McDonough, who is involved in every aspect of the band, from writing to merchandising, refrains from getting too literal about the band's music. As for the rather startling make-up the band wears, sPaG explains that it's just an attempt to bring some visual aspect to the music. "It doesn't necessarily symbolize anything," he says, "and I'd really hate to see things like that taken too literally. I feel the same way about our music. We try to leave it up to the listeners to form their own opinions about what it is we're really doing."

MD: Are the unusual pseudonyms you and your bandmates use intended to convey any particular image?

sPaG: The names we use in the band follow suit with how we write our music. There's an element of our band that we're almost an alien culture, some other form of intelligence. But my name actually came pretty much as a joke about my appearance.

MD: Tell us about the album.

sPaG: We signed our record contract around Christmas of 1999. In January of 2000 we went into the Warehouse Studio in Vancouver, which is owned by Bryan Adams. That level of studio quality was awesome. Garth Richardson, our producer, really likes to capture a live essence in the tracking. He really doesn't like to do punch-ins, so we started with me. In the first six days of tracking, I hammered out all twelve songs. I would do five or six passes through a song, and we'd record two to three songs a day. It was very grueling—a lot of playing. I'd track with our guitarist and bass player, just to be able to play along with the complete musical structure.

I'm a very systematic player. I leave hardly any room for improvisation in my playing. Right now I could sit down and play our whole set by myself. I'm kind of a mathematician about my playing. That's not to say I'm not emotional. But I find if I give myself too much room to move in my playing, I get loose and go off on tangents.

We tracked for the first six days, and then I spent the next six weeks just editing. It was a very long process, working with three other guys to sort through all the takes, deciding what I wanted to use. I pretty much drove them crazy. I'm very neurotic about how I want things. I had a very clear idea of how I thought parts should be played. In my mind, I knew what my bass player, guitarist, and singer were doing, so I knew what I needed to do on the drums for it to work with the songs. Unfortunately, the engineers didn't hear any of the instrumentation. When we started editing all they heard was the drums. So to them it looked like I was either being incredibly neurotic or arbitrary about stuff. But I knew what had to be done, so they had to trust me. In the end, when the other instrumentation began to come into the editing process, it became evident to them that we had a clear idea of what the songs were supposed to sound like. But the process was hard for them, and I really put them through the ringer. I wasn't cruel, but everything had to be the way it had to be.





Danny Carey

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After the fact, I told them how much I appreciated their effort.

"Internal Primates Forever" was a hard one for me to track. There was a lot of double kick work in it that had to be very precise. And "(K)Now F(orever)" was hard because the song is very complex. It's seven and a half minutes long and has a lot of movement in the arrangement. I spent a lot of time putting together several number sequences in the arrangement, and everything had to fall into those patterns or it didn't justify the way I wrote the song. It was a lot to keep in my mind and a lot to play over and over and over. In the process of editing it, it became very complex because I needed to remain focused when listening to it to know that everything was together. "-1" was an easier song to track because it's more of a feel song. I could just play it. Actually "King Of Pain"—which ultimately didn't make the album—was probably the hardest song for me to track, because I didn't write it. Eventually I played it to a click track, completely by myself, just to get through it. I've never really been able to play covers. Early on in my career, whenever I tried to do a cover band thing, it never worked. I do what I do and that's pretty much it. If you take me out of my element, I don't do well.

MD: Tell us about the writing.

sPaG: One of the things we take very seriously about our writing is cultivating accidents and coincidences. Initially we try to remain pretty unintentional in our writing. We allow an accident to happen, or let a cool riff happen. Then we flesh it out and let it unfold. Our writing is an ongoing process, especially for me. I'll get some ideas—a rough arrangement—and then reflect on it. I'll lay in bed, halfway between asleep and awake, and listen to it in my mind.

MD: Do you all write together?

sPaG: We try not to have too much of a formula. There are some songs we all wrote together, but predominantly [guitarist] Gurr and I write as a team. He'll come to me with a few riffs and a very loose arrangement, which he'll play to me. I might jam along with him, to get a feel for what he's doing. He might make a boombox recording for me, or he might not. A lot of times I'll just remember the riffs in my mind. Then I'll take a few

days. I'll be vacuuming the carpet, doing dishes, or falling asleep in bed, and I'll visualize everything and look for angles. That's when I'll start putting all the numbers into what we do, working with the time signatures and polyrhythms that come up in our songs. I'll find an angle like that that I can work from and start constructing the song from that point. It almost becomes a mathematical thing. Then from there we play, we listen, we change, we play, we listen, we play. Some of our songs, like "Death Blooms," took nine or ten months to write, "(K)Now F(orever)" took about six months.

I'm sort of a concept person in the band, along with Chad, our singer. A lot of our work with the songs begins on that level. We cultivate head spaces that we kind of live in and share, and we let the songs be written from that point. We're kind of in that space right now, working toward our next album. Every member of the band has his place.

Being the drummer gives me an interesting angle. I've never seen myself as all that great of a drummer. I'm highly specified, a lot of which comes from the fact that I'm not formally trained. I learned how to do what I heard in my head. But the creative freedom I'm given as an *artist* in the band influences me as the *drummer* in the band. So instead of coming from the angle of drums first, I'm coming from the angle of the creation process. I think that gives me an interesting style that gives the band as a whole a different flavor.

MD: What goes into performing your songs live?

sPaG: I lose songs very quickly if I don't play them regularly, so rehearsal is important to us, even on the road. After having two weeks off doing our last video, I lost muscle tone and stamina very quickly. But like I said, I'm very systematic about my parts, so once I get everything dialed in, it's actually very easy for me on stage—because, to the best of my ability, I play everything identically at every show. Everything is pretty much preconceived.

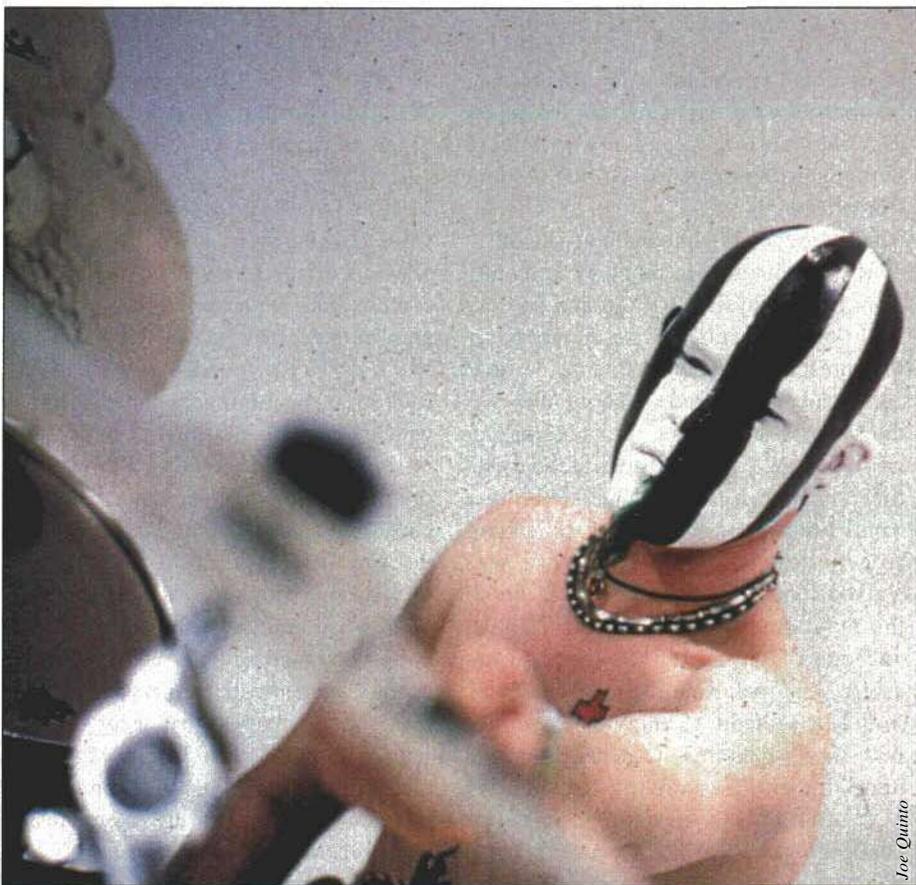
MD: What does the band need from you as a drummer?

sPaG: Because of the complexity of our songs, I have to remain as consistent as

possible. That goes without saying in *any* band, but it's especially important with us, because at any one point I might be playing in 5/4 and Gurr might be playing in 4/4. We have to know that we're going to end up in the same place, especially in situations where monitoring is poor and we can't really hear what each other is doing very well. So I have to be where I'm supposed to be, and everyone has to be able to trust that.

MD: Since you had no formal lessons, where does your knowledge of odd times come from?

sPaG: That's just how my brain works. My whole approach is not so much drums as it is working with numbers. It's a give-and-take on intuition and feel. I'd never want to give you the impression that I have a formula before I sit down to write a song. But there have been some cases where I've said, "I'm going to work with fives and sevens exclusively throughout this section of the song," and I've written the parts specifically for that. But generally it comes about during the writing process, where the guitarist and I like the way something sounds that happens to be in an odd signature, say, 11/8 or 3/4. Once I've gotten a feel for it, I'll sit down and break it down. "Okay, what signature is this in? 3/4." From there I have a wealth of angles. I can write all my fills in threes, or if I know *he's* in three and I want to do something with fives at the same time, I can work polyrhythms



Joe Quintano

"The Creative freedom I'm given as an **artist** in the band influences me as the drummer in the band."

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around his part and tailor my fills to that. So that's where I get my angles from: deciding to work specifically with these number groups and to sculpt the song from that angle.

MD: Were you big into math in school?

sPaG: My interest in numbers is mainly from a metaphysical background and my study of the occult. To me, numbers are the purest and most cross-cultural form of communication there is. The number 3 is the same to an Eskimo, an Aborigine, or an American. I always had a feel for odd time signatures, though. One of the first bands I really got into when I started getting serious about my playing was Voivod. Their drummer, Away, is one of the most innovative drummers I know, and one of the most influential in my career. Any rock band might have a break in 3/4 or something, but Voivod *worked* with time signatures. That really opened doors for me. I was really intrigued by how otherworldly it sounded and how challenging it was to listen to. From that point on, I went off on a tangent with it. I

started realizing the numbers *behind* it. With my metaphysical background, I began to put two and two together, no pun intended.

MD: Did you have other drum influences while growing up?

sPaG: I'd hate to have this taken out of context, but I've never really seen myself as a drummer. My perspective has always been art first...an idea first. I always looked at drumming as the medium in which I worked. Whenever I'm asked for influences and inspirations, I rarely go to drummers. I think about bands who influenced me as a kid, like Skinny Puppy. I listened to a lot of electronic music, and even now I enjoy the space and ambiance of it. I had an early interest in literature, philosophy, and art, and right now I'm on a major tangent with painters and trying to find a way to express that energy in song-writing. Film has also been a big deal to me. I think it's probably the most pure and advanced form of artistic expression available. Music is great because it's more abstract, but a well-made film that isn't

too literal can even take music a step further in some ways.

MD: For readers who are unfamiliar with Mudvayne's music, how would you describe it?

sPaG: Our new saying is "math metal." Bring an abacus. One of the things I think is really exciting about what we're doing musically is that we are a technical band, in kind of an '80s sense of what metal used to be. Heavy music got away from technicality and became much more emotional through the '90s and into the new millennium, which I think was really good. It got away from those long crazy runs and leads and that kind of musical arrogance, thanks to the Korn and Soulflys. With us, we're kind of returning to a more technical style of playing—almost an '80s European kind of metal. But I believe we're maintaining a level of dynamics that speaks about emotions, too. I think we're bridging the gap between being very cold, intellectual, and stoic and being unhinged, unbridled, and intense.



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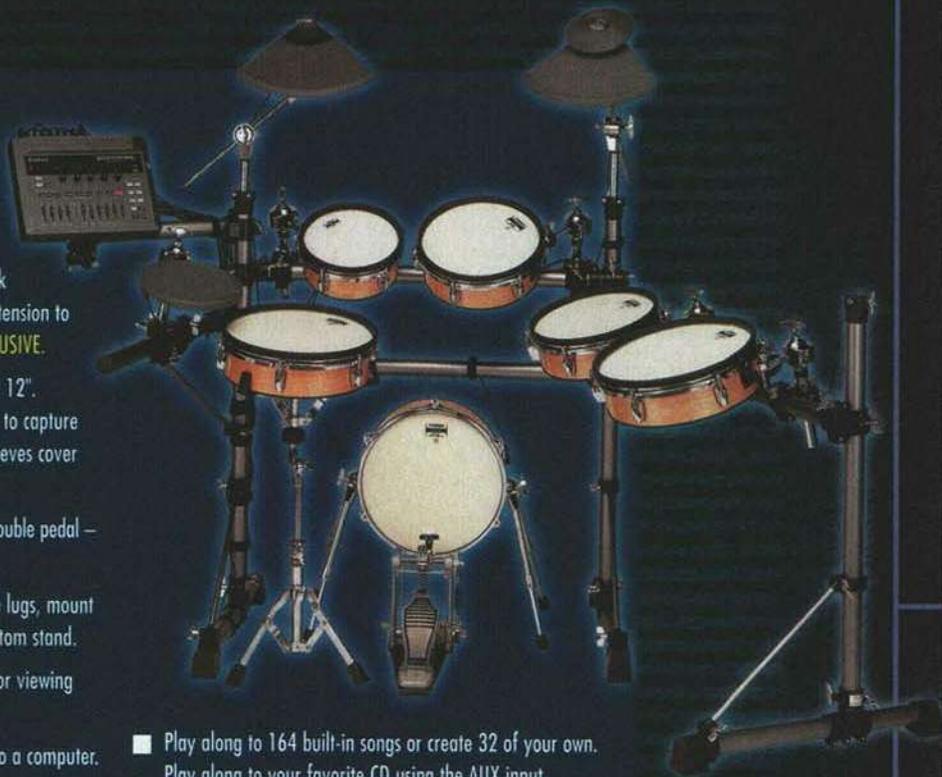
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HITS

all A Zildjian & Cie models sound pure and satisfying; 18" crash is especially nice

K heavy crash offers dark tonalities with good projection and a killer bell

K Custom Special Dry ride has exotic qualities that may appeal to drummers playing electric jazz or electronic music

MISSES

weight of A Zildjian & Cie hi-hats limits their "chick" capability

A Custom Projection ride had somewhat "gated" bell sound

Zildjian recently took advantage of the NAMM trade show to debut a selection of new cymbal models that range from the historic to the ultra-contemporary. Let's take a look at these new goodies.

A Zildjian & Cie Models

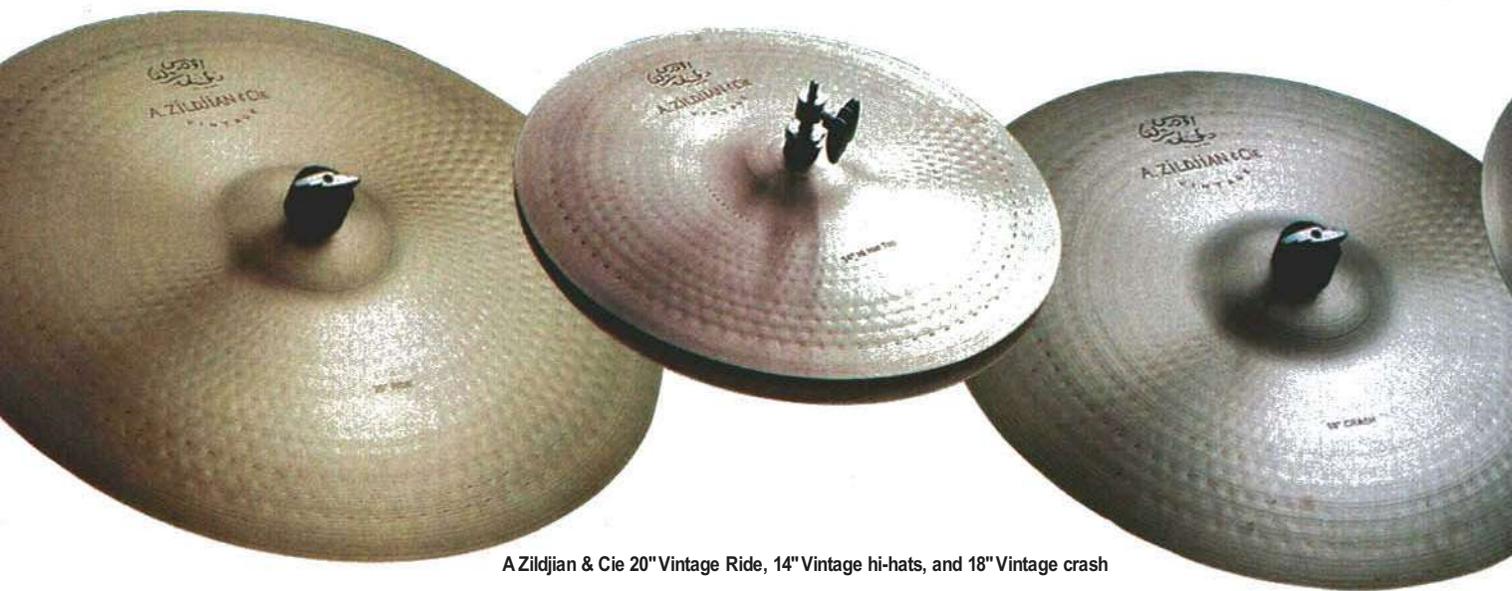
When something works for you, you stay with it. The introduction of A Zildjian & Cie crash cymbals early in 2000 certainly worked for Zildjian. Designed to create "the pure sound of the earliest Zildjians made in the US during the 1930s" (and based heavily on vintage cymbals from Armand Zildjian's personal collection), the A Zildjian & Cie crashes were throwbacks to cymbals used by the great drummers of the swing era. They proved pretty popular with drummers in *this* era, too, so it's not surprising that Zildjian has followed them up with a ride and hi-hat cymbals (along with yet another crash).

20" Vintage Ride. Described as medium thin by Zildjian, I'd peg this ride more specifically on the thin side as compared to most others on the market. That thinness gives it an airy, breathy sound when played softly and a sweet, pure, musical sound when played more forcefully. Even when I played at a fairly energetic volume level, the cymbal responded with a sibilance that gave it body, without ever getting washy or trashy-sounding. A nylon-tipped stick brought out more highs—and thus more stick articulation—while a wood-tipped stick retained the vintage character of the ride sound. As a bonus, the cymbal's thinness gave it excellent response when crashed, too.

The bell on this model is not large, and the bell-ride sound isn't great. But then, drummers didn't play the bells very much back in the swing era. What they did do was propel twenty-piece big bands with the shimmering sound of rides like this. Very sweet.

14" Vintage Hi-Hats. Zildjian's press release states that these hi-hat cymbals are "filled with character," and that they "summon the memory

by Rick Van Horn



A Zildjian & Cie 20" Vintage Ride, 14" Vintage hi-hats, and 18" Vintage crash

of 'Mr. Hi-Hat' himself, Papa Jo Jones." A lofty claim, indeed.

If that claim brings to mind a swing ride in the classic "spang a lang" tradition, these cymbals will serve beautifully. The thin top and medium bottom combine to create a satisfying, breathy stick sound, with a shimmering wash that fattens up the beat and adds character. They also produce a very quick response. What they *can't* do is create the biting, funky "chick" sound that heavier cymbals would. (Papa Jo didn't play Chili Peppers licks.) But they'd sure sound sweet on a jazz date, a moderate-volume pop gig, a studio session, or anywhere else where a killer "chick" isn't a high priority.

18" Vintage Crash. This crash fills out the range of sizes in the A Zildjian & Cie series, which also includes the 14", 15", and 16" models introduced last year. Simply put, it's just about the purest, most natural, "this is what a cymbal should sound like" crash I've heard in many a moon.

Unequivocally my favorite among all the cymbals in this review group, this crash was thin, but by no means lacking in body. It had a full spectrum of frequencies that just *exploded* out of the cymbal when it was struck. Only its weight would keep it from being a totally all-purpose crash; it would never survive arena-rock pounding. But other than that, this is a cymbal that just makes you smile!

An interesting point about the A Zildjian & Cie cymbals is that part of their sound is created by an aging process of at least two months. Zildjian states that this process, combined with the fact that the cymbals can only be made in batches of forty or so at a time, means that their availability will be extremely limited. Of course, this *could* be a bit of a marketing come-on, but nonetheless it's something that drummers enamored of the line should be aware of.

21" A Custom Projection Ride

This is a ride designed especially for rock music, in the

tradition of the original A Zildjian 21" Rock ride. With its heavy weight, large, deep bell, shallow lathing, and brilliant finish, it *really* focuses on the high end of the frequency spectrum. But while heavy rock cymbals are generally high-pitched simply due to their weight, they can also be a little clanky and downright dull-sounding. Not this puppy. It had life and clarity within its power. Whether I played the bell or the shoulder of the cymbal, it rang clearly with a sharp, penetrating ping. Its 21" size gives it more power than a 20" ride, and more control than that of a 22". So stick definition was clean and articulate.

I did notice that the bell sounded a little "gated," without a lot of sustain. I'm told by Zildjian that this characteristic will vary from cymbal to cymbal in any model. Some drummers might actually appreciate the articulation of a bell that rings out and then drops off quickly. It's just something to check out when you test any ride cymbal on your own.

The A Custom Rock ride is definitely a limited-application model. But that application involves a *lot* of drummers. It's not what you'd call full-bodied, because the lower ranges and undertones are definitely not represented. But those aren't the sort of acoustic characteristics that you're likely to need when competing with a Marshall stack, now are they?

21" K Heavy Ride

Well, maybe I spoke too soon. The K heavy ride is the antithesis of the A Custom Projection ride. As such, it might be just the ticket for drummers who *do* want deep, warm undertones and dark, mysterious characteristics from their rides, even at high volumes.

The cymbal features a special oversized bell and a flat taper that help it produce a warm, deep, low-end ride sound, with lots of rumbling undertones and a bit of gonginess that never gets out of control. It doesn't have a lot of high end, but there's enough for clear stick articulation. And



21" A Custom Projection ride, 21" K heavy ride, and 21" K Custom Special Dry ride

if you need even more penetration, this ride has a *killer* bell. It really contrasted with the rest of the cymbal sound, ringing out clear, high, and long. It's nice to get that sort of split personality within one ride.

21" K Custom Special Dry Ride

You want dark and dry? You got it. This cymbal has absolutely *no* "pinginess" at all. Even the use of a nylon-tip stick didn't make much difference; the dry stick sound just got a little "clickier."

This hybrid model features hammering processes from both the K Custom and the Re-Mix ranges. Fully lathed on the bottom, it's "scored" on top using a new lathing tool and techniques. It's designed to have a brighter, more penetrating stick sound than that of the K Custom Dry Light ride. Well, if that's the case, I wonder how anybody could even *hear* that model, because the stick sound on this one was about as dry and subtle as I could ever imagine.

An interesting characteristic of this ride is that it just borders on being "crashable" (in the way a jazz drummer

would crash on a ride cymbal, *not* as a substitute for a crash cymbal). It also has a larger bell than other K Custom Dry models, making the bell more accessible.

Like the K heavy, the bell offered a nice contrast to the deep, dry sound of the cymbal: It sounded bright, clear, and clangy—in a good way.

This is definitely the most exotic cymbal in our review group, and it's not for everybody. But Zildjian feels that it's "ideal for electric jazz and modern electronic music," based on the response of many of their endorsers who play in that genre. If you play that music, too—or if you're just interested in something out of the ordinary—you'll want to check out the K Custom Special Dry ride.

THE NUMBERS

A Zildjian & Cie Models

14" Vintage Hi-Hats (pair)	\$520
18" Vintage Crash	\$362
20" Vintage Ride	\$415
21" A Custom Projection Ride	\$380
21" K Heavy Ride	\$439
21" K Custom Special Dry Ride	\$453



Canopus Toms And Bass Drums

Designed To Be Different

HITS

thin shells provide good resonance

reinforcement rings provide strength

bearing-edge profiles are matched to drum type to eliminate high-pitched overtones

MISSES

Floor toms may be too dry for some tastes

A short time back I reviewed the solid-shell Zelkova snare drum made by a small Japanese company called Canopus. It was a unique drum in terms of its sound and construction. Canopus has also offered a variety of metal and ply-shell snares for quite a while. But now the company has entered the US market with toms and bass drums to create complete drumkits.



by Rick Mattingly

Ring Around The...Drum

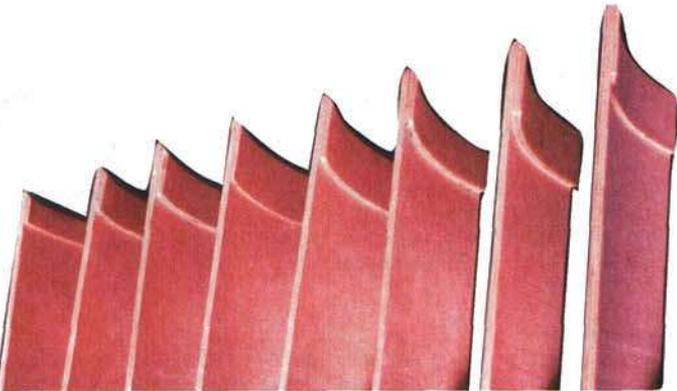
In the 1960s and '70s, reinforcement rings in drumshells were the norm (with the exception of Gretsch). But in the 1980s several drum-makers besides Gretsch started offering shells with no reinforcement rings, claiming that a quality drumshell doesn't *need* them. Pretty soon, reinforcement rings became the exception rather than the rule.

Canopus has taken a fresh look at the situation and decided that reinforcement rings are desirable in toms and bass drums. But the rings they use are quite thin. While they do add strength to the shell where it's most needed, they are also designed to enhance the vibrational capabilities of the shell by addressing a basic conflict in drum-making.

It is generally agreed that the thinner a shell, the more resonance the drum will have and the warmer the tone will be. But if the shell is *too* thin, the drum won't have the strength it needs to withstand the tension of the heads and to stand up to forceful playing.

Because they use reinforcement rings, Canopus is able to start with a thin shell. From there, they use nine different "formulas" of shell plies + ring plies + ring width to create their eleven tom and bass-drum models.

The rings vary in thickness from 3-ply to 5-ply, increasing the shell thickness at each end of the drums by 60-100%. The rings also vary in width from 1/2" on the smallest rack tom to 1 1/4" on floor toms and bass drums (except the 12x15 bass drum, on which the ring is only 1" wide). Canopus explains all of this by comparing the shell to a guitar string and the reinforcement ring to a guitar bridge. If you're curious, read all about it at the company's Web site, www.canopusdrums.com.



Size and thickness of reinforcement rings varies with the size of each drum.

The company also matches the bearing edge to the type of drum. Rack toms, floor toms, and bass drums each feature edges with slightly different profiles. According to the company, this is done to control high-pitched overtones so that no muffling is necessary.

This all sounds good in theory, but how do the drums sound to the ears? We'll discuss them by category.

Bass Drums

We received bass drums in all four sizes that Canopus makes. I started with the 15x22 drum, and immediately came to the conclusion that it was everything a bass drum should be. It had plenty of punch, but it also had a warm tone. The sound was dry enough that I didn't feel the need for any additional muffling, yet it had enough resonance and sustain to make it sound rich and full.



The 15x20 drum was equally impressive. Because of its diameter, it favored a slightly higher pitch, but it still had plenty of bottom. And while it understandably didn't produce quite as much volume as the 22" drum, it had more power than I expected. As such it would probably be the best choice for those needing a drum that's strong enough for rock but that wouldn't overpower pop or even jazz settings.

Having played quite a few jazz gigs over the years, I've heard many 18" bass drums that sound more like large toms. (You might call them "baritone" drums.) But the Canopus 14x18 bass drum got a credible bass sound with good punch and a warm tone. In fact, it compared favorably to some 20" bass drums I've worked with.

If an 18" bass drum is a "baritone," then you'd have to call a 15" bass drum a "tenor." Anyway, that was my take on the Canopus 12x15. Tuning it as low as possible without the heads flapping, I was reminded of the way Elvin Jones tunes his 18" bass drum. I've heard other jazz drummers use similar tunings. So the Canopus 12x15 drum might find favor with drummers who want to keep their "bass" drum above the range of an acoustic bass player.

This drum could also work for those who pad their bass drums so as to get a dry "thud" rather than a "boom." Of course, even a thud has *some* pitch to it, and there is no way that this drum will ever be mistaken for a 22" or even a 20". On the other hand, it could be quite adequate for triggering applications, and it certainly is easy to carry compared to a traditional bass drum. I'd suggest a drier batter head than an Emperor, though...such as a Pinstripe.

Floor Toms

One of the company's stated goals is to reduce "undesirable" high-pitched overtones by shaping the bearing edge. They've certainly achieved it with the floor toms, although from prior experience with floor toms on which the shell depth is less than the head diameter, I'm not sure all the



credit can be given to the bearing edge. Nevertheless, all three drums had a considerably dry sound. But they also had quite a bit of sustain, which you don't always get with such a narrow range of overtones.

Of the three drums, the 12x13 had the best tone, with the 13x14 a close second. But try as I might to tune, the 15x16 remained dry to the point of sounding brittle. This is *not* the drum for those who like boomy floor toms that sound like you're playing in a bathtub. But for those who prefer a contained sound with strong attack and good sustain, all of the Canopus floor toms are worth investigating.

Rack Toms



All of the rack toms we reviewed were fitted with RIMS suspension mounts. They shared the basic characteristics of the floor toms in terms of having a dry, focused sound with a lot of sustain. But all four of the rack toms had warmer, rounder tones than any of the floor toms. They also sounded good over a larger pitch range.

All Together Now

When I started playing various combinations of tomtoms and floor toms, I was impressed at how well they

all worked together. I've played many kits in which the rack toms sounded fine in their own right, as did the floor toms. But when I started playing "around the kit" patterns, it sounded as if I had changed drumsets when I went from one type of tom to the other. Not so here. Even though the rack toms had slightly richer tonal qualities than the floor toms, the overall sound of the drums was harmonious. Had the floor toms been any "boomier," they would have overpowered the small toms.

If I were only using two toms, I wouldn't match the 6 1/2 x8 rack tom with the 15x16 floor tom, since the optimum pitches for each drum wouldn't make a good match. Nevertheless, in terms of overall timbre, they sounded as if they belonged to the same drumkit. So it would be pretty safe to mix and match sizes to fit one's personal preferences.

Conclusions

Canopus drums feature quality workmanship, and they are professional in sound and appearance. But they're not just a carbon-copy of all the other drums on the market. What sets them apart is that elusive quality called "personality." The dry sound of Canopus drums won't fit everyone's taste or playing style, but then neither does the "old K" style of hand-hammered cymbals.

Buddy Rich said that the best thing you can say about any drummer is that he has his own sound. Perhaps that same philosophy should be applied to drums themselves. If you agree, you should check out Canopus drums. They're available through various dealers in the US, and can also be ordered direct from the company's Web site: www.canopusdrums.com.

THE NUMBERS

Bass Drums	Floor Toms	Rack Toms
12x15 \$900	12x13 (six-lug) \$570	6 1/2x8 (five-lug) \$460
14x18 \$870	13x14 (eight-lug) \$620	7x10 (six-lug) \$480
15x20 \$940	15x16 (eight-lug) \$720	8x12 (six-lug) \$490
15x22 \$970		9x13 (six-lug) \$560

Drumheads:

18", 20", and 22" bass drums fitted with Remo PowerStroke 3 batter heads with Falam Slam impact pads. 18" and 22" drums fitted with white coated front heads with Canopus logos; 20" drum fitted with smooth black front head. 15" drum fitted with Remo Emperor batter and coated white front head. All toms fitted with Remo white-coated Ambassador heads on both sides.

Shells: 100% New England maple

20" and 22" bass drums: 6-ply, 5/32" thick
All other drums: 5-ply, 1/4"-thick.

Finishes: Standard colors: sparkles in red, blue, green, black, silver, gold, and champagne, solid black. Custom colors (10% extra charge): black oyster, white marine sparkle, and black diamond.



Cadeson Soundscape Drumset

Your kit can really be a work of art.

HITS

unique aesthetic design

impressive sound

collectible value at mid-price level

MISSES

hardware details could use

tweaking

by Chap Ostrander

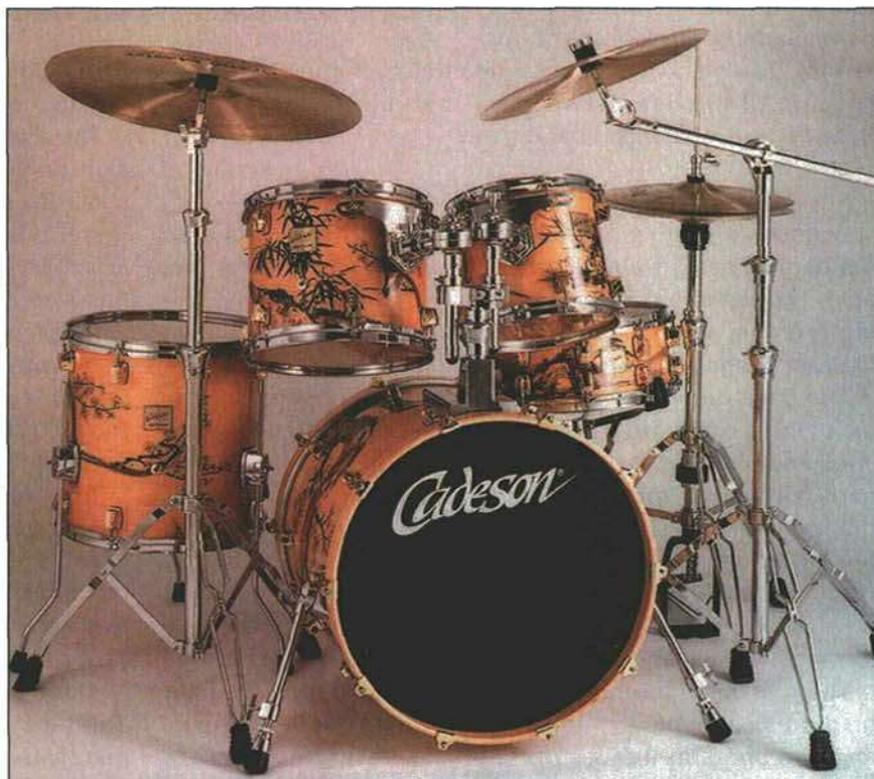
In the March 2000 *MD*, Rick Mattingly reviewed Cadeson's Royal Custom Snare with hand-painted "Chinese Watercolor" graphics. Rick indicated that the drum possessed a striking appearance with sound to match. Now Cadeson has gone one step further by building a limited edition of one hundred Soundscape drumkits with artwork in the same style. Let's have a look at the package.

The Visual Element

The artistry of the watercolor design is the most immediately apparent feature of the kit. The scenes are principally of mountain ranges, which in the Chinese culture denote nobility. The light maple finish of the drums makes for a great "canvas," and the brush strokes are broad, strong, and subtle at the same time. There is also a delicate use of color. Each drum is individually signed and numbered, adding to its uniqueness and collectibility.

The Drums

The shells are four thin plies of maple with 2-ply reinforcing rings, making the drums light and easy to handle. The bearing edges are double 45° angles. Nylon spacers are placed underneath the lugs, name badges, and vents where they attach to the shells. The solid machined-brass low-mass lugs are gold-plated, and they attach to the shells with one screw each. Cadeson uses the same-size lugs for all the drums,



which allows them to fit on each shell without getting in the way of the artwork.

The ten-lug snare drum features a very smooth-working side-throw strainer mated with a non-adjustable butt plate. Plastic straps on both ends support the 20-wire snares. The die-cast hoops on our review drum had a satin finish, but they're also available with 24K gold or chrome plating.

Our review snare was, quite simply, a joy to behold and play. It had a very controlled sound at low and normal volumes. When I leaned into it, the voice became powerful, with lots of penetration. There was no choking in the high end, and the drum definitely retained the character and sound of a wood-shell snare. It was also sensitive to brush work, and cross-stick rimclicks had a strong, woody quality. I took the drum on several gigs, and it worked fine in different scenarios, from jazz to rock to show music. This would be an easy snare to live with.

The bass drum was equally impressive. Of course there was the quality of the painting on its shell. A mountain scene with trees dominated the upper portion. But I liked other design features as well. The gold-plated claw hooks, washers, and tension rods combine with the painting and the maple shell to create a nice visual balance.

In terms of performance, the drum had a very pleasing sound. Its Remo Pinstripe batter and black Cadeson-logo resonant head combined with the thin shell to produce lots of presence, depth, and body. It sounded surprisingly big for a 20" bass.

All of the toms had full tones and distinct voices. Like the bass drum, the 14x14 floor tom had a particularly deep, full sound for its size. The blend of all the drums together created a good spacing of pitches between all the voices, making the Soundscape a balanced package.

The Hardware

Cadeson's double-braced 980 series hardware features handsome design elements that make it easily recognizable. The top of each stand section funnels out slightly, giving it a shapely look. Each height adjustment has its own die-cast wingnut displaying the company name.

The bass drum pedal features a straightforward design, including a chain drive over a linear sprocket and an infinite stroke adjustment at the spring connection. It comes with a hard felt beater, spurs underneath, and a solid plate under the footboard. Best of all, it attaches to the bass hoop using a wingnut on the side of the pedal, so you don't have to reach underneath—always a good thing. The pedal doesn't have much in the way of bells and whistles, but it performed just fine, and I got comfortable with it very quickly.

The hi-hat has a rotating three-leg design with a wingnut height adjustment, a drumkey lock at the base of the legs, and two spurs in the base of the yoke. A large chain con-

nects directly from the footboard to the pull rod. As with many other hi-hats, there is a large plastic knob on the lower tube (above the footboard) for adjusting the spring tension. However, you don't twist it to make adjustments. Going up the center of the tube is a vertical channel, with four small horizontal side channels on each side. These channels are all offset, so that each one represents a different tension level. You center the knob on the vertical channel, pull it up to the desired level, and turn it left or right to secure it in the appropriate horizontal channel. It's a simple and secure system. I found all of the spring tension levels to be workable, with none too tight or too loose. Overall, the hi-hat was smooth, quiet, and easy to play.

The snare stand is also well designed. Its low profile could easily be used for a deeper drum. The tilt angle is set using a ball & socket arrangement like that of the tom holders. It attaches to the snare basket with a drumkey screw directly underneath the basket, so your snare can sit close to the floor. With everything set in the low position, the bottom of the drum sits a scant 15" off the floor.

The rack-tom holder on the bass drum features a slide-track design that allows you to move the entire mount forward or backward for convenient positioning. The track is

just over 7" long, so you have some room to play with. The track mount also eliminates the need for anything to protrude into the bass drum shell.

The upper part of the tom mount is a 5 1/2"-tall rod with a three-hole multi-clamp casting on top. The tom arms that mount in two of the three holes provide additional height. (The third hole can be used for a

cymbal arm or another tom.) I can't imagine needing more low-to-high positioning range than this system provides.

The tom arms go through clamps mounted on suspension rings that attach to the lugs. (Small felt circles on the shell of each tom prevent marring the finish with a hastily installed mounting arm.) A solid-feeling ball & socket assembly controls the angle and tilt of the toms. The socket has a wide opening, so you have lots of angles to work with. Memory locks on the height and length adjustments mate with slots in the mounting sites. There is also a small rubber bumper under the clamp on the tom so that violent movement of the system would not damage the shell. It's a very solid and well-designed system.

The "suspension" tom mounts mentioned earlier utilize a curved metal strip that attaches to threaded posts coming out of two upper lugs. These lugs are smaller than the others, so the metal strip retains a low profile. A nylon spacer prevents metal-to-metal contact between the strip and the lugs.

Of the two cymbal stands that come with the kit, one is straight and the other is a convertible straight/boom design. The tilters feature a ratchet design, with small teeth that permit you to set fairly fine angles.



This close-up shot of the Cadeson Royal Custom snare drum MD reviewed last May highlights the company's wonderful watercolor detailing.

I do have some minor complaints about Cadeson's hardware design. For example, the locking collars included for the height adjustment of the bottom of the tom mount and the length of the hi-hat stand have a tab sticking out, as if to mate with a corresponding hole in the receiving portion. But there is no such hole. This means that while you can lock in the height of a tube, you can't lock in its rotation setting.

Additionally, the floor-tom leg mounts use two drumkey screws to secure each leg. I don't mind the lack of memory locks on the legs themselves, but it's a drag to have to work with a drumkey to attach the legs. The same thing goes for the height adjustment of the tom arms. All three holes in the multi clamp have two drumkey screws each. If you position the holder in the logical way, with two holes facing you, you can't change the height of the drums without removing them from the arms.

I don't consider these as major design flaws by any means. But they are minor annoyances in what is otherwise a very solid and sensible hardware package.

Art Meets Economy

Considering their acoustic and aesthetic features—plus the fact that only a hundred of them will be built—I'd con-

sider these drumkits a bargain at two and a half to three grand. But check the specs box, and you'll see that they're priced well *below* that mark. They actually fall into the low-mid price range! And if Oriental graphics aren't your thing, Cadeson's Studio series features the same shells and hardware without the hand-painted artwork—for \$200 less. Such a deal!

For more information, get in touch with Cadeson's US representative, Chris Wabich, at Accurate Percussion, PO Box 3901, Torrance, CA 90510, (213) 482-4010, accper@juno.com. You can also contact Cadeson directly at Cadeson@ms14.hinet.net

THE NUMBERS

Configuration: 5 1/2x14 snare drum, 8x10 and 9x12 suspended rack toms, 14x14 floor tom with legs, and 16x20 bass drum

Shells: 4-ply maple with 2-ply reinforcing rings

Hardware: 980 Series Double-braced stands, including a cymbal stand, a cymbal/boom stand, a snare stand, a hi-hat stand, and a bass drum pedal

Finish: Chinese watercolor design over natural maple shells

List Price: \$1,890



Pearl H-2000 PowerShifter Eliminator Hi-Hat

Why should your bass-drum foot have all the fun?

HITS

multiple cams plus PowerShifter feature equals lots of feel choices

room for extra pedals on both sides of hi-hat footboard

clean, attractive design

by Chap Ostrander

The hi-hat has been an integral part of the drummer's arsenal since its introduction in the 1920s. Originally called "sock cymbals" because the cymbals were positioned about 10" off the floor, the hi-hat evolved to a higher position so that drummers could use sticks on the cymbals. These days, the hi-hat is taking an ever-more-active role in contemporary drum grooves. And as the hi-hat has grown in its use and application, so too has the sophistication of its design. And on the cutting edge of that sophistication is the Pearl PowerShifter Eliminator H-2000. Let's see what makes it new and different.

Ups And Downs

At first glance the Eliminator looks like a fairly simple hi-hat with not much going on mechanically. Ha! At the top of the stand, the new SuperGrip clutch features a hinged gripping area secured by a die-cast wingnut, which allows you to really lock down the height of your top cymbal. The tapered rubber washers that hold that cymbal in place minimize contact with the cymbal, as does the rubber washer below the bot-



tom cymbal, which has three raised points. An easy-to-adjust set screw controls the angle of the bottom cymbal. And the two halves of the pull rod screw together at the point where the top tube goes into the base. (You don't have to fish for the threaded bottom half while assembling the unit. Yay!)

A large plastic knob on the base adjusts the spring tension. Our review pedal went through nineteen clicks from loose to tight. As the knob is turned, a cylinder rises out of it. The cylinder has rings cut into it, providing a good visual indication of your tension setting. If someone borrows your pedal and readjusts it, you can easily reset the tension to your liking by counting the clicks or the rings above the knob.

The footboard of the H-2000 is Pearl's TractionPlate. Its movable rubber grips and reversible footplate allow you to customize the traction feeling to your liking. In a nice touch, Pearl includes a bag to cover the footboard and keep it free from scratches during travel, along with a nylon strap that secures the collapsed leg/footboard package to the lower assembly. It might seem like a little extra trouble when setting up or packing, but I think the benefit of keeping the footboard safe outweighs the time it takes.

The Eliminator hi-hat also features Pearl's PowerShifter variable-pedal-action concept. A drumkey-operated screw on the heel plate of the footboard allows you to adjust the leverage and feel of the pedal to your personal taste. The footboard attaches to the base via pivot points. You set the front of the base on the pivot points, slide it down and forward, and secure it with two drumkey screws. This makes the whole assembly very solid—which it needs to be, since the footboard comprises one third of the leg supports. The other two legs rotate, letting you position pedals on either side of the Eliminator.

Speaking of the legs, their rubber feet include reversible spikes that ride in channels molded into the rubber. If you don't want the spikes, you keep them retracted. If you do want them, you loosen a drum key screw and a spring

behind each spike raises it up out of the channel. Very convenient. And the spikes are sharp and solid, so this baby ain't movin'.

Combined with the PowerShifter footboard is Pearl's PosiLink Twin Cam Drive System, adapted from the P-2000 Eliminator bass drum pedal. Double-link chains come down from the pull rod and wrap around an adjustable cam. Next to the pull-rod cam are the twin chains that connect to the pedal. These chains ride on felt-lined channels within one of four interchangeable drive cams. There are three height settings built into the chain connection to the pedal. The pull rod cam, which is tightened on its axle through the use of a drumkey screw, is infinitely adjustable.

Here's a quick run-down on the cams: The round black cam provides a traditional linear feel for smooth and balanced action. The white cam is also round, but with a larger diameter that makes the feel lighter and at the same time boosts the power. The blue cam emulates the feel of an eccentric-cam-drive bass pedal, with a power curve that starts out light and then accelerates with both speed and power at the end of the stroke. The red cam takes this to a higher level by having a more radically eccentric angle, providing lots of response and power upon impact. All four cams can be changed with the push of a button. The Eliminator hi-hat comes with a carrying case containing cams, a drumkey, and the allen wrenches you need for certain adjustments.

How Does It Play?

Since it's the newest feature on this pedal, I'll go into the effect of the cams first. The black cam definitely approximates the feel of what I would call a "normal" hi-hat: a linear translation of the motion of the foot to the travel of the cymbal. When I switched to the white cam, the feel was indeed lighter, due to the cam's larger diameter and range of pull. With the blue cam—the smaller of the two "eccentric" or progressive cams—the action and response of the



pedal did speed up somewhat. But I have to say that it was hard to notice much acceleration through the two inches of maximum travel of the top cymbal. However, when I changed to the more eccentric red cam, things changed dramatically. The action of the pedal was lighter and quicker, and I could really feel the difference.

When I experimented with the three footboard positions offered by the PowerShifter feature, I was absolutely shocked at the difference they made. When set to the front, the pedal felt strong and heavy, but not lethargic. The middle setting gave it a "standard" feel similar to that of many other top-quality hi-hats. At the rearmost setting the pedal felt airy and extremely responsive. It's up to each individual player to determine which combination of cams and PowerShifter position would best suit him or her, but there are certainly *lots* of choices.

Variations On A Theme

Although two-legged hi-hats are fairly common, the Eliminator looks unusual because its down tube is offset from being above the pedal by about an inch. The legs are also offset to accommodate this. I mentioned earlier that the chain attaches to the footboard at one of three points that you can set to customize the footboard height. Next to that is the infinitely adjustable cam under the pull rod. The benefit of this design is that you can infinitely vary the height of the footboard. It also allows you to maximize the effect of the individual cams. When using the blue or red cams, you can use the pull-rod adjustment to bring the "nose" of the cam to its highest point, thus giving it the greatest effect on the pedal's action. If this point is set lower, the cam reacts in a more linear fashion.

There are a lot of drumkey-screw adjustments on the Eliminator hi-hat, and they need to be tightened securely. Otherwise you could end up with the footboard on the floor and your cymbals left flapping in the breeze. But Pearl did their homework, and the hi-hat's operating manual (!)

advises you to tighten the screws securely when changing settings.

Another thing to be aware of is the potential of rotating the legs too far in either direction, which could make the pedal unstable. But again the manual comes to the rescue, warning you to test the stability of the setup once you have changed things. In reality, 99% of drummers out there would probably leave the legs in the standard tripod configuration. That setup permits the placement of a pedal on each side of the footboard with no interference whatever. Leg rotation may be more of an issue for those with setups where the surrounding area is an industrial landscape of protruding legs, feet, and other drums.

Process Of Elimination

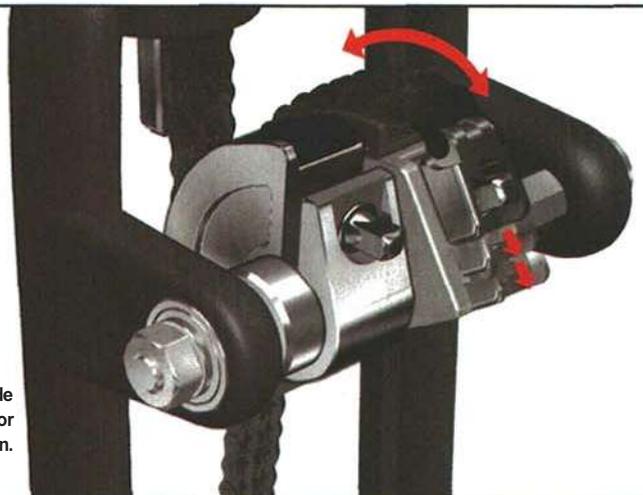
Stated simply, the Eliminator hi-hat is a very well-thought-out product. My feeling is that once you find a cam and PowerShifter setting you like, you'll probably leave it alone. (I could see changing one or both if you need to alter the feel in response to a change of cymbals, or even if your foot is more fatigued than usual on a given gig.) But *getting* to that one personal setting is going to be fun. Remember, you have the choices afforded by the cams (that's four), multiplied by the three settings of the PowerShifter footboard (that makes twelve), plus the infinite adjustments you can make with the pull-rod cam. (Now my head hurts!) With most other hi-hats, if you grow dissatisfied with their feel, you have to purchase another pedal. With the H-2000 Eliminator, you already have at least twelve different pedals at your fingertips... er, toes.

THE NUMBERS

Pearl H-2000	PowerShifter Eliminator Hi-Hat
Linkage:	chain
Drive:	four selectable cams
Footboard:	three variable positions
Leg design:	two rotating legs; footboard serves as third leg
List price:	\$279



Interchangeable cams provide personalized feel and action.



The twin chains ride on felt channels for smooth, quiet action.



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Yamaha DXTREME Electronic Percussion System

The innovative meets the familiar in Yamaha's new high-end e-kit.

by Rick Long

Yamaha has upgraded their electronic drum line with the development of the DXTREME (pronounced "dee tee extreme") Electronic Percussion System. Building on the success of the DTX 2.0 Silent Session kit and the budget-minded DTXPRESS, Yamaha is now offering the DXTREME as their top-of-the-line electronic percussion system.

Not long after the release of the DTX

2.0 upgrade, Yamaha executives went "on the road" and talked with DTX users in order to find out how they were using electronic drums in the real world. The results of this effort led to the development of new features and capabilities that give the DXTREME more of the tools a drummer or percussionist needs when performing in professional-level live or recording situations.

HITS

Ambassador drumheads and wood shells provide realistic playing response

Convenient hands-on mixing control

Extensive sound palette with capability for expansion through SmartMedia cards

MISSES

Foam-backed genuine drumheads are noisy to play on

HH80 hi-hat controller does not track as well as HH60 from DTX-PRESS, and is tall and easy to snag with one's foot



Let's Get Real

The most obvious upgrade on the DTXTREME is the presence of "real" drumheads on the new RHP pads. The 12" diameter of the RHP120SD snare drum pad is a much-needed improvement over the smaller rubber pads that, quite frankly, were easy to miss when playing heavy backbeats. The pad has a 3"-deep birch and Philippine mahogany shell, onto which the drumhead is mounted with traditional lugs, tension rods, and a triple-flanged rim. Rubber protecting rings are included on the rims.

The RHP120SD offers "position sensing," which varies the response across the diameter of the head, in the manner of an acoustic drum. The "edge" response can be adjusted, thus allowing you to manipulate the settings and create some interesting new sonic possibilities.

The RHP pad series includes tom pads in 8", 10", and 12" diameters, along with a 12" kick pad. The toms are easily positioned using the Yamaha YESS mounting system and the ball-type rack arms that are included with the DTXTREME system. The kick drum is anchored with four legs (two in front and two in back), which give the pad very solid placement. It doesn't wobble or move no matter how hard you play it.

The two PCY80S cymbal pads included with the DTXTREME are the same ones from the earlier DTX kit. These are two-zone, triangle-shaped pads designed with a pressure-sensitive trigger on the upper portion and a "switch-type" trigger on the rim. The "switch" means that this pad will not function correctly if connected to an input that doesn't have compatibility with this type of trigger. Inputs on the DTXTREME marked "snare," "tom," "ride," "crash," and "hi-hat" have this compatibility. Inputs 9 through 16 do not. This means that if you'd like to add more cymbals to the kit, they'll have to be single-zone pads, or pads that don't have a switch mechanism for the rim area.

The PCY10 cymbal bell pad is also the same as before. This is a very useful pad in that it will work with inputs 9

through 16. The pad is small, which makes fitting several around the kit easy to do. And while the PCY10 does resemble the bell of a cymbal, remember that it can be programmed to be anything. These pads are great for splash cymbals, special effects, or increment/decrement switching.

The hi-hat pad and pedal are probably the weakest links in the DTXTREME chain. The pad works well enough, but it's fairly rigid when compared to the cymbal pads. This makes riding on the pad a bit rough on the joints. Some drummers have experimented with using a cymbal pad for the hi-hat as a way to get around that rigidity. This will work, but there are problems with false triggering of the rim due to the floppy nature of those pads. Most drummers stay with the rigid pad and try not to play harder than necessary.

The hi-hat foot controller is the same HH80 model from the original DTX. The DTXPRESS uses a different controller, the HH60, which has a lower profile. I actually prefer that pedal, and I wish Yamaha had included it with the DTXTREME. There are two reasons for this. First, the HH60 has a smoother motion than the HH80, and it seems to track the hi-hat controller function better. Second, the HH80 has a rather tall, tower-like design that makes it very easy to snag with your foot and turn over when getting out from behind the kit. My kit is often set up where space is tight, and I've caught my foot on that HH80 controller and pulled it over many times.

Brain Power

The DTXTREME sound module has many new features. These include 1,757 drum or percussion sounds, 64-note polyphony (see the sidebar if you don't know how important this is), sixteen trigger inputs, eight output jacks, and new hands-on controls for individual pad volume, voice editing, trigger adjustment, and manipulation of other parameters. All of the sounds were re-recorded for the DTXTREME, since the new module uses a higher 16-bit sampling rate and more memory than the former DTX 2.0 chip.



POLYPHONY, AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

"Polyphony" refers to the number of notes that a music synthesizer can play at one time. With 64-note polyphony, the DTXTREME can play 64 simultaneous notes. You might think this is a tremendous number, since the chance of playing sixty-four drums or cymbals at once is pret-

ty slim. But the importance of 64-note polyphony comes in when you set a drum voice to "poly." This means that for each time you hit that drum a new note/sound is generated, while the previous note is not cut off until it has faded away naturally. This makes for smoother cym-

bal and timpani rolls. But you will be using lots of polyphony to get that effect.

You will also need 64-note polyphony if you play back complex MIDI files. All those keyboard sounds you'll be hearing take up a large amount of the available polyphony.

New kit names make it much easier to tell what kinds of drums were used to create the sounds. Kit names like "Maple" and "Beech" refer to Yamaha drums made with those shell materials. Other kit names, like "MCA Clear" (Maple Custom Absolute with clear heads) and "RC Pin" (Recording Custom [birch shells] with Pinstripe heads) refer to both shell and head materials.

The module contains sixty preset drumkits, plus space for forty user-definable kits. Room to store ninety-nine more user-defined kits is available via the SmartMedia memory card slot on the right side of the module. SmartMedia cards are small (about 1" square) but hold up to 164 MB of digital data, depending on which model of SmartMedia card you have. The obvious use of the cards is to store the DTXEXTREME's memory for safekeeping. But another use is to store sound files (AIFF format, mono) that you can record on your home computer. This way, the sounds of your favorite acoustic percussion instruments become available on the DTXEXTREME. (See the sidebar on AIFF files.)

A new voice called "XTr" (Extreme) allows you to create a "virtual" snare drum. When this patch is selected, voice-editing options expand to include shell material, muffling, snare strainer tension, and volume balance between the shell and snare sounds. This feature works very well for creating realistic-sounding custom snare drums. And after all, one of the biggest reasons to go to an electronic drumkit in the first place is the ability to create thousands of dollars' worth of custom snare drums and drumkits within a matter of minutes.

As for the hi-hat functionality within the sound module, the unit works very well. There are several types of hi-hat sounds to choose from, so whether you like smaller hats for jazz or something with more bite for rock, you should be able to find a sound that you like. You can achieve half-open and splash sounds that are very realistic. And for a thick, closed hi-hat sound, you can take an "open" hi-hat patch and turn down the delay so that it sounds "closed." This will free up your left foot for double-bass pedal work and still allow you to have the closed hi-hat sound available.

Let Your Fingers Do The Walking

Another much-needed improvement on the DTXEXTREME is the row of ten individual volume sliders found on top of the module: Main Out, Phones, Click, Accomp/reverb, Snare, Kick, Tom, Hi-Hat, Cymbal, and Misc. These sliders make adjusting the balance of the drumkit much easier than on the previous DTX module. Press the "shift" key, and the six drum/cym sliders become individual reverb sends, while the Accomp/reverb



slider becomes the overall reverb return control.

I often find that different rooms and different sound systems accentuate various frequencies. The ability to tweak the hi-hat or the kick drum slightly to compensate for room or speaker differences is very handy. The sliders also make it easier to get the kick, snare, or ride-cymbal sound to sit on top of the kit mix, depending on the style of music you're playing.

The expanded number of outputs will help you get along with the sound engineer. Two stereo outputs (right and left/mono) sit alongside six additional outputs, labeled Snare, Kick, Tom, Hi-hat, Cymbal, and Misc, just like the associated sliders on the top of the module. Now you can feed the sound engineer the individual drums and cymbals that he or she is accustomed to having control over. For recording, where stereo panning is necessary, the outputs can be grouped into stereo pairs.

Extra Added Effects

The internal reverb has also been upgraded. Along with the typical reverb settings, chorus has been added to the overall reverb selections. Two parallel "insertion effects" allow you to assign reverb settings to specific drum voices. This is very useful for adding extra reverb to cymbal voices for added smoothness, or for other special effects. The list of insertion effects settings is extensive, with forty-four possible selections ranging from reverb, chorus, and compression to effects you may not have tried with drums in the past, including distortion, rotary speaker, tremolo, autopan, phaser, touchwah, and more. Want to add that "jet engine" phase-shift effect to your next solo? Now you can do it without any additional equipment.

Of special note is a "localizer" effect, which makes practicing with the kit very realistic. This is a three-dimensional spatial effect that goes beyond simple left/right panning. The

AIFF Files

Using computer equipment that you probably already own (sound card, microphone), you can record your acoustic drums and cymbals, or anything else for that matter, save it as a sound file in AIFF format (mono), then transfer it to a SmartMedia card. SmartMedia cards are used in many digital cameras, so your local electronic camera outlet will have a FlashPath device that resembles a 3.5" floppy disk with a SmartMedia card slot.

To get your AIFF files into the DTX-TREME, format the SmartMedia card in the DTX-TREME (see page 82 of the Owner's Manual), then place the SmartMedia card into the FlashPath device. With the FlashPath in your computer's floppy drive, you are ready to make the transfer.

A folder called Volume is created on the SmartMedia card when it is

formatted by the DTX-TREME. Your AIFF files can be saved into this folder. They also can be saved into the Autoload directory. This will cause the AIFF files to be automatically loaded into the sound module's memory when you power up the DTX-TREME. See page 81 of the manual to learn how the files need to be named in order for this to happen. Also read the other notes on that page regarding setting up separate directories for various sets of AIFF files that you might create. This is a powerful feature that might take a few minutes with the manual to fully grasp. But it will definitely be worth the effort.

To link the AIFF file to one of the DTX-TREME drum pads, you simply go into the voice edit mode and set the voice type to "wave," then select the AIFF file of your choice.

localizer makes it sound in your headphones as if the drums and cymbals are in the same position they would be in on an acoustic kit. For example, the rack toms sound like they are out in front of you and not just in the center of your headphone mix.

The DTX-TREME's onboard sequencer is similar to that of the DTX 2.0. You can make a recording of your playing by using the sound module without any other equipment. You also can access General MIDI (GM) files that you've stored on the SmartMedia card and play them back using the sequencer and the internal GM-compatible synthesizer.

The internal sequencer is useful for recording patterns and loops. But even more possibilities are available when you connect the DTX-TREME to a computer via MIDI ports or the new TO HOST jack. The IN, OUT, and THRU MIDI ports found on most professional synthesizers are included, along with PC and MAC protocol choices for the TO HOST jack.

But Can It Groove?

Okay, enough technical talk. What does it feel like to sit behind the new DTX-TREME and *play*?

Since the RHP pads have shells, you get the feeling of being behind a set of acoustic drums. The distance between the larger pads seems more natural (yet the kit is still compact enough to let you set up easily in a cramped space). The response of the pads is much improved over previous rubber-pad models. Rolls are even and crisp. Rimshots are easier to perform, since the pads have traditional rims.

The DTX-TREME's pads will not track brushes the way some other pad kits will. Frankly, while this might be important to a few drummers, my guess is that the majority of drummers who play often with brushes will continue to use acoustic drums. In the meantime, Yamaha includes a "Brush" preset drumkit that will do a decent job of getting you through an occasional tune that requires brushwork. To try this kit out, select the Brush kit and play the traditional

"spang-a-lang" jazz ride-cymbal pattern on the snare-drum pad. You'll hear a very good brush sound, complete with an underlying swish sound. This kit may actually make brush playing easier for drummers who don't have a lot of experience in that genre.

While the genuine coated Ambassador heads on the DTX-TREME provide a very familiar playing feel, they aren't as quiet as the mesh heads found on some other electronic kits. Because of patent issues, Yamaha cannot sell the RHP pads with a mesh head installed. If mesh heads are more to your preference, there are after-market mesh heads available. To help facilitate this, Yamaha includes a waffle-topped foam pad in the box with each RHP drum pad. This foam pad is to be used under a mesh head in place of the factory-installed foam pad mounted under the Ambassadors. I tried this setup for myself and found the response to be excellent and the pad sound definitely quieter.

The new RS 100 rack that comes with the DTX-TREME is based on the DTX RS80 rack, with the major changes being color and bracing. The new rack has a dark metallic silver finish that should show less wear than the black color of the DTX rack. The bracing uses full-size cross pipes and additional leg bracing pipes for added stability. The rack feels more stable when you play the kit or move the rack on and off stage.

Final Thoughts

The DTX-TREME six-piece kit has a fairly daunting list price. But it's already being discounted to a "street price" almost a thousand dollars lower. In any event, when compared to high-quality acoustic drums, the DTX-TREME certainly gives you more capabilities for your money. As for comparisons to other electronic kits, the DTX-TREME offers more sounds, along with the expanded functions that are available through the internal sequencer and the SmartMedia card. Whether you are planning to upgrade from your present electronic kit or want to add electronics to your equipment arsenal, the DTX-TREME is worthy of serious consideration.

THE NUMBERS

Configuration: Six-piece model with one 12" snare pad, one 8" tom pad, two 10" tom pads, one 12" tom pad, one 12" kick pad, one 8" rubber hi-hat pad (similar to earlier model's rubber drum pads), two PAY80S two-zone cymbal pads, one PCY10 bell pad, an HH80 hi-hat foot controller, and the RS100 rack system.

List price: \$4,600

Rick Long is a working drummer and freelance writer from Southern California. He is a frequent contributor to Drum Business magazine, also published by Modern Drummer Publications. For more information on electronic drumming, visit Rick's Web site at www.glassthunder.com.



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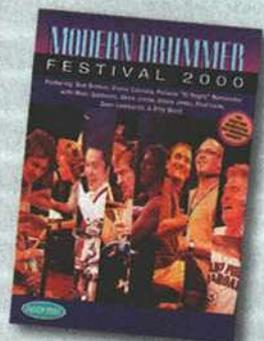
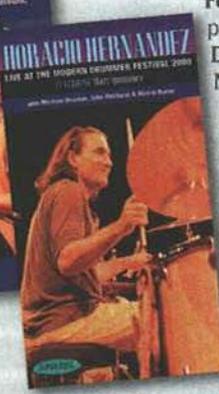
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Festival 2000 Sunday/Video (90 minutes) features great moments from Sunday's show, including performances and interviews with **Mike D'Angelo**, **Akira Jimbo**, **Billy Ward**, **Hilary Jones** and **Vinnie Colaiuta & Karizma** (featuring **David Garfield** on keyboards, **Mike Landau** on guitar and **Neil Stubenhaus** on bass).

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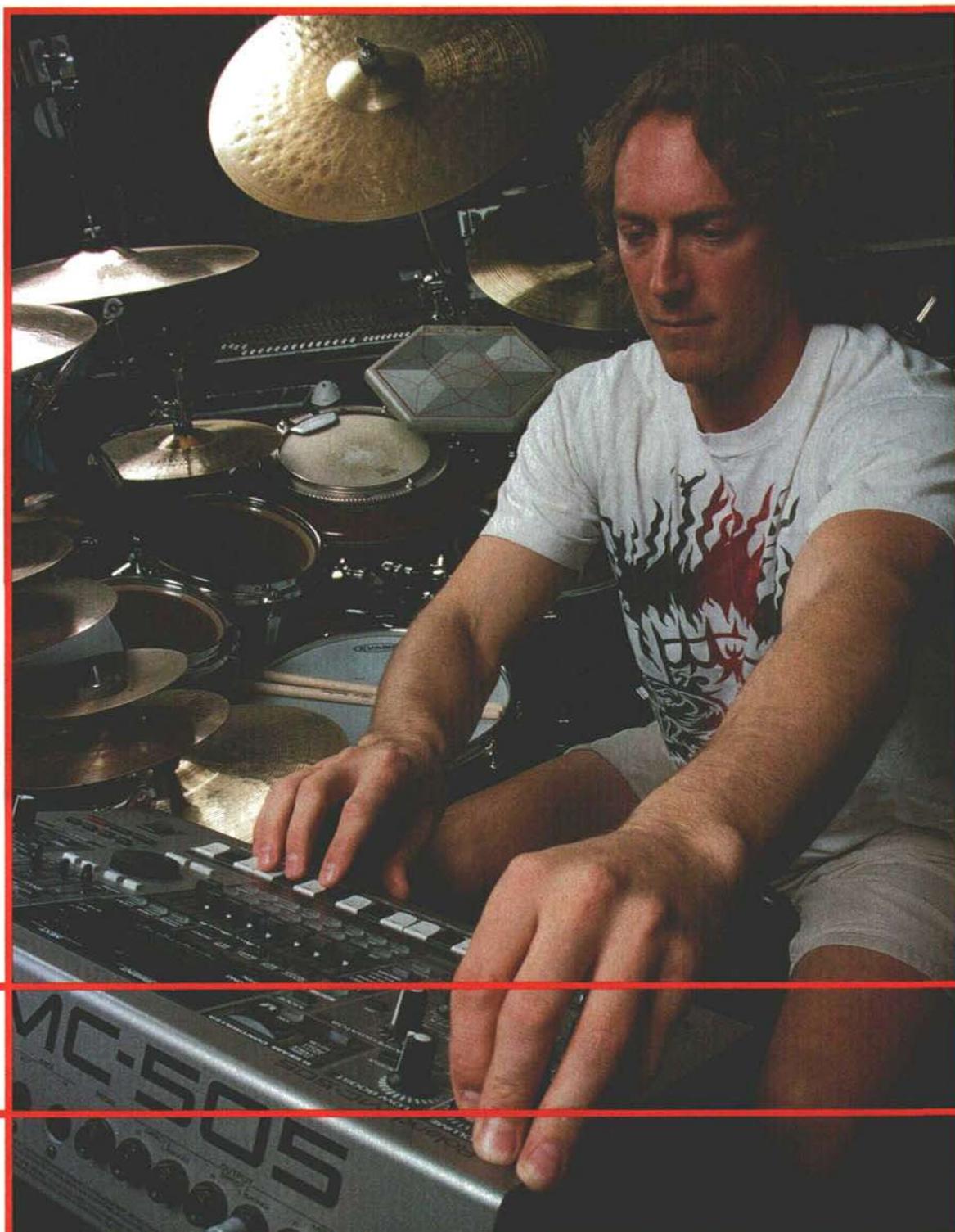
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Kevin Willis

For their fourth and most surprising album to date, Tool drummer Danny Carey, singer Maynard James Keenan, guitarist Adam Jones, and bassist Justin Chancellor pull out all the stops—injecting all of the metal meat and ritual magic they can muster into what may well be remembered as a prog-metal classic.

Lateralus is a powerfully progressive work that showcases Carey's elastic drumming—an engrossing web of odd-metered beats, intricate tribal patterns, intense tom figures, and double-bass dexterity that is simply spellbinding. Many of the songs seem built from the ground up around Carey's volcanic rhythms, and they often erupt into full-blown drum solos. And the song titles, "Faai De Oaid" (The Voice Of God), "Mantra," "Parabola," and "Ticks And Leeches," reflect Carey's deep fascination with the occult. In

fact, this "interest" literally smacks you in the face when you enter Carey's dingy Hollywood studio, which is where Tool wrote the bulk of *Lateralus*.

Entering the studio through a tiny alley behind a health food store, you're greeted by a mural that looks like a boy's night out at the death ranch. Skeletons linger under spotlights, cobwebs coil ominously. Inside, the studio is perpetually dark, and when the lights are turned up, you understand why. A large geometric grid (like the artwork on Carey's Simmons pads) covers the ceiling, which is also decorated with gargoyles, dinosaur mobiles, and skulls. Two-hundred-year-old swords once used by Carey's father in Masonic rites adorn one wall, along with more geometric designs, a mace, a virtual occult library, a bronze bust by the sculptor



Szukalski, framed photos of Carl Palmer, an Aphex Twin poster, and a weird-looking Jacob's Ladder, like you might see in a Frankenstein movie. A large Enochian "magic board" embellished with the names of various angels (used to channel the spirits) sits behind Carey's double-bass Sonor kit. The room is littered with more disparate objects—talking drums, a zebra-skin recliner, ancient masonry fragments.... Apparently Carey is both a scholar of the occult and a collector of spooky junk.

But it's his drumming that is most dazzling.

With *Lateralus*, you can sense Carey's intelligence in the tribal warfare of "The Grudge," the heavy metal grind of "The Patient," the explosive drum-band orchestrations of "Schism," his own Tibetan monk growls in "Parabola," the hyper-speed rhythms of

"Ticks And Leeches," and the frequent double-bass eruptions that occur throughout, like a time traveler pushing his ship into warp speed.

Coming off the platinum-selling */Enima*, Tool spent two years overcoming major legal hassles with their former record label. Where such obstacles would have defeated a lesser band, Tool simply summoned their strengths to create an album that seems to describe their frustrations and rewards.

Like a meeting of King Crimson and Black Sabbath, *Lateralus* is food for the mind and sustenance for the belly. Similarly, like a union of some African war god with a multi-limbed rhythmic Houdini, Danny Carey creates questions for the mind and music for the soul.



TO OCCULT OR NOT TO OCCULT?

MD: Tool promulgates a mysterious, enigmatic image of powerful, heavy music laced with occult imagery. Some people think the band is satanic. Is this image simply a ploy to keep the fans guessing?

Danny: There's no effort to appear any certain way. We just want to stay true to what we do. Maybe because we dig a little deeper within each other, stranger things come out that people aren't exposed to. If you're not familiar with something, often it gets labeled as weird or satanic. When people don't understand something, instead of being curious, their instinct is to fear it. That can lead to misperceptions.

MD: You've noted that you use five toms and six-sided Simmons drums, that the combination of numbers works as a "channel" of sorts.

Danny: Every number has its strike on the subconscious in one way or another, whether we're aware of it or not. The more you can make yourself sensitive to these things, the more it can open you up to other forces that may want to be heard.

It's my job to get my ego out of the way enough to be sensitive to these things and let them flow through me. I've always been fascinated with sacred geometry—those are some of the shapes I've drawn on the Simmons pads. It's about tracing the manifestation of matter into the physical world. Those are little signposts along that journey.

DRUMMING AS MUSIC

MD: Many of the songs on *Lateralus* sound as if they're built around the rhythms you play.

Danny: Some of them are built around the drumming, but just as many were built around bass and guitar riffs. I tried to stay as open as possible when we were jamming or when people were coming in with new ideas for riffs. Adam and Justin are quirky players. They aren't following anyone's examples, so they come up with things that are in strange time signatures. And I definitely *don't* want to mold them into something else. I go with what they're doing, and that sets the stage for the whole writing process.

Writing is a very open, organic process for us. We'll jam on one of these riffs for a few hours with the tape machine running, then go back and find the



jewels that pop up. Then we catalog all of these precious little things and find ways to arrange them together into songs.

MD: Tool's music is very progressive with a heavy, psychedelic edge. Your

drums have a unique yet kind of thick, '70s sound.

Danny: We've tried to sidestep trends. I hear a drum sound in my head, and it's mainly the sound that I hear when the four

of us are in the rehearsal room together. My goal is to re-create that as closely as possible onto a recording. If that sounds like something that was done in the '60s or '70s, so be it. I've never been into gad-



lic has changed a lot since the mid '90s.

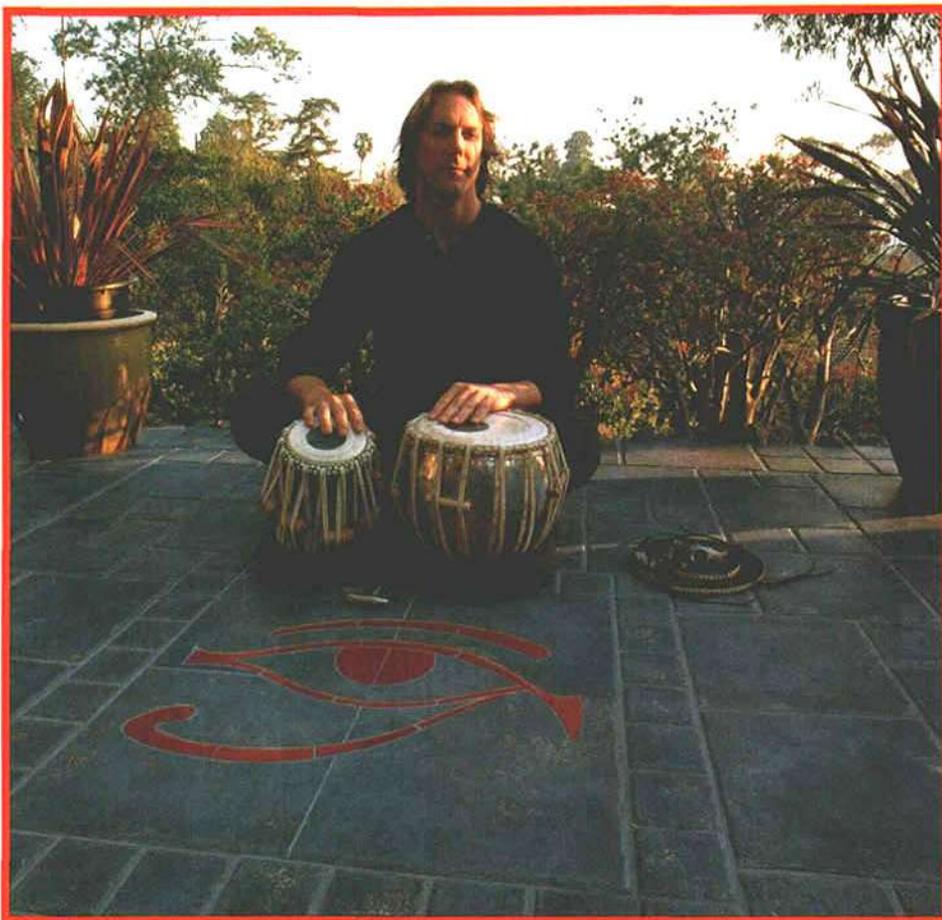
Danny: There's a large percentage of people who are disgusted at the state of the music industry. I think for those people this record will be a breath of fresh air. I would like to think that *Lateralus* will break down all the barriers, start a whole new revolution in music, and show where the influence for a lot of the music of the last few years has come from.

MD: The record alludes to so many sounds and themes.

Danny: It's a lot to take in right away. But those are the kinds of records I always loved as a kid. When I first heard them they would baffle me in places, like the old Yes and King Crimson records. You couldn't "hear" them all at once, but those would be the ones that would grow to become my favorites. They would become a part of me. That's my goal for *Lateralus*.

MD: The band is more impressionistic on the new album as well.

Danny: That's part of our growing as individuals. The level of communication has reached a new height in the band. It



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Danny Carey

had to, otherwise we definitely would have broken up, what with all the strain of the legal battles we've had. You now see the end product of that perseverance.

MD: On the live DVD *Salival* and on *AEnima*, the way you play the toms and the note groupings reminds me of Bill Bruford, especially on his early solo albums.

Danny: I guess it rubs off. No question, Bill is one of my biggest influences. I love watching him play. He makes it look so effortless. What comes out is so beautiful.

MD: As far as your time conception, I can hear a little Bruford, but the basic logic reminds me a bit of Vinnie Colaiuta as far as the allusions to one time or feel over another. You play odd meters well.

Danny: The band works really hard in the rehearsal room on those types of things. It's hard for us to be satisfied with the tunes, so we all dig deeper and deeper on our individual parts, trying as many possibilities as we can before we do the recording. It's that will to keep pushing the songs as far as possible that has

helped me develop those chops. There's a danger in that too. You have to know when to quit.

MD: How do you know?

Danny: You have to trust your instincts. At a certain point along the way, when the structures are put together, the songs take on a life of their own. You have to be as true to that as possible. Let it breathe and become its own entity so it'll have a beginning, an end, and some evolution without getting too messy.

MD: When someone brings some music in, do you actually identify it as being in a particular meter, or are you past that point as a band?

Danny: There's never any mention of time signatures, ever. There have been times when I played a weird beat and one of the guys wanted to play something over it. Then you have to use a meter metaphor to get the point across, say, "Play over this meter of five or fifteen," just so there'll be a meeting point somewhere.

It mainly comes in the arranging stages, like when we're trying to find

ways to string things together in subtle ways. As far as the riffs the other bandmembers bring in, it's pure feeling. It's pretty organic, picking themes from a jam we've had, until it comes to arranging. That's when the hard work starts. The payoff is having songs that go on a journey instead of just verse, chorus, verse, bridge, chorus, out.

ON PRACTICING

MD: What did you practice prior to recording this album?

Danny: I work on polyrhythmic exercises, and I still work out of Gary Chester's *The New Breed* book, just to keep my hands and feet moving separately yet together. I do some hand exercises to keep my chops up, too.

The main thing I work on now is trying to free myself from time. I still feel like a prisoner of time. Sometimes I catch a glimpse of that freedom, and shed the shackles and knock down the barriers. It's in those moments when I feel so inside of the music that time doesn't exist. That's when I do my best drumming and the

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Danny Carey

flashes of inspiration come.

The only way for me to get to that inspirational place is to get myself out of the way and let it come through. And that only comes through discipline and a lot of hard work, keeping clarity of mind and concentration when I'm playing. It's a never-ending thing. That's why I'm still playing the drums after thirty years.

MD: Can you practice that kind of freedom?

Danny: You can't practice it per se. It's a state of mind, something that, if you attain, won't be only behind the kit. It'll be your whole life.

MD: Overall, *Lateralus* is very complex rhythmically. When an obvious 4/4 rhythm pops up, it's like a celebration.

Danny: I like the contrast. That makes it more effective than if you play in four all the time. It makes it all the more heavy when you drop into a straight rock groove. That gives the music greater impact.

MD: It sounds like you're incorporating double bass on this record more than ever before.

Danny: I suppose I've gotten a little better at double bass, so it pops up more frequently. But I didn't go into this record trying to play more double kick. It just worked with the music we created. Actually, Adam always pushes me to play *more* double kick.

MD: In a previous *MD* interview you spoke highly of John Pratt's *Modern Contest Solos For Snare Drum*. Do you still practice it?

Danny: Yes. I even play some of that stuff on the kit sometimes to warm up. I also use some of the old rudimental solos I played in high school. I have "Tornado" memorized! I studied Chapin's *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer*. I also spent a lot of time with *Four Way Coordination* by Marv Dahlgren and Elliot Fine. That's a tough one, but it helped my feel a lot and my double bass playing.

I would work through these books, and sometimes it would get stagnant. But when I found something cool, like a hip phrase, I would repeat it until I could just rip on it. Then it became my own. I could

drop it in wherever I saw fit.

MD: Did you play much jazz as a kid?

Danny: I played in the school jazz band. In college in Kansas City [UMKC] I played in the big band and in combos. Kansas City is such a jazz town, there were always gigs to play. You couldn't avoid playing straight-ahead.

GETTING LATERALUS

MD: Does Tool write several songs simultaneously?

Danny: Occasionally we'll have two or three going at the same time, but usually we focus on one at a time. It's tough for Maynard to write the words for more than one song at a time. The emotions get mixed. But we do hit sticking points, so we might set one tune aside and start on another. We want each song to have its own identity.

MD: What were the first and last songs written for *Lateralus*?

Danny: "The Grudge" was first, "Triad" was last.

MD: That's almost in the album's running order.

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Danny Carey

Danny: Yes, it's funny, we hadn't even thought about the order of the album until we got to the mastering lab. We wrote the song titles on pieces of paper, shifted them around, and the final order came out almost exactly in the order we had written them.

MD: What are some of the samples you use on the album? One sound is a "Jacob's Ladder" [large transformer that produces an electrical crackling sound].

Danny: We use that. I also had a piano that was destroyed. I got some good samples from that, banging on the strings for "Resolution." I liked some didgeridoo samples, and a lot of found-sound stuff. The Tibetan monk sounds you hear on the record are just me growling through a tube. That was the initial sample, and then I overdubbed an Oberheim through a Vocoder.

Before this record, we were really rigid about being able to perform every note live, but we got away from that for this one. Maynard is doing more harmonies and doubling on his voices, and Adam did more guitar overdubs.

MD: On *Salival* there are tracks where there's a tabla player and percussion. Was that live?

Danny: Alope Dutta, who I'm studying tabla with, played on some of our shows, and I actually have him sampled in my Simmons brain. I trigger some of his sounds and play them with my sticks, but he does the real thing. You can tell which is which!

MD: Did the actual recording process of the drums differ this time from *Enima*?

Danny: Not too much. We had a little more time and a little bigger budget, so we didn't feel so forced to rush through everything. We were more meticulous. That's why the drums are even more powerful-sounding this time. We recorded in the big room at Cello [formerly Ocean Way studios], the same one that Frank Sinatra used. As for miking the drums, we used Akai C12s for the overheads and Neumann U-87s on the tops and bottoms of every tom.

MD: Did the drums go down first?

Danny: Yes. We started out just going for a great drum track. The band set it up so we could hear each other in our iso booths. I could clearly hear the other guys in my cans, and we just played the songs

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Danny Carey

until I nailed the part. It usually took me about three takes. A couple of times we would take a track I liked, but then add in parts of different takes within it. But we didn't do much of that. It was mostly me just going for a good overall take.

The basic drum sounds took a day, and we tweaked a little bit on the second day. The drums sounded great. They're the Sonor Bubinga Limited Edition Signature series. Bubinga wood is awesome. I've always preferred equatorial woods for drums, which are higher in density and heavier and tend to reflect off solar current. Conversely, they absorb the lunar current. It predisposes them to pour forth Hecates Fountain...that's the vibe that seems to fit with Tool.

MD: Hecates Fountain?

Danny: You would have to read Kenneth Grant. The lunar current, rather than the solar current, is what Tool is about. As long as I can get my ego out of the way and let that pour forth, we can create what we're aiming to do. But I also used my 1977 Octaplus stainless-steel Ludwig set on two songs, "Ticks And Leeches"

and "The Grudge."

MD: Do you still tune the drums to match the guitars?

Danny: Absolutely. When the songs are in D minor, I think it's effective to tune the toms to a triad—D, F, A. Of course, certain toms are more suited to a certain range, so you have to pick which chord inversion works best. It might be something like D, A, then another D, then an F. It could be any order. You don't want to force your drum to a pitch that it's not going to resonate at.

MD: Do you carry the Enochian magic board into the studio when you record?

Danny: Yes. We try to take advantage of every tool available. We'll use whatever it takes to get the best recording we can and tap into that harmony state between us. It's all about doing whatever we can to get us in the optimum position to make music.

CH...CH...CH...CHANGES

MD: What changes have occurred in your setup since *Enima*?

Danny: The RotoTom I used to use has

been replaced by a Korg Wave Drum. The pad, cymbal, and drum configuration are all pretty much the same. I've added a Roland MC505 Groovebox, an Oberheim TVS, an old '70s analog synth, and the Roland Vocoder, which I use on "Parabola." I have a Mackie mixer in my rack to mix all of this stuff. But I don't mix the drums from the stage.

My snare drum is by Jeff Ocheltree, one of his new ones where he creates the shell by melting down old Paiste 2002 cymbals. Jeff is making a complete drumset for me using this same principle, but made out of Paiste's Signature series cymbals. The kit will be like Carl Palmer's 1970s metal set, but my kit will have 1" bronze shells instead of stainless steel, which will be heavy. My roadie will be bumming. I've also added a Paiste Micro-Hat on the right side of the kit so I can play a few double hi-hat things.

MARKING TIME, MAKING LATERALUS

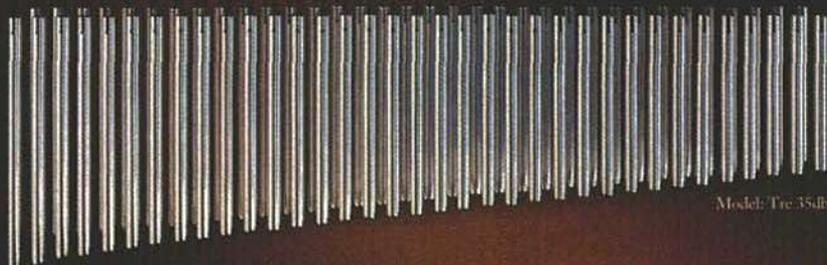
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Danny Carey

like a Haitian voodoo ceremony.

Danny: When people come to see us, I want to make it as much of a ritualistic experience as possible. If that means trying to emulate five African drummers, then that's what I'll do. I work on polyrhythms that might come across that way. I'll also put samples of African drums in my Simmons pads—just do all I can to get that vibe across. Some beats suck people in. Something like "Resolution," though, is a departure for us, more hypnotic and trance-oriented rather than just wailing away.

MD: "The Grudge" sounds like it's in 10/4.

Danny: Most of it is in five. There are transitional places where we just add a couple of beats to the bridge. It's all done to make the music flow together. It all makes sense to us and wouldn't fit together any other way.

MD: The end of "The Grudge" and "Schism" feature short drum solos. And the last track is an obvious drum solo.

Danny: That's about all hell breaking

loose. That track features a sample of the rantings of a guy who worked at Area 51. Who knows if he was speaking from a rational state, is really panicked, or is a complete schizophrenic who completely lost it? We may never know.

MD: How did the drum solos develop?

Danny: I felt like the songs needed to have a climactic ending and be as huge as possible. The intensity had to be raised to that level to make the song climax, and what better way to do that than with a drum solo? I just wailed and let my emotions dictate what was going to happen.

MD: "Ticks And Leeches" is in 7/4?

Danny: Yes, and that's a fun one to play. The opening pattern is one of the most powerful things I've come up with. The song is actually rehashed from an old song we had done around the *Opiate* period. There are a few places where a double kick comes into play—it's poking between my hands in places to fill in. When it needs to step up, I use the double kick to add some of the heavy low end behind it. At the end, when it starts cli-



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maxing, it's double kick all the way.

MD: Is that a 16th-note pattern across the toms?

Danny: Yeah, with the accents broken up so it sounds like three over the bars of seven.

MD: How do you think your drumming has changed over the years?

Danny: I think it's fitting in better with the songs and with what the other guys are playing. That's the goal. It doesn't mean anything if you just hear the drums doing these tricky things. I don't want to have people say, "That guy is burning." I would rather hear them say, "That reminds me of the Moors running down the hill, or Scotsmen attacking with their heads on fire, butt-naked in the middle of winter." [laughs] But seriously, I would rather create images in people's minds than have some drumming commentary. The worst thing someone can say about your playing is, "Wow, that is interesting."

MD: "Lateralus" has some fun meter twists.

Danny: The drum groove, which is prominent, is in five. The beginning is in 9/8, 8/8, and 7/4 repeating, which is kind of fun because you can divide it into groups of three. You can take it many different ways. Then it gets to the breakdown, where the guys are in six and I play in five over the top of it. I thought it would be fun to take it in a different direction.

MD: "Disposition," "Resolution," "Triad"—are these a trilogy?

Danny: Yes. They were constructed as one song. At twenty minutes, the three together was a little long, so we split them up.

MD: "Resolution" is serious sex orgy in the mosh pit.

Danny: I'm proud of that. It's a departure for us to do something so trance-like in a way. It's repetitive and groove-oriented rather than a slamming thing. That piece has really grown on me.

MD: And the final track is another instance of over-the-top drumming.

Danny: The tune came about one night

when I was recording really late. One of my old reverb units went haywire. It sounded like a transmission from beyond coming through. I heard it start to blow up, so I hit the record button on the DAT. You hear it going down the tubes. It had a compositional form to it. So I pushed it to the limit, developed it, and made it as anxiety-ridden and horrifying as possible.

DEMONS & DRUMMING

MD: On your bio page on the band's Web site [www.toolband.com] it states that you set up your drums "in proportion to the circle and square of the New Jerusalem," and it mentions The Book Of Thoth.

Danny: That's one of the cards from Crowley's Tarot deck. It has an incredible wealth of information. There's so much packed into each one of those cards.

MD: So how often do you get out the swords and summon up the demons?

Danny: Never, as far as you know. [laughs]



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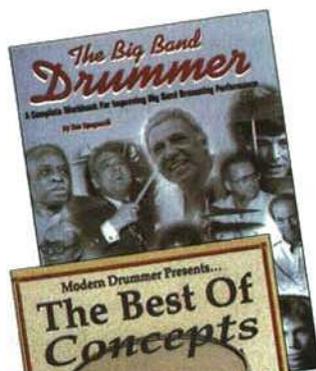
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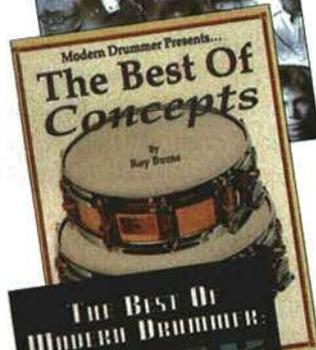
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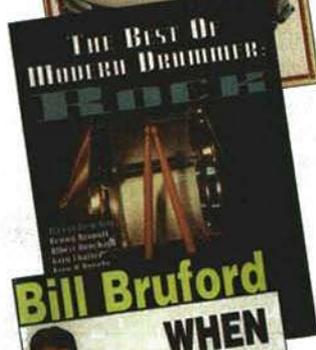
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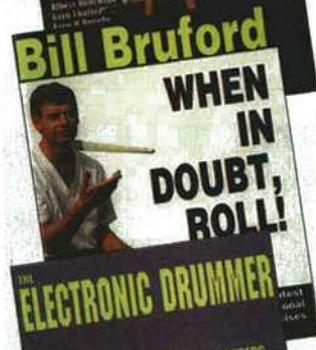
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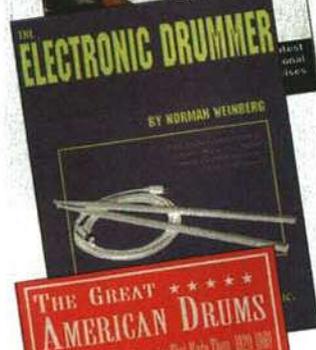
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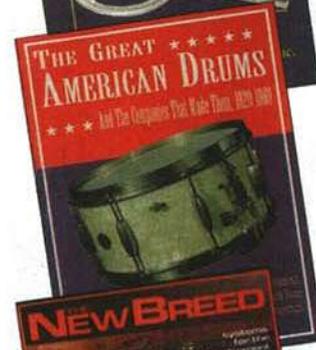
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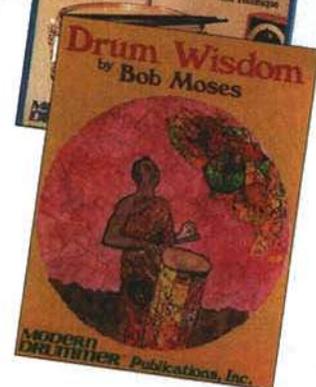
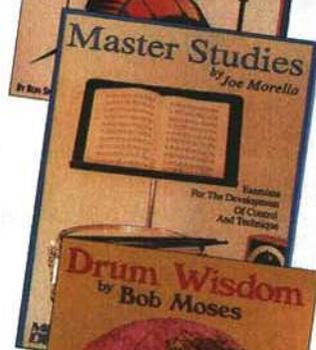
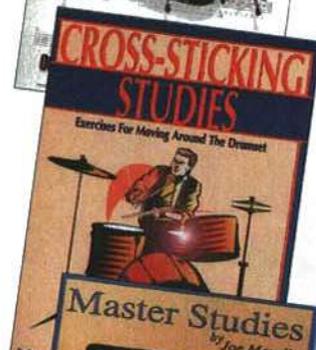
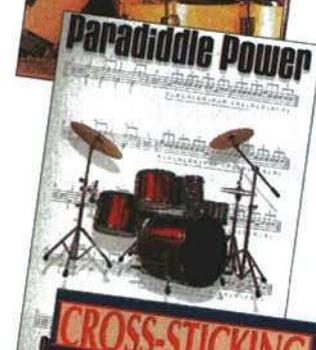
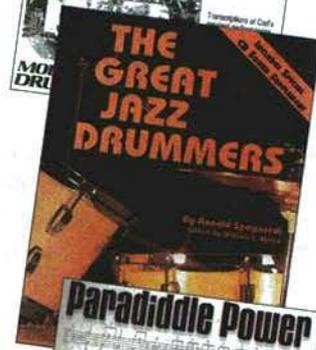
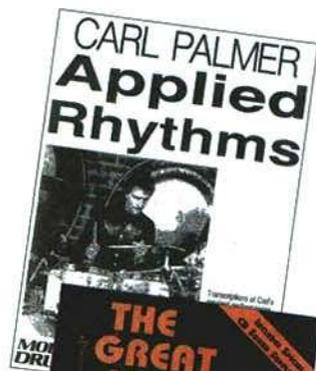
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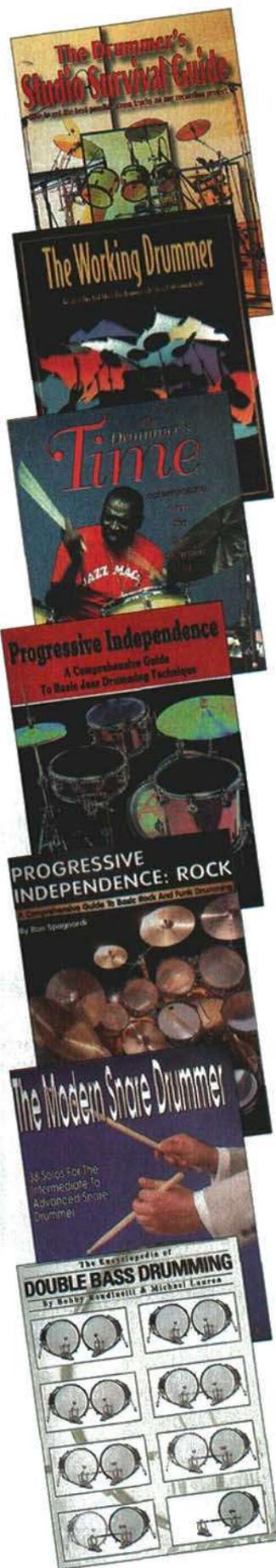
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Everything the working clubdate drummer needs to know to succeed.

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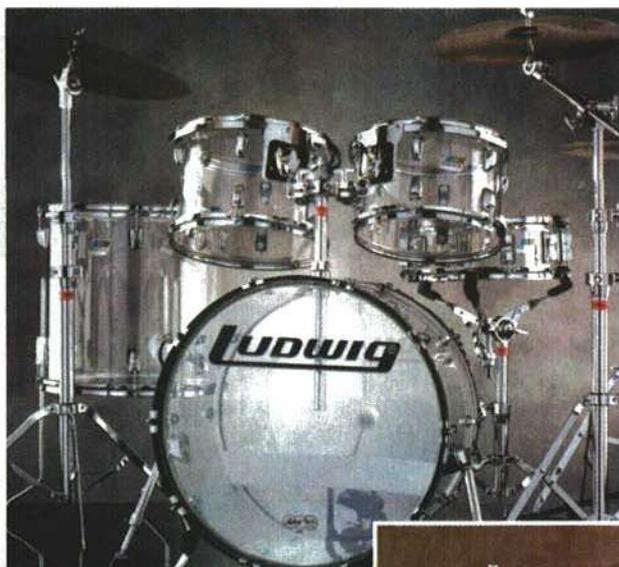
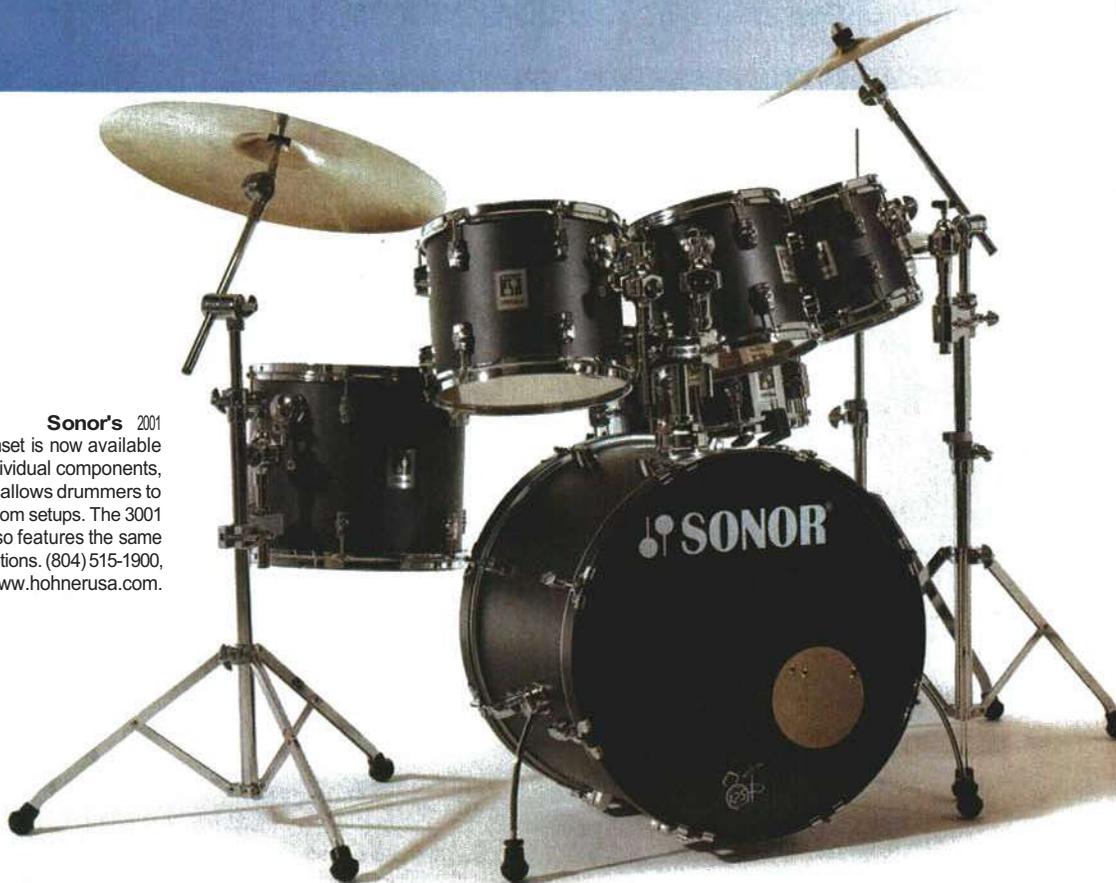
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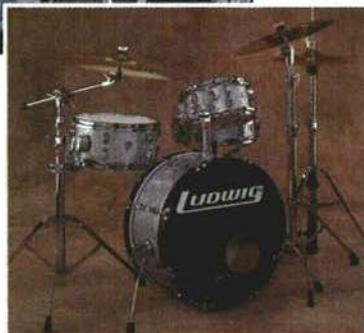
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DRUMS

Sonor's 2001 series drumset is now available in individual components, which allows drummers to create custom setups. The 3001 series also features the same options. (804) 515-1900, www.hohnerusa.com.



In response to popular demand, **Ludwig** has reintroduced the Vistalite line (above). The compact Gig-Lite kit shown at right is part of the new Classic Birch series. Also new from Ludwig are Millennium Collectors snare drums in brass and birds-eye maple, and upgraded Rocker Elite and Accent Series outfits. (219) 522-1675, www.ludwig-drums.com.



Premier's Artist Maple series includes this Limited Edition Union Jack drumset. The company is also offering Gen-X maple and birch drumsets, as well as a line of indoor marching percussion. (856) 231-8825, www.premier-percussion.com.

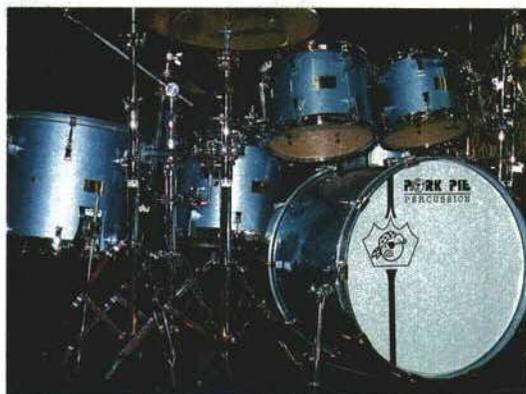
DRUMS



Yamaha's newest drumkit series is the Beech Custom Absolute. It features slightly thicker shells than maple or birch Absolute models, and is said to produce "dynamic yet warm tone" and "great production and punch." The new John "JR" Robinson Nail Snare literally features nails in the shell to give the sound more bite. (714)522-9011, www.yamahadrums.com.



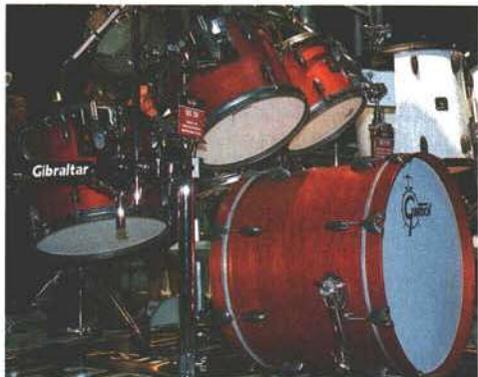
Australia's **Brady Drums** offers this cross-laminated jarrah ply drumset, as well as a line of London plane exotic desert hardwood block snares. (011) 61 8 94972212, www.bradydrums.com.



Pork Pie Percussion's unique designs include a set that features an 18" floor tom fitted with a 20" head. The kit is finished in Jeff Porcaro Blue. (818) 992-0783, www.porkpiedrums.com.

Smith Custom Drums offers "boutique" finishes like the Emerald Burst on this custom kit. (203) 846-6834, www.smithcustomdrums.com.

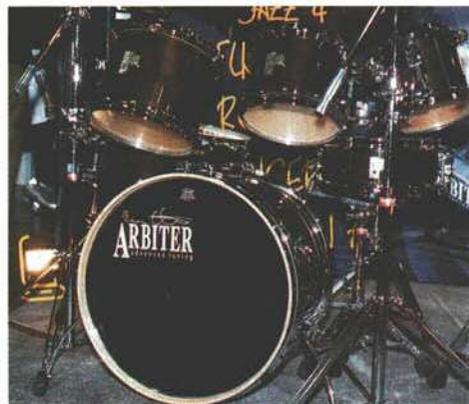




Gretsch is now augmenting their American-made series (top, shown with Gibraltar's new Mini Side Rack) with new imported kits made to their exacting specifications (bottom, shown with Gibraltar's revamped mounting system). (912) 748-7070, www.gretsch.com.



Arbiter's upgraded 6-ply Advanced Tuning System kit is available in six configurations and with a number of custom finishes. (905) 372-2202, www.arbiterdrums.com.



Spaun is now offering wood-hoop drumkits, along with a new hardware line. (909) 971-7761, www.spaundrums.com



Pearl's 100% maple Prestige Session Select drumset is a major entry in the mid-price range. The company has also introduced Ultra Cast snare drums (left). (615) 833-4477, www.pearldrums.com.

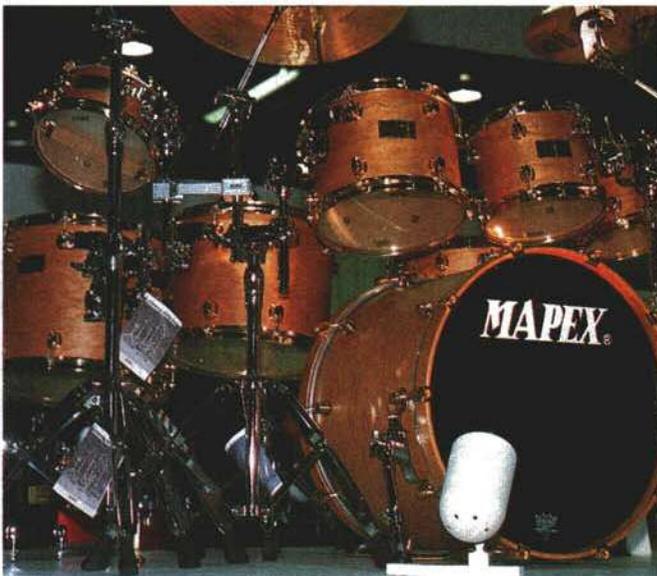


Sunlite's focus is on blending quality with affordability. Their SB22D70 seven-piece kit lists for under \$2,000. (626) 448-8018, www.sunlitedrum.com.

DRUMS



Drum Workshop has expanded the selection of Exotic Wood finishes on their Collector's Series drums, including the mapa burl finish shown here. Also new are Six-and-Six snare drums (below). With 6-ply shells and reinforcing hoops, they're designed to produce a warmer tone and a lower pitch than DW's standard Ten-and-Six drums. (805)485-6999, www.dwdrums.com.



Mapex has just released their Deep Forest Collector Series line of drums. Shown here is the 100% cherry-wood drumset featuring 5.1-mm 6-ply shells, 24K gold-plated lugs, 2.3-mm Powerhoops, and ITS isolation tom and bass drum mounts. In addition, the Mapex M entry-level series has been upgraded to also include the ITS mounting system. (615) 793-2050, www.mapexdrums.com.



Taye offers a full line of kits, including Studio Maple drumsets (shown above), as well as RockPro and Spotlight lines. The drums are made in Taiwan, with specifications and quality control under the supervision of Ray Ayotte. (909) 628-9589, www.taye.com.



Rocket Shells' line of carbon-fiber drums now includes 18" and 24" kick drums. RS also offers ten new standard colors, new carbon-fiber bass drum hoops in all standard sizes, and a line of Rocket Shields, which are lycra drum covers available in all sizes. (916) 334-2234, www.rocketshells.com.

DRUMS



The Special Edition Series from **GMS** features finishes like this Purple Sparkle Fall finish. In addition, GMS's 8" toms now come standard with five lugs rather than four. (631) 293-4235, www.gmsdrums.com.

Remo's Airo World Drumset features small, stackable toms and the ability to add multiple percussion instruments. Remo has also redesigned their MasterEdge set with new bearing edges and double-braced hardware. (661) 294-5600, www.remoc.com.



Compact, lightweight kits made of plastic laminates are the specialty of **Fever Drums**. (909) 396-1779, www.feverdrums.com.

Whitney Drums' Penguin Custom drumset comes standard with a virtually all-wood mounting system. The bass drum is mounted in Whitney's Egg Basket stand, while their ISIS tom-mounting system is an extension of the bass drum cradle. (805) 565-9398, www.whitneydrums.com.



Tama now offers a birch kit in their Starclassic Performer series (left). In addition, they've introduced signature snare drums designed with Mike Portnoy, Lars Ulrich, and Stewart Copeland (left to right, below).

Other new products include Limited Edition Starclassic Maple Chestnut kits, Rockstar Custom kits with Star-Cast mounting systems and matching birch snares, and new Swingstar finishes. (215) 638-8670, www.tama.com.



DRUMS



This fun-looking Jelly Bean Crystalite drumset from **Fibes** also features their new Fibales accessory drums over the floor toms. (512) 416-9955, www.fibes.com.



Pacific's L-Series has been upgraded. Now called LX (top), the drums feature thin all-maple shells for "a warm, classic tone," pro-style STM suspension tom mounts, and a choice of six high-gloss lacquer finishes. The new Chameleon kit (right) puts standard heads on top and mesh heads on the bottoms of short-stack-sized toms and bass drums for reversible play-or-practice options. (805) 485-6999, www.pacificdrums.com.



Allegra Custom Drums' 100% maple, wood-hoop, RIMS-mounted drumkits are available in both hand-stained lacquer finishes and the company's laminate veneer Tour-Tough finishes (shown at right). (503) 788-6065.



Scorpion Drums offers Brazilian-made mahogany-shell drumkits. (011) 55 11 6404 8548, www.rmv.com.br.

SNARE SCENE



Dunnett Classic Drums' Titanium snare drum features Ronn Dunnett's D-180 snare throw-off (designed in conjunction with Greg Nickel), which allows the lever to rotate to any angle next to the shell. (604) 643-9939, www.dunnett.com.



This symphonic version of **Noble & Cooley's** Alloy Classic model snare drum features a modified throw-off, which is available as a retro-fit on other N&C snare drums. (413) 357-6321, www.noblecooley.com.

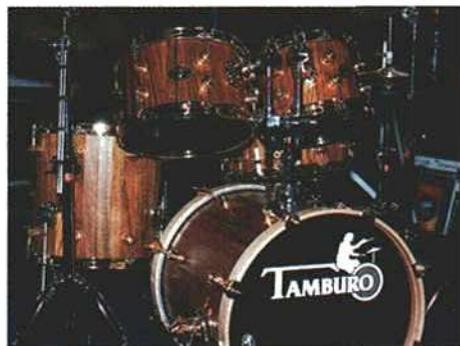


In addition to their Soundscape and Studio drumkit lines (reviewed in this issue), **Cadeson** now offers Hammered Bronze snares, which list for \$409. (626) 286-6866, www.cadesonmusic.com.

DRUMS



Peavey's Radial Pro 1000 series features new finishes, including the tangerine finish shown here. In addition, Peavey's 501 series sets now feature double-braced hardware. (601) 483-5365, www.peavey.com.



The distinctive Opera series of stave-shell drums is available from Italian manufacturer Tamburo. (915) 591-5848, www.proelgroup.com.



Innovation Drums' unique artistry is exemplified by this Batman drumset custom-made for Jay Dittamo. (248) 350-2512, www.innovationdrums.com.



Spirit Drums now offers a jazz-size drumset made of Australian ironwood. (011) 61 7 40316968, www.spiritdrums.com.



Paiste offer two distinct Jeff Ocheltree snare drums. The 5 1/2x13 Phantom Steel snare (above) is also offered in 5x14 and 6 1/2x14 models. The company also has a Spirit of 2002 snare drum, made out of recycled 2002 bronze cymbals. (800) 472-4783, www.paiste.com.



Well known for their entry-level drumkits, Peace Drums is now offering a Custom Cast Aluminum snare (top), a 5.5-mm-thick seamless-shell Phosphor Bronze snare (bottom left), and Hand Hammered Brass snare drums (bottom right)—all of professional quality. (626) 581-4510, www.peacemusic.com.tw.

CYMBALS



Paiste has debuted the high-performance/mid-price Innovations cymbal line and an Exotic/Percussion line for cymbals with unusual shapes and colors. They have also expanded their Dimensions line. Clockwise from top: 20" Innovations medium ride, 16" Innovations medium crash, 18" Dimensions Power China, and 20" Exotic/Percussion Flanger ride. Additional new individual models include a heavy ride with a sand-blasted bottom. And in a helpful move, Paiste's new catalog features complete consumer-oriented sound descriptions for their lines. (800) 472-4783, www.paiste.com.

Istanbul Agop is featuring a new line of Mel Lewis Signature Cymbals. Shown here are the 20" rides and 13" hats. An 18" crash/ride is also available. (201) 559-0100, www.istanbulcymbals.com.

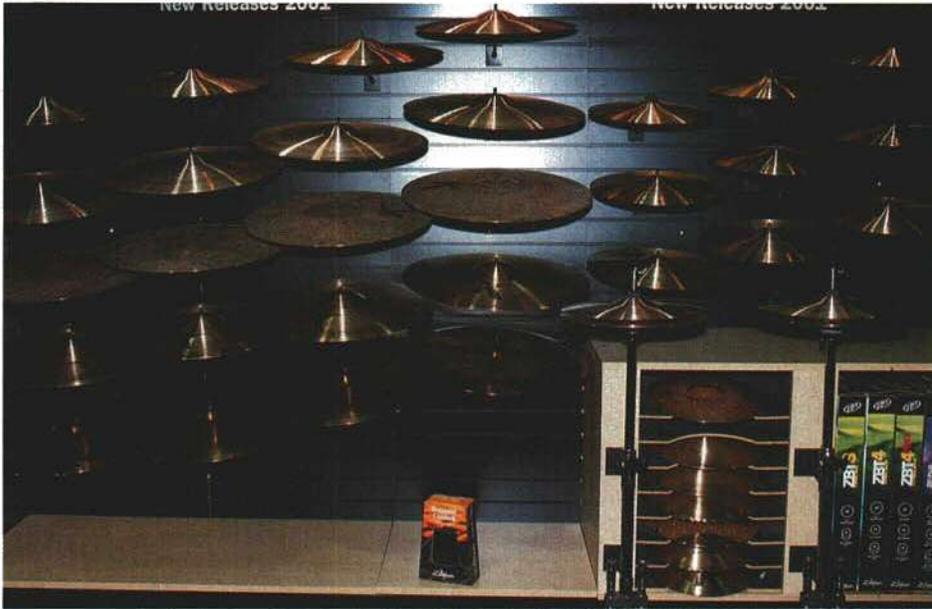


Sabian is very high on their new HHX line (reviewed in last month's *MD*). The design adds extra projection to the dark tonalities of hand-hammered cymbals. (506) 272-2019, www.sabian.com.



Universal Percussion offers a complete line of Wuhan Western-style cymbals, China cymbals, and gongs. (330) 482-5750, www.universalpercussion.com.

CYMBALS



Zildjian has expanded their A Zildjian & Cie cymbal series. (See review on page 36.) They've also recently introduced a 21" K Custom Special Dry Ride, a Zil-Bel Drumset Cowbell, and Indoor Marching Cymbals. (781) 871-2200, www.zildjian.com.

Along with their handmade cymbals, **Istanbul Mehmet** also offers handmade darbukas and snare drum shells. (011) 90 212 4819709, www.istanbulmehmet.com.



Euphonic, Jazz, Octave, Fusion, and Arasta lines of handmade cymbals are available from **Turkish Cymbals**. (011) 90 212 2516992, www.turkishcymbals.com.



Bosphorus's Gold Series cymbals (shown here) are designed to produce a "rock" sound. Rides and hi-hats are available now; crashes will be available soon. (770) 662-3002, www.bosphoruscymbal.com.



HARDWARE & ACCESSORIES

Gibraltar's imported, less-expensive DrumFrame (right), was designed by the original DrumFrame inventor, Boh Gatzen. Gibraltar also recently introduced their 2 1/2 Leg Hi-Hat stand, re-designed foot pedals, and modified mounting clamps. (860) 509-8888, www.kamanmusic.com.



Gauger Percussion's Aluminum Alloy RIMS mounts feature sliding flanges and various color options. (952) 938-0885, www.gaugerpercussion.com.



Drumspan offers colorful spandex drum-cover designs. (909) 989-0246, www.drumspan.com.

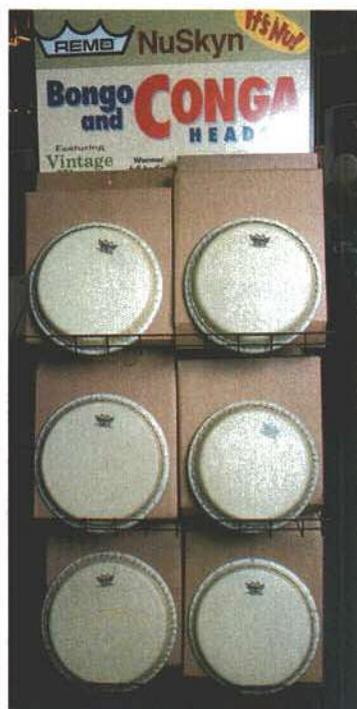


Clearsonic offers sound shield panels for use in front of and behind a kit. (330) 650-1420, www.clearsonic.com.



DW has expanded their 6000 Series line of flush-base stands to include snare, hi-hat, and cymbal boom stands. They've also upgraded the 5000 Delta II pedal series with a nine-position adjustable heel platform and several other new features. And the new Dual Accessory Hi-Hat (far left) combines a hi-hat with an accessory pedal in one compact unit. (805) 485-6999, www.dwdrums.com.

HARDWARE & ACCESSORIES



Remo's line of bongo and conga heads are now manufactured with the company's NuSkyn film. This film is designed to offer a warmer, full-bodied sound that brings up desired mid-range and lows without lingering high-pitched overtones. (661) 294-5600, www.remo.com.

Shown here on a clear Fibes bass drum for visual ease are Evans' EMAD bass head (which incorporates an externally mounted, adjustable dampening system), EQ-RGS resonate-gate system, and AF-Patch Arimid Fiber bass drum impact pad. (631) 439-3300, www.evansdrumheads.com.



Diggit's Stickweights now feature redesigned fabric on the end for easier stick-wrapping. (818) 615-0080, www.diggit.net.



Aquarian's new Powerhouse Kevlar snare heads (above) include a PowerDot and come in both black and white versions. In addition their 16" bass drum heads are now available in all models, and Vintage drumheads are now offered in all sizes. (714) 632-0230, www.aquariandrumheads.com.



E-Pad's Ail-Around Custom practice pad can be used on a tabletop or snare drum, while the Pro-Deluxe pad straps to a drummer's leg. (818) 295-7627, www.epadco.com.

New from PureSound are the 221 Two-To-One eight-strand wire system and the Varitone variable-tone fourteen-strand wire system. (310) 966-1176, www.puresoundpercussion.com.



HQ Percussion's RealFeel Practice Pad series offers several options. Shown here are (at left) the Ultra Clear-Tone Pipe Band model, (middle) the Drum Corp model, (right) the Clear-Tone Pipe Band model, and (front) the Time Table model with mounted metronome. (314) 647-9009, www.hqpercussion.com.



MetroPad offers a metronome-on-a-practice-pad device. Different sizes and mounting options are available. (949) 481-5873, www.educationalmusicaccessories.com.

HARDWARE & ACCESSORIES



Yamaha has re-introduced their Peter Erskine Signature free-standing stick bag with several new features, more durable construction, and a lower price. (714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrums.com.

The A&S Poly-Lite trap case features recessed housing for its in-line wheels. (818) 509-5920. www.ascase.com.



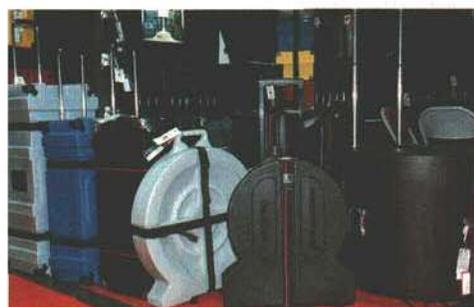
Gator Cases' GP22 cymbal case is equipped with a pull-out handle and wheels, and retails for \$99.95. (813) 221-4191, www.gatorcases.com.



Impact's hard and soft cymbal cases come with wheels and retractable luggage-style handles. (715) 842-1651, www.impactind.com.



Percussion Concepts now has a line of stickbags available with their distinctive look. (973) 283-1130, www.percussionconcepts.net.



Humes & Berg's Enduro Companion cases now come with in-line wheels and retractable luggage-style handles. (219) 397-1980, www.humes-berg.com.



New from XL Specialty Percussion are their Elite Series drum cases. (219) 637-5684, www.xlspec.com.



SKB's Roto-Molded D-Shape drum cases facilitate sturdy stacking due to their interlocking features. (714) 637-1252.

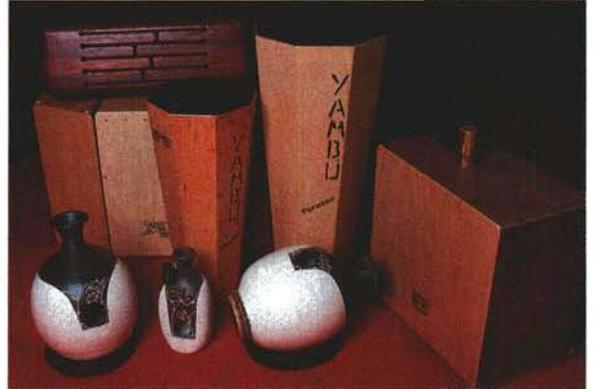


Beato's made-in-America Cordura Deluxe bags feature upgraded, heavy-duty shoulder straps. (310) 532-2671, www.beatobags.com.

PERCUSSION



Rhythm Tech now offers a line of kid's percussion (right), as well as their Eclipse line of congas, bongos, and djembes (top). (914) 636-6900, www.rhythmttech.com.



Among **Schlagwerk Percussion's** German-made hand instruments are (clockwise from center): the Yambu Travel drum, Yambu Peruanu drum, black and wood Groovy Shakers, Bass Cajon, Basic Udu, Piccolo Udu, Bass Udu, Cajon La Peru with Double-Set Add-On, and the eight-note F-Pentatonic Log Drum. (714) 538-1285, www.salwender.com.



Everyone's Drumming's stave-construction natural-skin hand-drum kits can be mounted via their Hand Drum Mounting System (right). (802) 387-2249, www.everyonesdrumming.com.



Among LP's plethora of acoustic options are the Jammer Jambe (top) for use in drumming circles, Cyclops shakers (which produce multiple shaker sounds), and Salsa Claro and Lil' Ridge Rider cowbells. Aspire timbales (bottom) are designed to offer high quality at an affordable price. (888) LP-MUSIC, www.lpmusic.com.

PERCUSSION

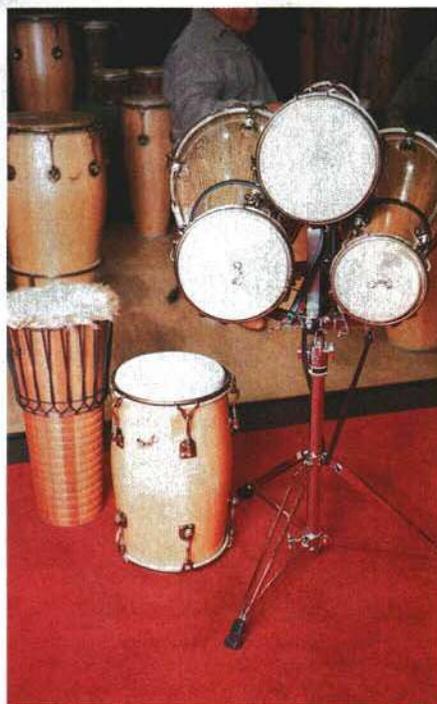


Toca's bevy of instruments includes (clockwise from top left): Pete Escovedo Signature timbales, the Peter Michael Escovedo Combo set (with matching wooden bongos, congas, and timbales in Mandarin Orange finish), Alex Acuna Signature Flamenco and Peruvian Cajons, the Sheila E Back To Rhythm Backpack, and the Sheila E Kids Timbale Set. (860) 509-8888, www.kamanmusic.com.

Earthshaking Music offers the Bauer line of Brazilian drums, including repiniques, caixas, pandeiros, tamborims, and timbals, as well as apito whistles and agogo bells. (888) 978-2500, www.earthshakingmusic.com.



Meinl's extensive percussion line includes their Professional Series wood congas, Amadito Valdes Artist Series timbales, and Kenny Aronoff Artist Series cowbells. (305) 418-4520, www.meinl.de.



Hand-made bata drums mounted on custom stands, along with tabor (middle) and ashiko (left) drums, are offered by Sol Percussion. (415) 468-4700, www.soldrums.com.

From Lawton Percussion come low and high Bamboo Chimes (on stand). Also available are (left to right on bottom): Two-Faced Guiros including stands and scrapers, Brass Bell Shekeres with stand, and Bamboo Claves. (805) 473-9389, www.lawtonpercussion.com.



PERCUSSION



Remo has debuted their upgraded conga line, which features NuSkyn drumheads, new hardware with traditional or radius counter-hoop options, and the Tuff-E-Nuff finish. This finish is an impact-resistant, textured urethane that is designed to withstand damage from normal use. (661) 294-5600, www.remo.com.



Yamaha's new Jingle Snare would make a nifty drumkit add-on. (714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrums.com.



Mountain Rhythm instruments can be combined to create an "ethnic percussion kit" like this one. (905) 764-6543, www.mountainrhythm.com.



Whacky Music has created Boom Whackers tuned percussion tubes for kids. (520) 282-3860, www.boomwhackers.com.

Pearl's Elite Series wood congas and bongos are shown here on the QRS—Quick Release System Multi-Stand. Additional percussive knickknacks include several unique Agogo-Pop, Ago-Sha, and Egg Carton items. (615) 833-4477, www.pearldrums.com.



Rhythm Fusion offers a set of three single-shell, djembe-like bata drums from The Ivory Coast that feature diamond-style tuning. Also available is an inside-tuning Middle Eastern wood frame drum. (831) 423-2048, www.rhythmfusion.com.

DRUMSTICKS



The stick shown here is the actual prototype from which Vater's new Stewart Copeland signature stick is reproduced. (781) 767-1877, www.vater.com.

JohnnyraBB's expanding line now includes (left to right): Matt Savage Marching Hickory Heartwood MPS 1 and MPS 2 sticks, Matt Savage Tenor Pros mallets, Marching Bass Pro mallets 1 through 5, the semi-retractable Brush Saw, the JR-retractable brush, the JR Brush, the Chad Cromwell signature stick, and Ritmo Series timbale sticks. New JohnnyraBB Webs are shown at top. (901) 658-2160, www.johnnyrabbb.com.



(Left to right): two gong beaters, five concert bass drum mallets, six concert timpani mallets, the Multi-Stick, James Campbell and Lalo Davila concert snare drumstick models, and the Paul Rennick marching stick are available from Innovative Percussion. (615) 333-9388, www.innovativepercussion.com.

New Regal Tip models include three types of Tim Adams Signature models, along with Taku Hirano multi-purpose percussion sticks. (716) 285-3546, www.regaltip.com.



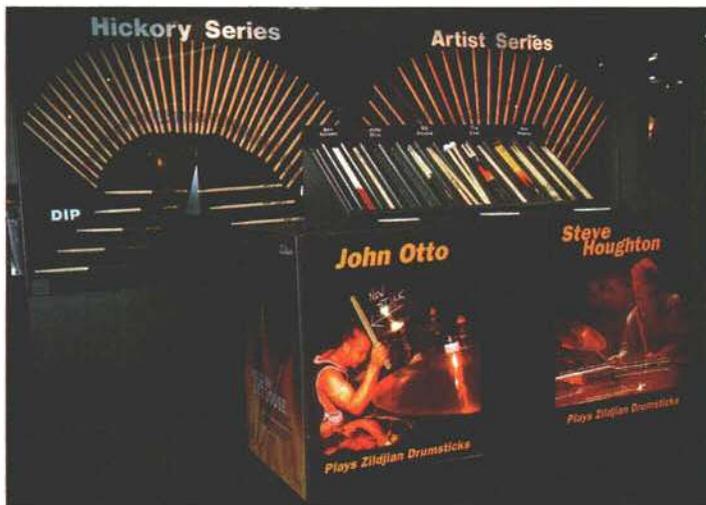
DRUMSTICKS



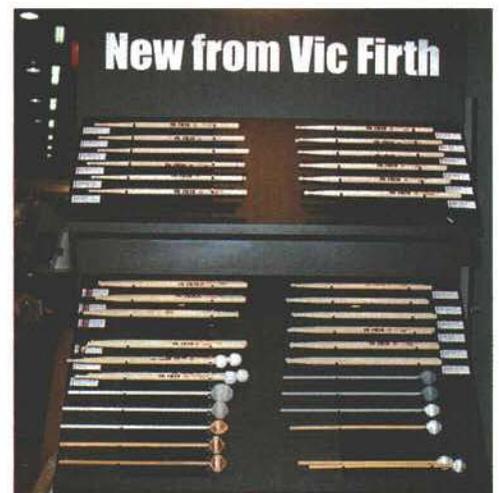
Unigrip offers Kicksticks multi-rod bass-drum beaters (left, on pedal), as well as their bamboo, nylon, and wood Flipsticks (left to right). At the top of the photo is the 6-2000 stick featuring a hexagonal rubber grip. (818) 840-0280, www.unigrip2000.com.



Cappella's line showcases (top to bottom): the Soprano 5A Double Tip Stick, the Jingle Stick, the Swingmaster Nylon, and the Aluminum Practice Stick. These models are displayed here on Cappella's Right Touch Practice Pad. (609) 448-1153, www.cappelladrumsticks.com.



New **Zildjian** stick models include the John Otto Artist model, the DC Double (a Dennis Chambers model with a mallet on the butt end), and two 6A models—one with a regular finish, and one with Zildjian's DIP coating applied for a tacky surface. The company is also offering an entire line of Essential Series percussion mallets. (781) 871-2200, www.zildjian.com.



New products from **Vic Firth** include the maple American Heritage line, Corpsmaster marching and indoor marching sticks, Jeff Lee and Brian Mason Corpsmaster keyboard mallets, American Jazz Series sticks, and 5A & 5B Cymbal Sticks, which incorporate a soft felt-ball mallet on the butt-end of American Classic models. (781) 326-3455, www.vicfirth.com.



Pro-Mark is now making Marco Minnemann TX721W and Jimmy DeGrasso TX440W signature sticks. (800) 233-5250, www.promark-stix.com.

ELECTRONIC PERCUSSION

Roland has redesigned their V-Drums, including the addition of the new V-Cymbals. This V-Session kit is now set up with new hardware and a new rack, and is available in various color options. And the new SPD-6 Percussion Pad (lower right) features six individual rubber pads, hand and drumstick compatibility, 113 on board sounds, and MIDI output. (323) 890-3700, www.rolandus.com.



Hart Dynamics upgraded Acupad electronic drumset features their revamped ECYMBAL II electronic cymbals. Also shown in the foreground is the Hart Multipad with direct trigger output. (850) 654-1455, www.hartdynamics.com.



Drum Tech offers a number of electronic drumsets and pad-set converter kits. The EAK9 Electro-Acoustic Set is shown here. (818) 886-1348, www.drumtech.com.



Yamaha has introduced a completely redesigned high-end electronic kit, dubbed the DTXXTREME. (See this month's *Electronic Review* for full details.) (714) 522-9011, www.yamahadrums.com.

The Rok Blox MIDI percussion pad kit from **AD Speaker Systems** comes complete with five pads, double kick and hi-hat pedals, a stand, and hard case. (843) 626-3415, www.adspeakers.com.



SOUND REINFORCEMENT



SHS Audio offers the JTS-NX series of drum mic's featuring cast metal bodies and user-friendly locking mounts. (317) 780-0454, www.shsaudio.com.

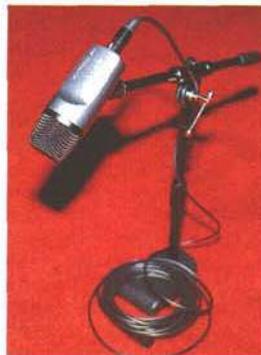
K&K Sound Systems' Golden Bullet unidirectional mic' with pre-amp is useful for all percussion and hand-drum applications. (541)888-3517, www.kksound.com.



All of the items in **Ac-cetera's** line of mic' clamps, mini-lights, and rubber-neck extensions have been reduced in size for lighter weight and smaller profiles. (800) 537-3491, www.ac-cetera.com.



Drum mic's from **CAD Professional Microphones** include their KBM 412 bass drum mic' (shown here), as well as their TSM 411 snare/tom neodymium dynamic mic's. (440) 593-1111, www.cadmics.com.



Sennheiser's E602 Kickpack includes a kick drum mic', mini-stand, and cable. (860) 434-9190, www.sennheiserusa.com.

MICROPHONE PRE-PACKS



An aluminum flight case contains **Electro-Voice's** N/DYM Drum Mic' Kit: two N/D468 mic's, one N/D478 mic', and one N/D868 mic'. (800) 392-3497, www.electrovoice.com



Shure's Drum Mic' Kit includes three SM57s, three mic' clamps with hardware, one Beta 52 bass drum mic', and a protective case. Also shown above is the all-purpose KSM44 multi-pattern condenser mic'. (800) 25-SHURE, www.shure.com.

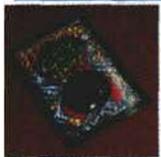


The KP-Drums Drum Microphone KitPak from **Audio-Technica** can mike an entire kit. Smaller snare/tom and kick/tom packs are also available. (330) 686-2600, www.audio-technica.com.

OF SPECIAL NOTE

Audix is now offering their MD10 snare and tom mic', the D-Vice mic' clip, and the entry-level Fusion Mic' Pak. (503) 682-6933, www.audixusa.com.

Grip Peddler now offers Bass Invaders mobile mute impact pads (left), as well as various versions of their Z-Force foot-pedal grips. (877) 987-G R I P, www.grippeddler.com.



Beyerdynamic has introduced their Opus high-performance touring and sound-reinforcement mic's. (631) 293-3200, www.beyerdynamic.com.

Axis Percussion offers high-tech snare, cymbal, and hi-hat stands, as well as their legendary bass drum pedals. (888) 549-2947, www.axispercussion.com.

E-mu's RFX-32 effects/mixer upgrade card for all E4 Ultra samplers offers up to sixteen simultaneous studio-grade effects. (831) 438-1921, www.emu.com.



Roc-N-Soc is offering their limited-edition LSG Model NAMM Centennial Edition throne. Only one hundred have been manufactured. (828) 452-1736, www.rocnsoc.com.

Version 1.4 of **Sibelius Music Notation Software** is the fifth free upgrade available to registered Sibelius users. Sibelius has also released their student/teacher resource guide, as well as a host of personal and Internet music publishing tools. (888) 4-SIBELIUS www.sibelius.com.

Kases Drum Gig Bags from **Ace Products** feature tear-resistant "over-sewn" linings, Cordura-quality shells, luggage-grade zippers, high-density padding, rubber handles, and double-stitched edges. (415) 492-9600, www.aceproducts.com.

Ahead Drumsticks have added 5B Limited models to their line. (800) 547-6401, www.bigbangdist.com.

Along with their *Kevlar/Mylar* drumset heads, **Bear Drumheads** now offers KSE Kevlar marching heads in 13", 14", and 15" sizes. (818) 718-1111, www.bearpercussion.com.

Ultra-professional double row chimes are available from **Treeworks Chimes**. (877) 372-1601, www.treeworkschimes.com.

WorldMax USA is offering a five-piece affordable lacquer set with hardware, as well as the P-2001P chain-and spring-adjustable bass drum pedal. (615) 365-3965, worldmaxusa@aol.com.

Zickos' Mach 5 Series drumsets feature 1/4"-thick acrylic shells. (816) 474-7474, www.zickosdrums.com.

Mainline Drumsticks has entered the snare drum business with their unusual shell-less Naked Snare. (310) 357-4450, www.mle.com.



Ross Mallet Instruments' R715G Pro Artist Vibes come mounted on a four-way height-adjustable stand. (512) 288-7400, www.jupitermusic.com.

Trueline Drumsticks has added Billy Ward, 2S-T, and 1S-T models to their line. (619) 461-0246, www.trueline.com.



Guitammer Company offers the ButtKicker, device that attaches to a drummer's seat and converts low-frequency sound into mechanical vibrations that can be felt by the seated drummer. (888) 676-2828, www.thebuttkicker.com.

Genuine Caribbean-style steel drums are offered by **Trinidad & Tobago Instruments Ltd.** (868) 627-0185, www.steelpanstil.com.

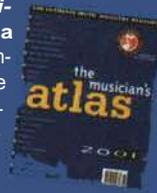
The original Mark Trees wind chimes (and accessories) are available from **Spectrasound Percussion Products**. (818) 764-7690.

ScanBeat has a new design for ergonomic, anti-fatigue, fully adjustable bass drum and hi-hat pedals. (707) 963-8363, www.scan-beat.com.

Canopus solid-shell Zerkova snare drums are now complemented by complete drumkits. See the review in this month's issue. (011) 81 3 33254462, www.canopusdrums.com.

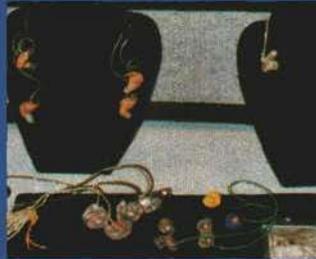
Ultimate Ears produces UE5 Pro, UE3 Stage, and custom hearing protection plugs, along with in-ear monitors. (702) 263-7805, www.ultimateears.com.

The **2001 Musicians Atlas** is a reference book containing extensive contact information for the working musician. (973) 509-9898, www.musiciansatlas.com.



Doc's Proplugs offers vented and non-vented molded earplugs, as well as their Protune line of hands-free molded earphones. (831) 425-5920, www.proplugs.com.

ProPhonic ER-15s from **Sensaphonics** are hi-fidelity hearing protection devices. The company also offers custom-molded in-ear monitor units. (312) 432-1714, www.sensaphonics.com.



Drum-oriented mic's from **Earthworks Audio Products** include their 20-kHz Omni SRO general-purpose microphone, as well as their 20-kHz Hypercardioid SR68 mic'. (603) 654-6427, www.earthwks.com.

Hal Leonard offers a variety of informational, entertainment-based, and educational publications, including Rod Morgenstein's *Drum Set Warm-Ups*, *Zildjian—A History Of The Cymbal Maker*, their *Beatles Drum Collection*, *Tito Puente's Drumming With The Mambo King* book/CD, and *Vinnie Colaiuta's Document*, an audio CD featuring his band *Karizma*. (414) 774-3630, www.halleonard.com.

For budget-conscious drummers, **Coda Drums' five-piece Generation Gamma** kit retails for \$549.95 including hardware. (650) 615-8991, www.musiclinkcorp.com.



Emmite Drumsticks has added timbale sticks to their line of synthetic sticks. The line features regular and glow-in-the-dark models, and are made of a material said to help prevent stick-shock-related hand injuries. (519) 836-2542, www.emmitedrumsticks.com.

RMV Percussion's Brazilian-made percussion instruments include a double-tuning, free-standing wooden surdo. (011) 55 11 6404 8548, www.rmv.com.br.



Drum's 1.40 version software is designed to be used with mesh drumheads. Signature series Mega drumkits are now offered for download at their web site.

New works from **Alfred Publications** include *Hand Drums For Beginners* (for consumers) and *Hand Drumming Essentials and Hand Drumming Ensembles* (for educators). (818) 891-5999, www.alfredpub.com.

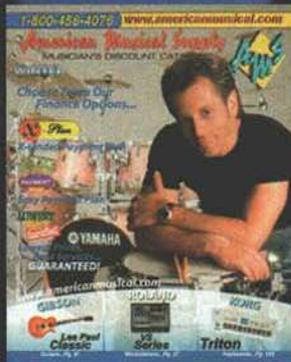


The **Rhythm Art** drumkit series has been developed by St. Louis Music. Numerous percussion items are also offered. (314) 727-4512, www.stlouismusic.com.

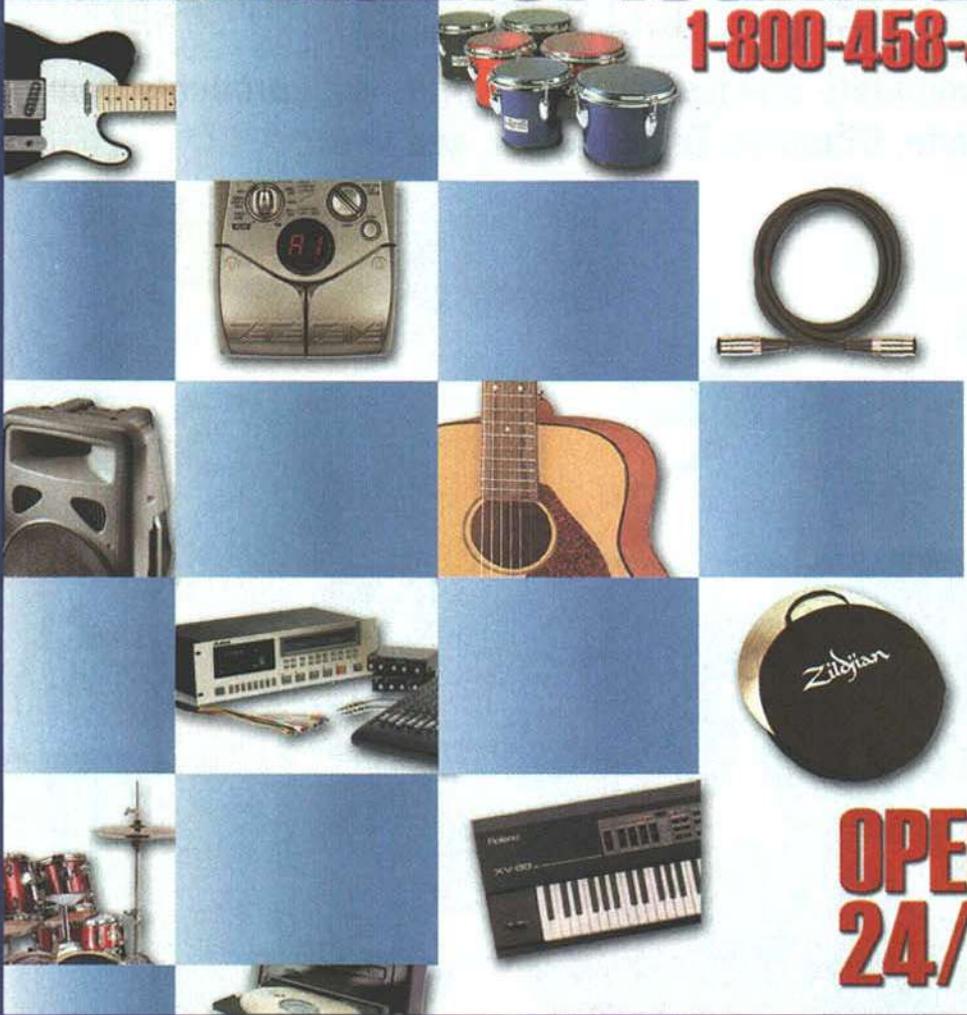


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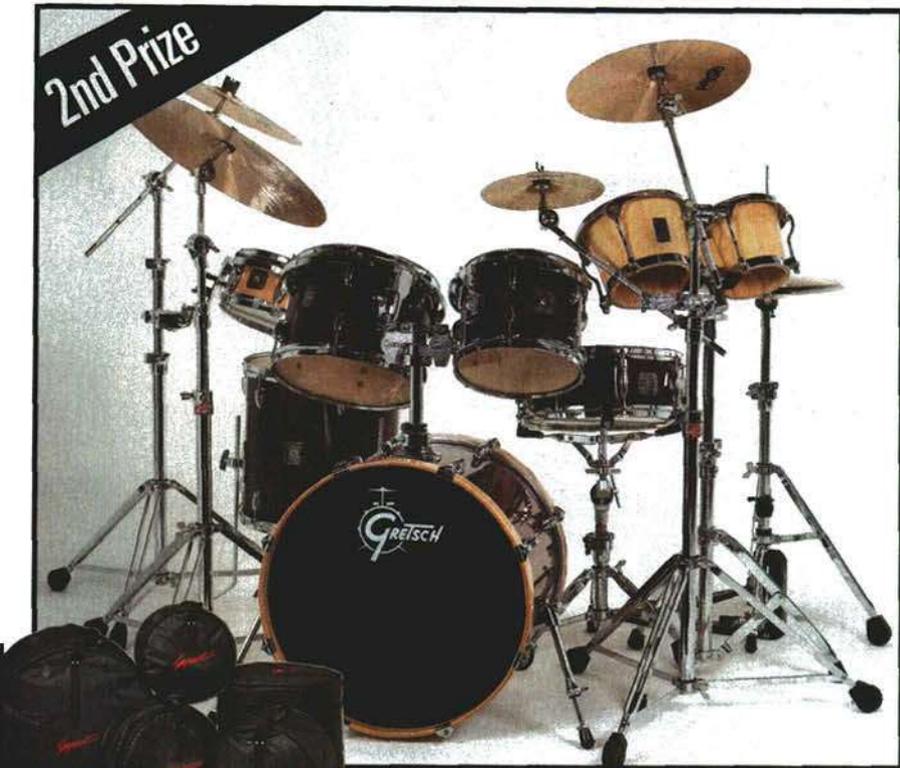
Help us celebrate the world debut of 3 new series of **Gretsch Drums!**

We're giving away three complete drumset prize packages with products from
Gretsch, Paiste, Gibraltar, Toca, Impact and Vater.



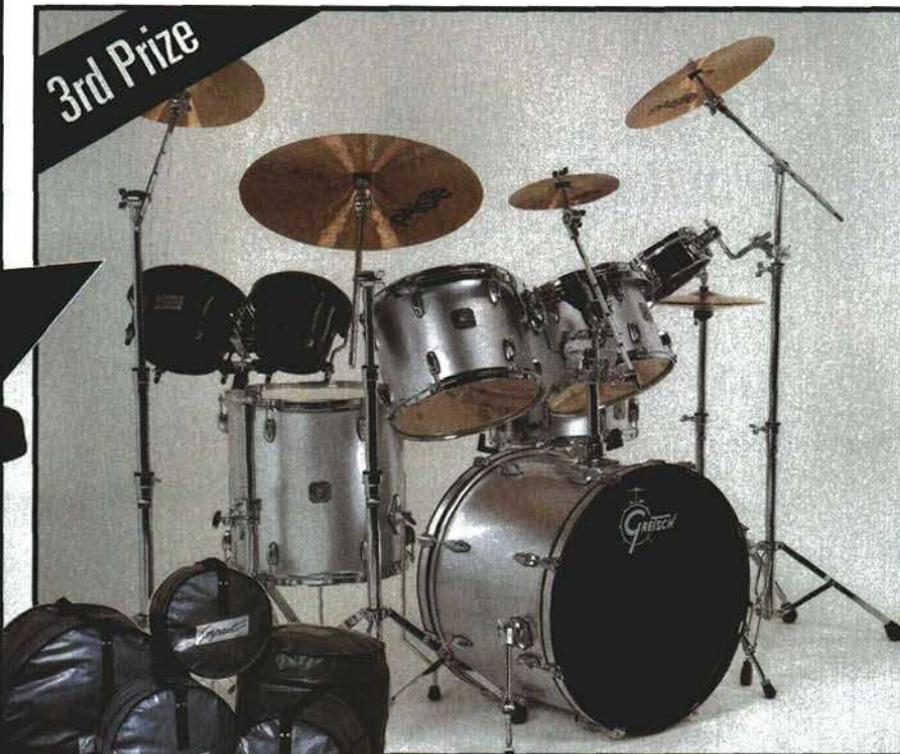
A seven-piece set of Gretsch Renown Maple Series drums in Deep Blue, plus a 5x12 auxiliary snare. This prize package also includes a set of Paiste Signature Series cymbals, Gibraltar hardware, Toca Traditional Series Natural Bongos and Conga, thirty-six pairs of Vater Sticks, and a complete set of Impact hard-shell cases!

2nd Prize



A five-piece set of Gretsch Catalina Elite drums in Ruby Red, plus a 5x10 auxiliary snare. This prize package also includes a set of Paiste Dimensions cymbals, Gibraltar hardware, Toca Elite Series Natural Bongos, twenty-four pairs of Vater sticks, and a complete set of Impact Signature drum bags.

3rd Prize



A five-piece set of Gretsch Catalina Stage Series drums in Silver Frost, a set of Paiste Alpha cymbals, Gibraltar hardware, Toca Players Series Black Fiberglass Bongos with stand and a 10" mini timbale, twelve pairs of Vater sticks, and a complete set of Impact Gray Vinyl drum bags.

ENTER EARLY AND OFTEN!

Consumer Disclosure

1. Two ways to enter: (a) call (900) 786-3786. Cost: 990 per call. You must call from the number where you wish to be notified. Or (b) send a 3.5" x 5.5" or 4" x 6" postcard with your name, address, and telephone number to: Modern Drummer/Gretsch/Paiste Contest, 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

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Grady Tate

The Man, The Music, The Wisdom

by Mike De Simone

Gigs

Louis Armstrong

Ella Fitzgerald

Count Basie

Tony Bennett

Burt Bacharach

Paul Simon

Bette Midler

"I love quarter notes" was the singular theme that ran through our conversation with master drummer-singer Grady Tate. Like a great jazz solo, he kept referring to that theme over and over to tie together his thoughts about his career in music.

Grady's discography is so long that it's impossible to count the exact number of recordings he's done. The artists range from jazz greats Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, and Wes Montgomery to pop stars Paul Simon and Bette Midler. He's also done countless jingles and film and television scores.

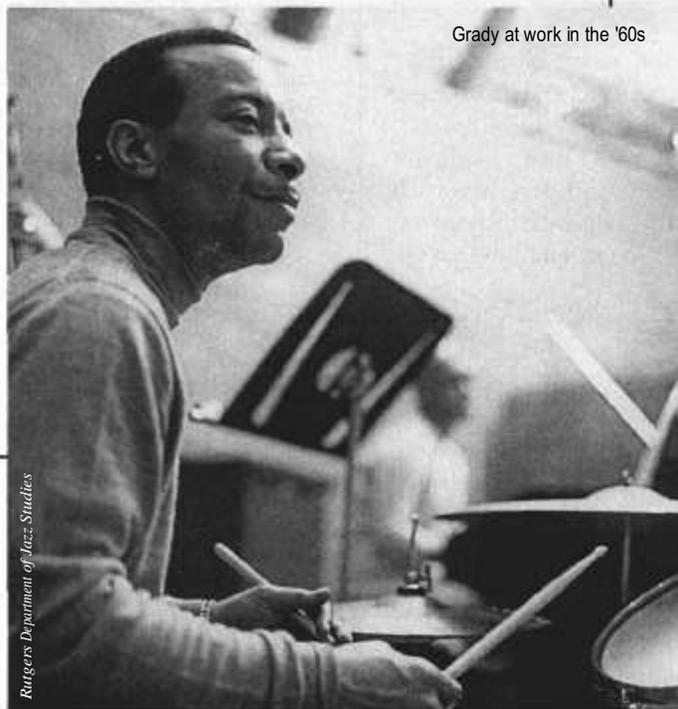
The list of artists Grady worked with is not only wide, but deep, which provides a portrait of a special artist. Grady Tate, the man, is honest, passionate, articulate, and most of all devoid of the "gift to music" kind of ego some musicians have. I watched as he approached the restaurant where our interview was to take place—smartly dressed, stick bag slung over his shoulder, and a confident walk that exuded a man of considerable accomplishment. He also looked much younger than his sixty-nine years.

So much of Grady Tate the drummer is tied to Grady the man. He speaks in a soft burrished baritone with an articulation that matches his playing. He listens carefully to every thought being expressed, and he's quick to laugh. His work has always reflected his integrity and individuality.

The test of any musician is their longevity, and after forty years, Grady Tate is still in demand. As you read through our conversation, you'll discover that it's filled with sage advice and wisdom that contains something for everybody.

Grady's thoughts are peppered with references to many of the great names in music and drumming. What stands out is how those quarter notes of Grady's have cut a path through jazz, rock, R&B, and pop—right up to his latest project, where he's playing the sacred music of Duke Ellington with opera diva Jessye Norman.

"I love quarter notes. I do more with quarter notes than I do anything else. That's just the way I feel."



Grady at work in the '60s

Rutgers Department of Jazz Studies

Grady Tate was born in Durham, North Carolina on January 14, 1932 into a loving and supportive family. "My parents and relatives would buy records," he recalls. "The first thing that I remember listening to is the phonograph. Light classical music is what impressed me. At five years old, I knew eight to ten light classical pieces. I didn't do the drum thing until later on in elementary school, but in preschool I was singing light classical for ladies' groups and small family functions. That's what I like; I like pretty music."

Grady's inspiration to play the drums started when his parents took the five-year-old to an amateur show sponsored by R.C. Cola. The contest featured a trio backing the singers and dancers. "I was quite impressed by the drummer; I had never seen anyone play a set of drums before," Tate says. "Even though I was impressed with the drums, the emcee asked if there was anybody else who wanted to try out for the show. Before my parents knew what happened, I was on the stage singing 'The One Rose.' The judges accepted me as a singer and I won a crate of R.C. Cola. That was my first payment for performance.

"The drums still stayed on my mind," Grady continues, "and I told my father about my interest. He asked, 'You like drums?' and I said, 'Yeah,' and I didn't mention it any more. At Christmas, I came down and there was a full set of drums under the Christmas tree. He had to send to New York to get them."

Grady goes on to state how proud his parents were of him, and he of them, and how fortunate he was to have been born into that family. He also speaks with great affection about his high school band director, Fillmore "Shorty" Hall, who had played in a number of territory bands and had taught the young Dizzy Gillespie at another school. "Shorty was an excellent jazz player," Grady recalls. "The best I'd ever heard. He introduced me to timpani, something that not only dealt with rhythm, but pitches and changes as well. I've always had an incredible ear. I hear things and don't forget them. As a matter of fact, I learned to read by rote. I would ask the trumpet player in the band what a figure sounds like. 'Oh, that's what that is.' I never learned 1, e, &, ah, etc. I learned by seeing something and knowing exactly what it sounds like. I must say that was one of the biggest assets to my recording career.

A Vocalist's Take Tate On Drummers

Not only is Grady Tate recognized as a great drummer, he's acknowledged as a fine vocalist, to boot. With this in mind, we asked him who some of *his* favorite drummers are, from both the drummer's and vocalist's perspective.

"Buddy Rich is one drummer I would listen to under any conditions—in total darkness, all by himself, nothing. The man was just a phenomenon." It was these comments of Grady's that jazz critic Leonard Feather used to lead off his liner notes for *Swingin' New Big Band* in 1967. Thirty-four years later, his opinion has not changed. "I'm not sure *what* it was about Buddy," Grady says. "To me he made the most incredible sounds that I've ever heard. His time, his power, his precision, and the fact that he would do anything to get it out of his head and onto the drums. It wasn't worked out; it was how he felt at that moment. He was a bitch."

Other drummers? "Philly Joe wiped me out," Grady urges. "Philly could play the snare drum and get four or five different sounds out of it. When he was right, he was awesome!"

What about Jimmy Cobb? "Power, drive, no attempts to be slick, consistency," is how Grady describes another great Miles Davis sideman. "If you were to hear him tonight, you would hear what you would have heard in 1947. Very consistent."

Mel Lewis. "Great recording drummer. Live, everything was too low and far down, but he recorded like a son of a gun."

Sam Woodyard. "Sam was a timekeeper. He played great time and colors. He was very comfortable with the Ellington band, and they were very comfortable with him."

Sonny Payne. "Sonny was a showman and a great part of that Basie groove."

Grady added a coda: "Let's not forget Buhaina [Art Blakey], the groovemaster."

All that said, Grady saves his highest praise for Roy Haynes. "Roy is perhaps the most exciting, most innovative, and slickest drummer I've ever heard. Roy never compromises; all told he is my all-time favorite.

"We were in Finland," Grady adds, "and Roy was playing with a group in a small club. He called me up to the stand to sing. I went up and called 'It Might As Well Be Spring.' He said, 'I want to show you some shit that I have.' We did the tune, and for the first time in my life I felt as if my body had risen from the floor! Roy used nothing but the bass drum, no brushes, no sticks, no hi-hat, no cymbals, just the bass drum. To this day, I cannot recall how he did it. Roy Haynes, that's the drum genius for me, whew!"



Reynolds Department of Jazz Studies

"My next thing was to listen to the orchestra to learn what was necessary to make that happen," Tate continues. "I never dealt with drum music as such, because ninety-five percent of it had nothing to do with what's happening in the band. So many people have destroyed their careers by reading exactly what's written for them. My thing in recording is to look at the music, listen to what's being done instrumentally, and see what elements of that drum music fit with what's going down with the other instruments."

I reminded Grady of an evening when we were out listening to a very good big band. He actually sang along to "Shiny Stockings." He not only sang the melody, but the articulations of the lead trumpet part as well. "That's the way I learned it," he says. "If I'm going to hear it, I'm going to hear it from the source, and that's the lead trumpet player. When you've got a passage that strong, you won't get it from the saxophones. You get it from that power base [trumpets]. When it's a saxophone thing, that requires another type of understanding. The brass is the boss, and the undercurrent of the saxophones is to nurture that power and let that power simmer."

"They're playing their asses off, and they're playing in the confines of the pocket." Grady is smiling now, as he comments on the high level of young drumming talent today. "It's difficult to play all of that stuff and make sure everything is right down the middle. The young kids are playing chops galore, power, stamina—and they still have that pocket going."

"We can talk about the Weckls and the Cobhams of the world," Grady says, "but they're no longer young. They brought goodies to the table, and then the young kids took that and ran with it. There are young kids out in Iowa, Minnesota, and the Dakotas who are picking up recordings and hearing something that was done with two bass drums, but they didn't see it being done. They'll say, 'Oh, *that's* what a bass drum is supposed to do,' and then they play it with one foot! That type of thing has caused a great revival of fantastic drummers. And

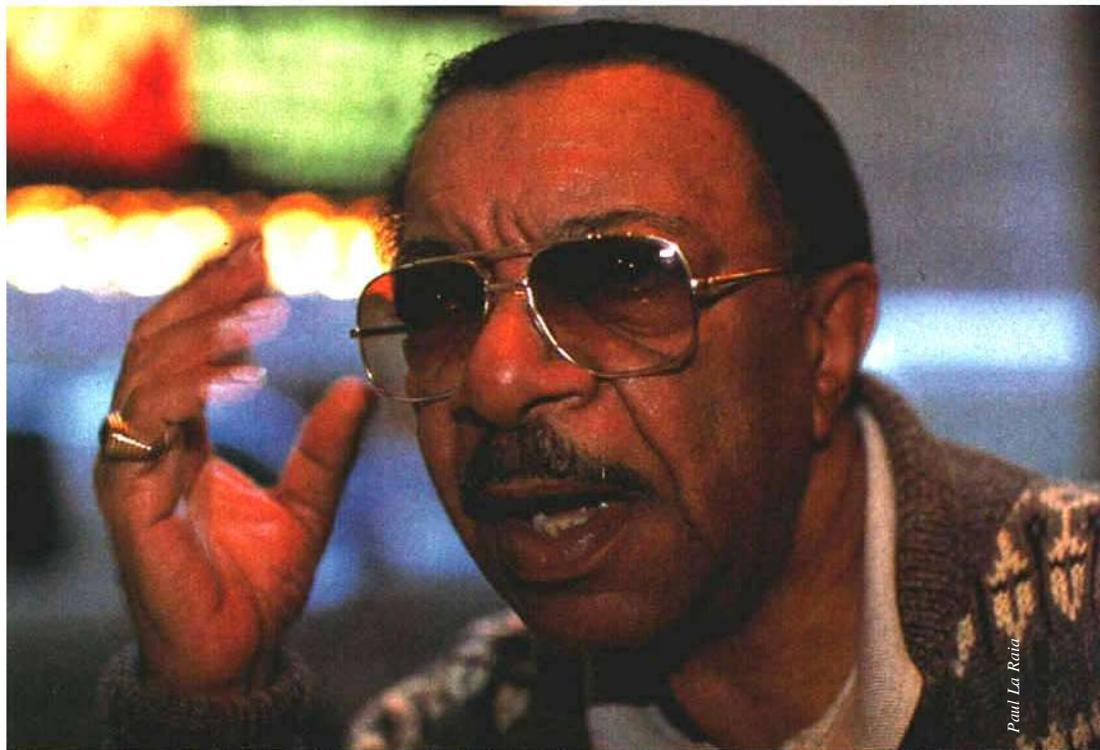
there are some great female drummers too. I'm so pleased, I don't know what to do."

One of the seminal live dates of the '60s, *Ella And Duke At Cote D'Azur* (Verve), had as much drama as music. Ella was heartbroken and exhausted due to the death of her half-sister, and Duke and producer Norman Granz were at odds. Ella took the stage with Jim Hughart (bass), Jimmy Jones (piano), Grady, and the Ellington orchestra. Considering Ella's state, some drummers would have kicked and bashed like a wild bronco. But Grady set up a firm yet relaxed groove that got the fire going.

"Yeah, Jimmy Jones never played 'piano'

then again, Tate's approach has always been more about intensity than bashing. "That's just the way I heard it," Grady says, modestly. "I don't like being unable to hear whatever else is being played around me. Most of those recordings were done acoustically. If I bashed, I wouldn't have been able to hear exactly what the bass and the piano were doing. And I certainly wouldn't hear precisely what the singer was singing."

"There are all kinds of ways to play dynamically," Grady offers. "It's about having stick control. You can press your stick down into the head and still play a hell of a shuffle. It'll be softer because you're not getting any overtones. If you loosen up a little



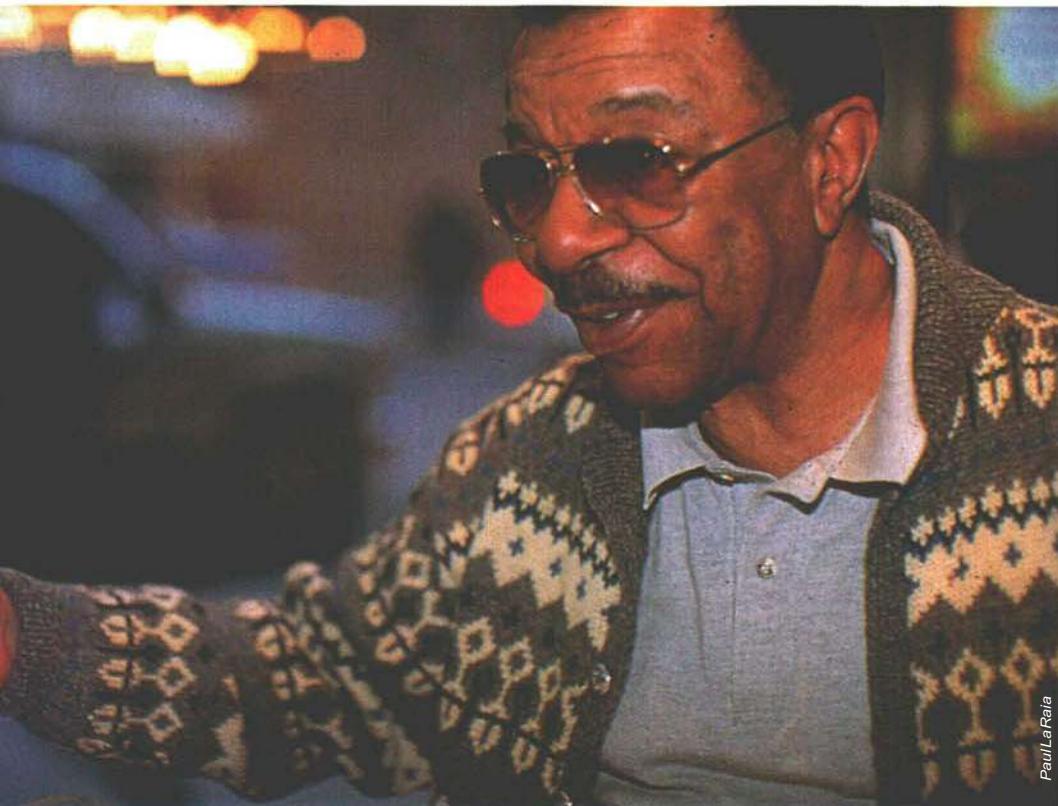
Paul La Rotta

as such," Grady recalls. "He played orchestrations; all the parts were there. It was a marvelous experience for me—and to listen to Ella...well! There again, it's all about listening—to Ella, Sarah Vaughan, Peggy Lee, Joe Williams, Billy Eckstine. Just listening to these people while you're working with them, you study them."

As an example of sensitivity and restraint, drummers have always pointed to Tate's playing on Bobby Darin's classic version of "Mack The Knife." Many drummers have been guilty at one time or another of bashing the hell out of the modulation section of that tune. Grady *identified* each key change by putting a little more edge on the beat and just a small "pop" that makes it a bit louder. But

you'll be playing at the same level. Loosen up more and you'll be getting a lot more sound. When you hit that rim with a little more force, you'll be loud."

The "A" team has different meanings to different people. On the New York session scene in the '60s, it meant Grady Tate and bassist Ron Carter, who was his rhythm-section mate on a long list of recordings. "We've done *lots* of work together," Grady enthuses. "We're so akin in the way we feel about music. His sound is so warm, God knows he can play *anything*, and he has such a pocket. Ron and I agree on where it's supposed to be. The dates went so much smoother with the two of us than they might



Paul LaReia

mined it. We just take it to another level. Ron's a monster, man."

During our conversation, the restaurant sound system coincidentally featured a number of artists that Tate had worked with. Grady constantly made humorous references to them. "I've done so many dates. I'd leave one session and immediately go to another, and I'd have to empty my head in between so I could start fresh on the next project.

"One of the things I've tried to do with studio work is play with each artist as differently as I can without losing what I do. I can't remember all of the things I've done. I go to Japan, and after performances there's a line of people with stacks of recordings that they ask me to sign. I have to turn them over and look, then I remember."

One session Grady remembers well is recording the Benny Golson composition "Killer Joe" for Quincy Jones' *Walking In Space*, which is often a young drummer's introduction to jazz.

have gone with others of equal or superior talent. It's the communication that the two of

us have—we have eye and body signals that allow us to do stuff without having predeter-

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"Some of the music in the studio was so incredibly difficult. I think that's when I started wearing shades, so that **nobody** could see the fear in my eyes."



Rutgers Department of Jazz Studies

Grady uses the session as an example of how to approach the song. "You have to know who Killer Joe is, for one thing," Grady urges. "He's perhaps the hippest dude on the street. He walks with a certain gait, his dress is of a certain code, he thinks a certain way, and he's into everything. Everything has to be toned down because he doesn't want to get busted by the man. He can't be as flamboyant as he would like to be, so all of his stuff has to be underneath to keep the heat off.

"That's why I love playing quarter notes; Killer Joe is walking [sings walking bass line]. He's strolling. He's not out there saying, Look at me. You have to be very cool with 'Killer Joe'; you've got to play the character. I loved playing with [bassist] Ray Brown on that tune. That was fun. Ray plays... [sings triplet groove Brown

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Grady & Satchmo

The night before our interview with Grady Tate, the multi-part PBS documentary *Jazz* by Ken Burns premiered. Since Grady's work is featured on the film's soundtrack recording, and since much of *Jazz's* early episodes concentrates on legendary jazz trumpeter Louis Armstrong, we thought it an appropriate time to ask Grady about his ex-boss.

"The only thing I specifically remember was the way I felt when I saw him," Grady says. "It was as if I had seen God, and that's the reverence with which I played when I was with him. 'Pops' was one of the swingin'est guys imaginable. His time, his energy, and his sound were always there. His playing was totally honest, and when he picked up a microphone it was just as honest. He could take a pop tune and make it mean something to millions of people. That's not an easy thing to do."

plays throughout the piece], which gives 'Killer Joe' a little more life. I stayed where I was and let Ray deal, let him dance. He danced the hell out of that thing. And the band was incredible—all these characters. That's something that Quincy is an absolute genius at. He brings together the right group of people who are individuals, but who at the same time can become a group."

The '60s were an exciting time in New York. Musicians walked from one recording date to another, and live gigs were plentiful. It was out of this firmament that

Grady Tate solidified his reputation as a reliable and gifted drummer who could play any style with conviction.

The earlier generation of great jazz drummers who were in the studios refused to play anything that didn't have a swing feel. Grady's preference was also for jazz. But his unflagging commitment to make every date as good as it could be guaranteed that his professionalism overrode whatever opinions he held. Besides, it was a period of significant musical change, and Grady understood the importance of that. "The first thing that comes to mind is that we all wore suits,

white shirts, and ties," he says. "That was the dress code. We were very polite, and the music sounded like it. To me, it exuded a great deal of sophistication, and the artists we were working with were very sophisticated. Everybody spoke well, had a certain amount of education, and was well-traveled."

As the "soul jazz" movement took hold in the late '60s, the straight-8th-note groove became more prominent. Yet these were jazz dates, and they had to have that jazz vibe. "I studied all of my life to play the dotted-8th-and-16th-note pattern," Grady says. "And then in the latter part of the '60s, I was told that I must play 8th-note patterns. I had to devise some scheme where I could camouflage the straight 8th notes to give them a dotted feel and keep it within the jazz concept."

Stan Getz' 1967 album *Sweet Rain* (Polygram) is one of the most important recordings in jazz, and it features a stellar performance from Grady Tate. In fact, Grady had the unenviable task of replacing Roy Haynes, who had worked with Getz for a long time. Getz was also notoriously diffi-

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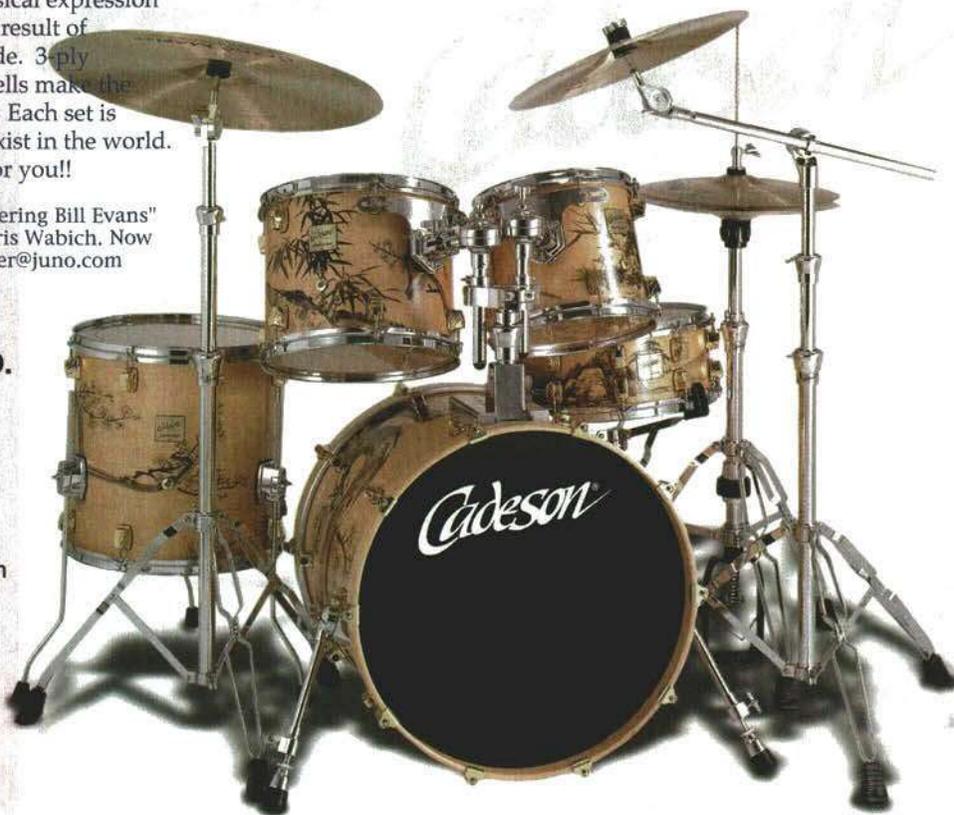
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Grady Tate

cult, but *Sweet Rain* is perhaps the best example of mental practicing and care that Grady provides an artist. "I've listened to so much Roy Haynes," he says. "Roy had been working with Stan, so he had Roy in his ears. Every drummer has 'crips,' things that you most remember him for. So I thought, Let me pick out ten of Roy's crips. It will be a relief to Stan, and it'll still be in the context of what's happening. I prepare here [pointing to his head]. That's the way I always prepare. I don't sit down and practice. For *Sweet Rain*, I just thought about Roy."

As our chat with Grady continues, the conversation turns to the great session drummer Osie Johnson. Johnson is relatively unknown today, but he was part of an extraordinary rhythm section that included bassist Milt Hinton, guitarist Barry Galbraith, and pianist Hank Jones. That ensemble did many major recordings. "I learned decorum and an approach to recording from Osie," Grady reminisces. "Recording at the time didn't have all the sophistication that you have now, where you can make anybody sound the way you want

them to sound. The sound of each player was so individual at that time. You could say, 'Oh, that's Osie.' You could pick out *all* the cats. You had to be sober and really think seriously about what you were doing. You would never play what you played on a live gig on a recording. That was the one thing that aced a lot of cats out of work in the studios. They would come in and try to play it the way they would play live.

"Osie Johnson was as sweet a cat as you could meet—big smile, just a perfect gentleman. That's another thing—and maybe cats don't want to hear it: There are a lot of guys out there who can play, but if you're going to work at this or any other instrument, you can't have an attitude. Likability is the thing. If people like you, you're going to get more work. If you're a nasty human being, it takes too much time and energy to work with you."

Grady also feels that young drummers today rely too much on educational books and videos. He sees this partially as a financial issue. "You have to be pretty well-heeled to go to a jazz club," he suggests. "You just can't walk out and hear people

anymore. If it weren't for the Japanese and the Europeans visiting the clubs in New York, most of them would fold. Americans don't give a shit about jazz, and those who do don't care to spend a hundred bucks to go hear it. Drummers are going into rock because that's what's going to make them money."

As a faculty member at Howard University, Tate sees first-hand what young musicians contend with today. "What I'm at Howard to do is teach jazz vocal improvisation," Grady explains. "I also coach a couple of drummers and critique their playing, just by listening and looking at them. But I'm not a drum 'teacher' because I didn't study drums the way I did voice."

Tate has in fact had quite a successful career as a singer, with a number of recordings and live performances to his credit. Of course, Grady isn't the only sticksman to make a name for himself at the front of the stage. Mel Torme, Buddy Rich, Don Henley, and Phil Collins come immediately to mind. Grady feels that the role allows him an even deeper understanding of the drummer's duties. "I've had problems with

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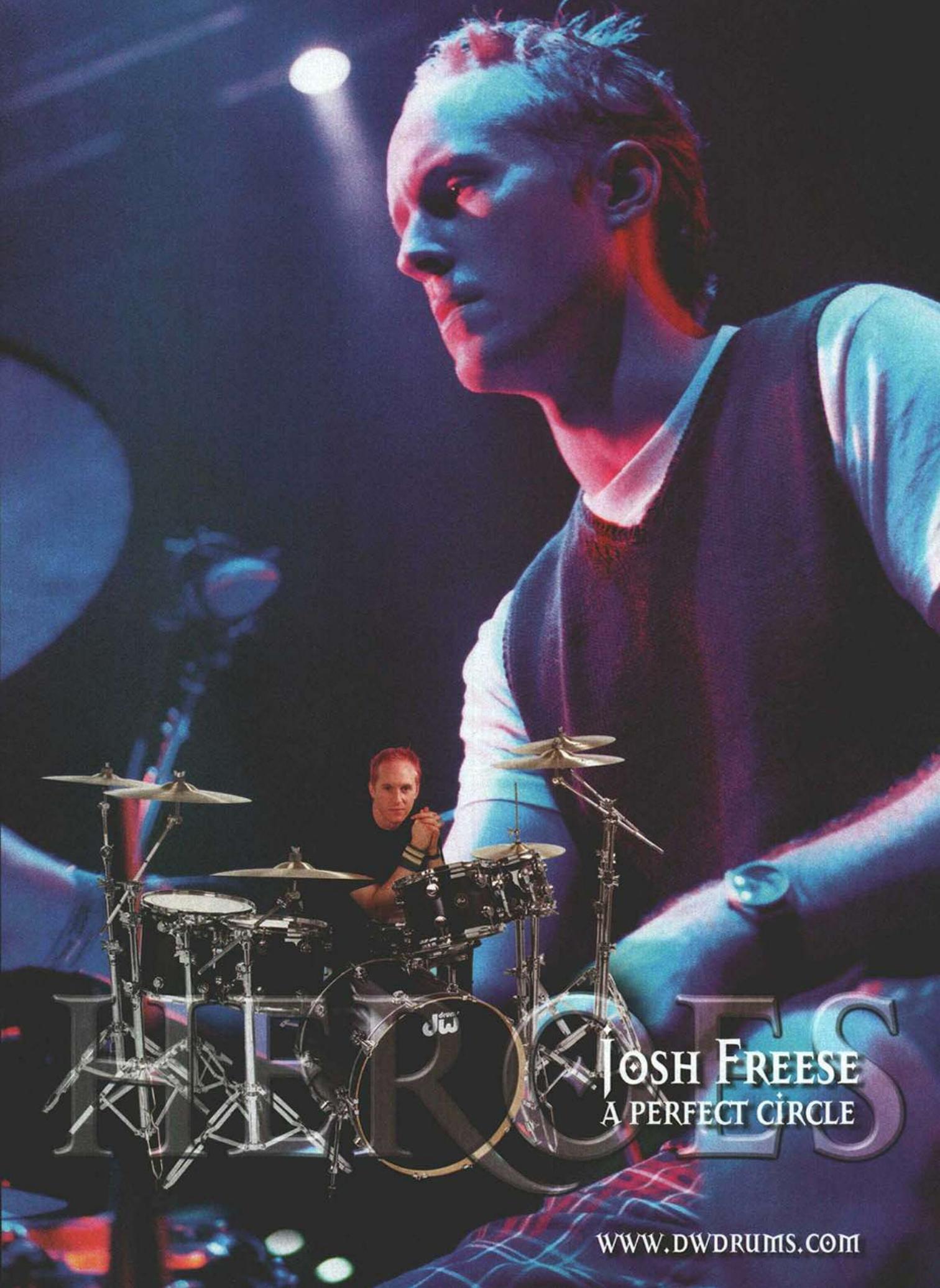
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Grady Tate

drummers," Tate admits. "They either don't accept their role, or they underplay because they're intimidated.

"I try to make the drummers who work with me be as comfortable as possible," he continues. "One of the ways I have of ensuring this is by listening to what a drummer plays—not on my gig, but on *his* gig. I've also got to have a person who plays brushes, who can groove with them not only on ballads but on uptempo tunes as well. And I don't want to hear everything that a drummer can play. It's about selectivity. You have to select what you're going to play behind a singer. You have to find out what makes a singer go. It's a matter of trial and error, and you should be able to tell what's happening even if you're looking at that person from the rear. You just have to be aware."

In the early '80s, the word spread like wildfire that Grady Tate was going to play a Broadway musical. Drummers all over New York were excited about the prospect of getting to hear him live for two uninterrupted hours. The show was a retrospective on the

career of singer-actress Lena Home, *A Lady And Her Music*. What made this a drumming event was when one of the most powerful critics in New York, Stuart Klein, said in his review, "The music was brilliant due to the superior playing of jazz great Grady Tate." It's a rare event indeed when a sideman is mentioned for his contribution to a musical.

The day this writer attended the show, there were three other drummers in the audience. With all due respect to Lena Home and her magnificent career, we had come to hear Grady. The show covered musical genres going back to the '30s, and Grady covered it all with ease. He was flattered when I told him about the review and how much he has meant to drummers the world over. "I'll be darned, I'm totally unaware of that kind of awareness of what I do," he says.

That's not just Grady being modest. "I don't think about it," he explains, "because I never thought of myself as a drummer, and I know how little I can play. I've always said, How can I approach that sound and how can I play much less to really bring the music out? I don't have any chops, never really thought about them. I hate solos; I can't play

one to save my life. I think of myself as someone who can keep time. When I think about great drummers, I think about Billy Cobham, Buddy Rich, and Dave Weckl, cats who are incredible. I can't do any of that stuff with my hands. All I do is keep time."

With all of the recordings, film and television scores, and live dates he's done, Grady gave special care to the work of composer Oliver Nelson. "Oliver Nelson was one of the most inventive and creative talents I've ever had the pleasure of working with," he says. "Man, he wrote things that defied description. The music was coming from pure jazz—so incredibly difficult. I think that's when I started wearing shades in the studio, so that neither he nor the band could see the fear in my eyes! Pressure does that to you sometimes. There's always something that you can't do comfortably."

A situation that always *was* comfortable for Grady was when he worked with percussionists Ray Barretto and Johnny Pacheco. Together these three men have recorded some *burning* grooves, especially with Latin-jazz pioneer Cal Tjader. "I love work-



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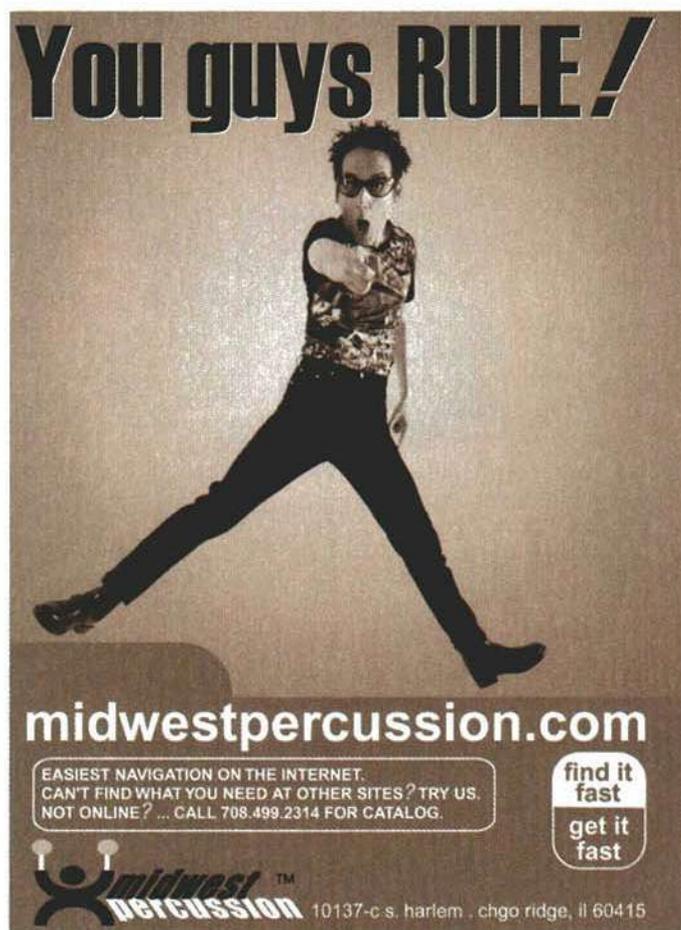
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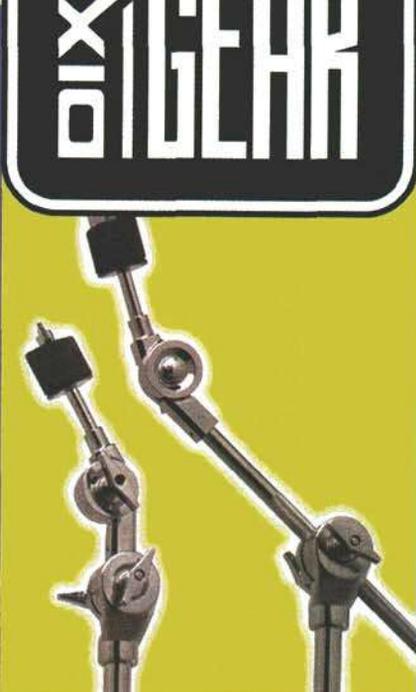
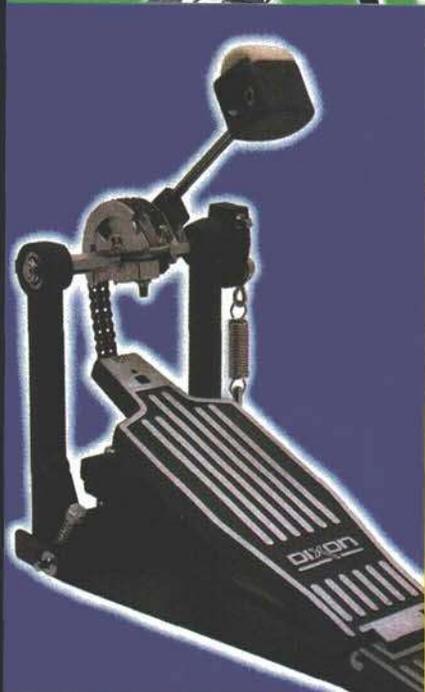
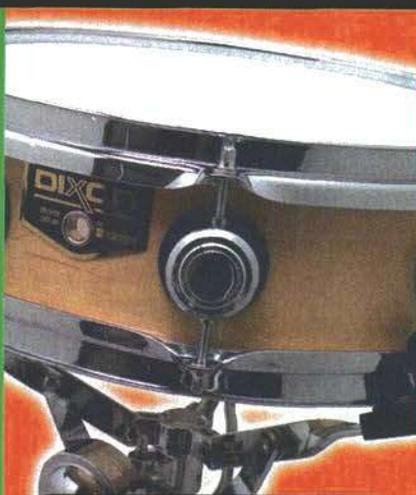
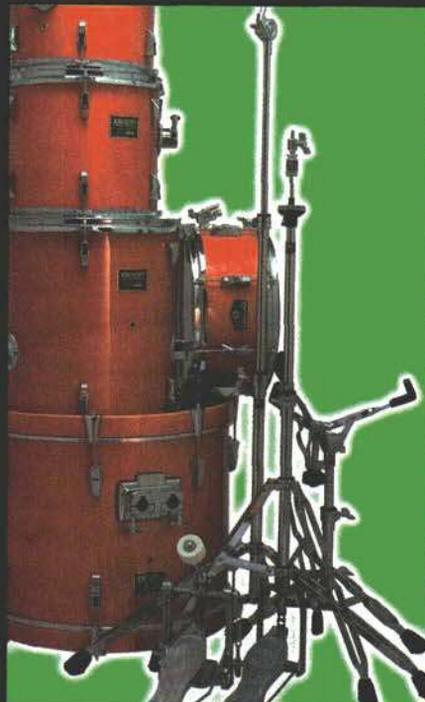
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Grady Tate

ing with Ray and Johnny," Grady says fondly. "They're both jazz fans. The conga players who play that 8th-note groove drive me nuts, especially when you're trying to play dotted-8th-and-16ths. Ray and Johnny play the conga groove *and* swing their butts off. We used to do all kinds of jazz dates together. When playing with a percussionist, you have to get out of the way and know what and when to play. That's why the quarter note is so slick. I didn't have to play much, and it fit perfectly."

As we began to talk about working with Paul Simon, Grady spoke of his genius for music and lyrics. But then Grady immediately jumped to Simon's long-standing drummer, Steve Gadd. "Whew, talk about a demon! Steve's got that laid-back pocket—it's just indescribable. He just sits down on the beat. He's a bad, bad young man."

When I mentioned Steve's driving quarter-note groove on "Love For Sale" from *Burning For Buddy*, Grady reintroduced the theme of our conversation. "I love quarter notes. I do more with quarter notes than I do anything else. That's just the way I feel."



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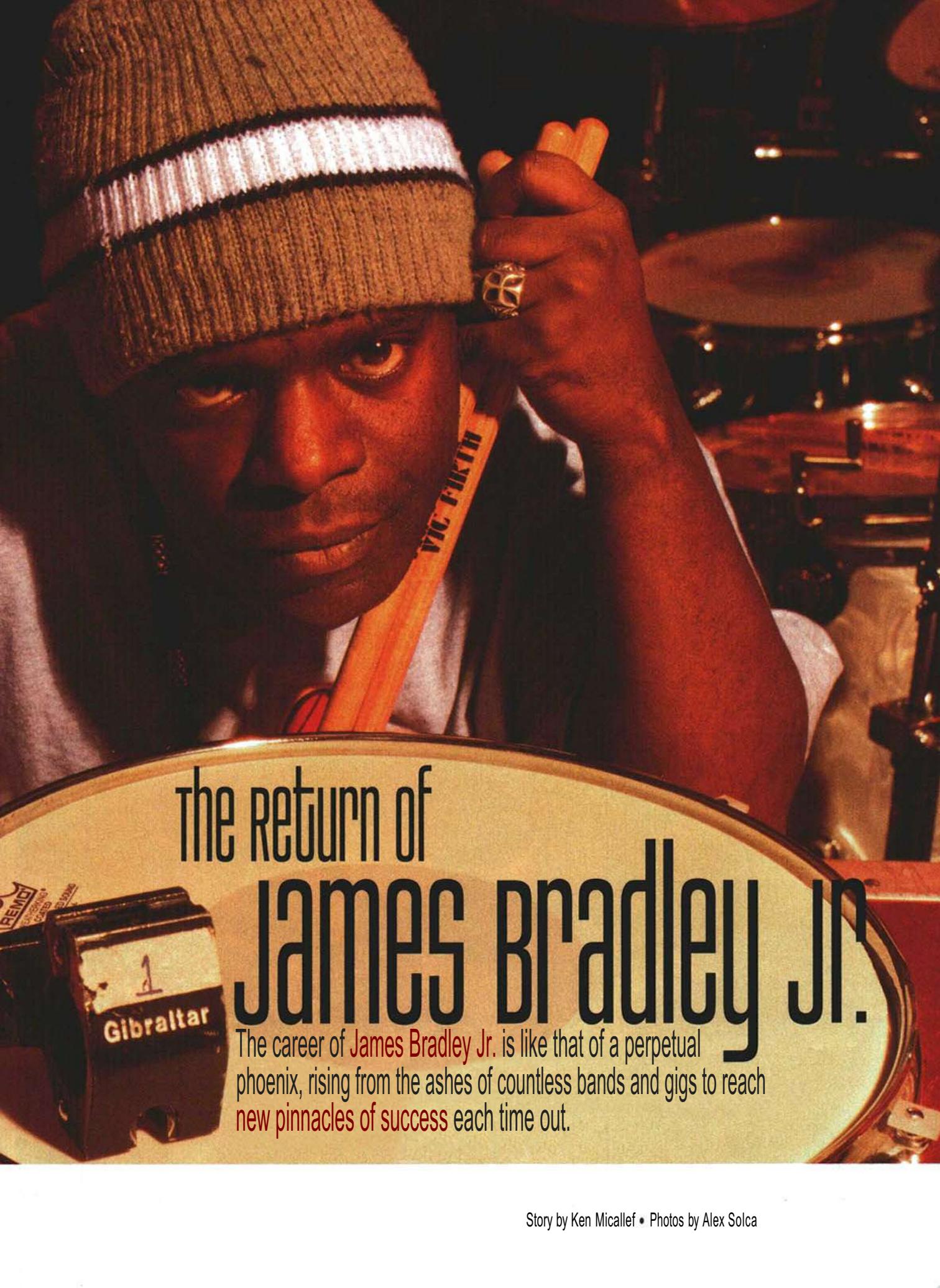
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former chuck mangione sideman is back in crazy town



The Return of James Bradley Jr.

The career of **James Bradley Jr.** is like that of a perpetual phoenix, rising from the ashes of countless bands and gigs to reach **new pinnacles of success** each time out.

Story by Ken Micallef • Photos by Alex Solca

A child drumming prodigy who regularly performed on

television shows in the 1960s, the now forty-two-year-old

Bradley is currently the rhythmic force for LA rock-

rappers Crazy Town and their hit album, *The Gift of Game*.

Riding high on the charts with three hit singles—"Butterfly," "Toxic," and "Darkside"—Crazy Town's gangsta stance and hip-hop routine make them seem like just another band from LA. But beneath the thuggery and pomp lie infectious songs and a band bolstered by true camaraderie.

Bradley (or JBJ, as he's called these days) brings something new to the tired rap-rock genre. With a big, loose groove and slamming power punches, JBJ's beat is more dynamic than banal loops or the testosterone-fueled pummel of heavy metal.

Part of what makes JBJ's drumming so powerful is his vast experience in the busi-

ness. In the mid-'70s, he recorded and performed with jazz trumpeter Chuck Mangione on the million-selling 1977 album and single, *Feels So Good*. The last Top-10 instrumental jazz hit, "Feels So Good" was bubbly and smooth, bolstered by JBJ's Steve Gadd-influenced groove. JBJ went on to work with R&B superstar Anita Baker, alterna-rockers Mary's Danish, The Go-Go's' Gina Shock, The Beastie Boys, Slash, and many others.

But Crazy Town is the first time JBJ gets to play the kind of crossover drumming he's always imagined, a kind of pre-Living Colour fusion of flash, funk, and rock 'n' roll. For James Bradley Jr., appropriately, it's all about *The Gift Of Game*.

MD: Let's talk about your *Feels So Good* period with Chuck Mangione.

JBj: I was eighteen when I joined his band. But before that I was a child prodigy on the drums. I performed on all these TV shows in the '60s when I was a kid: *Jack Benny*, *Nat King Cole*, *Steve Allen*, *Hollywood Palace*. I was featured as a drummer, this four-year-old kid playing with a big band. I would play solos on things like "Caravan."

I hooked up with Chuck right after high school, but my first tour had been with Deniece Williams in the fall of '76. I also passed up an audition for Santana when the thing with Chuck panned out. At that time I was into jazz and I knew who Chuck was. I'd been playing around LA with Patrice Rushen and George Cables. I had heard Chuck's song, "Hill Where The Lord Hides," with Steve Gadd on drums. I did the audition and Chuck sent me a bunch of records, and then a ticket to start touring with him. I was into the CTI records, so I was a fan of Gadd. I was also into Alphonse Mouzon, Harvey Mason, and Lenny White.

MD: How big was *Feels So Good*?

JBj: That was the first album I recorded,



back in April of 1977. It then was on the charts for three years, peaking at Number 2. It went double platinum, sold two and a half million copies. We performed on all sorts of gigs that you'd consider pop. Hey, we were even on Dick Clark's *Rocking New Year's Eve 1979* with Rick James and The Village People. We made history.

MD: Your drumming was so smooth, and you had such good technique.

JBJ: My parents worked as a duo at clubs in California, and they toured with famous acts. They had a house gig in Downey, California—things were a lot different then. I heard a lot of jazz, and the people next door were more into R&B, so I heard that too. I had a cousin who was into avant-garde jazz, and so I heard that when I was nine. Of course, hearing Elvin and Tony, my jaw dropped. That's when my style changed. I got more aggressive.

MD: Were you formally trained?

JBJ: I had a teacher when I was five years old, Bill Douglas, who was a star in the Central Avenue scene. He taught me rudiments, but I was playing paradiddles when I was four. I also had an album by a famous rudimental drummer, Frank Arsenault, where he played everything from slow to fast. I played to that record every day and had it covered. Then I played in the marching band in high school.

Another turning point for me was when a friend turned me on to Billy Cobham in 1973. After seeing Billy, I switched to matched grip. And from Billy Cobham and



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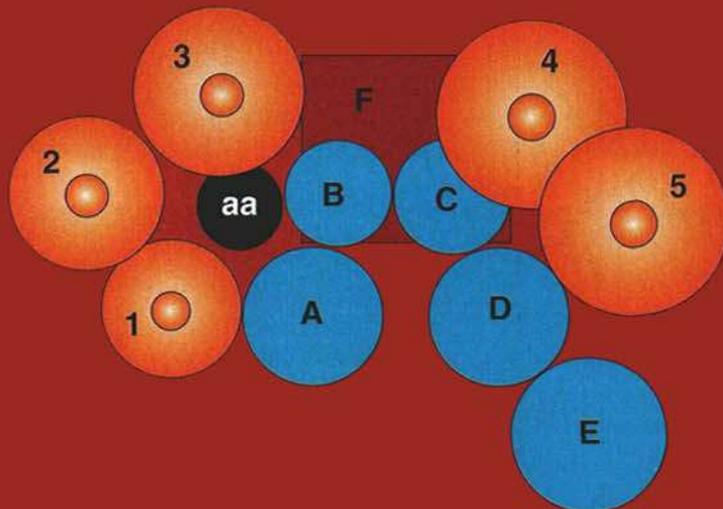
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JBJ's new kit not shown in photos.

JBJ's New Drums



JBJ

Lenny White I got the ambidextrous technique. And I was into straight-ahead. I played jazz with my mom, who played piano. I was doing those gigs when I was fifteen.

MD: Back then you had that Gadd thing. Everyone thought it was Gadd on *Feels So Good*.

JBJ: What I liked about Gadd was his soulfulness. Before I met him, I figured he was black. Chuck never told me. And when I did meet Steve, I was surprised.

When we recorded *Feels So Good*, Gadd actually came to the session. He was friends with Chuck. Steve hung out and gave me a few ideas for the songs. The grooves are mine, but he showed me a few little things. I incorporated those into my own thing. Chuck had charts, but I was playing from the heart. That's how the magic happened. And we knew we had something magical after we recorded "Feels So Good"; we got chills when we heard the playback.

MD: You played with a full orchestra on Mangione's *Children Of Sanchez* album. What was that pressure like?

JBJ: We were a close-knit band. Chuck

feels so crazy

These are the albums that JBJ says best represent his playing.

Artist	Album
Crazy Town	The Gift Of Game
Chuck Mangione	Feels So Good
Chuck Mangione	Children Of Sanchez
Chuck Mangione	Live At The Hollywood Bowl
Chuck Mangione	Fun And Games
Mary's Danish	Live At The Ventura Theater
Mary's Danish	Circa
Mary's Danish	American Standard
Beastie Boys	Check Your Head (percussion on seven tracks, drums on two tracks)

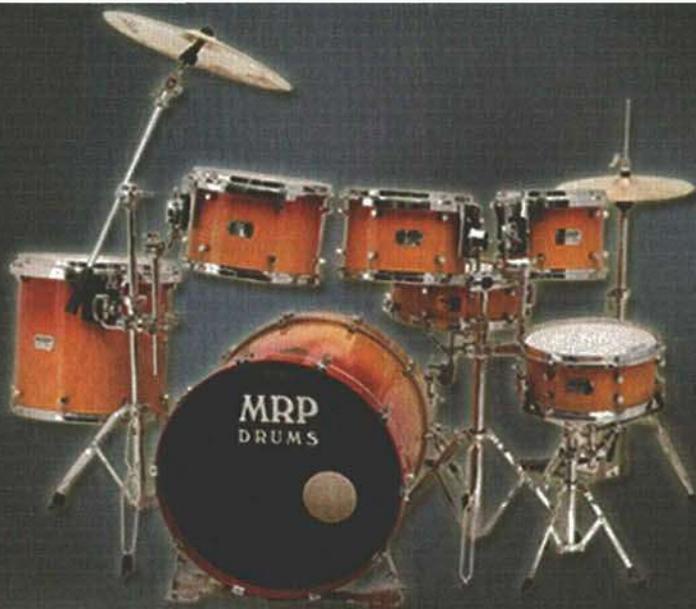
And these are the ones he listens to for inspiration.

Artist	Album	Drummer
Tony Williams	Believe It	Tony Williams
Pat Martino	Joyous Lake	Kenwood Dennard
Led Zeppelin	all	John Bonham
Mahavishnu Orchestra	Inner Mounting Flame	Billy Cobham
Miles Davis	Miles Smiles	Tony Williams
John Coltrane	My Favorite Things	Elvin Jones
Art Blakey	Indestructable	Art Blakey
Genesis	Abacab	Phil Collins

would give pep talks before gigs, and we'd go out and do it. It was more of a challenge

for me, though, but I had the schooling. It's funny, but I never got nervous as a kid.

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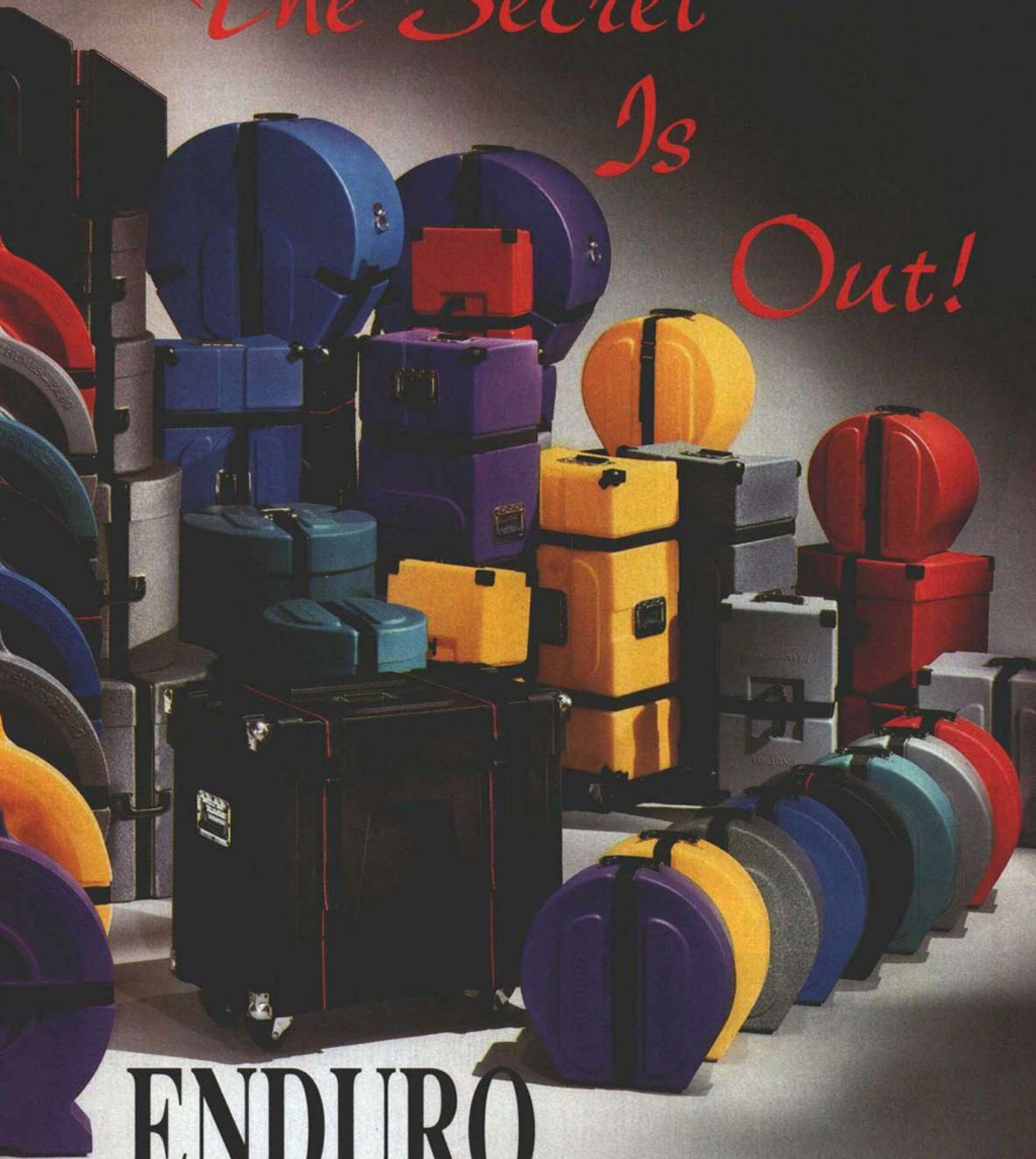
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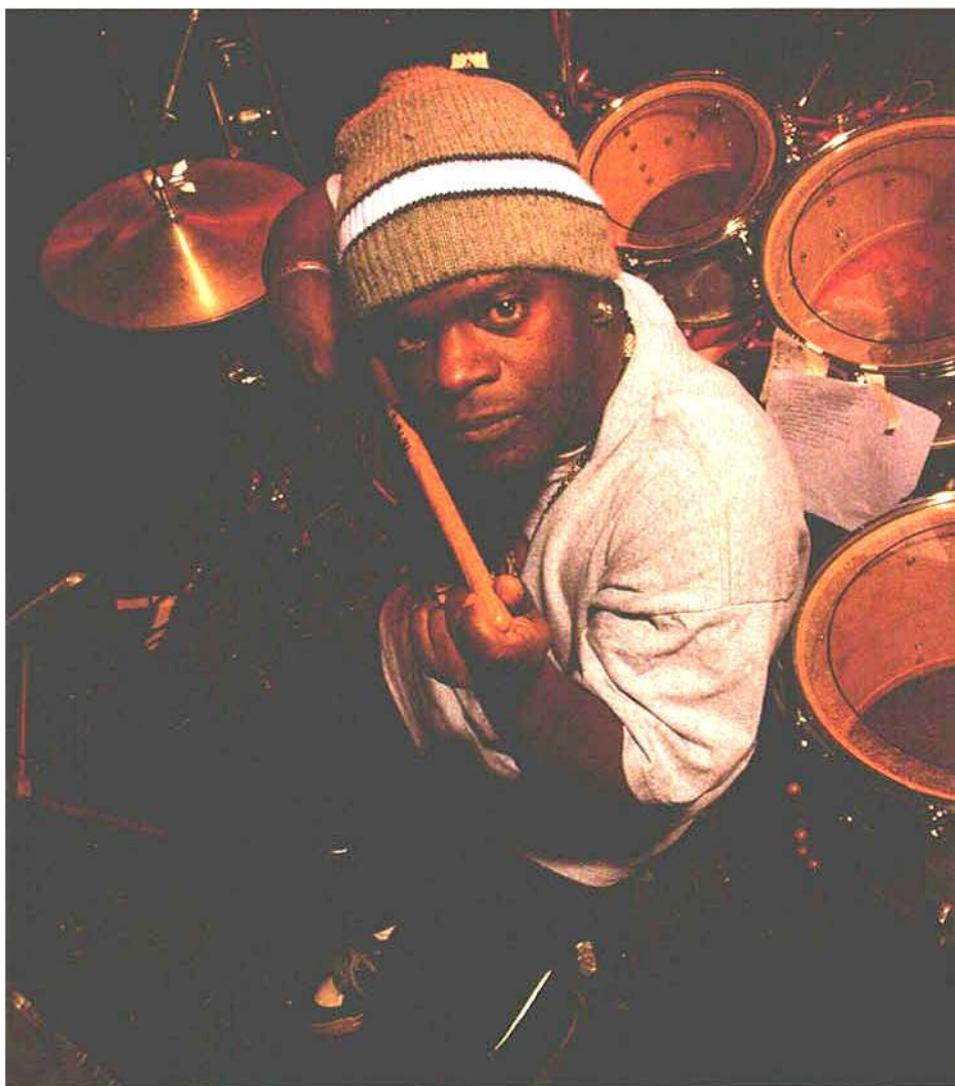
JBJ

MD: What did you practice then?

JBJ: I didn't. We were always gigging—two hundred shows a year for four years. Back then I didn't warm up as much as I do now. I play harder now in this style of music. I do more exercises. My favorite book is Ted Reed's *Syncopation*. *Stick Control* is cool, too. But I used to apply *Syncopation* to my jazz stuff.

MD: What happened after Mangione?

JBJ: I had a band called Urban Gypsy, where I was trying to fuse rock with funk. I was into Bowie and Talking Heads. We were close to being signed by Geffen in 1984, but people weren't ready for that crossover sound then. In '86 I was called to go on tour with Anita Baker for her *Rapture* tour. I was with her for a year and a half. From 1987 to '88 I was out with Jeffrey Osborne. In '89 I did some writing



"I realized that *this* is what I've always wanted to do—live rap-rock. and I had that same feeling I had when I was with Chuck Mangione and Mary's Danish; I knew Crazy Town was something special."

with Gina Shock of The Go-Go's, and we were signed with a band called House Of Shock. I wanted to write more and cross over to rock.

I joined an alternative band called Mary's Danish in '89, and they had some big singles. I saw them and liked them instantly, so they asked me to join. We did four albums, *There Goes The Wonder Truck*, *Experience*, *Circa*, and *American Standard*. We were feminist rock right before grunge hit, from '89 to '93.

MD: You've had amazing timing in your career.

JBJ: I've had some tough times, too. I was a heavy partier for a while. It began when I was eighteen, even jazz was all about that. It got bad around '93—I was smoking crack. I was addicted to cocaine and marijuana for a long time, too. I didn't know I had a disease. I had to hit bottom. That's when I got scared, and all the people who loved me could see it. I couldn't hide it anymore.

I was in a band called Rob Rule after Mary's Danish. By '95 I was tired of beating myself up and I asked for help. I went to AA, and I've had five years of abstinence

from drugs and alcohol.

MD: Did this take a toll on your drumming?

JBJ: It didn't affect the drumming so much. It affected *me*. I became isolated on crack. It brought me to my knees. I had to get my life back, and luckily, by the end of '95 things got better. My girlfriend got pregnant. In 1996, I was sitting in with Slash at the Baked Potato. He was leaving Guns N' Roses and needed a band to go to Budapest to play a rock fest, and he asked me to go. We called it The Slash N' Blues Ball. We played all these '70s rock tunes, and did ten shows in two months.

MD: Does anyone ever start playing "Feels So Good" when you're on a gig?

JBJ: I've walked into restaurant clubs and had bands play it, and then they call me up. I've played that song so many times. Oddly enough, in 1997 after I finished up with Slash, Chuck Mangione called. 1997 was our twenty-year reunion. We re-formed with the original guys, and I stayed with him until the end of 1999. Then I joined Crazy Town.

MD: Your drumming is so malleable, and you've played in so many different bands

and styles. Crazy Town is another left turn. You play very loose, and you groove on the record as opposed to sounding like a set of loops. It's more interesting than the usual hardcore rap record.

JBJ: That's why I joined. I like that direction, and it's something I had a taste of in '92, when I hooked up with The Beastie Boys and played on their *Check Your Head* album. Mike D was my drum student. It's amazing how all this stuff happens. I heard *Paul's Boutique* and loved that. Next thing you know, one day I was playing basketball with Flea and some guys from The Beastie Boys. That's how I met them. Once they found out who I was, it was all over. They asked me to play percussion on the album. And I played drums on the last song of that album—one of my most enjoyable records.

MD: Do you wish you had done more session work?

JBJ: Kinda. The kids are sampling all the music from the era I came up in. I wish I had gone more with my funky side, but I was trying to cross over into rock. Maybe I could have done more session work, but I don't regret anything.

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JBJ

MD: Did you practice a lot during all this time?

JBJ: I play a lot more than I practice. I also study by listening. And I practice piano and write.

MD: How did Crazy Town come about?

JBJ: I met the producer, Bret Mazur, through a friend in '99. The band wasn't signed yet, but after hearing their demos I thought I'd jam with them. At first I thought they were some snotty kids trying to be gangsters. Then I realized that *this* is

what I've always wanted to do—live rap-rock. That's what The Beastie Boys were doing, and they wanted to be like The Meters. So right away I knew that this was what I wanted to be involved in. And I had that same feeling that I had when I was with Chuck and Mary's Danish; I knew it was something special.

MD: On *The Gift Of Game*, are we hearing real-time drumming or are your parts looped?

JBJ: Most of the songs are real drums start

to finish. Some of those tracks were quantized with Pro Tools, but it's all live drums. "Think Fast," "Revolving Door," and "B Boy" are all live drums.

MD: Your drumming on *Game* is somewhere between hardcore and hip-hop, but it's loose.

JBJ: That combination of styles comes across even more live, and that's my signature now, I guess. The band didn't say what they wanted; I just brought my JBJ style into their music. That's what I do. I



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JBJ

bring my style into other people's music and try things. No matter what, it's gonna feel like me.

MD: What drums are we hearing on the record?

JBJ: That was a Gretsch kit. The Drum Doctor [LA-based drum cartage and care] worked with me on that. There's no sampling, it's all natural drums.

MD: There are a lot of rhythmic changes in "Think Fast." After everything you've done, what was the challenge of playing this music?

JBJ: I don't know if it was a challenge. I was a part of where hip-hop came from. When I played with The Beastie Boys, they enjoyed working with me. They respected me. I just brought my history and knowledge to that music.

MD: Are there particular songs you play live that are hard work?

JBJ: The energy is very high live. And we have little extra figures that we've put into the music that all of us hit. I'll play something, and then everyone will vibe on it. I do that on "Only When I'm Drunk." Hip-hop is so rhythmic, it's kind of like bebop. In every song there are little rhythmic

things the rappers do that I accent.

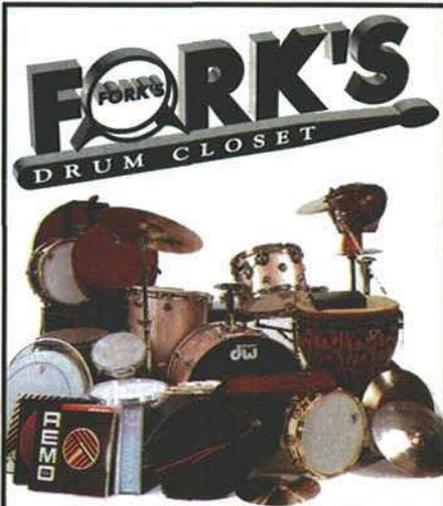
MD: How do you keep your chops up on the road?

JBJ: What helps me out now is warming up before I play. I do twenty minutes of single strokes and doubles before every gig. I also do some snap-wrist exercises. Warming up is really important, because Crazy Town's material could really cause me to cramp up if I didn't.

MD: Besides Crazy Town, I've heard rumors of a JBJ solo project.

JBJ: I'm working on something called The JBJ Experience. It's a jazz-fusion trio. When I'm in town, we play regularly at this gentlemen's club in Pasadena called Pleasures. We just jam and throw down hard. We improvise and record everything. It's raw, and I can play whatever I feel. We have several live tracks that we're going to assemble and release later this year.

It's funny, but before I was in Crazy Town it was hard for me to book my group. Now, with all of the success the band has been having, clubs are like, "Please bring your trio back. Come back and play now!" It's cool.



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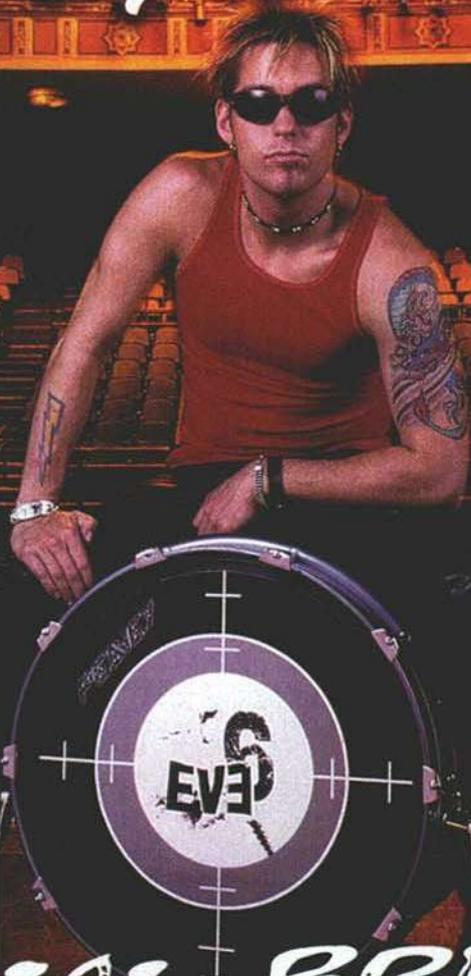
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Dawsonisms

Part 3: Paradiddle Combinations

by Osami Mizuno

Variations on paradiddles and paradiddle combinations were a key element of master teacher Alan Dawson's rudimental inventiveness. Before beginning the following exercises, you must

develop total facility with the single, double, and triple paradiddle, and as well as the paradiddle-diddle.

Single Paradiddle

R L R R L R L L

Double Paradiddle

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

Triple Paradiddle

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

Paradiddle-Diddle

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

Next, try these permutations of the paradiddle-diddle. Be sure the accents are placed correctly, and practice using both stickings.

Paradiddle-Diddle Permutation Study

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

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

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

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

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

The following two exercises, the first in 16th notes and the second in 16th-note triplets, use the single, double, and triple paradiddle in sequence.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The next exercises put the accents on the first two notes of the single, double, and triple paradiddle.

Exercise 1: R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L (S.P.)

Exercise 2: R L R L R R L R L R L L R L R L (D.P.)

Exercise 3: R R L R L R L L R L R L R L R R (D.P., T.P.)

Exercise 4: R L R R L R L L R R L R L L R R L L L (S.P.)

Exercise 5: R L R L R R L R L L R L R L R R L R L L (D.P.)

Exercise 6: R L R L R L R R L R L L R L R L R L R R (T.P.)

Watch the accent placement on these final four sequential exercises using the single and triple paradiddle and the paradiddle-diddle. Practice these at various speeds and dynamic levels, and strive for clean execution and accuracy.

Exercise 1: R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L (S.P.)

Exercise 2: R L R R L L R L R R L L R L R R (P.D.D.)

Exercise 3: L L R L R R L L R L R L R L R R (P.D.D., T.P.)

Exercise 1: R L R R L R L L R R L R L L R R L L L (S.P.)

Exercise 2: R L R R L L R L R R L L R L R R (P.D.D.)

Exercise 3: R L R L R R L R L L R L R L R L R R (T.P.)

Exercise 4: R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L (S.P.)

Exercise 5: R L R R L L R L R R L L R L R R (P.D.D.)

Exercise 6: L L R L R R L L R L R L R L R R (P.D.D., P.D.D.D.)

Next month, in the final installment of this series, we'll look at Alan's use of single, double, and triple ratamacues.

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The Third Hand

Working Your Bass Drum Into 16th-Note Fills

by Ted Bonar and Ed Breckenfeld

MUSIC KEY

H.H.	X
T.T.	●
S.D.	●
F.T.	●
B.D.	●

In the last installment of this series (September 2000 *MD*), we mixed the bass drum together with different sticking patterns over triplet rhythms. As a review, the following three exercises cover the basics of the technique. Be sure you have all of the sticking variations mastered before moving forward.

1

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

2

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

3

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

Now that the physical aspects of these patterns have been mastered, it's time to have some fun. Let's take the previous patterns out of the triplet context and apply them to 16th-note fills. We'll start with some short two-beat fills. Be sure to try the sticking variations to find the one that works best for you.

4

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

5

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

6

R L L R R L

7

R R L R L
R R L L R

8

R R L R L
R R L L R

9

L R L R L
L R R L L

10

L R L R

Now let's move on to full-measure, four-beat fills. Note the "triplet" phrasing inside the 16th-note patterns.

11

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

12

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

13

R L R L R L R L R R

14

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

15

L R L R L R L R L R

16

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

17

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

18

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

Now let's try adding double strokes on the bass drum over triplet ideas. Remember to start out slow and gradually increase the speed. And be sure to maintain that smooth triplet feel.

19

R L R L R L R L

Finally, here are some 16th-note fills using all of your newly developed technique.

20

21

22

23

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Green Day's Tre Cool

Warning

by Ed Breckenfeld

MUSIC KEY	
Open	O
H.N.	X
T.T.	X
S.D.	X
P.T.	X
R.D.	X
	Semi-Open
	X
	C.C.
	X

Green Day's fourth album for Warner Bros./Reprise finds the California punk trio slowing down to explore mid-tempo

power pop. On *Warning*, Tre swaps his patented speed flourishes for straightforward, rock-solid grooves. Let's take a look at some of Tre's cool drum parts on the album:

"Warning"

The opener/title track kicks in with a classic rock 'n' roll fill and groove:



In the song's bridge, Tre changes the feel to follow the guitar riff:



"Castaway"

This song features a double-time "Bo Diddley" groove:



"Misery"

Green Day must have had fun recording this Kinks-style cabaret tune, complete with accordion and trumpets. Tre demonstrates some nice snare roll technique:

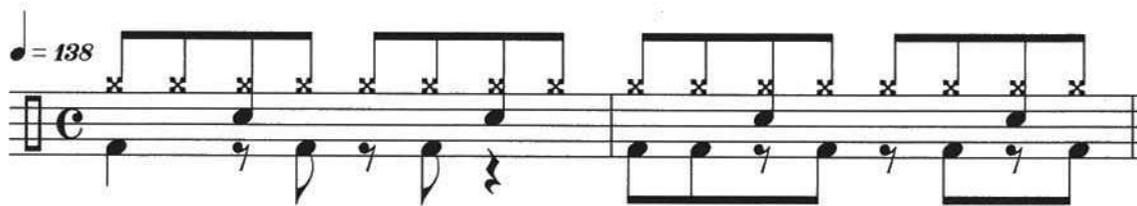




Green Day

"Waiting"

The great melody in this song is supported by this driving drum groove:

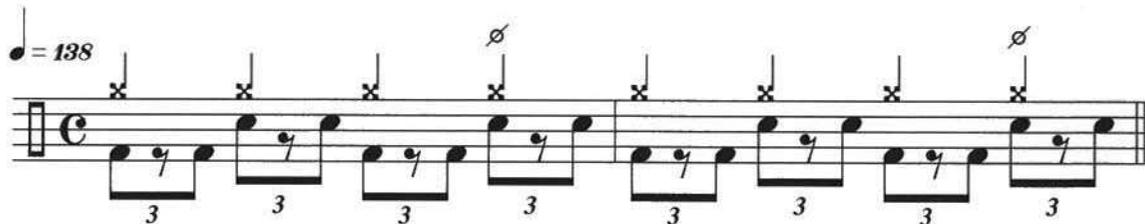


Here's the fill that sets up the song's guitar solo:



"Minority"

Tre has always nailed the rock shuffle, going back to "Longview" on the *Dookie* album. This one features splashy hi-hats:



A marching pattern in the last verse underscores the lyrics of this defiant anthem:



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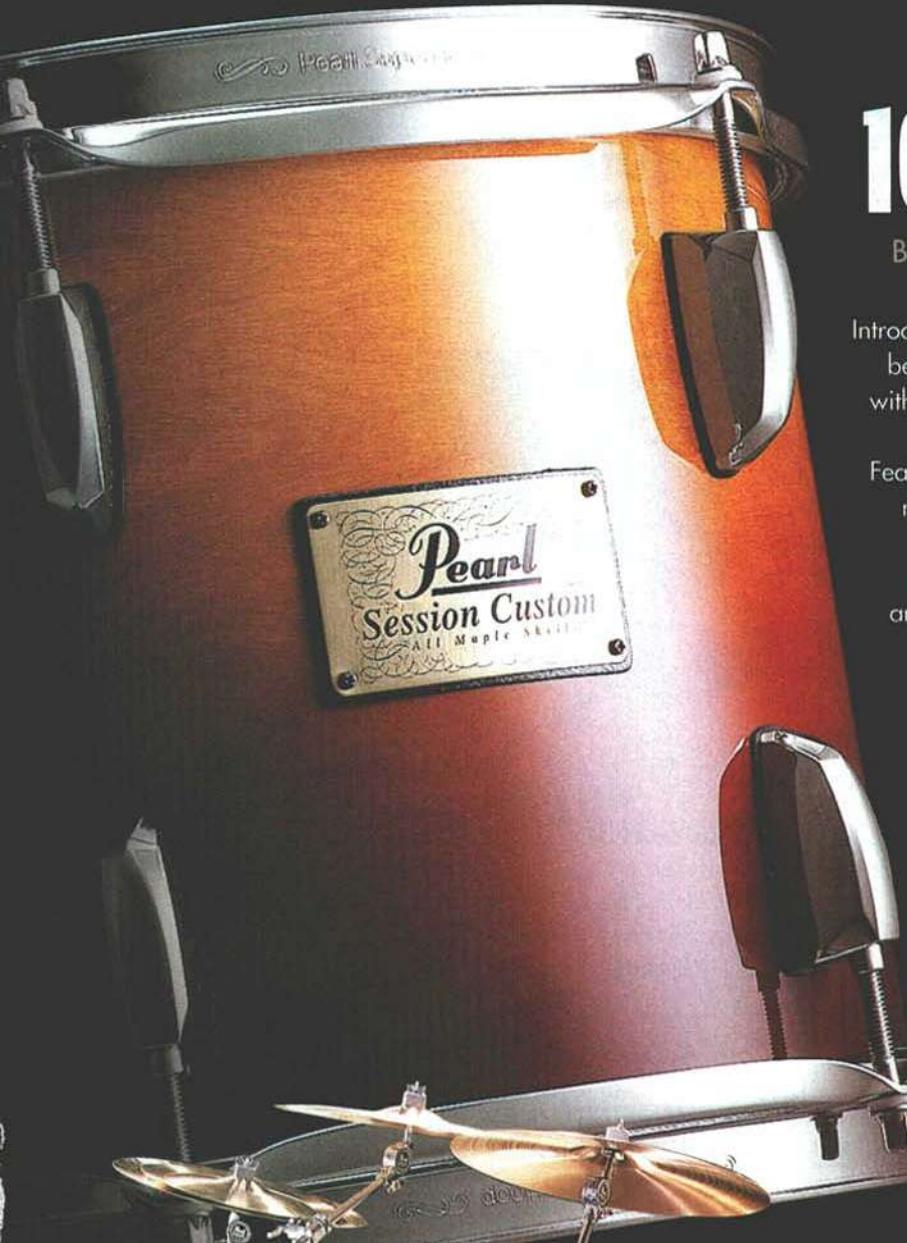
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Steve Gadd

"Signed, Sealed, Delivered I'm Yours"

Transcribed by Billy Miller

MUSIC KEY

Open	O	C.C.
H.H.	X	X
T.T.		
S.D.	(●)	
F.T.		
B.D.		
H.H.	X	Ghost Add'l Note
w/foot		T.T.

The great Steve Gadd continues to have a tremendous career. Last year he recorded and toured with Paul Simon in support of the singer/songwriter's *You're The One* release. This year he's on Eric Clapton's latest, *Reptile*. You can also catch Steve perform



Tom Copi

his groove magic on the road with the guitar giant.

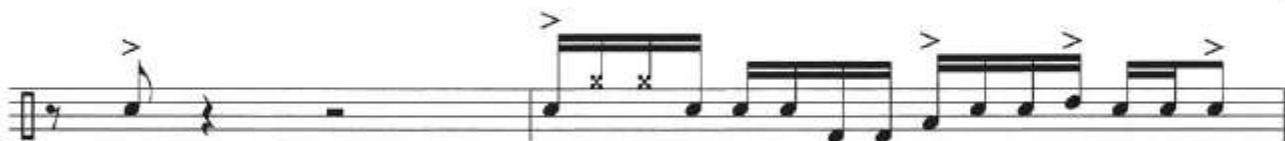
Of course, there are hundreds of great Gadd performances on record. A somewhat obscure yet typically intense track is from an album he did with legendary '70s New York band Stuff. Originally released in 1978, *Live Stuff* showcased the true soul and power of the group on stage. While this album is out of print, a track from that record, "Signed, Sealed, Delivered I'm Yours," can be heard on *The Right Stuff*, a compilation of the band's best work (Warner Archive Label, CD#2-45812). The solo begins at the 7:17 mark of the tune.

As you read through the chart, you'll see some classic Gaddisms—the laser-like hi-hat/snare/kick interplay, the punchy four-

stroke-ruff motif, and, of course, the famed triplets between the kick and hands. But this piece also shows how Steve is a master of pacing and tension & release.

Gadd delivers, as usual.

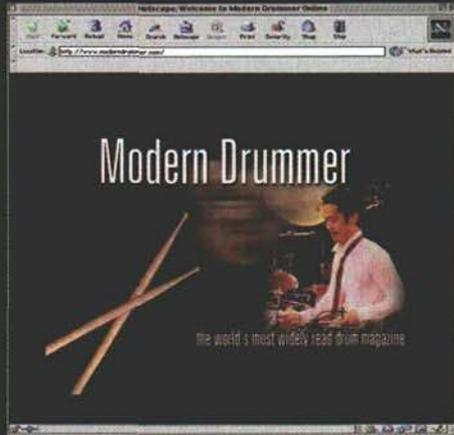
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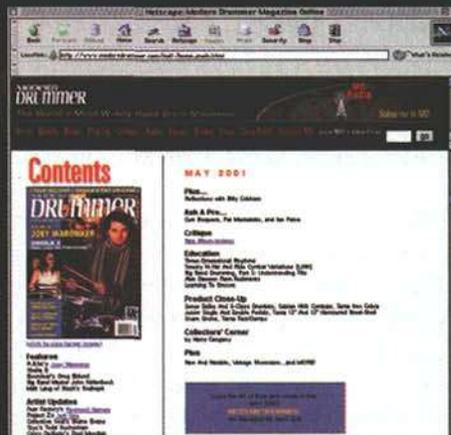
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To Transcribe Or Not To Transcribe?

Tips And Tactics For Getting It Down On Paper

by John Riley

As a young drummer, I had great fun playing with recordings. Sometimes I would use a recording as a backdrop, a kind of glorified metronome. At other times I would try to fit into the music I was hearing. This process taught me many lessons—about playing different tempos in time, about hearing the repetitions in a song's form, and about the limitations of my endurance, coordination, and concentration.

Playing with recordings also prompted me to listen carefully to songs and their drum parts. This led to attempting to copy the grooves and fills I was hearing on the recordings. I found that I could play some things perfectly, while others—even from songs that were easy to play in time with—were impossible to replicate. With the limited musical resources at my disposal, I could "fake" a groove similar to the beat that was giving me trouble, but I knew it wasn't exactly correct. Though I could read and was working through books with my teacher, playing "by ear" was, and still is, an important element in my learning process.

Eventually my level of musical sophistication and appreciation got to the point where I could no longer accept my "fake" versions of grooves I really liked. The breaking point was David Garibaldi's intro to "Squib Cakes," from Tower Of Power's *Back To Oakland*. I had to figure it out. With pencil, paper, and erasers at hand, I listened to "Squib Cakes" over...and over...and over. Eventually I was able to accurately write out the intro. My realization of the value of transcribing, not to mention being able to see what David actually *played*, forever changed my approach to learning.

If you've seen my books or read my recent columns in *MD*, you'll know that I value transcriptions for this simple reason: The old cliché that music is a language is true. Music is best learned the same way we learn any other language. How do we learn to speak? First we copy the sounds our parents make. Eventually we come to understand the meanings of those sounds. Finally, we arrange those sounds to convey our point of view.

Music is the same. We copy things we hear. Eventually we realize why someone played what they



played. Finally, we organize the things we've learned from others into our own personal form of expression. The great thing about music is that you can pick who you learn from—you can pick your musical parents!

When I played my "fake" version of "Squib Cakes," I was organizing things that were comfortable for me to play. What I discovered after I transcribed it was that the things David was comfortable playing were really uncomfortable for me, like a foreign language. I shedded "Squib Cakes," and eventually some of David's dialect became *my* dialect.

I then went back to check out other recordings I had "faked" over the years. I transcribed Max Roach's playing on "Conversation." Afterwards, I practiced Max's language and more fully recognized the clarity of his dialect. Some of it entered my playing. By moving from approximations of another person's phrases (consisting only of things you could already do) to the actual material (which is often very foreign), you'll gain a deeper musical sensibility and become more actively involved in accelerating your growth.

I have *books* full of things I've transcribed. Some transcriptions are only two or three beats long, while others are entire songs. I still have the book, circa 1974, with the "Squib Cakes" transcription. It also contains some Harvey Mason, Mike Clark, Philly Joe Jones, Jack DeJohnette, and a lot of Steve Gadd and Tony Williams transcriptions. Every couple of years I stumble upon that book and play through it again. I continue to discover hip ideas that I haven't fully explored and digested. I've also been intrigued by solos played by other instrumentalists,

"I play transcriptions to expand the kinds of ideas that I'm comfortable playing, not to copy things verbatim. It's a kind of physical and mental lubricant."

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Transcribing

and have transcribed piano and horn solos and taken ideas from those to the kit.

A student of mine once balked at my suggestion that he transcribe a solo by Philly Joe Jones. He was concerned that he might select a solo that Philly Joe might not have liked. I told him that it wasn't important whether Philly Joe liked that particular solo, it was only important that *he* liked the solo! Furthermore, it's quite likely that if a student learned a solo that an artist played but didn't particularly care for, then the student would most likely be developing ideas that that artist hadn't fully explored.

At first, copying verbatim is exactly what everyone needs to do—just like you copy your parents' speech patterns to learn new words, new phrases, and the subtleties of the language. At this point, though, I play transcriptions to expand the kinds of ideas that I'm comfortable playing, not to copy things verbatim. It's a kind of physical and mental lubricant. But in the end I don't really speak like my parents do, and I don't sound like the people that I've transcribed. I just hope to be able to communicate fluently in both languages.

So how do you start? First of all, tran-

scribing is tedious work, so pick a groove or solo that you really love. But select something that you think will be easy to notate. I promise it will take longer than you think to make it perfect.

Start by listening and counting through the groove several times to get a feel for the landmarks. Next decide on a time signature. Be sure to take into consideration which kind of notation you'll be most comfortable reading when you take the transcription to the kit. For example, do you prefer to read 8th notes in a fast tempo or 16th notes at half the speed? If I'm transcribing a groove, I'll often work from the top (ride cymbal or hi-hat) down, as the top part is often the most consistent. After I notate the top part, I'll fill in the more fluid stuff.

When transcribing a solo, I start by listening and counting through it. I do this to help me hear the phrases and to determine exactly how many measures long the solo is. As I listen, I make mental notes about how the phrases are shaped. Are they symmetrical, or do they go across the bar line? Where?

After hearing a solo a couple of times, I'll have a pretty good understanding of the basic shape. I start transcribing at the begin-

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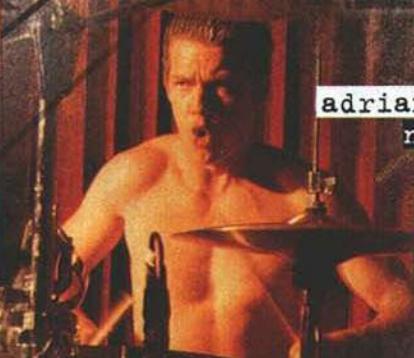
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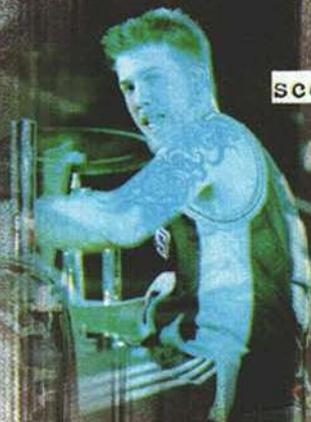


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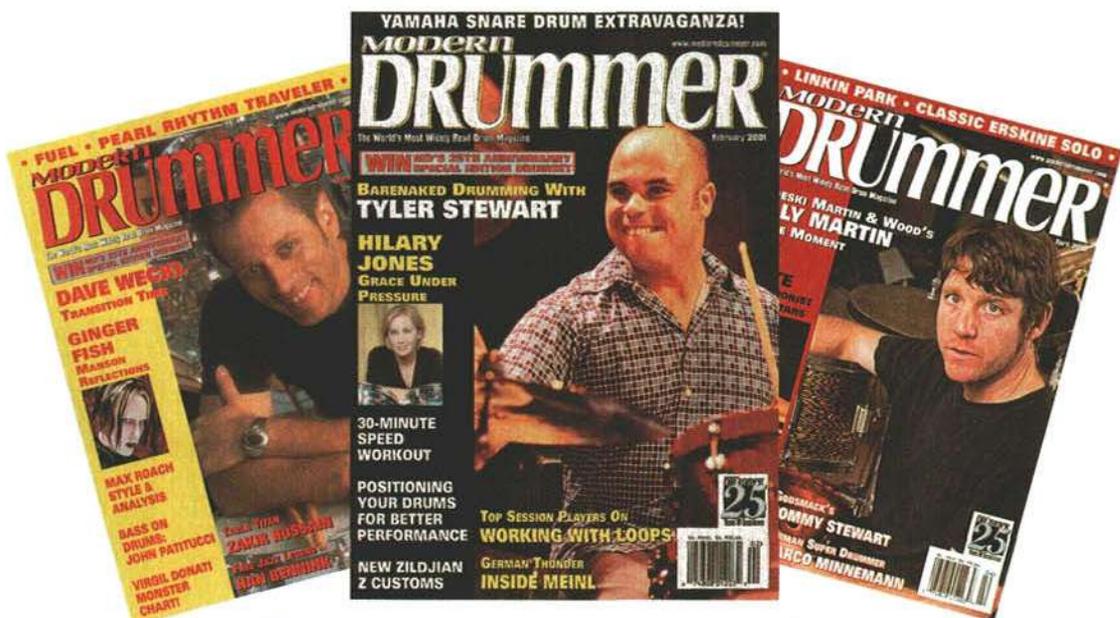
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Transcribing

ning of the solo, but if at some point I get stumped, I'll skip to the next phrase that I can hear clearly and continue from there. Often by the time I've written out the rest of the solo, I'll have a better understanding of that player's dialect. Then I can go back to the stuff that stumped me and figure it out with greater ease.

I prefer to transcribe from audio, not video. Watching a video offers too many distractions, making it difficult to focus on the specific measure at hand. So if I see some captivating playing on video, I'll transfer it to cassette, transcribe it, and then check it with the video later.

The reason to transcribe is to acquire information and knowledge. If something excited me enough to compel me to transcribe it, I want to do the tedious pencil work as quickly as possible so I can take the new musical ideas to the drumset as soon as possible. It's not cheating to slow the music down. For years I transcribed in real time. But once I got a tape recorder that had pitch control, I used it to help me hear the material more clearly, thus assisting me in writing it down quickly and accurately.

Last year I acquired an inexpensive digi-

tal machine that slows CDs or tapes down—an Akai Riff-O-Matic U400—and the sonic quality is much better than with cassettes. Digital technology is evolving quickly, so there may be even better options today.

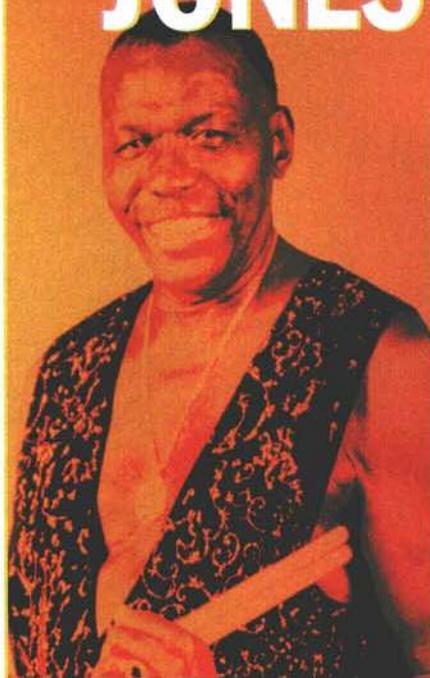
The process of transcribing is beneficial on many levels. First, it improves your listening and concentration skills. Second, it provides new vocabulary. And third, transcribing improves your reading and writing skills. Plus, you can manipulate and permute transcribed material, merging ideas from different sources more easily than things learned by ear. You can blend ideas from players from different eras: Take a page of David Garibaldi, mix it with some Max Roach, and then link that to some Jeff Watts. Give it a try. I guarantee it will open many doors for your drumming.

John Riley's career includes work with such artists as John Scofield, Mike Stern, Woody Herman, and Stan Getz. He has also written two critically acclaimed books, The Art Of Bop Drumming and Beyond Bop Drumming, published by Manhattan Music.



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Learning To Groove 3

Confidence, Consistency, And Count-Offs

by Billy Ward



Paul LaRosa

Time is a very relative thing. Shakespeare, in his play *As You Like It*, talks about how time is different for someone *with* his lover (it flies) compared to someone who is *waiting* for his lover (it crawls). I find that I'm affected by this phenomenon. Sometimes a song feels way slow—and other times fast. Who knows what it really was? You could call this "FUD," which stands for fear, uncertainty, and doubt. FUD's a killer.

Working Out The Bugs

Technology can assist us sometimes. I combat FUD by using a metronome that "memorizes" the tempo of each song in the show. This is a good reality check. If, during the playing of a song, I've worried about the tempo, as soon as it's finished, I check the metronome again to find out if I've shifted. Also, I'll sometimes use a Beat Bug in rehearsals. The Beat Bug (I'd imagine there are other similar devices) sits on your snare drum and measures the time between backbeats. It allows you to check your time while you're playing a song.

This type of device helps me to notice the tempo during that eight-bar bridge that felt great, so that the next time I count off the tune it's exactly at *that* tempo. This really helps in rehearsals or gigs with extremely picky singers or bands.

When I use the Beat Bug, I make a big thing out of it to the band. I make sure they know what it does—that it shows me the tempo any time I look at it. Of course, any question by the band about tempo is allowed. Maybe they want to know if that last song sped up at the end. If it sped up, I apologize and say, "Yes, it sped up. Did it feel better to you at the end at that faster tempo?" Always be truthful. Admitting guilt, taking responsibility, and being open is the first thing that leads to your credibility in the band. (Well, maybe it's the second thing. Playing well would have to be the first.)

"1...2..., 1...2...3...4..." The count-off. On the gig, night to night, giving consistent tempos is one of the more obvious places we drummers can excel. But tempos have to do with time, and we all know that subject is a big bag of worms. (The secret torture of being a drummer—ouch!) But I'm hoping to help you with a few concepts and practical tips that I use to tackle the subject.

When the musicians you're working with aren't too mature or experienced, counting off a good tempo is pretty worthless because nobody's going to stick with it anyway. When you listen to the tapes of your gigs and rehearsals, you will find out if you and your band are in this predicament. If you are individually or collectively having trouble playing in time, then an awareness of the problem and some extra practice needs to happen. But when everyone in the band can play well, all it takes is a proper count-off—at the *perfect tempo*—to make the song come alive.

Sometimes I give it up
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Billy Ward

I used a Beat Bug in rehearsals with Joan Osborne. I even took it on the road for the first two weeks of shows—not because Joan was paranoid about tempos, but because I was! I knew that she knew the right tempos for her music, and I was still learning how her singing/body/heart worked. And she deserves great tempos, so I used all the technology I could for reinforcement.

Finding The Key

The key to finding the best tempo—and remembering it—is finding that particular place in each song that the tempo is *crucial*. Maybe it's the bridge after the guitar solo, or the very first verse, or the chorus. Whatever it is, that's the *key* part that I sing to myself to get the click tempo for the next song. Once I have it in mind, I dive into the song as quickly as possible. Why wait around for second thoughts?

I personally prefer to train the band to a one-bar count-off. That way there are no doubts about it. If it's a live gig and they're changing guitars between songs, I ask the guitar player who is making the change to look at me when he's ready. As soon as he looks, I count. The bottom line is, I truly believe that the tempo is up to me. *This is my job, and I run the train.* Try to get everybody used to that idea.

Making Adjustments

I'm running the train...yes I am... I think I am...yes I am...Sam I am...2...4...2!...4!...feels good. What's that? The *singer* is turning to me *during the show* and *demanding* that I speed the song up! How do we drummers deal with this? Don't we run the train? Well, sometimes I do give it up and move the tempo. But other times I shake my head "no," and somehow, due to the band's trust and faith in me, they don't fire me on the spot. It's hard to get away with this, but when you've established credibility and the band knows how hard you've worked to have the best tempo, they will acquiesce.

Sometimes the band wants it faster simply out of panic. But what the heck, it's only music, ya know? Let them have what they want. Speed the darn thing up!

The really good singer/songwriters have a "tempo memory" that is more rock-solid than almost anything I can cook up. My guess is that good singers have a very real physical memory of their breathing

what Stefanie Eulinberg

Kid Rock & the T.B.T. Band

Some drummers like their Iron Cobra pedals because they can be set for a lightweight, effortless feel. Stefanie Eulinberg isn't one of them.

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"On tour, I use two Power Glide single pedals. Live, I like things open; I like the feeling on stage of having two bass drums. But in the studio, where things have to be 100% perfect, I like things tighter. Then I use a single kick with a Rolling Glide double pedal."

And while some guys say they like heavy-duty Iron Cobra footboards because they play in boots, Stefanie isn't one of them either. "I like the nice grooves on the Iron Cobra footboard. I need that for the traction, because I play barefoot. Always."

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between the words and pitches that gives them a better memory of tempo. This is another reason why I say that we drummers should always take a physical snapshot of our bodies when we're grooving. Good singer/songwriters have their actual human physiology to back up their sense of tempo. That's what *we* need to do.

Get the pace of the song into your body and remember it when the metronome is clicking. I only need two clicks from the metronome to confirm the tempo before I count it off. Since I know my key to the song, I'm feeling the tempo inside *that part* of the song. I'm feeling the physical snapshot of playing it, and I'm ready to dive in and bet the farm on it.

There's something else about singers: They're *always* allowed to change the rules of what the tempo is. (Let's feel sorry for them. They don't have all that cool wood, metal, and hardware around them like we do.) I just try not to let it happen too often on stage. In rehearsal, I say, "Great, let's try it," no matter what I think about the idea. If after the show the singer says, "That was too slow," I say, "Oh, okay. Do you want to play it faster tomorrow night and see how it feels? How much faster? Just a tick or two?"

It's wonderful to let your band or singer know that you're pliable and that you'll not question them or their opinion. I discuss tempos right up front. First day of rehearsal...soundcheck...first take...whatever the situation is. I also try to get the people who play with me to understand that I've spent a really long time working on tempo, and that while I'm not perfect, I am pretty darn consistent.

All that said, let's say your singer turns to you and asks if the tempo was faster that night. Remember what I said earlier: Tell the truth! You'll become credible and trustworthy. So later, as they begin to trust you more, even though they are certain that the tempo was different, when you say it was the same, they'll believe you. They'll just figure it was that cup of coffee before the show that made them feel differently about the tempo. But you've got to be honest at all times!

Feelings

Be aware of your feelings and those of the people around you. During the tour, sometimes Joan Osborne would mention that one song was too fast. I'd have gotten

the same feeling. So my reply would be, "I know. I felt that way, too. But it was the same tempo we've been at for over a week now. Do you want to change the tempo tonight?" Other times she might say that it was too fast even though I knew it was dead-on. Listen to me now, drummers: Never tell a band or a singer that they are *not* feeling something that they say they're feeling. It won't help at all.

Feelings aren't necessarily logical, but they are always real. Don't negate them. At least sympathize—even if you don't agree. My answer when they say the tempo sucked and I know it was right on? "Wow! That's amazing, 'cause I thought it was great." Then maybe I'll say, "Let's listen to the tape of the show and check it out." Or more simply, "Do you want it faster or slower tomorrow night?" Honesty and open discussion will give birth to the most valuable thing a band can possess: *confidence!*

My advice is to first size up the abilities of your band. Give them every credit for the things they're good at, and use their abilities to your advantage. The guitarist's rhythm part feels good on the bridge of the song? Remember that, and when you're playing the bridge, compare that moment with all of the physical snapshots you've taken of all the times it's felt great. The bass player is totally groovin' on the chorus of a particular song? Every time you play that chorus, listen to the bass player and make sure it's all feeling right. These confirmations help keep away the deadly FUD that will inhibit your playing. Then size *yourself* up the same way.

There will be certain grooves or tempos that *you're* better at than others. Count on yourself...lean on yourself...trust in yourself when you're playing those kinds of grooves. Hopefully the bass player owns the grooves that you *don't* own yet, and you can lean into him or her on those songs! Good luck.

Billy Ward is a successful session and touring drummer who has worked with a long list of artists including Carly Simon, Robbie Robertson, Richard Marx, Yoko Ono, Ace Frehley, John Patitucci, and Bill Champlin. He is currently on tour with Joan Osborne. Billy can be reached at his Web site, www.billyward.com.

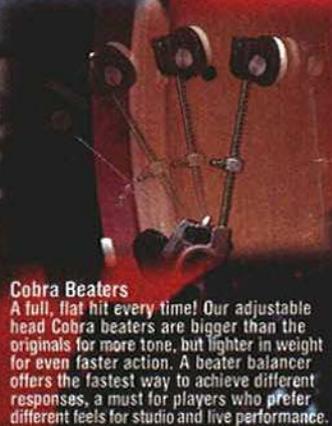
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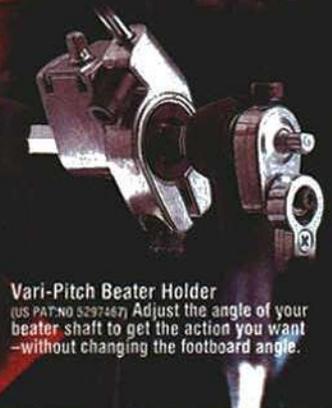
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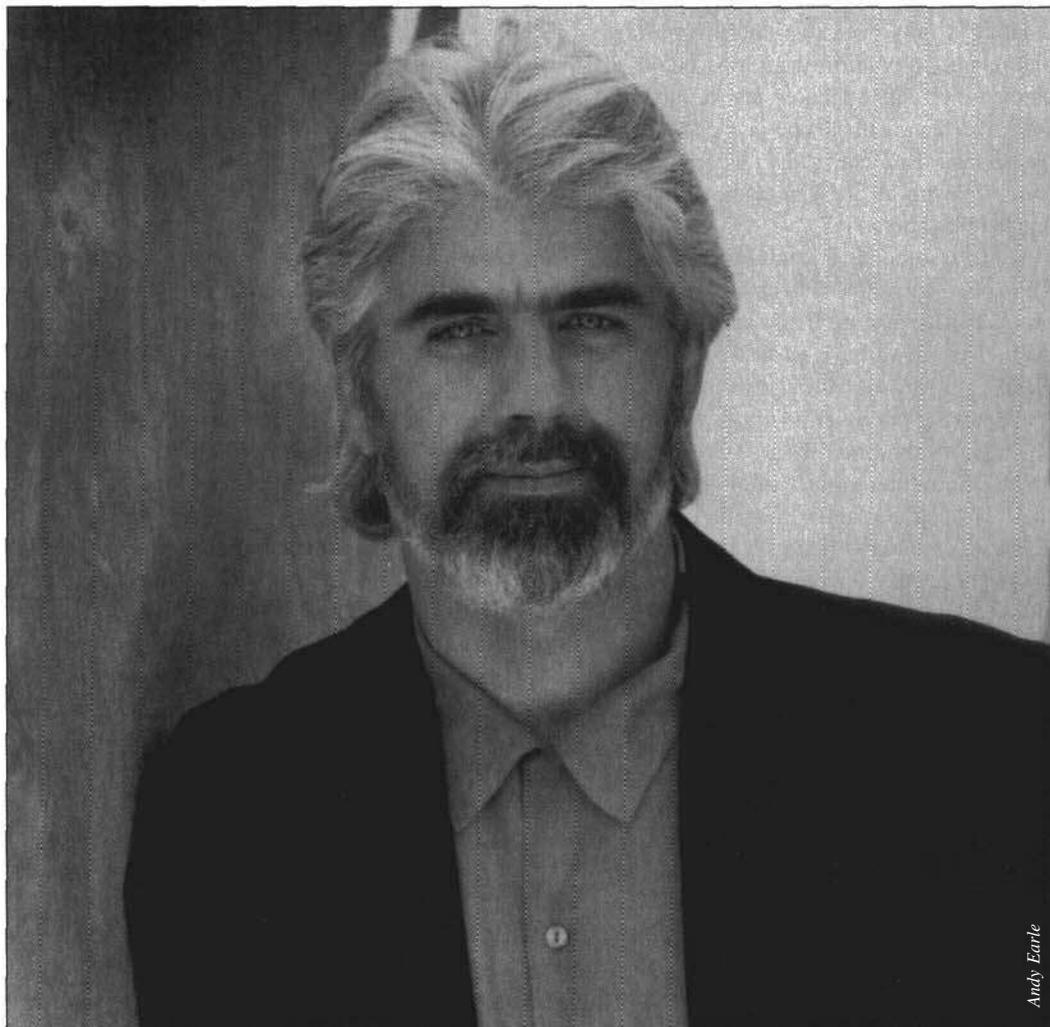


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Michael McDonald

by Billy Amendola



Andy Earle

Most of the drummers I've worked with have a kind of insanity and a great sense of humor.

With one of the most recognizable voices in the music industry, Michael McDonald's smooth, soulful vocal delivery can be instantly identified the moment you hear him.

Michael was born in St. Louis in 1952, and took an interest in music at the age of fourteen. "I started playing rhythm guitar in bands, then taking piano lessons for about a year," says Michael. "I began writing songs at around sixteen."

In 1975 Michael joined Steely Dan as a background singer and keyboardist. "I got

the gig, but certainly not from my keyboard playing." Michael laughs. "I don't really consider myself a keyboard player; I have a small, dangerous amount of talent. I play enough to write songs. I think I got the gig because I could sing all the high parts in my natural voice. That was something they really liked." A year later, Michael joined the already popular Doobie Brothers. The Doobies, who already had pop-commercial success, continued their streak after McDonald joined with songs *penned* by Michael, including "What A Fool Believes," "Takin' It To The Streets," and "Minute By Minute."

Kenny Aronoff

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After The Doobies went their separate ways in 1982, Michael went back to his day job: singing background vocals on recordings by Donna Summer, Toto, Kenny Loggins (with whom he would go on to co-write many hits), and Christopher Cross. Later that same year, Michael released his solo debut, *If That's What It Takes*. The record climbed to number six on the strength of the top-five single "I Keep Forgettin'." There was no stopping the hits at this point. They included "Yah Mo B There," (a duet with James Ingram), a second solo record called *No Looking Back*, the smash single "On My Own" (another duet, this time with Patti Labelle), and "Sweet Freedom," the theme from the Billy Crystal/Gregory Hines film *Running Scared*.

After a short rest, Michael released his third solo record, *Take It To Heart*, in 1990. Two years later he was back on the road with Donald Fagen's New York Rock & Soul Revue. And in 1993, he released his fourth solo record, *Blink Of An Eye*.

Michael's latest recording, *Blue Obsession*, is his first in seven years. It's a blend of the singer's trademark R&B,

Some of the drummers Michael's played with include:



Jeff Porcaro • Steve Gadd
 Steve Ferrone • John "JR" Robinson
 Keith Knudsen • John Hartman
 Chet McCracken • Michael
 Hossack • George Perilli
 Chester Thompson • Dan Needham
 Brian Zsupnik • Yvette Preyer

gospel, and soul influences mixed with a slightly harder rock edge on a few tunes.

MD caught up with Michael while he was on tour promoting the new album, and we took the opportunity to ask him about some of the drummers he's worked with over the years.

MD: Let's start with Jeff Porcaro.

Michael: Jeff was a great guy, and a great

drummer. We hit it off the first time we met at this infamous little bar called The Brass Rail.

I was in a band called Blue Rose, while Jeff was in a band called Marietta. He must have been sixteen at the time. Jeff was an incredible young drummer, phenomenal. He was the one responsible for me hooking up with Steely Dan. We were on a casual together and Jeff mentioned that they were looking for a background vocalist and keyboard player. At this time Jeff had already recorded *Pretzel Logic* with them. I auditioned, got the gig, and we left for Europe.

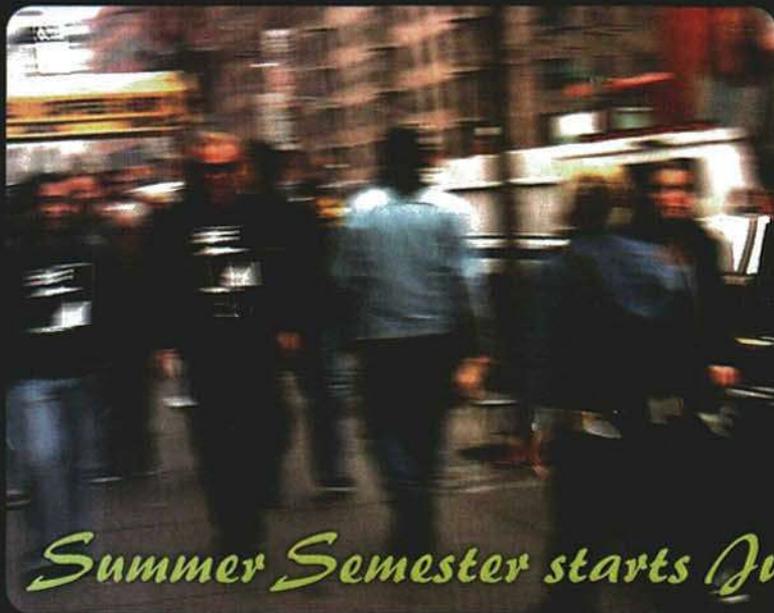
MD: "I Keep Forgettin'" has one of Jeff's famous feel-good grooves.

Michael: It was just one of those magic nights in the studio, where the recording took on a life of its own. Jeff was a very big part of that. The more I worked with Jeff over the years, the more I realized what a great ability he had in the studio. It wasn't just his playing. His playing was obviously incredible, but he also had a willingness to make the session special.

Jeff would really listen to what the arrangement *could* be, and help formulate the whole thing. Many guys just come in

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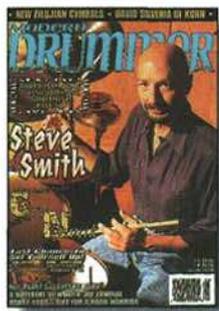


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Michael McDonald

and play, and it's like, "This is the best I've got, if you don't like it, call someone else." Jeff was *always* willing to sit, listen, and get into the possibilities of the track. By the time we'd do a take he'd have rethought his whole drum approach. And it would have so much to do with the basic tracks.

Jeff had a great knowledge for where the song should sit tempo-wise. It was really fun to work with him for those reasons, besides the fact that he was a great guy to hang with. I always felt I had the most fun on my sessions with Jeff. We had some great times.

MD: Steve Gadd also played on your first solo record.

Michael: Steve is another fantastic drummer. He always struck me as the guy who brought a great sense of jazz to his dates. He applied his jazz chops to the pop music scene, to create a very sophisticated way of playing. It was fun playing with Steve. Steve is also a funny guy. Most of the drummers I've worked with have a kind of insanity and a great sense of humor. [laughs]

MD: On David Garfield's *Tribute To Jeff*, the track you did, "Let's Stay Together," features Steve Ferrone on drums. Had you

worked with Steve before?

Michael: I worked with Steve at Bill Clinton's Inaugural Ball. Steve's one of those guys who can *really* groove. One of my all-time favorite bands is The Average White Band. I still listen to those records.

MD: "Blink Of An Eye," the title track from your fourth solo record, features three drummers. How did that come about?

Michael: That track was based on a groove that I had always wanted to write a song around. John Robinson did the basic track. JR's one of the all-time great R&B drummers. Quincy Jones produced some of my favorite R&B records, and JR's the guy on those. Manu Katche comes in on the choruses because we felt we wanted to syncopate it a little more. George Perilli co-wrote the song with me and played additional drums. It was a quagmire of rhythmic overindulgence on our part. We cut that track long before the song was written, which is a dangerous thing to do. It was really just a piano outlining a melody, with no words. But it turned out to be one of my favorites.

MD: Did the track take you back to the double drumming in The Doobies? Do you write with multiple drummers in mind?

Michael: Not really. Mostly I just wrote

with a groove in mind. At that period of time, my writing was more rhythmic. I didn't pay as much attention to what the words were. If they sounded okay, I was happy. My whole approach now has changed; it's run the gamut over the years.

MD: Tell us about the "What A Fool Believes" session. Did [producer] Ted Templeman play drums on that track?

Michael: Yes. Ted did play drums. I'm not sure if he doubled with Keith Knudsen or John Hartman on that one. When we wrote it, it had more of a Gospel feel. But eventually we wanted a New York pop, early '60s rock 'n' roll, Rascals kind of groove. We wanted to figure out, mostly in production value, how they made some of those '60s records. The big echo. How did Phil Spector do *his* records? How did they get that four-on-the-floor groove? Did they stomp on plywood? That was the vibe. I love that groove. So we overdubbed a whole lot of percussion for that Four Seasons, "Walk Like A Man," "Sherry," four-on-the-floor feel.

MD: While we're on the subject of The Doobies, let's talk about John Hartman, Keith Knudsen, and Chet McCracken.

Michael: Well, the original Doobies drum-



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mers were Michael Hossack and John Hartman. Keith replaced Mike, and then Chet took over for John. Mike and John are both great. And Keith is a natural drummer. We worked very closely in The Doobies. Keith had a large input on "Minute By Minute" and "Takin' It To The Streets." He really brought those tracks together. He came up with the arrangement and grooves. We cut "Minute By Minute" with just bassist Tiran Porter, Keith, and myself.

Chet is another phenomenal drummer. He's a great R&B drummer, a great rock drummer, and largely at heart a great jazz drummer. He's one of those guys who really gets it as far as the groove and finesse. I look back on the drummers I've played with and realize that in the period of time I was playing with Chet, Mike, Keith, and John, the band really had the ability to groove, especially in a live situation. So many times when you're playing live you're battling that runaway-train situation. Your adrenaline is flowing and everything is a little too fast. Sometimes there's too much *thinking* going on onstage, which produces too much playing. It's a problem that goes from bad to worse.

I find that what really works is playing

with guys who have been playing a long time. They have that experience behind them. They have enough background to where they know how to play *less*. They know the importance of it. All the Doobie drummers were really good at that.

MD: You mentioned George Perilli earlier.

Michael: George is a great drummer. He's played live with me for many years. The first time I heard George play, he was drumming for my wife. I knew he was going to go way beyond the club scene. He's got great style. He's also a powerhouse—probably one of the physically strongest drummers I've ever worked with. He can play at peak level all night long and never get tired—like a bulldog.

MD: On your new record, *Blue Obsession*, you co-wrote "Kitwit Town" with Chester Thompson.

Michael: I saw Chester playing with Phil Collins a few years ago, and I became a fan of his. We've worked together before and talked about getting together someday to write. "Kitwit Town" is a very interesting song. The drums have this distant tribal sound. Chester brought a lot to the song. His understanding of West African music and his knowledge of world music helped

zero in on the setting. He's a very sophisticated drummer.

MD: While we're on the subject of the new record, let's talk about some of the other drummers who play on it.

Michael: Dan Needham is a great young drummer with a unique understanding of old-school R&B grooves and feel. It's uncanny, because I don't think he really listened to it that much. But the minute he heard it, he picked up on what it was all about. For someone so young, he's a very sophisticated player.

I worked with Brian Zsupnik on Jeff Bridges' record. We also did an old Johnny Cash track called "Ring Of Fire" for one of Jeff's movies. Brian's one of those guys, like Jeff Porcaro, who's great to have on your session. He really knows how to listen, and he comes up with some great grooves and ideas.

MD: How did you hook up with Yvette Preyer? I really enjoyed her live performance, not to mention her great vocals.

Michael: Yvette is another young sophisticated player. She's a very natural drummer, and a great singer as well. We worked together one night and I was very impressed with her drumming and feel.

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Michael McDonald

Yvette understands that the music doesn't have to be at the same tempo every night. She'll make it groove. I think that's something I've learned too. It depends on the drummer's sense of the song more than just the tempo. Tempo is a great place to start, but even if it does start a little quicker than the night before, a great drummer can really make things groove, and hold it.

MD: What special qualities do you look for in a drummer?

Michael: I'm always looking for drummers who can sit deep in the pocket of the groove. That means more than physical ability or chops. I always let the drummer count off, because a drummer who has that understanding has a better understanding than I do. If you go back and listen to the tempos from old-school R&B records, it's so slow compared to what it usually is today. I think that's one of the keys when someone makes a retro-sounding record. The first thing I discover is that the tempo is laid way, way back in the pocket. For example, "Hold On I'm Coming" is teetering on the backside of the backbeat.

MD: Do you use a drum machine in your early writing stages?

Michael: I used to chronically, but now I don't as much. Now I attempt to write with the drums in my head. Sometimes I'll just use a click in the initial writing stage. I feel it's more freeing *not* to have any rhythm. Just let the song materialize and dictate on it's own. I find that when you write to a drum machine from the get-go, everything you do is going to be something to fit that pattern. Sometimes you can think ahead, but I find that to be a hassle. These days I write more organically, letting the drum pattern change in my head, rather than sitting around programming drum machines.

MD: What about when you demo a song?

Michael: That's probably when I will use a drum machine. On *Blue Obsession*, Tommy Simms did most of the programming for the demos. The track "No Love To Be Found" was the demo Bernie and I cut in Nashville with a drum machine keeping the time. Dan Nedham played right on top of it. It's always a different situation.

There's good and bad about all of it. What I like about programming is that you get to experiment. You wrote the song, you know how it should go. So rather than terrorize the drummer for hours on end, you

can work out where you'd like the tempo to be. You can map out the song. Then, when you have something, you can bring the drummer in and let him listen to the groove. "Here's what we're looking at. Any ideas?" This way it gives the drummer a direction without giving him the grief and terror. Then he or she can add to it. I find this approach works well.

MD: Are there any drumming styles you like that we haven't mentioned?

Michael: I like a lot of different styles of drumming. I like Simon Phillips. He's not typical with his fills; he's very interesting. There's a real excitement in that kind of drumming, a more aggressive-style jazz. I like that.

MD: Without disrespect to the great drummers you've worked with, is there anyone you'd like to play with who you *haven't*?

Michael: That's a hard one. I guess Bernard Purdie, for my love and appreciation of old-school R&B.

For more on Michael McDonald, visit his Web site: www.michaelmcdonald.com.



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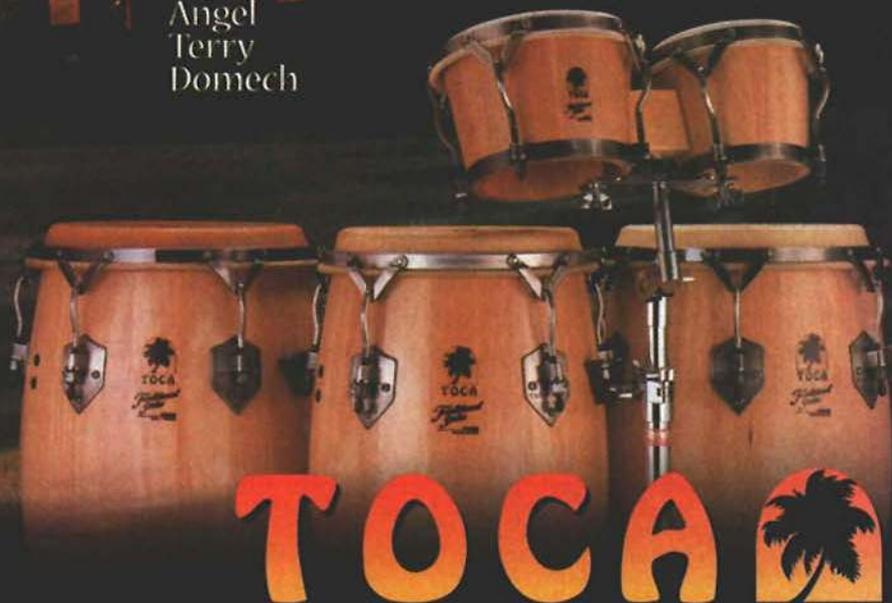
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Mark DiFlorio

Mark DiFlorio is a busy guy. The New Orleans-based drummer plays between four and seven days a week, gigging with a Latin jazz group called Chevere and an improvisational quartet called The Brian Punka Group, and as the first-call sub for many of the city's top bands.

But Mark's primary focus is Quintology, a modern jazz quintet that plays all original music. A self-produced CD was voted among New Orleans' best by the city's music press in 1999; their second CD, *Blues By 5*, is up for the same honors for 2001. Along with his considerable drumming skills, Mark also contributed several compositions to the

album. Check out www.quintology.com for more information.

Mark cites his playing styles as jazz, Afro-Cuban, Brazilian, Cajun, funk, and rock. Not surprisingly, his list of influences is equally diverse: Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, and Jeff Watts on the jazz side, Brian Blade and Johnny Vidacovich for the N'awlins flavor, and Bob Moses for a combination of musicality and spirituality. All those influences are expressed in Mark's technique, which combines the precision and chops of contemporary jazz/rock with a distinctly soulful looseness.

Mark's kit is a four-piece Ayotte set with



wood hoops, equipped with Sabian, Camber, and Zildjian cymbals. As for goals, he says, "I aspire to be a nationally and internationally recorded drummer. I'd like to travel the world playing music."

Alessia Mattalia



Alessia Mattalia is one of the best-known pop/rock drummers in Italy, due largely to a summer playing in the *Beato Tra Le Donne* TV show band. She also opened for Michael Jackson's 1997 Milan show as a member of B-Navio, and she was on Eros Ramazzotti's 1998 summer tour of Italy.

More recently Alessia has been part of a power-pop band called ArX, featuring keyboardist Marcello Giordano and vocalist Alessia Ceglia. Their music has

been described as "a twerpy Italian cousin digitally fiddling with symphonic effects while a rock drummer practices in the courtyard and your aunt listens to Edith Piaf in the kitchen." Be that as it may, on ArX's demo CD Alessia definitely makes her presence felt, with a combination of powerful grooves, a killer backbeat, and some blazing double-bass chops that stop just short of making the whole thing bottom-heavy. It's still pop, but it definitely rocks. (Surf to arx.hypermart.net for more information.) Alessia plays Drum Sound drums and UFIP cymbals, and uses her own signature drumsticks made by a European company called Roll.

"Jeff Porcaro is the one who made me decide to be a drummer at the age of thirteen," says Alessia. "My other influences are Simon Phillips, Vinnie Colaiuta, and Terry Bozzio. My goal with ArX is to get famous enough to hook up as an opening act for The Who. My personal goal is to play with as many musicians in as many different styles as possible. And my *ultimate* goal is to play live or record with Toto!"

Paul Brown



Twenty-eight-year-old Paul Brown of Greer, South Carolina divides his time between being a career drummer and a career firefighter. (Talk about keeping things heated up....) Inspired early in his childhood when he saw Buddy Rich in concert, Paul has pursued drumming ever since. "I'm very open to different musical styles as far as listening goes," says Paul. "But for playing I gravitate to rock and pop. My influences are Michael

Baker, Gary Husband, John Molo, and 'JR' Robinson."

Paul displays his pop/rock influences with Bleve, a band that plays regularly on the local club scene. (The name is a firefighting acronym for Boiling Liquid Expanding Vapor Explosion.) On their demo CD, Paul plays in a no-nonsense style that balances delicacy and power, depending on the nature of the song. Most of the tunes focus on a straight-ahead groove, and Paul lays it down solidly. Not a lot of notes, but a great feel. Paul does it all on Yamaha Maple Custom drums, with Zildjian cymbals, Alesis electronics, and Pintech electronic drum pads.

"My job as a firefighter is very rewarding," says Paul. "Even so, as a drummer my goal is to keep working hard with my band, with the hope of experiencing that elusive 'big break.'"

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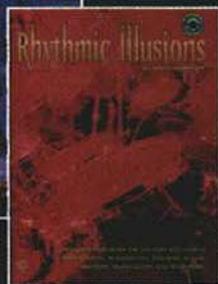
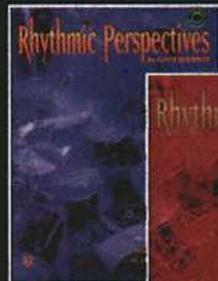
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Check out Gavin's excerpts in this issue!



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8 Dave Matthews Band *Everyday*

Carter Beauford (dr, perc, vcl), Dave Matthews (vcl, gtr), Stefan Lessard (bs), Boyd Tinsley (vln, vcl), Leroi Moore (sx, flt, vcl)



Dave Matthews did it. He traveled on a new musical journey—more electric, more pop, more radio-friendly—and came back with his credibility intact. Producer Glenn Ballard, who played keyboards and co-wrote all the tunes with Matthews, used the band more like Dave's session players, bringing them in after the writing was done. But long-time fans need not worry. These musicians have played together for over a decade, so the Dave Matthews band vibe

is not easily buried. And Carter Beauford plays as wonderfully as ever here; he just has to get the job done in less time. (No track exceeds five minutes.) Although Carter holds back on his polyrhythmic fusion chops to lay deep and heavy in the pocket, he still finds spots to pull off some typically atypical grooves and rhythms, notably on "Fool To Think" and "Mother Father." (The latter features Carlos Santana on guitar and Karl Perrazo on percussion.) The hi-hat shuffle on "When The World Ends" is pure Beauford. And the verses of "Angel" are played so deeply, you may even hear a little John Bonham in there. Other standout tracks include "So Right," the Peter Gabriel-influenced "Dreams Of Our Fathers," and the infectious single "I Did It." So give it a listen; Matthews' latest journey is not too far off the track. (BMGRCA)

Billy Amendola

10 Karizma Document

Vinnie Colaiuta (dr), Neil Stubenhaus (is), David Garfield (kybd), Mike Landau (gtr)



Vinnie Colaiuta energizes the music of this long-standing Los Angeles fusion band with what many will consider to be his best live fusion recording to date. Vinnie's gift is making the most complex technique sound flowing and effortless. Vinnie slices through odd time signatures like a knife through butter (as on "Heavy Resin"), leaving listeners with either a blank stare or a huge smile. And what he does with 4/4 time is even scarier. The music here consists of six lengthy pieces that cover the spectrum of swing, funk, Latin,

blues, rock, and fusion. Vinnie takes each style to new heights and is heavily featured on each track. Once again, Vinnie Colaiuta shows us that nothing is impossible on the acoustic drumkit if you have the will to explore. This is exciting, innovative, and over-the-top drumming as only Vinnie can produce. (UFToneMusic, www.hudsonmusic.com, [888] 796-2992)

Mike Haid

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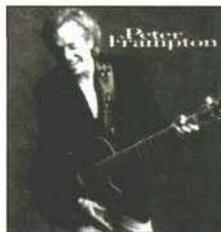


Anyone who's spent quality time in bars would be forgiven for being squeamish about Meat Loaf's *Bat Out Of Hell*. There always seems to be a gaggle

of sorority girls bleating away drunkenly to "Paradise By The Dashboard Light" whenever the song comes on the jukebox. And that just isn't right. But *Bat Out Of Hell* is the biggest-by-design record ever made, and you can't take that away. Todd Rundgren's production is mammoth,



Jim Steinman's songs are epics of young lust...and we all know about Mr. Loaf's gargantuan vocal abilities. **Max Weinberg**, having recently recorded and toured behind Bruce Springsteen's *Born To Run*, was quite familiar with the job of backing huge talent and huger songs. As was **John Wilcox**, who regularly explored musical bombastics in Rundgren's band Utopia. Sadly, the two live bonus tracks here are unaccompanied by credits. Buy this anyway; it's a one-of-a-kind. (Epic/Legacy)



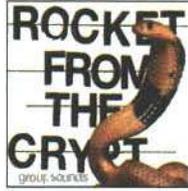
Now, despite the photo on the cover of *Frampton Comes Alive*, no one would mistake Peter Frampton for Meat Loaf in person. He's a little dude. But Peter also knows a thing or two

about making big music. And drum sounds come no more massive than **John "JR" Robinson's** on Frampton's recently reissued, self-titled 1994 album. You can practically feel the studio floor shake on Robinson's tracks. Somehow JR always manages to add subtle touches between the explosions, and he's always—and we mean *always*—steady as a rock. The diminutive **Denny Fongheiser** also slams on a couple of tracks, proving that heaviness isn't necessarily measured in pounds. (Sony/Legacy)

Adam Budofsky

8 Rocket From The Crypt Group Sounds

Mario Rubalcaba, Jon Wurster (dr), Speedo, ND (vcl, gtr), Petey X (bs, vcl), JC2000 (trp, perc, vcl), Apollo 9 (sx, perc, vcl)

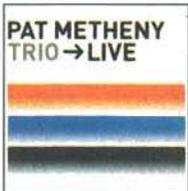


Rocket From The Crypt may have parted ways with Interscope in favor of indie label Vagrant, but *Group Sounds* proves their raw, biting intensity remains. New to the band, though, is drummer Mario Rubalcaba. Mario is an incredible live drummer, completely worthy of replacing former RFTC drummer Atom. Here he shines especially brightly on "Straight American Slave," "White Belt," and "Return Of The Liar." (Superchunk drummer Jon Wurster also lent his skills to several tracks.) RFTC fans can rest easy: There's plenty of steady, consistent, and polished slamming to ensure their cult-rock status for years to come. (Check out this month's *Update* to read more about Mario Rubalcaba.) (Vagrant)

Waleed Rashidi

9 Pat Metheny Trio Live

Bill Stewart (dr), Pat Metheny (gtr), Larry Grenadier (bs)



Bill Stewart's personality has always shone through in his playing. His work as part of Pat Metheny's excellent new trio is no exception. Bill's lively, inventive chatter pushes and prods the group throughout the thirteen performances on this energetic and inspired live album. Check out "Question And Answer" with its driving three; after a roiling solo by Stewart, the group takes it up a notch and just burns. "So May It Secretly Begin" opens with a subtle, swaying groove that rolls along, moving the piece through to its conclusion. No matter the song, Stewart always complements the group's playing while adding his unique perspective. Whether accenting the wonderfully chaotic shredding of "Faith Healer" or tastefully navigating the maneuvers through "Giant Steps," his playing is continually exciting and a pleasure to hear. (Warner Bros.)

Martin Patmos

9 Bruce Hornsby Here Come The Noise Makers

Michael Baker, Land Richards, Bonny Bonaparte (dr), Bruce Hornsby (pno, vcl), J.V. Collier (bs), Doug Derrybery (gtr, mand, vcl), J.T. Thomas (kybd, vcl), Bobby Read (sx)



Let's face it: Bruce Hornsby didn't make it easy for us in the past. He'd bury good songs under sequences that had as much lilt as a flagpole. But live was another story, and that's what we have in this two-CD set compiled from 1998/99 performances. Hornsby's lush piano makes better sense when set in a rhythm section that nails it to the wall. And Michael Baker will be your new favorite drummer: He doesn't let up! Hornsby follows him into jazz territory, trading fours and just having a plain ol' good time. (Several songs here feature Land Richards and Bonny Bonaparte on kit.) If you shied away from Hornsby in the past, this is the one to get. (RCA)

T. Bruce Wittet

6 American Hi-Fi American Hi-Fi

Brian Nolan (dr), Stacy Jones (gtr, vcl), Jamie Arenben (gtr), Drew Parsons (bs)



Just as Nirvana skinsman Dave Grohl did in the mid '90s, Stacy Jones (Veruca Salt, Aimee Mann) forsakes his trusty sticks to front as a singer-guitarist. Caught somewhere between garage-band angst and bubblegum grunge, "Hi-Fi Killer" and "A Bigger Mood" bounce with Brian Nolan's solid timekeeping and thunderous snare/bass drum attack. While this is clearly Jones' moment, Nolan does break with form for the explosive opening to "Scar."

And in the aptly titled "Wall Of Sound," perhaps the disk's best tune, rolling tomtom fills reverberate just before a tidal wave of cymbals crashes. While this may not be a groundbreaking effort, catchy melodies, straight-ahead beats, and dissonant guitar chords give it a certain charm. (Island/Def Jam)

Will Romano

KICKIN' OUT THE NEW

6 Old 97'S Satellite Rides



Shaking the dust off the "alt-country" tag once hung upon them, the Old 97's' latest release echoes the edgy pop of early Replacements. What

drummer Philip Peebles lacks in extravagance, he more than makes up for with warm natural sounds. Rarely deviating from the standard rock 'n' roll kit, his occasional frills and tambourine trills lend a grace to the band's meat 'n' potatoes sound. (Elektra)

8 The Dangers The Dangers



At this stage of the game, it's sort of hard to be original. But The Dangers pull off some pretty neat tricks on their self-titled debut.

Produced by original Violent Femmes drummer Victor DeLorenzo and flavored with the Femmes' ethos of intelligent oddballness, this CD exudes freeform pop with attitude. Taking an orchestral approach, John Sparrow's drumming isn't based upon the concept of a "kit." It's "pick a drum" and use it for the song. In one instance he uses three toms and snare—no cymbals to speak of. Experimenting with sound like this is fun for any drummer to try every so often; Sparrow makes an art of it. (Heavy Wooden)

6 Gwenmars Driving A Million



Monster snare sound. We could just end the review of Gwenmars' *Driving A Million* right there, but we're required to tell you more than that. So,

let's consider. We've got a Los Angeles trio clearly into their retro Brit pop, with a drummer who's pretty slamming. John Boutin spearheads the excitement on each track, laying in some great open/closed hi-hat work coupled with a really funky snare. Neither exclusively a pocket player nor a pusher, Boutin knows how to read a song. (SeeThru Broadcasting)

Fran Azzarto and Lisa Crouch

7 Paris Combo Living-Room

Francois-Francois (dr, perc), Belle du Berry (vcl), Potzi (gtr), David Lewis (trp, pro), Mano Razanajate (bs)



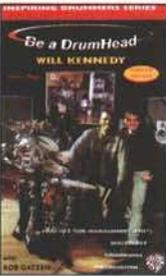
Paris Combo is so hip, they might make you feel like a dweeb. At first. But after tapping your toes to a few bars of the quintet's perfectly calibrated grooves, you'll feel downright cool—whether you speak French or not. Part of the secret of true hipster panache is never letting them see you sweat, and this gang never does. Still, their smoky music is anything but dull. The group's squeaky-clean sound is built on romantic, martini-sipping lounge jazz, with touches of theatrical flair, flamenco fire, and snaky Eastern melody. Francois-Francois, who rounds out his spare style with tasty brushwork and hand drumming, plays with a supple feel. He lets his relaxed sense of time, rather than flashy embellishments, do the talking. Now *that's* hip. (www.tinderrecords.com)

Michael Parillo

VIDEOS

8 Be A Drumhead featuring Will Kennedy with Bob Gatzen

level: all, \$39.95 (with CD)



There's Bob Gatzen, the idea man. And there's Will Kennedy, a drummer of exceptional chops and feeling. Both are "drumheads." That is, they love, live, and breathe drums. "Don't buy one practice pad, buy six," Gatzen says. "Have one *everywhere*."

Gatzen discusses the concept of "spaceology"—taking control of your musical environment and making things happen creatively—and the practical side of that: monitor system in your studio, proper lighting, sound isolation, headphones.... Your studio is your laboratory, that's the mantra. Gatzen's Practice Time Management system involves short, focused, consistent practice periods, working on specific ideas rather than long, aimless sessions. Makes perfect sense. Kennedy demonstrates some warm-up exercises, and there are about a dozen drum lessons in that segment alone.

Kennedy and Gatzen play together on some songs. On the first, Kennedy is low in the mix. But sound problems are soon corrected, and it's always interesting watching Will play left-handed lead on his right-handed kit. Kennedy is a positive personality, explaining his rhythmic ideas with a genuine excitement. Overhead cameras catch him building intensity as a tune reaches its climax. They also provide a great look at his killer single strokes. Kennedy delivers some of his "drum words" too—vocal sounds that mimic popular drum transitions and fills. And he explains his ideas about "servicing the music"—finding the right beat for the song, taking into account tempo and primary rhythm, and then *joining* with that rhythm. A fun and informative video. (Warner Bros.)

Robin Tolleson

8 R&B Drumming featuring Gerry Brown & His Motown Sound

level: beginner to intermediate, \$29.95



Breaking into the musical consciousness with fusion pioneers Return To Forever, Stanley Clarke, and Larry Coryell, Gerry Brown is often thought of for his well-refined monster chops. But his resume includes a lot more. He's held down the solid groove for Vanessa Williams, Lionel Richie, George Benson, and, for the last seven years, Stevie Wonder. Brown is certainly qualified to make a fusion video for advanced players, but this one is mainly about groove and feeling. To that end Brown thoughtfully demonstrates five different Motown styles, building from what he calls the foundation—bass drum, snare, and hi-hat. And what a pleasure it is to see Brown and longtime Stevie Wonder bassist Nathan Watts working, laughing, grooving, and improvising on "I Wish" and other Wonder classics.

Brown has the extensive musical background to be able to explain the street-wise swing groove of "Sir Duke" in logical fashion. He also breaks down the top and bottom ends of his flashy Afro-Caribbean groove on "Another Star," and discusses the 12/8 feel of "Isn't She Lovely." Brown's stickings on that groove, and the 6/8 ballad groove he explains after, require more than a casual glance, making video the perfect medium for his unique patterns. In an informative interview session, Gerry discusses his early training, including how he took backsticking and drum major ideas and applied them to the drumset to come up with his remarkable stick-twirling chops. More importantly, Brown talks about the power that a drummer has to make people move, a topic he knows a thing or two about. (Mars Music Video)

Robin Tolleson

WHAT IN THE WORLD

8 Per Tjernberg Universal Riddim



Percussionist Per Tjernberg's latest album conjurs up a perfect blend of reggae, world music, scratch, and dub. Field recordings from Benin, Bali, Thailand, and Morocco mix with the melodic leads from the ney, oud, sarod, and kalimba, all seasoned by The Scratchaholics. Trap drums by Bosse Skoglund and bass by Desmond Foster provide a deep pocket for Tjernberg's smorgasbord of tasty percussion. (Rub-A-Dub)

7 Glen Velez Breathing Rhythms



Glen Velez, a master frame drummer, effectively shares his path to well-being and creativity on this total body & mind experience. The drumming involves the lower body, the melodic instruments (Damon Draghici on pan pipes and David Freisen on cello) are at the center (heart), and the voice serves the upper body. Vocalization of the rhythms, even if only in thought, enables a deeper concentration to take place. (Sounds True)

7 D'Drum Village Beside Time



This five-member percussion troupe from Dallas takes us on a world tour with brilliant arrangements, authentic acoustic instruments (beautifully photographed in the liner notes, by the way), and chops aplenty. They have created their own "field" recordings with original compositions, and even the traditional tunes sound original. And there's a heavy Balinese and Hungarian vibe throughout, thanks to group founder Ron Snider. ([Unicornucopia, ddrum@airmail.net](mailto:unicornucopia,ddrum@airmail.net))

David Licht

Correction

In the review of Nile's *Black Seeds Of Vengeance* in MD's April issue, we credited Pete Hammoura with the drum performances. We have since learned that Derek Roddy replaced the injured Hammoura on nine of the album's tracks.

9

Conversations In Clave by Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez

level: intermediate to advanced, \$24.95 (with CD)



El Negro is a marvelous practitioner of drumming independence, turning heads in the US with an array of styles and amazing control of left-foot clave. Now he's put many of his musical ideas forth in a clear and inspiring manner.

Hernandez begins *Conversations* with the fundamental concepts of the clave and of Afro-Cuban rhythms. His exercises for achieving dexterity with clave are so much fun, you'll be repeating tracks on the accompanying CD just to enjoy them again and again. Placing five-, six-, and seven-note patterns at different points in a two-bar phrase is a rhythmic mind-opener.

Horacio goes on to define the cascara rhythm and lists many more exercises for achieving dexterity in that feel. El Negro's "advanced systems" technical exercises, where the cowbell or cascara pattern is combined with a bass drum and hi-hat pattern, are getting at the types of polyrhythms he was inspired by growing up in Cuba. The book includes transcriptions (by Ken Ross) of grooves that Hernandez has developed in different musical settings: Afro-Cuban 6/8, guaguanco, mambo, conga and comparsas, cascara, maracuta, cha cha cha, merengue, songo, and mozambique. There are also transcriptions of some of Horacio's most memorable recorded tracks.

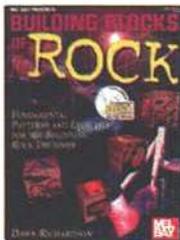
For the trap drummer wanting a good shot in the arm for Afro-Cuban-inspired independence, this is among the all-time best tutorials available—user-friendly and supremely provocative. (Warner Bros.)

Robin Tolleson

7

Building Blocks Of Rock by Dawn Richardson

level: beginner to intermediate, \$19.95 (with CD)



We all want to be great rock drummers. Okay, most of us do. Along comes Dawn Richardson's *Building Blocks Of Rock* to help us get there. Dawn says she began *Building Blocks* "out of my frustration with trying to find a beginning drum book to develop solid basic rock skills." To address that, Richardson starts out with all the formalities—terms, note values, a drumset key—and then goes right into the basic beats. The progression is a little fast; all the limbs are in action within the first four pages. But the overall flow of the exercises is spot-on. A really nice touch is the early introduction of the fill. The

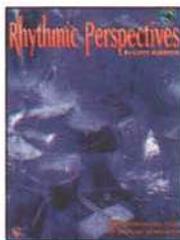
examples are fairly simple and do not require too much dexterity or advanced reading skills. This is important. After all, what good is a rock drummer if she can't nail down that sweet break between the verse and the chorus? The only oddity here is the "Four On The Kick" chapter, with its unusual exercises. Still, at 95 pages and with an accompanying CD, *Building Blocks* will give any newcomer a kick-start at becoming that next great rock drummer we all want to be. (At least most of us.) (Mel Bay)

Fran Azzarto

10

Rhythmic Perspectives by Gavin Harrison

level: advanced, \$24.95 (with CD)



Rhythmic Perspectives is for the drummer who's got the time required to make big progress. Challenging? Yes. (Never have I been so glad that a book had an accompanying CD.) Worthwhile? Very. These may not be the licks your bandmates will want you pulling out on the next gig without prior consultation. But nothing will make you feel more like Vinnie Colaiuta than locking into some of these polyrhythm exercises.

Harrison looks at drumming in terms of "dimensions," and his goal is to get you playing four different polyrhythmic groupings at the same time. As he states in his introduction, it's not a chops-oriented approach as much as one that can open up creative options for drummers in musical ways. His method starts with ostinato patterns on the kick, adding each limb playing different polyrhythms over the top. Helping with this advanced technique are "tool boxes" at the beginning of some chapters, patterns to prime you for what's to come. Gavin's crash course of polyrhythmic theory is a long lesson in itself, as he subdivides measures of 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, and 7/4 by threes, fours, fives, and sevens. This is deep stuff, but it can be taken in slowly, enjoyed, and integrated as it makes musical sense to you. (Warner Bros.)

Robin Tolleson

8

Supertramp Crime Of The Century

Bob C. Benberg (dr, perc), Roger Hodgson (vcl, gtr, pno), Richard Davies (vcl, kybd), John Anthony Halliwell (sx, clar, vcl), Dougie Thomson (bs)



Most people are familiar with Supertramp via their nearly 20-million-selling *Breakfast In America* album and its sophisticated pop hits "Take The Long Way

Home," "Goodbye Stranger," and "The Logical Song." Few, however, are aware that the band began life as a bona fide progressive rock band—long jams, heavy lyrics, odd passages...the whole shebang. That formula proved a dead end, though. So when it came time to record their third album, 1974's *Crime Of The Century*, the London group decided to work some AM hooks into their sound. Presto! Supertramp had their first hits with "Bloody Well Right" and "Dreamer," and they did it without sacrificing musical and lyrical weightiness.

Even at their most adventurous, though, Supertramp were always polite lads. Unlike ELP, Rush, or even Genesis, they rarely tested listeners' attention spans. And unlike those bands' chops gods, drummer Benberg was restrained to the max, preferring to make his statements with perfectly placed one-note floor-tom slams, pushing ghost notes, and uptempo Motown beats. Supertramp were expert arrangers too, and the drum parts were clearly well thought-out in advance to serve the vocals and lyrics. Benberg wasn't transparent, though. He always had clever ideas, and the pristine recording methods allowed each of them to be heard. Next time you hear "Dreamer" on classic-rock radio, ask yourself whether you would have come up with those drum parts—or played them so solidly. Quirky, passionate, intelligent—all words that describe *Crime Of The Century* in general, and drummer Benberg in particular. (A&M)

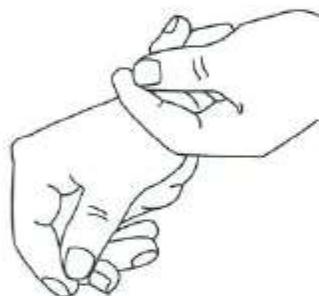
Adam Budofsky

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Occupational Hazards

by Cameron Patterson



If you want to play throughout your lifetime, be safe rather than sorry, smart rather than naive.

There you are on the gig, nailing your ride cymbal with a groove so deep in the pocket that the bass player just can't stop smiling. Suddenly, out of nowhere, a spasm pinches you. You're not quite sure if you've "pulled" something, if you've exceeded that safe barrier between expression and overexertion. But you do another gig, and nothing happens. A few more, and still nothing. But then, two weeks later, there's a reoccurrence. Pain sets in that wakes you in your sleep, and now you start to worry. Only maybe now it's too late. You've developed a Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI).

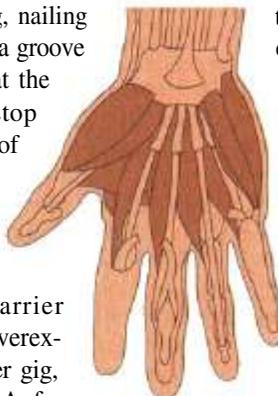
How do you prevent such a paralysis to your career? One way is to be aware that as a drummer, you're in a high-risk category for these crippling disabilities, and educate yourself on the early signs. When it comes to RSI, what you *don't* know can hurt you.

Tendinitis

Of all the RSIs common to drummers, tendinitis is probably the most common.

This problem occurs when overuse and strain produce small tears in the tendon. Unlike muscles, tendons don't have elasticity or rejuvenation properties, so injuries usually have sustaining implications. Symptoms can be intermittent and ambiguous since the pain can move around your wrist and along the forearm. Keep in mind that tendinitis is usually a chronic condition, and there are many subsequent disorders that can flare up if preventive measures are not taken.

Unfortunately, there's no fast cure or surgery for tendinitis, so alternate remedies must be used. Relaxation plays a key role here. Be aware of your grip, and acknowledge the fact that strain and tension increase sensitivity to injury. There are recognized methods, such as the Alexander



technique, that can retain and heighten your perception of relaxation while drumming. (Check the self-help section of your local library or bookstore for literally dozens of titles in this area.) Anti-inflammatories like aspirin and ibuprofen are also helpful, but they should be used with caution and under a doctor's supervision.

Tenosynovitis

Tendon sheaths guide tendons around bones and joints and secrete a lubricant called synovial (si-NO-vee-al) fluid. A repetitive strain known as tenosynovitis occurs when the tendon and sheath rub together, resulting in an overproduction of fluid and subsequent swelling. This excess pressure restricts movement and can, if the irritation is in the carpal tunnel, impede nerve and artery functions.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

The carpal tunnel is comprised of wrist bones and the transverse carpal ligament. It serves as a guide band for nine finger tendons, arteries, connecting ligaments, and the median nerve. Any swelling in this confined area results in a nerve entrenchment, which then causes numbness in the thumb, forefinger, index finger, and possibly part of the ring finger. The loss of control and constricted blood flow can cause muscles to atrophy, resulting in weakness. If the condition is not properly diagnosed and treated, it may cause complete dysfunction of the hand—ultimately requiring carpal release surgery.

While the pain from tendinitis can be intermittent, the predominant symptoms of CTS are prolonged soreness, tingling, and numbness. An obvious indication of this disorder is to be awakened from sleep feeling like the hand is on fire. (If you're at this point, your doctor should have been contacted long ago.) CTS sufferers may undergo an EMG (electromyography) nerve-conduction test. Remember, if you experience pain, it's your body's way of telling you something is wrong. Don't ignore it.

If diagnosed soon enough, CTS can be treated non-operatively. Splints can be prescribed to keep the wrist straight and prevent additional strain and damage to the

median nerve and tendons. Once again, anti-inflammatories like aspirin or ibuprofen are effective. Cortisone is also an alternative, but it's a steroid, so continued use

is not recommended. If you do require surgery, the actual operation takes around twenty-five minutes, with six to eight weeks to heal, after which physiotherapy can begin.

Tom Brechtlein "Say What?" by Charlie Lahaie

"Oh yeah, I have ringing in my ears. But I'm a drummer, and it goes with the territory."

Don't kid yourself. If you have *anything* wrong with your hearing, check it out. There's a huge chance that it's not from playing at all, as was the case with Tom Brechtlein. A professional drummer for over twenty years, Tom got his big break at the age of twenty when he landed the gig with Chick Corea.

"I noticed a problem in my right ear when I was working with Wayne Shorter, back in 1985," says Tom. "My ear felt stuffed. It seemed to happen all of a sudden, though the doctor claimed it actually developed over time. I went to an ear, nose & throat specialist, who told me I had fluid in my ear. I knew my hearing was really bad, but I didn't want to know the truth. I didn't want somebody opening up my ear and saying, 'You can't play drums for a month,' or wrecking my hearing altogether. And to tell you the truth, it never really bothered me."

I left messages on Tom's answering machine for one full year. I truly had a feeling that his problem was not noise-induced hearing loss, and that if I could just get him to have a hearing test and see one of the doctors at the House Ear Institute, he could be helped. Finally, in December of '94, ten years after his initial visit with an ENT, he called me.

"The main reason I finally went for the hearing test was that I was tired of saying 'What?' to my bandmates," states Tom. "To be honest, I wanted to be able to hear what people were saying. I wasn't distraught or depressed. The audiologist gave me the regular test, in addition to a test where they place a headset on the bone. At that point I knew it was the bone and not the nerves. I knew it was something in the middle ear."

"Later, I sat down with Dr. William Slattery at the House Ear Institute. He told me, 'We have some good news and some bad news. The bad news is your hearing is terrible. The good news is it's the best kind of hearing loss you can

have because it's in the middle ear. You have Otosclerosis. The middle ear bones are not moving, so they're protecting the nerve. It's like having natural ear plugs.' Then he told me it could be reversed. I needed a surgical procedure called a stapedectomy. With that I could expect anywhere from a 95% to 98% improvement, with a 1% chance of it not working at all."



Tom gets his regular check up with Dr. William Slattery of the House Ear Institute.

Tom had the surgery. It was a painless outpatient procedure, and he was cracking jokes through the whole operation. "Dr. Slattery was right," claims Tom. "I got my hearing back. I had to wait eight days before I could play. On the eighth day I had a session, and I couldn't believe how loud everything was, even with my ER-25 plugs. I don't talk as loudly as I used to, and the 'What?' factor has gone to less than half. I can hear sounds I never heard, like the refrigerator making ice, dial tones, and a dog barking in the distance. It's so great. I can't wait to get the other ear done!"

If you have *any* type of problem with your hearing, see an otologist. Don't just assume it's caused by your drumming. Have a hearing test every couple of years. If you still have normal hearing, *protect it!* Many drummers do suffer from noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus. You don't *have to* be one of them.

Charlie Lahaie is a former director of the House Ear Institute, an organization dedicated to hearing protection and the prevention of hearing loss.

Focal Dystonia

This affliction is commonly associated with "writer's cramp," but it can strike musicians as well. Unlike tendinitis and carpal tunnel, dystonia is a secondary condition of the central nervous system, and results in intermittent contractions in the hand or forearm. The sufferer may enjoy complete and normal hand activity, only to exhibit cramping while performing.

Focal dystonia is a repetitive strain disorder, but unlike the others mentioned here, it's caused by a neurological dysfunction rather than an anatomical one. And, unlike tendinitis and CTS, it can flare up as a result of hereditary dispositions. Dystonia is a rare and complex disorder. Fortunately a neurologist can prescribe medications to counter it.

What To Do

If you suspect an RSI, consult with your family physician immediately. Don't ignore that tingling in your fingertips or the pain in your wrist that shoots into the palm of your hand and up your arm. Continued strain only irritates the condition and could delay complete recovery.

Don't let denial slow you down, either. Unless you're a doctor or a physiotherapist, don't try to self-diagnose your ailment. Doing so only prevents many RSI victims from seeking proper treatment at the early stages. Remember, "RSI" is simply an umbrella term for *many* disorders that affect the tendons, tendon sheaths, joints, ligaments, and nerves. The early warning signs of one disorder may not parallel another, so the bottom line is: Get to your doctor.

For the beginning student: Be sure to mention any discomfort to your teacher. For teachers: Emphasize the need to relax and warm up before playing. This alone could be the single most important defense against RSI. Develop finger and wrist stretches and incorporate them into your daily practice routine. If you want to play throughout your lifetime, be safe rather than sorry, smart rather than naive. Hopefully, awareness is as close as you'll ever get to Repetitive Strain Injuries.



Jobbing As A Career

Tips On Becoming A Working Drummer

by Mike Haid

Playing cover tunes is not an insult to your abilities. Its actually what the greatest percentage of working musicians around the world do.

Want to make a living as a drummer? Most young drummers fantasize about hooking up with a band, getting signed to a major label, and becoming a superstar with an infinite cash flow. Sorry kids, it's time for a reality check. There's a big difference in the entertainment business between *fame* and *fortune*. Fame can be achieved fairly easily, given the right amount of money and proper marketing. The fortune part is not so easily attained. To make drumming a life-long career, it takes dedication to your craft, perseverance, discipline, networking, positive attitude, and talent.

I recognize the fact that many talented players feel that it is beneath

them to play anything but original music, or to put on a tux and play for a wedding or private party. But let me just say that I've made more money from playing one wedding than I have from playing with all the original bands I've been in combined! Playing cover tunes is not an insult to your abilities. It's actually what the greatest percentage of working musicians around the world *do*. Remember, we're talking about developing a career, not taking shots at stardom.

With that in mind, let's take a look at some of the things you'll need to "bring to the office" as a working drummer.

Job Skills

First of all, it's important to have a wide variety of styles in your drumming vocabulary. In order to get the best (paying) gigs, you must be able to play the most popular styles of dance music, which include swing, Latin, rock, R&B, disco, blues, waltz, electronica, hip-hop, and country. You must also be familiar with ethnic styles such as Jewish, Greek, and Polish (polka). You can bet that if you get called to do a casual gig, you're going to run into many of these styles of music, and if you're not prepared, don't expect to get called back. Word spreads fast in casual circles, and if you're not cutting the gig, chances are your phone won't be ringing much for casuals. You don't have to be a master of all of these styles, as long as you develop a solid feel for each one. The more you know, the more gigs you will be able to do.

Educating yourself is imperative. Even if you have a natural talent for drumming, you must still learn the proper techniques for various styles of



music. Graduating from a vocational music school was the best thing I've ever done for my career. Figure out what makes sense for you and go for it. If drumming is to become your career, then you *must* develop the tools and techniques that are essential if you're to compete for the good gigs.

Reading music can be helpful in some cases, so you should have at least a basic idea of how to read drum charts. If you're not a good reader, don't take a gig that requires reading. You'll be sorry you took the gig and will only embarrass yourself. Check out *Modern Drummer* for educational books and videos that will help in developing your reading skills and technical abilities.

Whether or not you read, you *must* have a good working knowledge of the repertoire for casual gigs. This means: Learn lots of tunes! You should know as many "standard" songs from all the popular styles as possible, so you don't get caught with your pants down when a casual leader calls a tune. Listening to "oldies" stations will help in this area. To be even better prepared, call the casual leaders in town and ask them to send you a song list.

Your biggest asset to getting gigs is your ability to lock the time down, no matter what the style of music. If your "inner clock" was not set to a metronome at birth, chances are you're going to need to practice with one. I suggest using some sort of metronomic device every time you practice. (This can include CDs, sequencers, or drum machines.) When working with other musicians whose time is *not* solid, you will need to establish yourself as the timekeeper and control the tempos of the songs. Eventually you'll learn the tempos for the various styles that work best for dancing, and the band will depend on you to set those tempos.

Add To The Mix

Singing will make you a more valuable asset to any working band. If it comes down to you or the other guy, and he sings and you don't, most times he'll get the gig. Find a vocal style that fits your personality and voice range. Practice singing along with your favorite artist (and also with the most popular "oldies"). Learn the vocal inflections that fit the style you're going for.

Learning how to harmonize will help immensely. Listen to an "oldies" station

that plays music from the '50s, '60s, and '70s, and try hearing and singing the harmony parts. This ear training will help you become a better vocalist.

Keep Things Interesting

One thing I do to keep things interesting for myself and my bandmates is to never play a song the same way twice. I find ways to change the hi-hat or ride-cymbal pattern, or to create a pattern between the two, or even to add a tom to the pattern. Doing this can keep the creativity flowing and help you develop new ideas that can open up your technique in a tasty fashion. Just remember, don't change the basic groove of the song. That will only throw the band off.

On simple grooves (or on ballads), try changing your lead hand from right to left (or vice versa). Once you get comfortable doing this, try alternating lead hands back and forth. This creates a unique yet subtle change in the sound and feel. Of course, you should practice this *first*, until you feel comfortable that your time is solid leading with both hands. This will help develop your overall independence and time.

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Another way to develop a solid groove is to pretend that you are recording in a studio. Listen to the balance of your kit for volume levels, and try not to overplay. Adding too many fills or confusing patterns will only take away from the groove. It's tempting to want to "take it out" sometimes, but just remember that you're playing for people who want to *dance*, not for drummers at a drum festival. If the people are dancing, the bandleader is happy, and that means you'll keep working.

Quick Tips

Here are a few more brief words of advice to help you succeed in the casual gigging field. To begin with, make sure your gear is in good condition, and keep spare supplies and tools necessary to make any repairs on the spot. It's a good idea to use double-headed drums so that if you break a top head you can use the bottom head (except for the snare) until you can replace the broken head. It's also a good idea to have a tom that is the same size as your snare in case you break a snare head and don't have a spare.

Dress properly for the gig. Don't show

up at a country club wearing ragged jeans and an old T-shirt. Most musicians wear their tux into the gig to set up. If that's not possible, then wear nice casual clothes to set up in, and then change into your tux. Remember, first impressions last forever.

Another no-brainer is to be punctual. Make sure your vehicle is in good working condition. Carry a cellular phone if possible, and have the bandleader's phone number as well as the number for the venue where you're playing, in case of emergencies. Nothing upsets a bandleader more than wondering if you're going to show up on time—or at all.

Stay healthy! This should be obvious. Eat healthy, drink healthy, exercise, and get proper rest. Being sharp and focused on a gig will influence the other members to keep up with you. And remember that excessive drinking of alcohol is a sure way to lose the gig.

I can't say enough about having a positive attitude. Try to be friendly, cheerful, and complimentary to the other musicians. If you take the attitude that the gig is a drag, it *will* be. Nothing sparks a band

more than players who love what they do. Invite the rest of the musicians—and the audience—to join you in this celebration of music. Making everyone happy by getting them up to dance and forget their worries for a while is what you're there for. Fun is contagious! Music can be magical if you give it the attention that it deserves—even if you've played the same songs a thousand times.

How To Start

If doing casual gigs appeals to you, your first step is to do some networking. Get on the phone, and get out to meet the top players. Find out who your competitors are. Meet the working drummers in your area and let them know that you're interested in subbing for them. If you groom yourself into an in-demand player, and if you have perseverance, discipline, and a positive attitude, you should be able to find work playing casuals that will pay as much for one night as you'd make in three nights in a club. There is nothing more rewarding than doing what you love for a living and being paid well for it.



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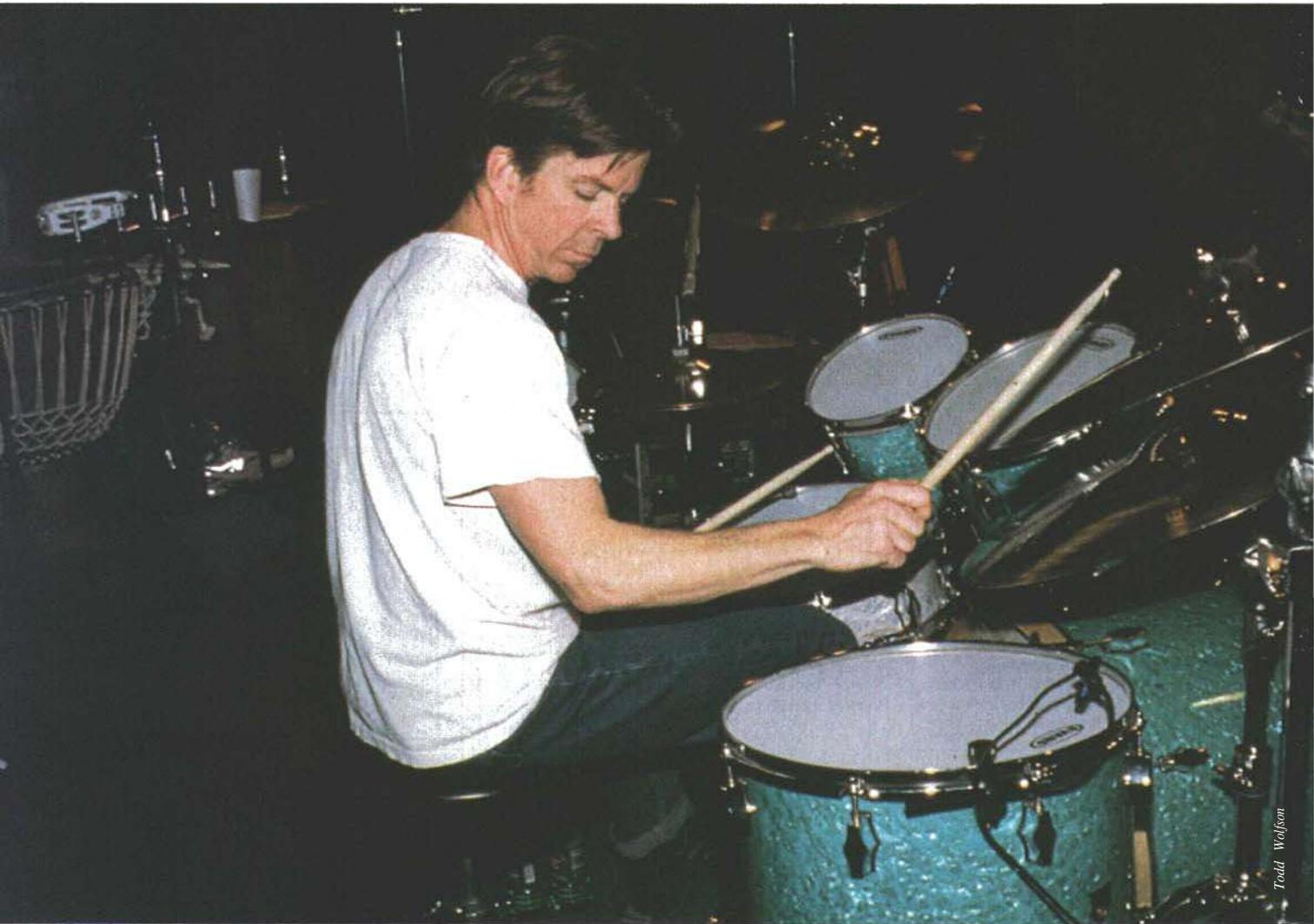
Chris Layton

Been A Long Time

Studio: Brooklyn Bridge Recording, Austin, Texas

Label: Tone-Cool

Artists: Tommy Shannon (bs, gtr), Charlie Sexton (gtr, vcl), Malford Milligan (vcl), Doyle Bramhall II (vcl), Reese Wynans (kyb), guests



Todd Wolfson

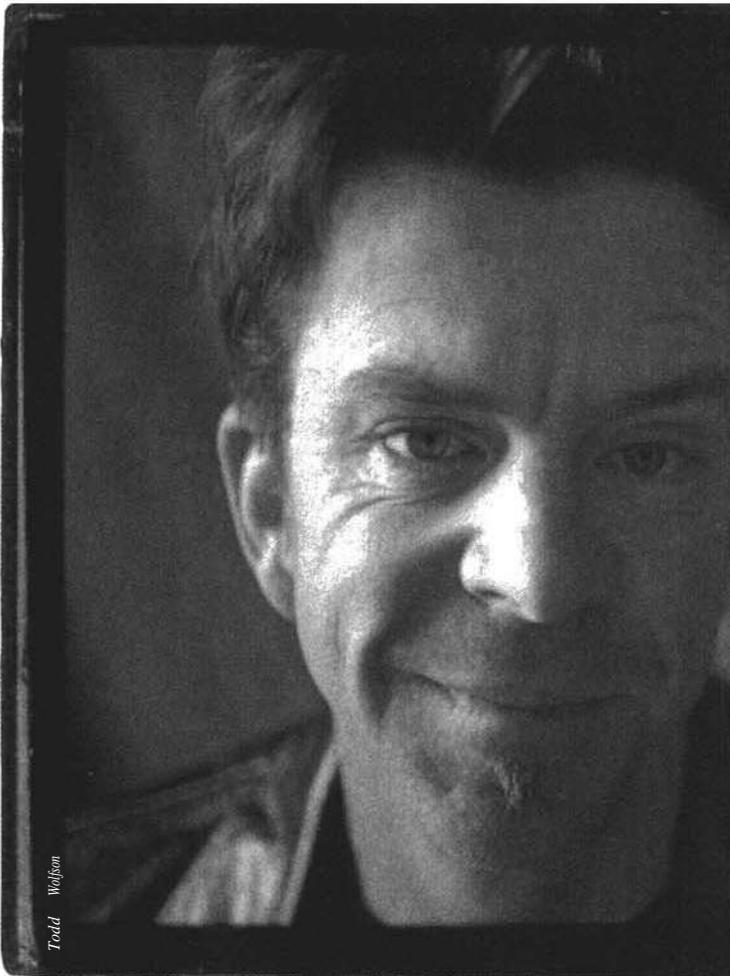
Been A Long Time, the new release by the former members of Stevie Ray Vaughan's backup band, Double Trouble, is a powerful album, full of moody mid-tempo rockers, lumpy funk, and even gospel. And there's not a Stevie Ray shuffle in sight. Charlie Sexton, who was a colleague of Layton and Shannon in Arc

Angels, co-produces. Celebrity appearances include Johnny Lang, Gordy Johnson, Susan Tedeschi, Dr. John, and Willie Nelson.

Don't get the wrong idea from the first radio single, a remake of Led Zeppelin's "Rock And Roll." It's *not* indicative of the album. Layton interprets the record

company's strategy: "It's kind of like throwing a cherry bomb in the room to get everybody to look at you!"

The studio, says Layton, is "a little cement building, nothing special. But it's got a great engineer, Andy Taub. We recorded to 2" tape mostly with tube gear—very little solid state—through a



Todd Wolfson

INSIDE SCOOP

"Sky cry" required a different *modus operandi* when live off the floor takes didn't yield the required vibe. Explains Layton, "I created a loop with a brass-shelled djembe and printed that on tape. Tommy and Charlie played guitars to that, and then I went out and played kit along with Tommy playing bass. That weird sound you hear at the top is one of Joe Montineri's Tambo snare drums, then the regular kit comes in for the second verse. At the end, I went back into the room and overdubbed tom fills, working off the vocals and the track."

Microphones: Neumann U87s, and U67s and Sennheiser 414s (toms), Electro-Voice RE20 and Coles on kick, Shure SM57 (snare, top and bottom).

Drums: Fibes (in turquoise metal flake) drums included 4x14 or 5x14 Fibes, 5x14 Ludwig Black Beauty or hammered bronze, 5x13 Montineri Tambo. Other drums included 8x10 and 9x12 rack toms, a 14x14 floor tom (positioned on the hi-hat side), a 16x16 floor tom with legs), and a 16x22 bass drum.

Cymbals: Sabian, including an 18" AA crash, a 22" AA medium ride, an 18" AAX crash, a 16" AA thin crash, and 13" AA Hats (thin top over heavy bottom).

Percussion: LP cowbell and djembe

Heads: Evans G1 coated batters on snare and toms, Remo coated Ambassador on bottoms of toms and front of kick (with 5" hole), Remo coated Powerstroke 3 on bass drum batter.

Sticks: Vater Power 5B. According to Chris, "A heavier stick affects the tonality more than the volume."

Tuning & Approach: The snare drums varied from very tight to very loose. Toms were medium. "Fortoms, I don't like that dipping sound," Chriss says. "I just like a pure sound that sustains." Snare backbeats, even on the gentle "Baby, There's No One Like You," are rimshots.

Muffling: None. The engineer said, "The more open the better."

Studer analog board. We did a lot of basic tracks with Tommy, Charlie, and me together in the room, with the bass rig in the corner, gobo-ed off."

To get the ambient snare sizzle on "Say One Thing," Layton carted out his '70s

Ludwig Black Beauty. "It was tuned kind of tight," says Layton, "and we compressed the hell out of it. There's a lot of room mic's going on—two Neumann U87s over one shoulder and over the floor tom. We miked the snare underneath and

on top. On the kick, there was an RE20 in front at close range, then a Coles mic' five feet out at waist height."

T. Bruce Wittet



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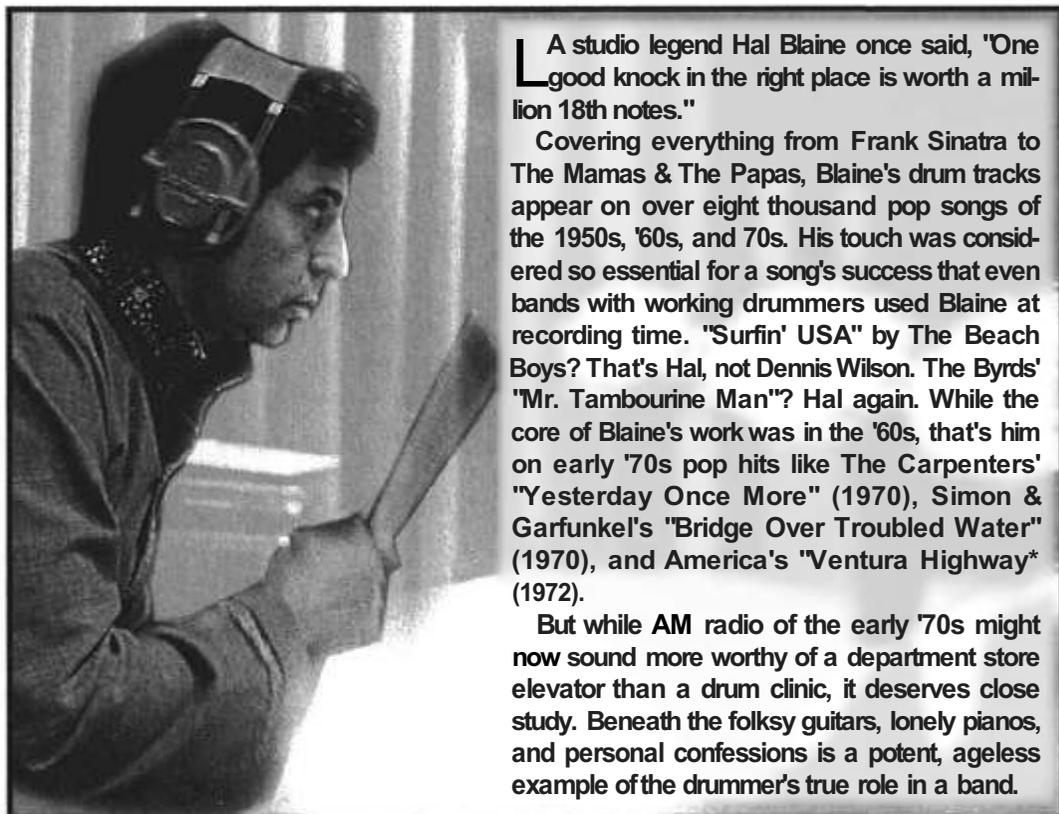
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The Chosen Ones Of '70s Pop Radio

by Mark Loftin

Beneath the
folksy guitars, lonely
pianos, and
personal confessions is
a potent ageless
example of the
drummer's true role
in a band.



LA studio legend Hal Blaine once said, "One good knock in the right place is worth a million 18th notes."

Covering everything from Frank Sinatra to The Mamas & The Papas, Blaine's drum tracks appear on over eight thousand pop songs of the 1950s, '60s, and 70s. His touch was considered so essential for a song's success that even bands with working drummers used Blaine at recording time. "Surfin' USA" by The Beach Boys? That's Hal, not Dennis Wilson. The Byrds' "Mr. Tambourine Man"? Hal again. While the core of Blaine's work was in the '60s, that's him on early '70s pop hits like The Carpenters' "Yesterday Once More" (1970), Simon & Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water" (1970), and America's "Ventura Highway" (1972).

But while AM radio of the early '70s might now sound more worthy of a department store elevator than a drum clinic, it deserves close study. Beneath the folksy guitars, lonely pianos, and personal confessions is a potent, ageless example of the drummer's true role in a band.

The Rise Of The Studio Wizard

With the singer-songwriter movement exploding in the mid-1970s, a new crew of LA session drummers picked up where Blaine left off. Artists like Carole King, Joni Mitchell, Carly Simon, James Taylor, and Seals & Crofts wanted the *perfect* drum track, so they turned to studio aces like Russ Kunkel, Jim Gordon, and John Guerin. Representing an elite club of "chosen ones," their magic touch was in high demand. But with the laid-back sounds of the early '70s calling for nothing more than a rudimentary 4/4 beat that a grandmother might pull off, why would such a small handful of drummers be considered worthy of these artists' recording sessions?

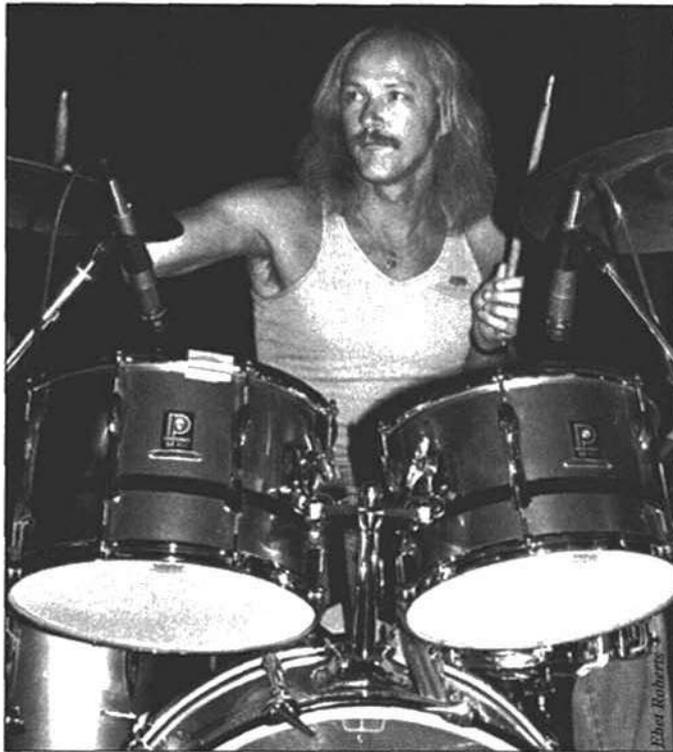
Rather than ask what they added to the music, the appropriate question is to ask what they *didn't* add. Never showing off or clattering every break with a fill, Kunkel, Gordon, and Guerin embraced Blaine's principle of "less is more." While they certainly had the ability to fill a song's breaks and gaps with jaw-dropping drum licks and solos, they exemplified the true role of the professional drummer during this era: *playing for the song first*. Punctuating only when it fit, it was their commanding restraint—

coupled with a strong sense of feel—that made their drumming critical to a song's success.

Russ Kunkel

With scores of album credits backing artists like Carole King, James Taylor, Jackson Browne, and Neil Diamond, Russ Kunkel was the king of the LA studios in the early '70s. Always knowing when to hold back, even if it meant hanging in near silence, Kunkel was a master of restraint. On Carole King's hit "So Far Away" from her landmark 1971 album *Tapestry*, Kunkel barely taps his bass drum and hi-hat on the beat, steering the listener's full attention towards King's yearning vocals and piano. His instinct is also apparent on the light folk of Joni Mitchell's first hit, "You Turn Me On I'm A Radio" (1972). Lurking in the shadows, Kunkel's bass-drum thumps accent the ultra-mellow bass line, creating a subdued backbone for Mitchell's acoustic strumming and Graham Nash's harmonica solos.

But when the piece demands, Kunkel knows how to give things a push: On the verse of Neil Sedaka's "Laughter In The Rain"



(1974), he drives an effervescent flow on a standard 4/4 beat, giving the feel of almost gliding through the air. A transcription of the beat would look deceptively simple, and would be worthless. The key is Kunkel's fluidity.

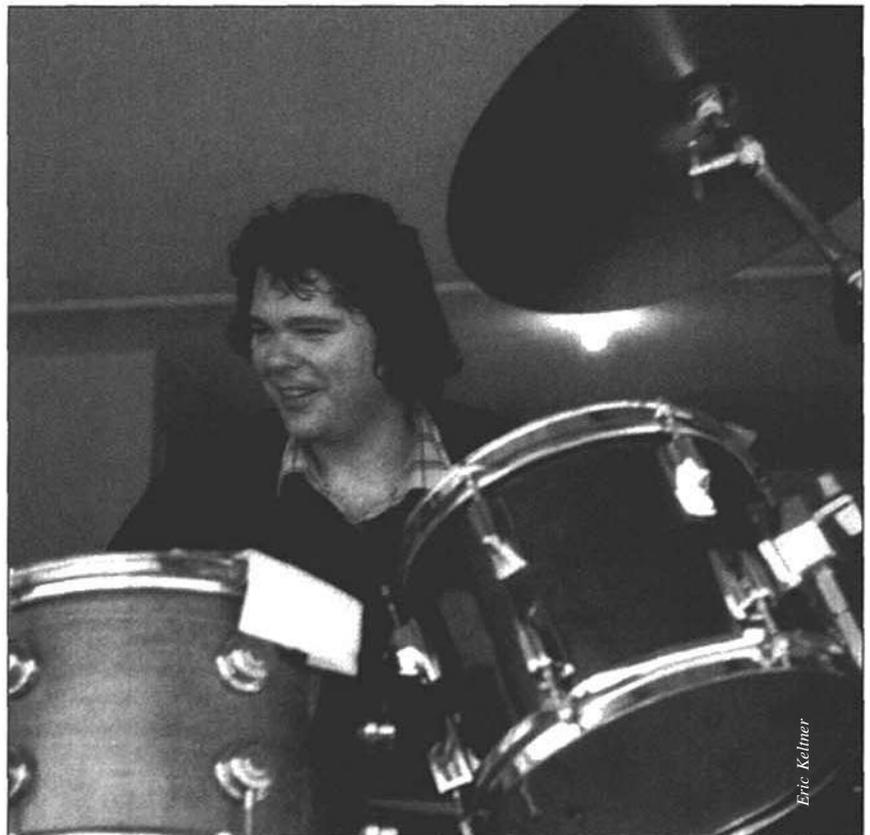
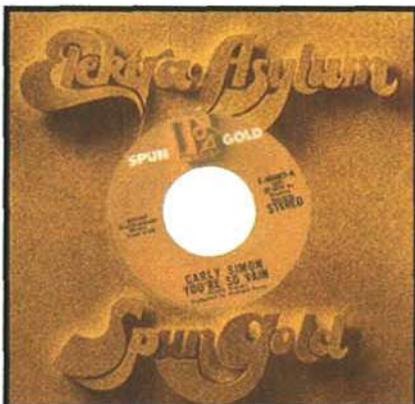


Jackson Browne also owes much to Kunkel for helping spawn his Top-10 hit "Doctor My Eyes" (1972). Catapulting the thick stomp of the verse into cruise control with a sprightly shuffle ride, there is again a very open-air feel to Kunkel's groove. When a drummer can help paint the vision of driving down California's coast at sunset, with the top down, you know he is in an elite class.

Jim Gordon

As with Kunkel, drum charts simply don't do justice for much of Jim Gordon's work. With an uncanny ability to provide just the right feel for the song at hand, he was the drummer of choice for artists as diverse as Barbra Streisand, Traffic, B.B. King, and John Lennon (on Lennon's landmark album, *Imagine*). On Carly Simon's number-one hit "You're So Vain" (1972), Gordon creates an aura of intensity that perfectly complements Simon's vengeful tone of a romance gone bad. His majestic, on-the-money beat is one of raw passion.

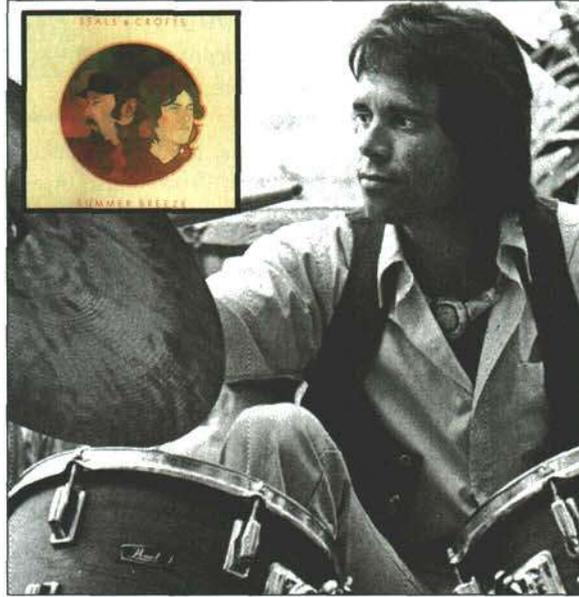
Compare this to the rollicking kick of Harry Nilsson's "Jump Into The Fire" from *Nilsson Schmilsson*, and you get a sense of Gordon's versatility. Set against a thick, swooping bass line and Nilsson's echoing wails, Gordon's spirited cowbell stomp is one of pure giddiness.



John Guerin

Even given all of the above, it might be John Guerin who best personifies the 1970s LA studio drummer. On Seals & Croft's "Summer Breeze" (1971) Guerin keenly lingers in the background during the song's signature keyboard intro. Then, with amazing effect, he jumps starts the bouncy bass line with a single tom slam. Before the resonating keyboards and tight vocal harmonies of the chorus kick in, Guerin pokes a few of those popcorn-pitched toms in just the right places. With light cymbal flourishes and an occasional hi-hat hiss, you truly get the sense of a breezy, jasmine-scented July afternoon.

That's Guerin again on Joni Mitchell's hit "Help Me," laying an elegant groove that slithers just under the surface of Mitchell's heartfelt uneasiness over a risky relationship. Mitchell's singing sounds winded from all the heavy contemplation, and Guerin's wistful rhythm helps give the sense of a long, list-



less sigh. Keeping the pulse alive during the breaks, he fills in with a signature '70s tom flam, then clears the way for the breathy harmony. When Mitchell gets heavy with life-evolving lyrics like "We like our lovin', but not like we like our freedom," Guerin knows where the spotlight is. He appropriately leaves plenty of space for Mitchell's graceful melody and kinetic yodels. Overall, the polished sheen of Mitchell's album *Court And Spark* (1974)—with its icy-clear cymbals, damp snare crack, and dry, widely-pitched toms (think of a less-refined Phil Collins drum intro to "In The Air Tonight")—probably best defines the LA drum sound of the early '70s.

Current Value

While the drums may sound dated (or retro-hip, depending on your perspective), the *style* embraced by the LA masters has enjoyed a timeless longevity. Kunkel and Guerin are still going strong today, adding their touch to the likes of Elton John, Madonna, Bob Dylan, George Harrison, and Lyle Lovett.

Next time the likes of Seals & Crofts or Neil Sedaka come on that oldies station, or you see that late-night TV ad for *Singer-Songwriter Hits Of The '70s*, don't touch that dial. Today's trend back towards simplicity and feel proves that for pop/rock drumming, the "chosen ones" of '70s pop were on to something.



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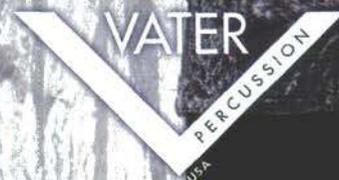
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NAMM Show Concerts

Every year the musical-instrument industry gathers to show its wares to dealers at the National Association Of Music Merchants (NAMM) trade show. But not all the excitement happens on the convention floor. There is also a bevy of exciting after-hours events. This year's show in Anaheim was no exception, with several major performances sponsored by percussion-instrument manufacturers.

Drums Along NAMM 2001

Sabian's "Drums Along NAMM 2001" blended exciting Latin flavors with serious pocket playing to keep showgoers' toes tapping.

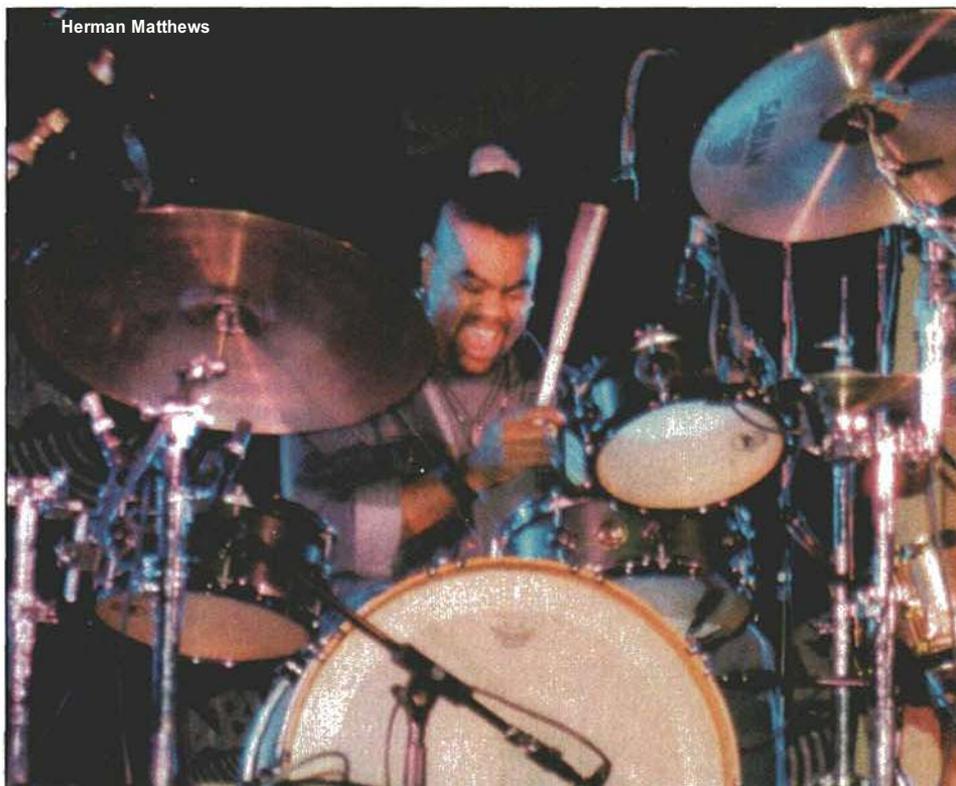
The evening began with Joey Heredia & Friends, featuring percussionist Kevin Ricard. With dynamic vocals, blazing horns, and unbelievable percussive intensity, the group started the show off with the proverbial bang.

Funk master Herman Matthews and his group settled things down to a slow burn. Combining Herman's bottomless pocket with soulful R&B vocals, the band set the evening into a laid-back but nonetheless powerful groove.

Blues legend Taj Majal and his Phantom Blues Band kicked things up a notch, propelled by drummer Tony Braunagel. With good-time shuffles and down-home jump-blues tunes, Taj had the audience smiling, clapping, and dancing.

It was back to the Latin attack with Oscar Cartaya & The Enclave. Featuring drummer Tal Bereman and percussionists Kevin Ricard and Richie "Gajate" Garcia, the clave once again ruled supreme.

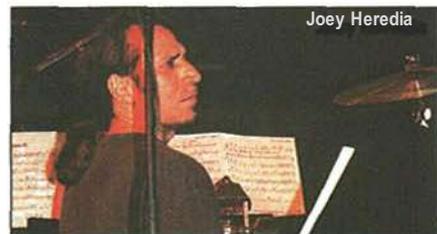
Finally, those who stayed late were treated to the jazz/funk stylings of Lil' John Roberts, who impressed the crowd as he performed with The Chronicle.



Herman Matthews



Tony Braunagel

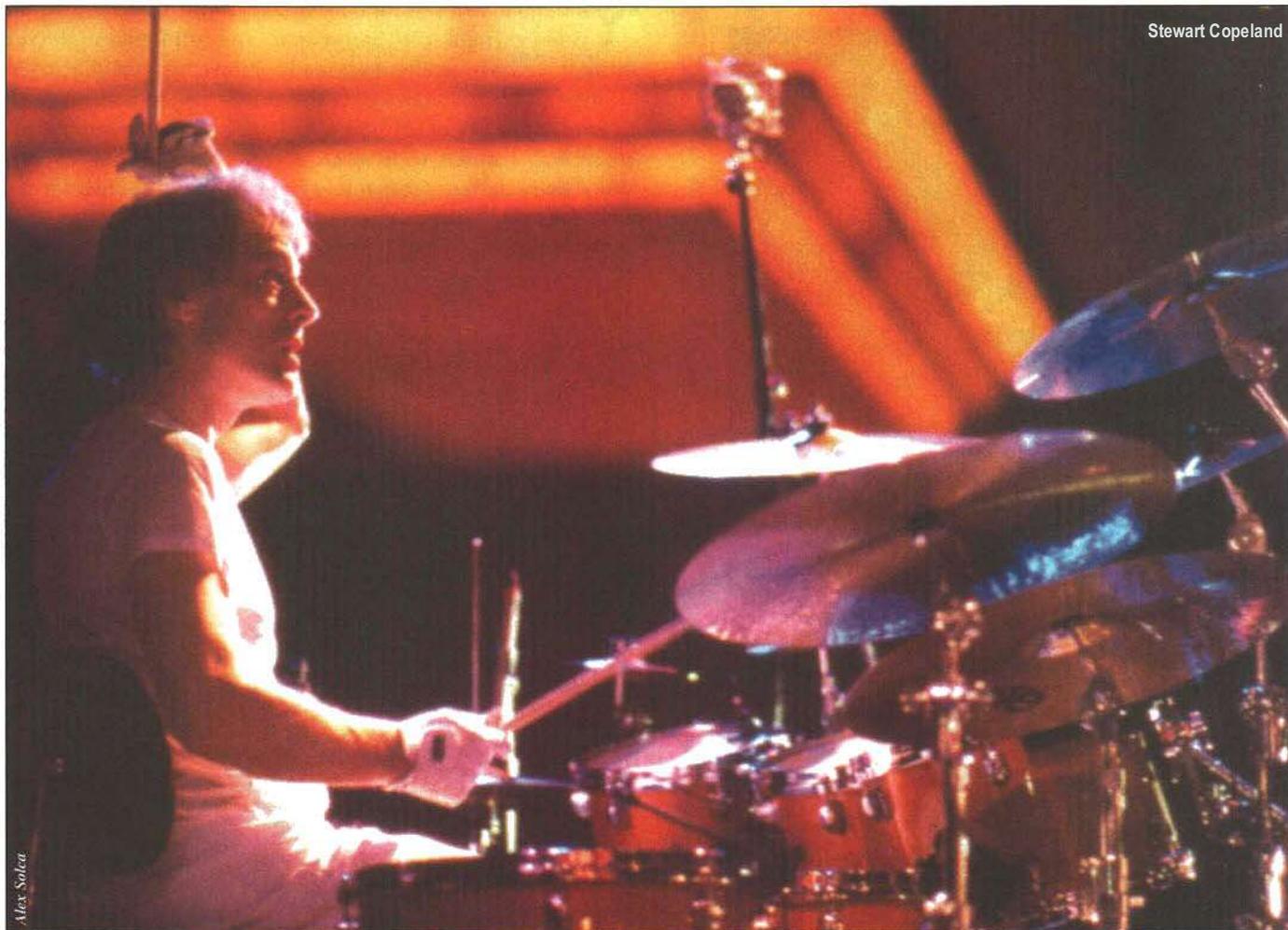


Joey Heredia



Kevin Ricard

Stewart Copeland And Mike Portnoy



On Saturday night, January 20, Tama drums (with support from *Modern Drummer*) presented a program that featured one of drumming's current leading lights, along with one of its genuine legends. (Each had a new Tama signature snare drum launched at this year's NAMM show.)

Opening the show was Mike Portnoy with Transatlantic. Along with Mike's patented dynamic drumming, the group features the talents of Neal Morse (vocals, keyboards, guitar), Roine Stolt (guitar, percussion, vocals), and Pete Trewavas (bass, Moog Taurus pedals, vocals). They offered a set of music that creatively bridged the gap between classic "art rock" (à la early Genesis and Yes) and today's more fiery "progressive rock." Portnoy aficionados were thrilled at Mike's aggressive yet always musical drumming.

While the audience tried to catch its breath, the stage was reset to accommodate an entire orchestra. Strings, woodwinds, brass, and a battery of symphonic percussion instruments were arrayed around a conductor's podium. Perched on a riser stage left, dominating this large musical assembly, was the commanding presence of Stewart Copeland.

Casually attired in white slacks and shirt, Stewart took a decidedly non-casual approach to his performance, pro-



pellung the orchestra through a variety of his own complex compositions. Rhythmic changes, percussive contrasts, and dynamic intensity were the order of the day. Each piece added new emotional elements to the overall presentation, until at the conclusion the audience was cheering in delight.

INDY QUICKIES

Aid Sought For Billy Higgins

Five years ago, jazz drummer, educator, and community leader Billy Higgins received a liver transplant, which literally saved his life. Unfortunately, in recent months the new liver has showed signs of severe damage, and Billy has been told that he will need another transplant. He has been in and out of the hospital since October.



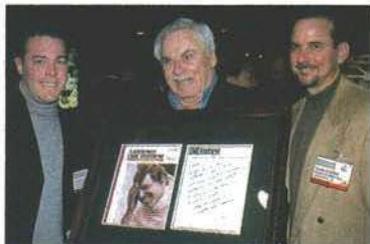
A benefit show was held recently in Los Angeles to raise money for Billy's medical expenses. Until another benefit can be organized, several of Billy's friends are soliciting additional support on his behalf. Donations will be consolidated and sent to Billy on a bi-weekly basis. Checks may be made out to: Larry Grenadier and Rebecca Martin. Send your check, along with a personal note to Billy, to: Larry Grenadier/Rebecca Martin, PO Box 850, Marlboro, NY 12542. A copy of each check will be included with your personal note. For more information call (845) 561-3608.

KoSA 2001

The 2001 KoSA International Percussion Workshop will be held at Castleton State College in Castleton, Vermont from July 30 through August 5. The program will include master classes, seminars, and concerts by faculty and visiting artists. This year's faculty will include Memo Acevedo, Mario De Ciutiis, Dom Famularo, Richie "Gajate" Garcia, Gordon Gottlieb, Jamie Haddad, Horacio Hernandez, Beverley Johnston, Morris "Arnie" Lang, Marco Lienhard, Aldo Mazza, Marco Minnemann, Karen Ervin Pershing, Paul Picard, Johnny Rabb, Repercussion, Walfredo Reyes Jr., Lou Robinson, Ed Shaughnessy, Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman, Glen Velez, Zoro, and MD senior editor Rick Van Horn. For more information contact KoSA USA at PO Box 332, Hyde Park, VT 05655, (800) 541-8401, or KoSA Canada at PO Box 333, Station A, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3C 2S1, (514) 934-5540, email: kosa@istar.ca, Web: www.kosamusic.com.

Many Happy Returns!

Modern Drummer Publications was pleased to present Armand Zildjian (chairman of Zildjian Cymbals) with a plaque commemorating his eightieth birthday. The presentation was made at the 2001 NAMM show by *Drum Business/Modern Drummer* advertising

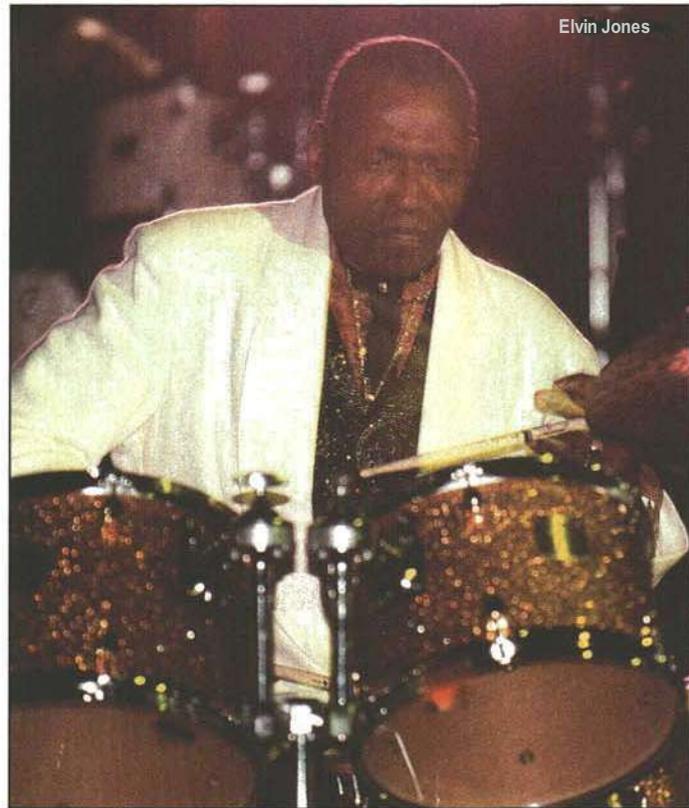


director Bob Berenson (left) and *Drum Business* associate publisher/*Modern Drummer* Web site director Kevin Kearns.

Yamaha's

Yamaha's second annual Groove Night was held at the Galaxy Theater in Santa Ana. The attractive nightclub format was an excellent venue to showcase a stellar roster of new artists, veteran stars, and drumming legends.

Before the lineup of "groovers" began to play, the audience was treated to a rare personal appearance by jazz giant Elvin Jones. After a few brief words of thanks for the standing ovation he received upon his introduction, Elvin



QUICK BEATS

TOMMY IGOE (BROADWAY'S *THE LION KING*)

What are your favorite grooves?

Gene Krupa on "Sing, Sing, Sing" (Benny Goodman), Steve Gadd on "Fifty Ways To Leave Your Lover," "Late In The Evening" (Paul Simon), and "Lenore" (Chick Corea), Omar Hakim on "D Flat Waltz" (Weather Report), Dennis Chambers on "Pick Hits" (John Scofield) and "Foreign Affairs" (Birelli Legrene), and Sergio Mendes on *Brasilero* with various drummers and ensembles.

What's the best advice you've learned from your drum teachers?

Always listen, even to poor players. You can always learn something to make yourself a better musician.

What records and/or books did you study and play along to when you first started drumming?

I remember I used to play along to Buddy Rich, Stan Kenton, Miles



Davis, Grover Washington, Spyro Gyra, Yellowjackets, and various rock and funk records, to name a few. My books were numerous: Louis Bellson's *Modern Reading*, Buddy Rich's rudiment book, the Chapin book, John Pickering's *Drummers Cookbook*, Tony drone's *Portraits In Rhythm*, and Ted Reed's *Syncopation* are a few.

Second Annual Groove Night

launched into the only drum solo of the night. Incorporating his trademark time fluidity and loose-yet-articulate technique, Elvin demonstrated the uniqueness that has kept him at the forefront of jazz for over forty years.

The actual Groove Night began with drummer/emcee Rick Marotta, playing with the evening's crack backup band, The Bristols (Robbie Wycoff on vocals, Jon Greathouse on keyboards, Ross Bolton and Mark Williamson on guitar, and

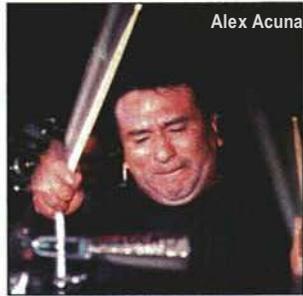
Neil Stubenhaus on bass). Along with Rick, each following drummer played one number with the band, showcasing groove and musicality as opposed to displaying chops.

The evening's roster featured (in alphabetical order) Alex Acuna, Michael Baker, Tom Brechtlein, Ray Brinker, Gerry Brown, Ndugu Chanler, Peter Donald, Sonny Emory, Peter Erskine, Loraine Faina, Anton Fig, David Garibaldi, Ralph MacDonald, Russ Miller, Jamie Oldaker, Earl Palmer, Chris

Parker, Prairie Prince, John "JR" Robinson, Oscar Seaton, John "Jabo" Starks, Clyde Stubblefield, and Dave Weckl.



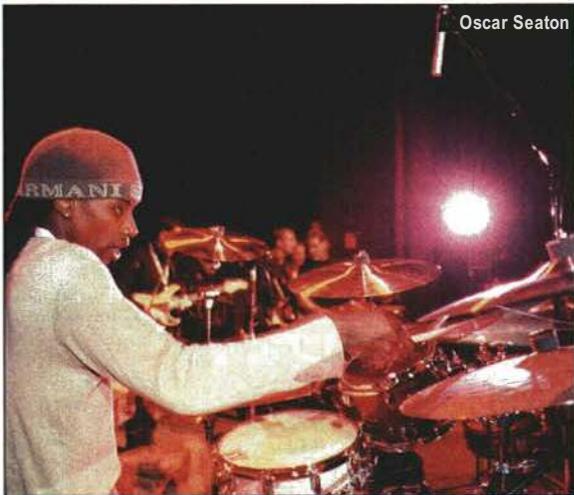
Rick Marotta



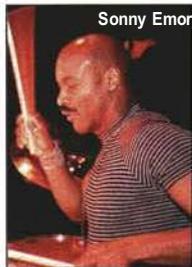
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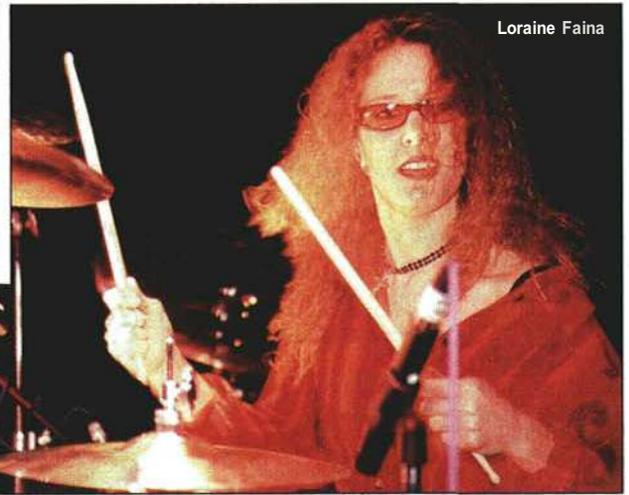
Earl Palmer



Oscar Seaton



Sonny Emory



Loraine Faina

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What are some of your favorite grooves?

Bun E. Carlos on "Surrender" (Cheap Trick), Ian Paice on "Fireball" (Deep Purple), Keith Moon on "Baba O'Riley" (The Who), Neil Smith on "Billion Dollar Babies" (Alice Cooper), Stewart Copeland on "Don't Stand So Close" (The Police), Neil Peart on "Bastille Day" (Rush), Michael Thomas Tucker on "Ballroom Blitz" (Sweet), Michael Shrieve on "Jingo" (Santana), and Clem Burke on "Dreamin'" (Blondie).

What are some of your favorite recordings that you've recorded?

"Life Loves A Tragedy" from Poison's *Flesh & Blood*, "Power To The People," "Action" (Remix), and "Glitter For Your Soul," from *Native Tongue* (featuring Sheila E).

What ride cymbal are you using at the moment?

The good ol' 22" Paiste 2002. The bell cuts through just the way I like!



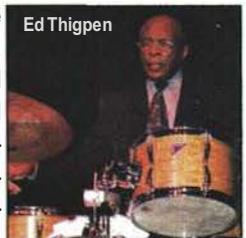
Who are some of your influences?

Ian Paice (Deep Purple), Keith Moon (The Who), Stewart Copeland (The Police), Neil Peart (Rush), Bun E. Carlos (Cheap Trick), Peter Criss (KISS), Michael Shrieve (Santana), Dinky Diamond (Sparks), Paul Cook (Sex Pistols), Bobby Rock, and Ringo Starr.

Elsewhere...

Gregg Bissonette performed with a re-formed Spinal Tap at a special concert celebrating Shure's seventy-fifth anniversary. (And he managed not to explode!) Shure also hosted a dealer reception, with entertainment provided by jazz great Ed Thigpen and his quartet and Sheila E & The E Train.

Remo drums and heads of every description are installed on floats featured in the nightly parade at Disney's new California Adventure theme park. This float features a Chinese theme illustrating San Francisco's famous Chinatown district.



Ed Thigpen



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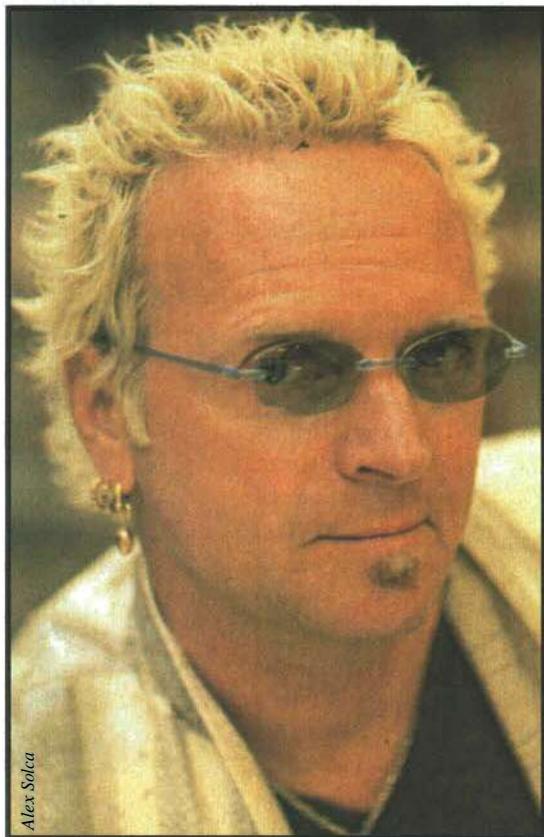
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